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To Whom We Owe Our Gratitude

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|--------------|----------|
| Words to Find: | police | military | firemen |
| mother | friends | leaders | employer |
| father | family | grandparents | |
| teachers | wife | Jesus | |
| pastor | husband | God | |
| | doctors | Holy Spirit | |

Salvation — God’s Gift

Harry Todd

As you travel down life’s highway
 It’s a broad road to destruction;
 The Bible says that “All have sinned”
 And you must change direction.

Now you are helpless by yourself,
 You are dead in trespasses and sin,
 God hates sin; Heaven is holy
 Therefore you cannot enter in.

Someone must die because of sin,
 It should be you and I,
 But God loved the world so much
 He sent His only Son to die.

Now Jesus paid the sin debt
 Upon dark Calvary’s tree,
 So you and I by simple faith
 Are forgiven and set free.

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I’m Outta There!

Bill Brinkworth

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” *Hebrews 10:24-25*

Church is the place we should be hearing the Word of God and be strengthened in following the Lord. Our own Bible reading is



one way we grow in the things of the Lord. However, God has ordained the local church to also assist us in our spiritual walk. It is there we get spiritual food God has given His appointed preacher to disburse to us. It is there many can hear the Gospel and be saved. It is inside a church where we can

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A Grateful Whale

Bill Brinkworth

A 45 - 50 foot humpback whale was rescued off the coast of San Francisco. The whale had be-



come entangled with ropes, crab traps, and weights. The animal was so weighted down that he could hardly surface to get air. A rescue team was summoned to attempt to free the 50-ton behemoth.

Divers went into the water and discovered that at least 20 crab-pot ropes, each being about 240 feet long, and their weights were tightly wrapped around the whale. The humpback’s tail was encircled four times by ropes. Twelve crab traps, each weighing 90 pounds, hung off the whale.

Soon four divers were in the water cutting off the entanglements with curved knives. The whale quietly waited and allowed the rescuers to free him. The diver who cut the rope from the

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I'm Outta There!

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find a place of ministry where we too can serve God.

Going to church is the right thing to do, but many reasons keep people from heeding God's command to attend. I certainly would not give the devil the credit all the time. Sometimes our own natural flesh, which struggles at doing right, intervenes. Between the two, there are a lot of excuses and wrong decisions that people use to keep them out of church. Here are a few of them that keep too many from God's house:

Sin. Going to church and hearing from God's Word, will remind too many of their sin. To avoid conviction many stay away from church; so they do not get the unpleasant reminders of their wrong doings.

Church hopping. They try this church; then that one; then go to another with a friend. Soon they find themselves out of their routine of faithfulness to the church God had led them to. In a short time, they are not attending any church.

Discontentment. Folks can easily find a reason for not being happy with their church. "I don't like the way the preacher preaches. He screams too much," or "They sing too much". There is

The Church is not a gallery for the exhibition of eminent Christians, but a school for the education of imperfect ones.
— Beecher

no perfect church, and if there were one, it would not be perfect after we entered.

Hurt feelings. Probably the number one killer of church attendance is when folks get their feelings hurt and leave the church. "No one shook my hand," or "No one even said hello to me. It just is not a friendly church."

Lack of understanding. Many do not have a clue as to what the Bible teaches. If they attend a church that does preach and practice the doctrines taught in the Bible, they do not understand it, and leave. Many just go for the religious trappings of the denomination they were raised in, and do not realize that much of "religious" practices are not biblical.

Pride. The old folded-arm excuse, "No one is going to tell me what to do!," keeps many out of church. They have not figured out that the preacher's message that got them indignant and wanting to leave, was from the Word of God. Ultimately, they leave, not because of what the preacher said, but what God said.

Legitimate reasons. Legitimate excuses of sickness, or vacations can become bad habits of non-attending.

No excuse is acceptable to keep us from God's house. We cannot please God when we are staying home from church. Even the unsaved know where a Christian should be on Sunday morning.

God started and sent His Son to die for the local church. The local church is important to God. Be at one this week. Be faithful in attending one that is teaching what the Bible instructs, and where you believe God has led you to attend.

A Grateful Whale

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creature's mouth remarked that the whale winked at him as he did his work.

After realizing he was free, the animal swam to each diver and nuzzled him. It was as if the animal were giving a thank you to each one that had had a part in his new freedom. He certainly was appreciative to those that worked to free him.

Is it possible that that whale had better manners and more appreciative courtesy than most people do? There are too many husbands that rarely thank their wives for all the important things they do to make their lives easier. Too many children never even think of thanking their fathers for working diligently each day to provide for their upkeep; nor do they even consider thanking their mother for her sacrificial efforts to provide a good home for them. Countless bosses are the topic of criticism and gossip, but are hardly ever thanked for providing a job for their employees. Teachers put in long hours in going the extra mile to grade papers and spend much of their time helping those that do not want to be helped and never hear any form of appreciation.

Police put in long days trying to protect residents they do not even know, and face ridicule and threats from many that are breaking laws, but rarely do they ever receive any gratitude.

Many make our lives much more pleasant and safe. We owe them for their work and effort. It takes no intelligence or character to ridicule, judge, or criticize others. It does take an appreciative, grateful spirit to realize what we have and to thank others for their part in our lives. As the whale "thanked" his rescuers, there are many of us that need to do the same to those that have helped us.

Salvation — God's Gift

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By grace are ye saved through
faith,
Not of works or by any deed;
Salvation is a gift of God;
So of His Word you must take
heed.

He came unto His own
But they turned Him away,
Now you can be a child of God
By receiving Christ today.

Today is the day of salvation,
Tomorrow may be too late,
Behold! Now is the accepted
time,
Oh! Sinner, do not wait.

If gratitude is due from children to their earthly parent, how much more is the gratitude of the great family of men due to our father in heaven.
— Hosea Ballou