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# THE CORNERSTONE

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OCTOBER 2015

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## Something to Think About by Bill Powell



**E**nter ye in at the  
strait gate: for  
wide is the gate,  
and broad is the way, that  
leadeth to destruction, and  
many there be which go in  
there at: Because strait is the

gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto  
life, and few there be that find it. Matt. 7:13-14  
I was lying in bed one night around 2 AM  
recently and my brain decided I had all the  
sleep I needed, so it decided to race. I'm sure  
that has never happened to you. Anyway when  
that happens to me I go to praying. This par-  
ticular night these verses came to mind.

As I prayed I thought about how we are so  
easily run off into a ditch. I thought of John  
1:23 as well as other verses that tell us make  
straight the way of the Lord. For example, I ask  
the Lord for things that if I am not careful can  
get me off into a ditch. Let me explain. Lord,  
help me guard my tongue. So often I say far  
too much. I say things I wish I could take back.  
Well, the ditch is the opposite - we don't speak  
out when we should. When we have a chance  
to give an answer for the hope that is in us we  
don't. When we have a chance to give a kind  
word we don't.

Let's look at some more ditches. Lord, help  
me be a good steward of the finances you have  
given me. The ditch is we become frugal and  
selfish. Maybe you have heard it said the person  
has the first nickel he ever earned. A guy I used  
to work with, when told he can't take it with  
him, replied "Well, then I am not going." Have  
you heard the expression *your money is burning  
a hole in your pocket*? Have you heard it said I'm  
so broke I can't rub two nickels together? We  
know there are spenders and savers. You see the  
two ditches. What about love? The Lord said,  
"Love your neighbor as yourself." But He also

said, "The love of money is the root of all evil."

As I lie in my bed I'm thinking, "Lord, give  
me confidence in living out my Christian life."  
Then I think, "Help me not let that confidence  
become arrogance." I think, "Lord, help me be  
humble as I face my day." The ditch is wanting  
to do penance, as if beating yourself up over  
your missed steps makes you humble.

Here are a few more examples. Lord, give  
me discernment. This is a gift but we have to  
be careful we do not become too critical or  
think we know more than we do. Have you  
heard this expression - *There are three sides to  
a story. Your side, my side and the right side.* I  
think most people think they have the gift of  
discernment, but do they? Many, when asked  
if they are a Christian, say yes, but the question  
is who is your Jesus? The Mormons say they are  
Christians but do not adhere to the Jesus of  
the Bible. The Jehovah Witnesses say they are  
Christians but their Jesus is not God.

Back to the Bible verses I started with. We  
need to strive, not strife, to enter in at the  
straight gate. If you have never read the book  
*Pilgrims Progress* I highly recommend it. In the  
book, Christian heads off to the Celestial City.  
He travels down a road that many travel and  
along the way he meets many types of people  
and experiences many of the wrong roads  
and ditches we all face in our Christian walk.  
Hopefully, this small article born from one of  
my bad night's sleep gives you some food for  
thought and prayer the next time your brain  
takes off, 100 miles an hour, when you're trying  
to sleep.



## Looking Ahead

Oct 3

Port Orange Family Days

Oct 12

Columbus Day

## Prayer Corner

*Please join us each week for prayer at our studios at 4295 Ridgewood Ave., Port Orange.*

**Thursdays @ 9:00 am**  
**No RSVP required, just come.**

**T**his month is Pastor Appreciation Month, and we ask you to turn your prayers in their direction. These faithful shepherds have challenges and struggles few of us can imagine. Pray for grace on them to be faithful to the Word of God, to their churches and families, and to Christ.



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## Time-Limited Immortality by Donna Bramlett



**W**hen we consider immortality, as Christians our minds usually drift toward heaven and all that encompasses.

This immortality, purchased for us by Christ's blood, contains an eternality that extends beyond this time-defined existence we know. But there is also an immortality that is not eternal. It is limited in effect to this age, this existence before Christ rolls up the scroll of time forever. It extends at best only as far as time itself. This is where the world often gets stuck in their thinking, desiring to earn an earthly fame that will "immortalize" them in the eyes of men. Because it is so often encased in selfish ambition, Christians can tend to dismiss any such pursuit as worldly and carnal. And that could be true, but it is not universally true.

Take Peter, for example. At the writing of his second epistle, he knows his time on earth is coming to a swift end and he is very concerned for his sheep, that they not be led astray or deceived. *"I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. And I*

*will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things."* (2Pe 1:13-15) There is a resonating ache for some earthly immortality for the benefit of the people he loves so dearly. He realizes he and all the others who actually knew Christ in His humanity are dying off, and there will be no one left to remind Christ-followers of who it is they are following and how to do it. But what makes his desire for this type of immortality noble where for so many others it is anything but noble is this - he is not earnest that his *name* be immortalized, only His *message*. This is actually a pretty good litmus test of sincerity for ourselves and those we encounter, helping us to judge rightly.

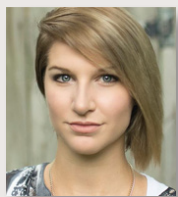
Peter used two means of obtaining such immortality - example and exposition. He lived the message; he spoke the message; and he wrote the message. Let us consider both our motives and our means of preserving the particular understanding and faith Christ has entrusted to each of us. What is it we want to be remembered - our message or our name? Is our example consistent with our message? What are we doing to preserve it for those who will come after us? It is not an inappropriate thing to consider in this breath of time we have on this earth.

## Faithfulness & The Changing Seasons by Chris Johnson



**S**easons come and season go. Time keeps ticking and years keep passing. The Scripture tells us that the days of our lives are but a vapor and with each passing day we edge nearer the return of our Lord. Recently I've been thinking a lot about living between the cross and the resurrection. Daily looking back and rejoicing in the gospel of Jesus Christ and yet looking forward to that day when I'll see him face to face. The truth of the cross and the reality that our Lord gave his life upon the tree stands firm and declares with eternal force that God has acted to redeem sinners from their cursed plight. All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved and those same saved people now look with sure anticipation for the return of Jesus Christ. We live between these great realities, and the question that remains is how then shall we live? My simple answer is that we seek to remain faithful. That's been my earnest and daily prayer in these fast changing times. Although the entire world turns its back afresh and spurns their creator, I pray that I might walk humbly before him and walk worthy of the call to which I've been called. The fruit of the Spirit is displayed in many ways, one of which is faithfulness. As we transition into new seasons and new days might our heart's cry be to remain loyal and steadfast following our Savior and abiding daily in Him!

## God's Sovereign Plan by Christina Hutchinson



**G**rowing up I wanted things to go my way! I had expectations that I felt needed to be met or else I would be miserable, and many times I would make others miserable in the process. I've come to realize that wasn't a healthy approach, and the past couple years I've committed myself to studying God's word, focusing on what true obedience is in a Christian's life. The experience has been very humbling and I'm learning to submit myself to the Lord entirely!

I've been working in the music business for about seven years, and it's one of the ways God has taught me to submit myself to his will, seek Him daily in all I do, and allow Him to guide me. I began praying that He would open the doors to wherever it was that He wanted me to be; no matter the cost I simply want to follow Christ and be in the center of His will. As I continue to yield myself to the Lord, my trust and faith in God continues to grow and situations that would have previously caused me great disappointment

and frustration have become new ways to seek God in prayer and glorify Him all the more.

Proverbs 16:9 has become my theme verse! *"The heart of man plans his ways, but the Lord establishes his steps."* The truth is, no matter what we have planned, God may have something entirely different in store for us, and we must trust Him and submit ourselves to His will. When we do so, there is no room for disappointment because we are pleased with God's purpose for us! We are joyful that God can use us in ways that we never imagined! We don't always understand why He places us in situations at times that seem inconvenient for us, but Proverbs 3:5-6 says *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make straight your paths."* We must remember always that "the steps of man are established by the Lord..." (Psalms 37:23). Our prayer should be "Lord, where do you want me? How do you want to use me?" and rejoice in thanksgiving when He shows His sovereign plan to us. May the Lord bless you!

