



BLADE

ISSUE 5

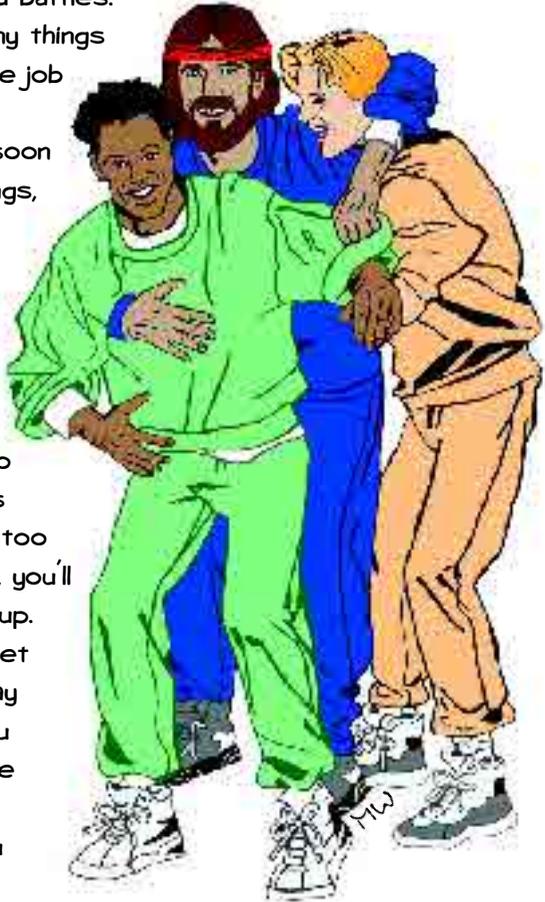
From One Friend to Another

I love you! You're cool, you're fun, you're wild, you're special, you're awesome, and you're amazing. I love being best friends with you, and I'm so happy that we're as close as we are. I know that we can be even closer, but friendship is built over time.

Life's a little tough sometimes, and growing up isn't all fun and games. There are a lot of battles: feeling bored, missing your friends, wanting to *be* something and *do* something special. I know about *all* of these feelings, because I was your age once too. I wanted to be able to do all of the things that My Father had prepared for Me, but I had to wait until it was the right time. I had to go through every stage of life—many years filled with different feelings, emotions, and battles.

My Father had to teach Me many things before I was ready to tackle the job He had for Me.

Don't be discouraged. You'll soon go on to bigger and better things, and these days will have been your days of preparation. The best advice I could give you—from one friend to another—is to *hold on*. Keep getting in the Word, keep loving Me and taking the time to hear from Me—and hold on. This stage of your life won't last for too much longer, and when it's over, you'll be so glad that you didn't give up. You may wonder, "Where do I get the strength to hold on and stay positive and hopeful?" I love you very much; and I promise to give you all the strength that you need through the time that you spend with Me.



I KNOW THE SPOT YOU'RE IN!

You feel so small and insignificant sometimes, and you ask how *I*, the great God, the Ruler of the universe and Creator of all things, could possibly understand *you* and the things you're going through. Well, that's exactly why *I can* understand you—I *made* you! I created every part of you—your whole body, even the tiniest brain cell. I understand every thought and every doubt, worry and fear that you have. I created your spirit and gave you life, and I *do* know what you're going through.

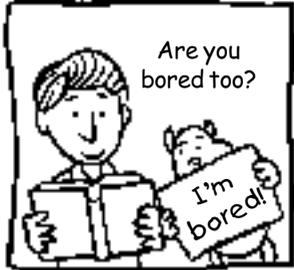
Maybe you think, "Well, if You know what I'm going through, why don't You *do* something about it? This is the pits! The depths of despair! Why in the world would You let something like *this* happen?" You wonder if there's any way that I could possibly understand how big of a deal it is to you and how you're feeling right now.

Well, I *know* the spot you're in; I *know* how big of a deal it is, and I *care*. But if you'll just be honest with yourself and listen to what I have to tell you, you'll soon understand that *I'm* not the One Who got you into this mess. The only reason I allowed it to happen in the first place was because I knew that if you'd make the right decisions, and if you'd just trust Me and yield to Me, I'd be able to turn this whole thing around and use it for good in your life.

I want you to be happy and victorious and a blessing to others around you, so it's really My greatest desire to help you through this. If you'll just ask Me and trust Me to work things out, I *will*, because I really *do* care.



A Faithful Man Will Abound



(Grandpa:) The Lord said in Proverbs 28:20, that, a faithful man will abound in blessings. I know that you might normally just think of being faithful as having to do with things that are *physical*. That's good of course, because the Lord *will* bless you for your faithfulness in those things. But faithfulness also has to do with the things of the spirit, like your walk with the Lord. For instance, if you're faithful with your Word time, even if you don't *feel* like it, even if you feel ho-hum and bored with it sometimes—still, if you read the Word faithfully, just because you *know* it's important and it's good for you, you *will* be blessed. You might not "feel" the blessings, and you might not even think that it's doing you much good, but it *is*, because the Word is *spirit*, and it helps you in *your* spirit.

The same with other things about your walk with the Lord, like praying and praising. Sometimes you'll forget, or sometimes you might not feel that it's important. Maybe the Enemy will even tempt you to think it's silly. But if you do it out of love for Jesus and because you know He *wants* you to, He'll really bless you for it. Jesus loves it when you're faithful and obedient, especially those times when He knows that you're being faithful even though you don't feel like it.

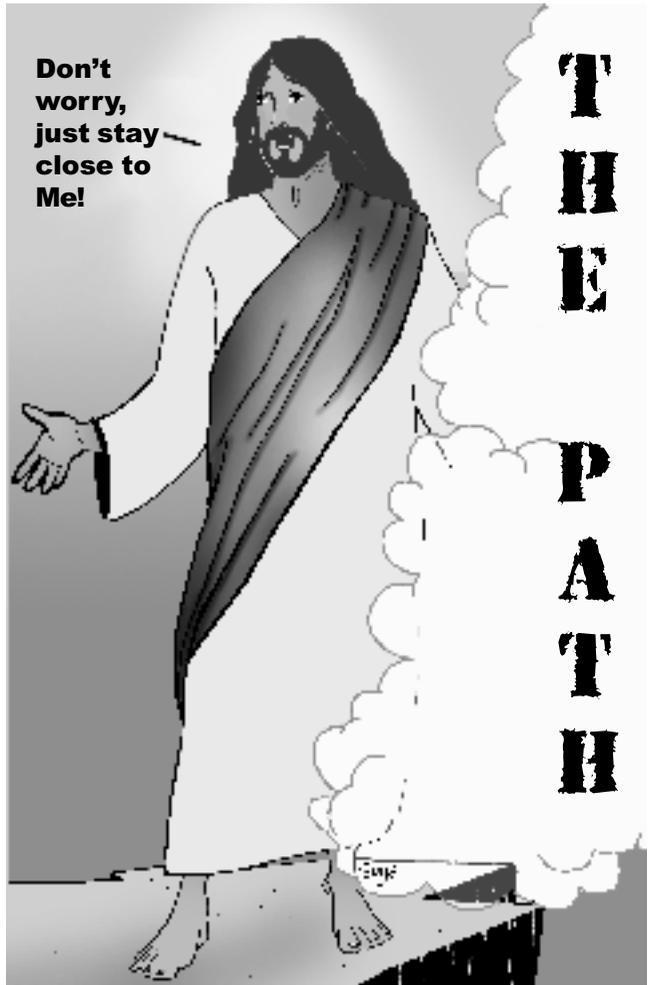


You have been walking on the path, but you've been way behind Me. Now, I'm happy to say, you're catching up and will soon be by My side again. If you reach out now and take My hand, I won't let you fall. But if you *don't* take Me by the hand, you could end up straying once again. And even just a little straying—to the right hand or to the left—could land you right back at the bottom if you don't watch out.

I don't mean that every little thing you do to help you pass the time and have fun will put you on the spiritual scrap heap. What I mean is that when you start to make these things the source of

your inspiration, that means that you've strayed way off of the path that I've set for you, and you don't want *that*. I don't want that either. I *need* you. If you'll just give your all to Me. I'll give you *more*, not less, of the *real* joys and pleasures in life.

You're afraid that your life will be boring, that you won't know what to do with your time, that you won't be challenged, and that you'll grow into a boring old nerd. Well, My promise to you is that none of that will happen. I promise that you'll have every desire of your heart fulfilled—those secret desires and yearnings of your heart and mind. And these fulfilled desires will minister to your *spirit*; they won't just be carnal pleasures that pass away. They'll be the pleasures of My Spirit that last forever.





Greener GRASS

(Spirit helper:)

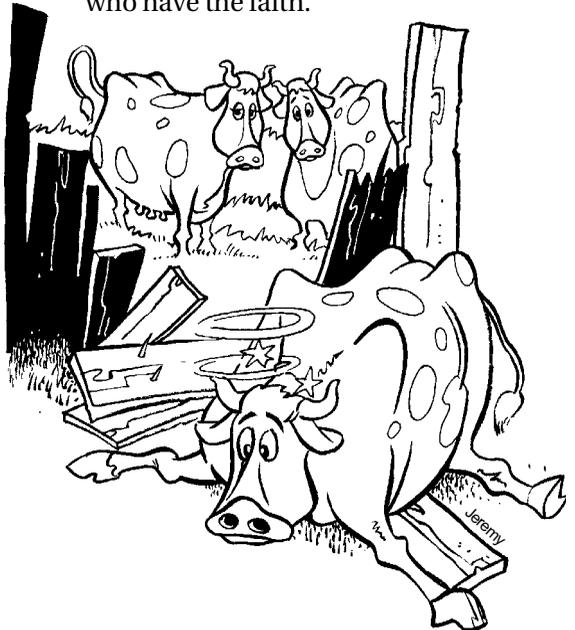
There once was a cow named Flo,
Who had it in her mind to go
Right over that fence
In the far distance...
The grass looked so *scrumptious*,
you know.

Flo whined, "I think my milk's
going sour,
The more of this grass I devour.
But the grass over there I do see,
Is so green, and ... gee!
This stuff's tastin' drier by the hour."

So, Flo grit her teeth,
and with a dash,
She sped like a mad cow
with a rash.
But the other cows did sigh,
For they knew cows
can't jump high.
And Flo went through the fence
with a crash.

When Flo's consciousness
finally came,
And she lifted herself,
bruised and lame,
She looked down and said,
"I must've hit my head.
'Cause the grass on this side
now looks the same!"

(Grandpa:) Sometimes it might look like
your life would be so much happier if
only you could get out of your current
situation and make your way over the
fence to where the grass seems greener.
But even if you had the opportunity,
you'd probably end up just like Flo
here, and find that the grass *isn't* any
greener. If you'd just ask the Lord for a
little more patience, there's a good
chance you'll be able to turn even an
unpleasant situation into a wonderfully
challenging place to be. I've seen it
happen time and time again to those
who have the faith.



Where the Cool Breezes Blow

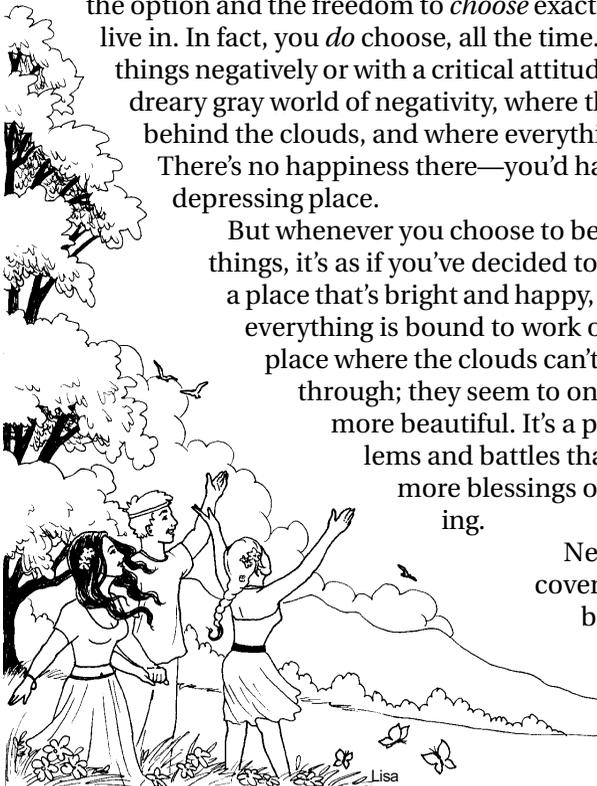
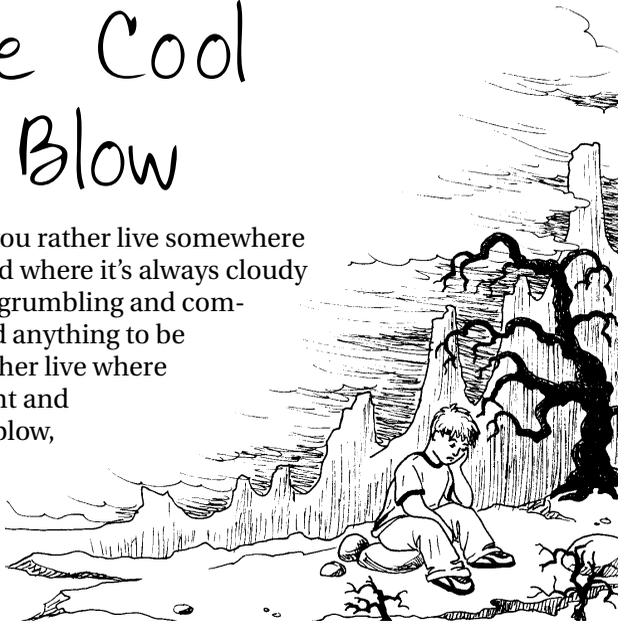
If you had a choice, would you rather live somewhere where the sun never shines, and where it's always cloudy and gray, where the people are grumbling and complaining and never seem to find anything to be happy about? Or would you rather live where it's nearly always nice and bright and sunny, where the cool breezes blow, and where the people are happy and smiling and full of life and song?

Believe it or not, the choice is up to *you*, because I've given you

the option and the freedom to *choose* exactly what kind of world you want to live in. In fact, you *do* choose, all the time. Whenever you choose to look at things negatively or with a critical attitude, you're walking right into that dreary gray world of negativity, where the sun doesn't show its face from behind the clouds, and where everything always seems to go wrong. There's no happiness there—you'd hardly expect to find it in such a depressing place.

But whenever you choose to be *positive* and full of *faith* about things, it's as if you've decided to move to a totally *different* world, a place that's bright and happy, where, no matter what happens, everything is bound to work out okay. It's a wonderful place, a place where the clouds can't stop the sun from shining through; they seem to only make the blue skies even more beautiful. It's a place where even the few problems and battles that *do* arise are sure to bring you more blessings of love, maturity, and understanding.

Negativity is like a dark cloud that covers up the beautiful blue skies and blocks out the light and the warmth from the sun. It makes everything look sad and gray. So, let Me ask you again: What kind of a place *do* you want to live in?



Lisa

How Much Will You Carry?

Picture in your mind an aid worker who's preparing to carry food to the starving children of a remote village—a village so isolated it can only be reached by foot. It will be a very difficult journey, and the only thing the aid worker will be able to take with him is what he's able to carry on his back.

Now imagine that instead of taking care of himself and doing his best to make sure he was going to be healthy and strong before setting off for the village, the aid worker has been skipping out on his meals for days at a time, and





has been living only on candy bars and other junk food. How much aid do you think he'd be able to carry on such a long and difficult journey? Not very much, if any. He'd probably end up fainting along the way, and not even make it at all.

But imagine this same worker, faithfully eating a good balanced diet and exercising each day in order to prepare for the journey. When the time comes to carry the needed supplies to the village, he'll be feeling good and strong and will be well able to carry a large amount of food and other supplies. When he arrives at the village with the other aid workers, he'll still be feeling strong enough to pass out all the desperately needed supplies to the many hungry children.

So it is with *you*. Each one who faithfully feeds himself My Words is one who will be able to feed many others also. If you think there are already so many people giving aid that one less worker won't make a difference, think again. Each one makes a huge difference, and the more Word you feed *yourself*, the more you can feed others.



You might be tempted to think that young people in the world get to have more fun than you do. But have you ever noticed how *bored* they look a lot of the time? Why do you think that is? Well, I know it might be hard for you to believe, but in general, their lives *are* pretty boring compared to yours. They don't have *half* the opportunities that *you've* had. They have to go to the same school day after day for years, and listen to their teachers drone on and on about things they're not at all interested in and will probably have very little use for.

And what about after school, or those who even don't go to school? What do *they* have to look forward to? Just hanging out, mostly. No wonder they look so bored—they *are* bored! There's *nothing* more boring than just hanging around all the time with nothing to do. I guarantee you that most of the kids you see hanging out would probably tell you in a minute that they're *bored stiff*, if not totally depressed about their lives!

I know that you feel bored sometimes too; I understand. And when you can't think of anything better to do, maybe it doesn't seem like such a bad idea to just hang out. After all, it's fun to be able to just relax every once in awhile, especially when you don't get to see your friends that often. It's okay to occasionally relax and have a fun time with your friends. But for your own sake, please don't make the mistake of just hanging out doing *nothing* just because you're bored! If anything, that'll only make you feel *worse*, because I can't bless the times that you're just tripping off or wasting time, when there's something better that you could be doing.

I *hate* it when you're bored, and if you or someone else will just ask *Me*, I can tell you plenty of things to do. So instead of just hanging around and dying a slow death of boredom, ask *Me* what to do, 'cause I've got *lots* of good ideas.



Just Take It!

(Grandpa:) I'm sure you remember that story about the preacher who offered to give his nice, shiny gold pocket watch to the group of boys he was talking to one day. I'd like you to think about that story and picture yourself as one of those young people sitting there before the preacher. But instead of a pocket watch, he's offering you the gift of prophecy.

Remember that there were several young people there that day—all of whom had the exact same opportunity. There was no reason whatsoever why any one of them couldn't have jumped up and grabbed that watch. The preacher was right there in front of them, holding it out to them, practically begging them to take it. He said, "Here you go. Wouldn't you like to have this? Go ahead and just take it." Do you remember who it was that jumped at the chance to get that watch? It was the smallest boy there, the youngest one among them.



Why didn't the others have the faith to accept what was being offered them? They were too smart for their own britches, that's why. They thought they knew better. They thought they had it all figured out, and it just didn't seem logical. But that young fellow, the smallest one there, turned out to be the smartest one of the whole bunch, because he didn't think he knew better. He was just waiting for his chance to grab that watch and stuff it in his pocket.

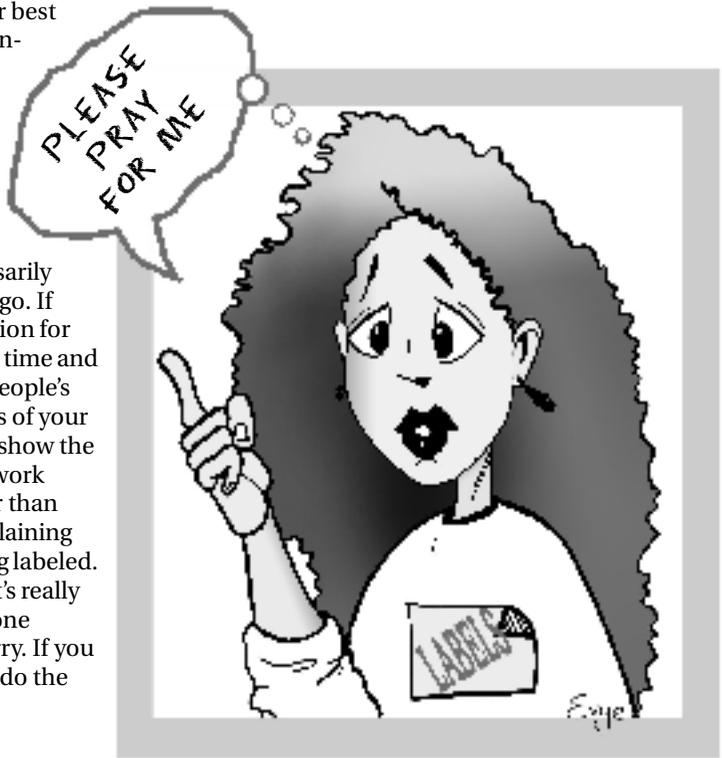
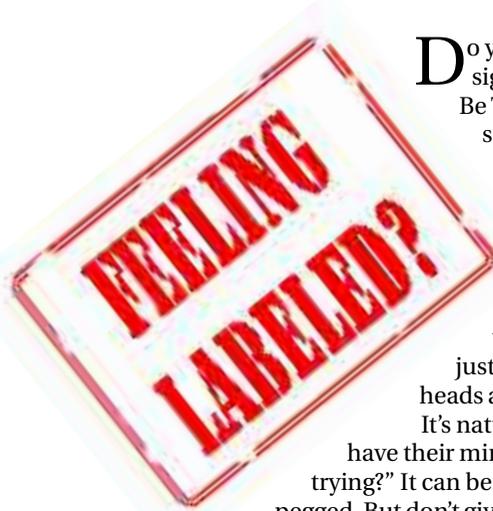
That's the way it is with the gift of prophecy. Don't let the Enemy tell you that it's just not logical. You can't try to analyze it and figure it out. Just grab it! Don't wait or hesitate. Take it! It's God's gift to you, and it's really far out—worth much more than gold. He wants you to have it. He's told you that you can have it. He's holding it out there for you. So please take it. It's yours!

Do you sometimes feel like you must be wearing a sign that says “Lazy!” “Irresponsible!” or “Not to Be Trusted!”? Worse yet, maybe you feel like it must say “Loser!” or “Bad Person!” because of the way some people seem to treat you. Or maybe all it says is “Young Person,” and that’s bad enough. You just want to be able to live up to the potential that you know is inside you, without having others misjudge or mistrust you just because of some rumor they heard, or something you did one time, or just because they have something stuck in their heads about people your age.

It’s natural to be tempted to think, “If they already have their minds made up about me, what’s the use of even trying?” It can be real torture when you feel that people have you pegged. But don’t give in to discouragement, and don’t just accept your “fate.” It can sometimes take a while before people will change their opinions of you, but if you want to get rid of that label you’ve been given, the very best thing you can do to get the ball rolling is to ask for united prayer. That will help people to understand how you feel and to see that you really are trying.

Then, just do your best, and don’t worry about it. For example, if people think you can’t be trusted with responsibility, for whatever reason, do your best to take each job or responsibility you’re entrusted with extremely seriously. Pray and ask Me to help you do the job right, and to follow through on what you’re asked to do.

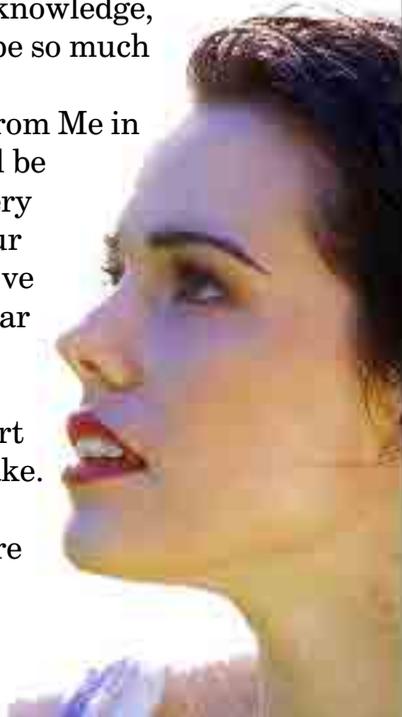
The label won’t necessarily get peeled off in the first go. If you’ve had a bad reputation for awhile, it’ll probably take time and several attempts to win people’s confidence. But the fruits of your works and behavior *will* show the difference, and that will work much more in your favor than just grumbling and complaining about how you hate being labeled. If you want a *new* label, it’s really up to *you* to change the one you’ve got. But don’t worry. If you just do what *you* can, *I’ll* do the rest.



It takes a lot of faith for you to understand how important it is to learn to hear from Me. It's difficult for you to see the need for it, especially since you feel like it's so hard to do. Plus you think you don't really have that many opportunities to make your own decisions anyway, or to decide what you're supposed to be doing. But the truth is, there are *lots* of times every day when you *do* have the chance to decide what you're going to do with your time, as well as situations where you need to decide for yourself what's right and what's wrong.

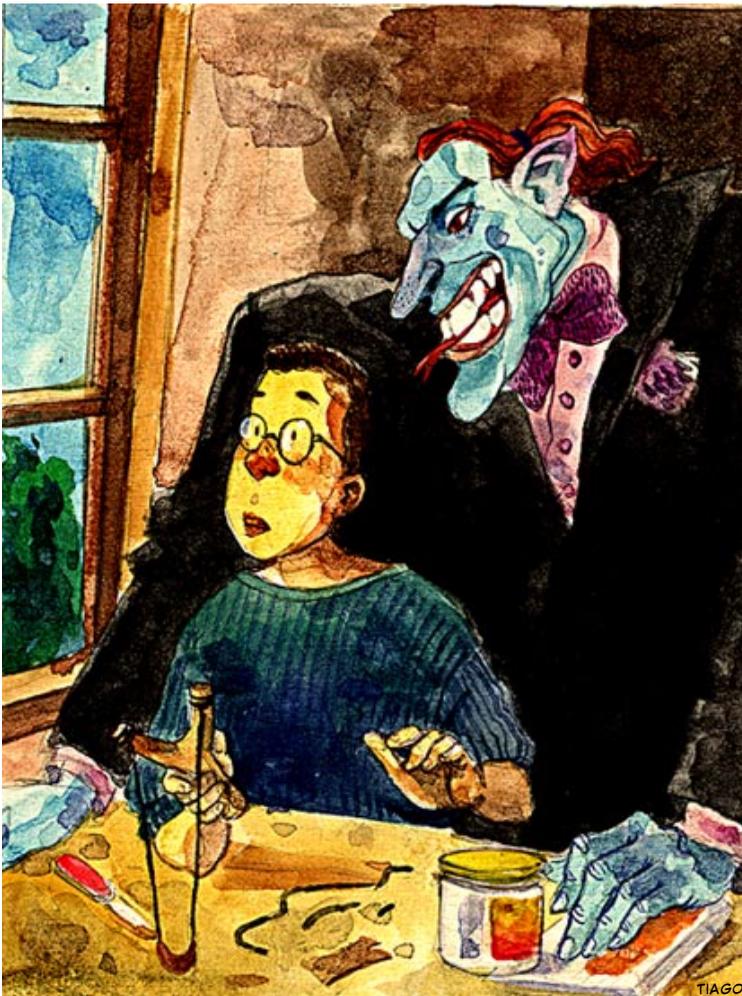
I know I'm asking a lot of you, but try to look at it this way. A lot of times when you do your schoolwork—for instance when you had to study extra hard and make an effort to learn your multiplication tables—it can be pretty tough to understand why it's so important and what good it's going to be in the future. But once you learned those tables, you got it all behind you—and you'll be glad you did. Now, as you go through life, you'll often benefit from having that knowledge, and certain things will always be so much easier for you.

Of course, learning to hear from Me in prophecy is something that will be much more useful to you in every way. But similar to learning your multiplication tables, once you've learned to make it a habit to hear from Me, then you've learned something that, from that time on, will just be an automatic part of any decisions you need to make. You won't have to go through a long, drawn-out process to figure things out. Once you've heard from Me, you'll *know* what the answer is and what you're supposed to do.



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TEMPTATIONS



The Enemy is such a snake!—He's so slimy! He's still tempting people in the very same way he did Adam and Eve way back in the Garden of Eden. And he's still asking the same kind of sneaky, trick questions and planting the same subversive doubts as always: "Why do things have to be like *this*? Why can't you do whatever you *want* to do?—It's not gonna *hurt* you any."

He's really out to trip you up and make you fall, and

he'll use *anything* he can to get at you—especially things like your pride or your emotions. That's why it's so important to bring your thoughts immediately into subjection and submission each time you're faced with a test of yieldedness or some kind of temptation. Don't play his game, and don't let yourself fall for his lies.

You've got to let the Devil know right away that *you're* the boss. Slam the door in his face as soon as he starts tempting you

to do something you know you shouldn't, because all he wants to do is mess you up. If the Enemy sees that you're not going to give him any space and that you straightaway say yes to Me and close the door on any resistance to what I'm doing in your life, he'll soon get the point that you're one of the die-hards, and that you're not going to give in to his temptations.

That doesn't mean, though, that once you pass the test, everything's going to be easy, and it doesn't mean that the Enemy's going to just leave you alone. That's not what you're saying yes to. In fact, you're saying, "Yes, I *know* this could turn out to be super difficult in some ways. But I'm *still* going to say yes, period!" It's like unconditional surrender.

The quicker you shut the door on the Enemy's

doubts and temptations, and the more wholeheartedly you yield to Me, the *easier* it's going to be for you. As long as Satan can detect that there's still a part of your heart holding out or resisting or murmuring or feeling sorry for yourself in some way, he's able to work on you and try to weaken you. But the more wholeheartedly you give your all to *My* side, the less severe and shorter the battle will be.



Simple TRUTHS

You might think that some of the things I give you sound a little too simple, too childlike. You wish that what I had to tell you was a little deeper, maybe a little fancier or smarter sounding—like if it's really *Me, God*, talking to you, then it ought to be *super* deep and full of such profound wisdom that it would be almost beyond comprehension. That's the way the wisdom of the *world* is—so deep and intellectual, it's often beyond comprehension.

But remember that the wisdom of the world is really just foolishness. They have to make things *sound* deep and profound in order to cover up how *empty* things really are. They try to drown you in a bunch of complex words and theories, so you won't notice how many holes there are in what they have to say. They want you to think that they're the experts, so you'll have to listen to *them* and take their word for things. But *I'm* the real expert, and I have all the answers. The thing is, I want to make *Myself* perfectly clear and easy to understand. So I make sure that what I tell you is very straightforward—sometimes even just a phrase or a verse.

When you come to *Me* for answers, I'll always fill you in on the things you need to know. But you can be sure that I'm not going to make it complicated, otherwise what purpose does it serve? I know that life itself can sometimes be pretty complicated, but it's really just made up of many simple little parts. So don't ever think that what I have to tell you sounds too simple or childlike. Just be thankful that *My* answers *are* simple. Be happy for simple truths.

