

VOLUME LXVIII
FEBRUARY 2017

THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF



The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." Psalm 23:1 ESV

As the Father has
LOVED
ME, SO HAVE I
LOVED
you. Now remain in my
LOVE
John 15:9



YOU SAID IT!!!

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newsletter@pahrupcc.com

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Tools

My older son, Zachary, has become a real handyman. He, like both of his grandfathers, is one who excels at hands-on jobs.

Is something broken around the house? Zachary can fix it. Has an appliance gone *on the fritz*? Zachary will take it apart and figure out what's wrong so he can repair it. Is the car making funny noises? Zachary will trace it down and propose a solution. (If it is his own vehicle, he will certainly undertake the repairs himself. If the car belongs to someone else, he can make suggestions but will likely not do the work himself—proving that he can be both handy **AND** wise!)

Over the years, he has been collecting various tools. Because he does his own car repairs, he has a large assortment of wrenches, screw drivers, nut drivers, torque wrenches, impact drivers, grinders... and the list goes on. Because he does all his own yard work, he has a variety of yard tools, shovels, pick-axes, irrigation system tools, etc. Because he loves woodworking, he has hand saws, table saws, cut-off saws, band saws, sanders, drills, a drill press, etc. Because he does his own computer repairs, he has tiny screw drivers (with every conceivable type of head), electronic testers, different kinds of soldering equipment, etc.

For some years now, whenever we ask him for ideas for Christmas or birthday presents, we usually get a list of tools he feels he needs to expand his shop capabilities. Many of the things on his list these days are specialty tools that I don't even recognize. It has reached a point where we just choose something off his list, get it shipped and wrap it—and sometimes we *still* don't even know what it is we're giving him!


Even though I am not the handyman my son is, I have certainly grown to appreciate the value of having the right tool for the right job! When the proper tool is used, everything just works so much better!

Just as a saw is designed to cut wood, or a shovel is designed to dig holes, so you and I were designed to be tools in the hands of God to serve a specific purpose.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. 1 Peter 4:10

The Bible teaches that every Christian has received a gift (at least one—and some may have more than one). That term *gift* does not refer to some ornamental object merely for the appreciation of the receiver. Rather, *each has received a gift* means that God has given you a special ability (talent, skill). The fact that we are *tools* is expressed in the next phrase: *Use it to serve one another*. Your gift is for the purpose of accomplishing a task—you are to use your gift to serve others! The final phrase in that verse indicates that *you are God's tool*! The Bible instructs us to be *good stewards of God's varied grace*. In other words, you are a tool in God's hands and you must be found faithful (i.e. be a good steward) to do His work.

The phrase *varied grace* means we are not all the same. What good would it be to have a workshop that has nothing but saws? If you need to cut some wood, great! But if you need to screw things together, or repair a leaky faucet, or change the oil—you're going to be in trouble!

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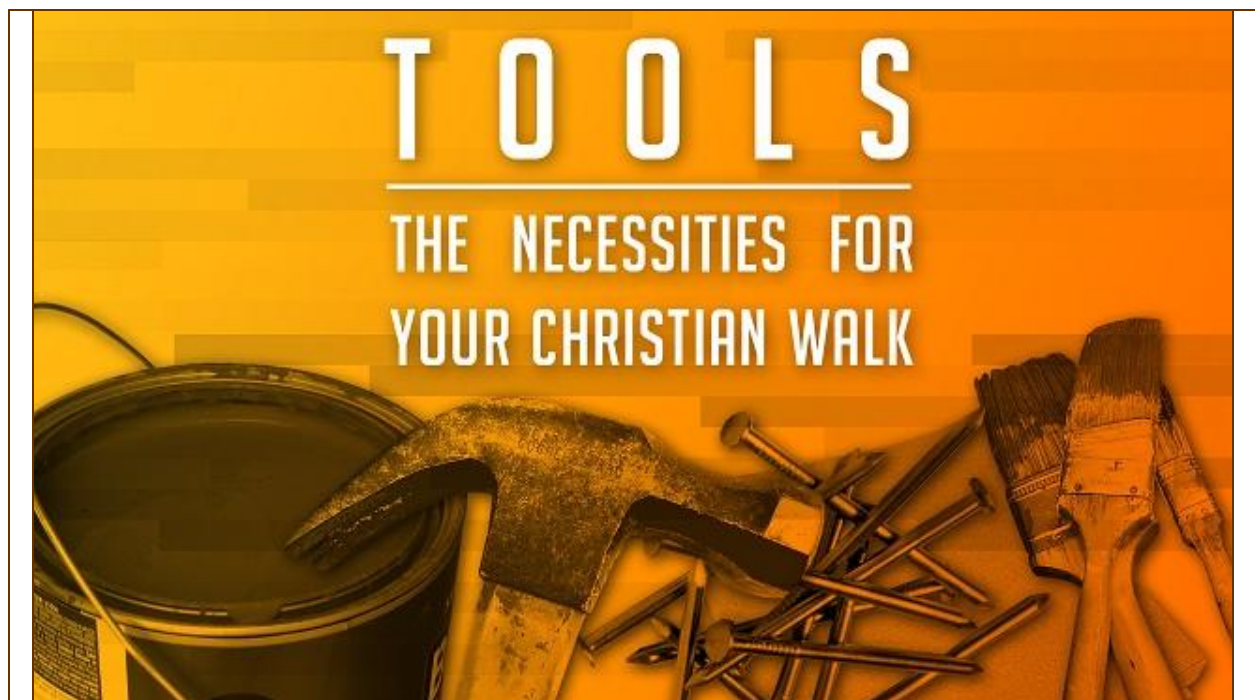
God's church works best with a wide variety of tools in order to accomplish a wide variety of ministries. If one of the tools is missing, we may be able to get the job done some other way—but not as effectively. The beauty of God's church involves the variety of Christians with their variety of gifts carrying out a variety of ministries touching the lives of a variety of people!

Thank you, PCC family, for your faithful service. As I preach, teach and counsel, the work of the Lord is going on far beyond my gift-set because of all of my brothers and sisters in Christ who are actively being used as tools in the hands of God. Just as many of you believe you could never do what I do, so you are doing things that, were I to try to do them, would be done ineffectively. ***Together, we are the Church!***

For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Romans 12:4–5

What kind of tool are you?

Serving the Savior,
Pastor Keith



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Red, White, and Pink

Details regarding its origins are sparse, but a handful of years ago, someone created “Singles Awareness Day.” This person decided that it would be amusing (and perhaps semi-spitefully satisfying) to stage a revolt against traditional February 14th festivities. Best I can tell, people got fed up with Hallmark shoving red and pink and white hearts down their throats with the reminder that they don’t have special “someones.” It caught on. Friends at CBU would sometimes jokingly say they were celebrating S.A.D. (see what they did there?) and spend the day commiserating over their aloneness.

Even before this counter-holiday came on the scene, I had noticed that our February celebration tends to get a bad rep. I visited with a handful of guys who griped and complained about Valentine’s Day as the commercialization of something that shouldn’t have been that big of a deal to begin with. They seemed to wear their lack of Valentine’s Day cheer as a badge of pride. Even now that Singles Awareness Day has been “officially” moved to February 15 to make it more of a celebration of singleness than a mourning thereof, I have found that many people of my generation tend to deride February 14 as a waste of time.

This article isn’t meant to disrespect those for whom God has not yet provided someone to love. Far from it. I praise the Lord that Amy is in my life and that we will be able to celebrate Valentine’s Day together (though in different states on the actual day), but my opinions regarding this heart-filled holiday have not changed much over the past eight to ten years.

Singles Awareness Day bugs me. Have I been more acutely aware of my singleness on Valentine’s Day than on other days in years past? Certainly. Can I understand why many folks get frustrated with the sheer tonnage of red, white, and pink stuffed dogs, chocolates, and flowers rolling into the stores immediately after the first of the year? Sure (though I’m not sure what a stuffed flower would look like... maybe something like a stuffed pepper?). Have I been induced to nausea over the sappy and oozingly flirtatious Facebook posts of my friends who are “in a relationship?” Absolutely! In my mind, none of those things even remotely justify the dissolution of or the mockery for Valentine’s Day.


In the thick of the commercialization, cheapening, and twisting of “love,” Christians should hold forth the genuine love that Scripture celebrates throughout its pages. The way I see it, Valentine’s Day provides for us a peculiar opportunity to bring God glory through modeling the relationship that we have with Him. Amy and I have been working on memorizing Ephesians 5.22-33 as we prepare for marriage and try to love one another like we’re supposed to. I won’t get into all that Paul says here (since Pastor Keith will get to these verses probably sometime mid-2019), but I want to focus in on verse thirty-two. After Paul unpacks how the marriage relationship is meant to function, he gives context for all these instructions: “This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.”

Please don’t hear me saying that Valentine’s Day is automatically a Christian holiday. Though it was Christianized in the fifth century (which is a great thing), it started out as a pagan celebration that was more than a little sketchy (which is a bad thing). Our privilege and our responsibility as Christians is to do everything for the glory of God. Loving one’s wife (or one’s husband) is already a biblical command and our calendars provide us with an additional specific day each year to obey this command in our unique cultural context. That was a mouthful, but let me try to explain. For at least one twenty-four hour period, society expects what is biblically commanded of us: that we cherish the ones we love. Don’t resent this opportunity; use it.

I know that I’m young and that I have minimal experience loving my helpmeet through thick and thin. As I progress through the years, I know that I will grow wiser and perhaps more realistic. I’m not directly unpacking some verses this month; where these next statements are less informed than they might be, pray for me. All that being said, I do desire that my Valentine’s Day thoughts will be of some encouragement to you and that I will continue to apply them when I get a few more years under my belt.

1) Guys, for the glory of the Lord and for your own joy, please do something for your girl this Valentine’s Day. I’m not the Holy Spirit nor do I work for Hallmark so I’m definitely not going to try to tell you the specifics of what to do. I would simply encourage you to go at least somewhat out of your way to demonstrate your love for

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her this February 14. I can't think of any context in which this wouldn't be a good idea. No, it's not like you're going to be a horrible husband/fiancé/boyfriend if you leave this out, but I do believe it would make Jesus happy.

2) Gals, I'm not one of you and I'm just starting out on this journey to figure out how you think so I'll keep my comments to a minimum. Perhaps this is a no-brainer, but I don't think it would be overly presumptuous to say that it sure is nice when you express your appreciation. If your guy goes out of his way to do something for you, even if it's lame or dumb (which we tend to have down pretty pat), please serve the Lord by focusing on the fact that he's trying to love you like he should.

3) Singles, praise the Lord for His sovereignty and remember that you are neither more nor less than your "attached" Christian family members. God has particular plans for everyone. He knows what you need and what He wants you to accomplish for His glory. Please celebrate God's blessings both of your singleness and of the relationships of those around you.

4) Widowers and widows, I hesitated even to include this paragraph, but I don't want you to think you're forgotten. I'm sure this is different for folks depending on one's personality, but I can imagine Valentine's Day being extra hard for you. Even as we remember you, please be in prayer for your married, engaged, or dating brothers and sisters as they seek to love one another like Jesus does. Be encouraged in February by Psalm 68.5, "Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation."

5) Remember that many people are hurting from the brokenness of a shattered relationship or a romance that turned sour (or worse). Pray for them on Valentine's Day. If you have a particular name in mind and an appropriate context in which to do it, consider doing something special for this person to remind him or her that God's love hasn't changed.

6) Couples, don't let Valentine's Day be the only day you express your love for one another. I know this is obvious, but I wanted to say this for those who complain: "Why do we need a whole day devoted to love? Can't we just love every day?" While I personally think that sounds an awful lot like an excuse to get out of doting on one's sweetheart, those folks do have a point. Valentine's Day should be special, but it should also be a time assigned to celebrating something that already occurs on a regular basis. Expressions of love are good every day of the year.

7) Even as Valentine's Day is a little more of a "personal" holiday (as it should be... it's for couples, after all), keep in mind that we as Christians are to love everyone. Remember how Charlie Brown never got any Valentines? Always made me sad for him, but I wonder how we might use that image of a forlorn round-headed kid to remind us of the truths of Luke 6.32-35: *"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked."*

Happy Valentine's Day, brothers and sisters.

By God's grace (and with His love),

Pastor Caleb



From the city of light -* We wish you a Happy New Year 2017!

For Reflection

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

Psalm 90:12 KJV

Look at the nations and watch - and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.” Hab. 1:5 NIV

“... I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” Phil. 3:13-14 NIV

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” 1 Peter 1:3 NIV (1978)

***Photo? Make a guess!**

Mike & Karen Kotecki



Thank you for your partnership with us!

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Mike and Karen Kotecki are Navigator Missionaries our church family supports.



THE HOME STRETCH

Hey everyone!!

I wanted to give you a quick update on how this outreach has gone. We are in week seven out of ten at our final location in Baguio. We have seen many people over 100 give their lives to the Lord - a majority of them being young men we ministered to in Davao who were in a regional rehab program.

God has been so faithful to this team and I have continued to see the students step out in faith and pour out their hearts to every person they encounter. It's sad to think there are only three weeks left but it is my hope we will finish with the same zeal we started with.

-Please **pray** for us that our passion will not die and that we will give everything we have for the people of Baguio and the surrounding region.

-**Pray** for peace and unity.

-**And, pray** we will continue to be devoted to Jesus.

P.S. Stay tuned for a more in depth update in March.

With all love in Christ,
Ben Wichael

Ben Wichael is a "*Youth With A Mission*" (YWAM) missionary our church family supports

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	<p>Valentine's Day Celebration!!!! AWANA SCHOLARSHIP CAMP FUNDRAISER You are invited to our AWANA Valentine's Day Italian-style dinner. It is free and you will have a good time fellowshiping with your brothers and sisters in Christ. However, your donations for Camp will be welcomed. Join us on Saturday, February 11 at 5:00 pm in the MPB. The AWANA youth will serve you; and, we can be an encouragement to one another.</p>		
 <p>Baby Bottle Boomerang</p>	<p>FIRST CHOICE PREGNANCY CENTER The Baby Bottle Boomerang for First Choice Pregnancy Center is underway! This annual fundraiser supplies the money to keep the center open and operating for the year. Fill up a baby bottle with cash or checks made out to "First Choice Pregnancy Center" and return it to church. If you haven't already done so (or you have already filled up one up), feel free to pick up your "boomerang bottle" today.</p>		
	<p>Please accept our apologies for the current inconvenience regarding access to our Multi-Purpose Building. We are thankful to report that the ramp into the east entrance has been completed! As we anticipate the completion of our parking lot, we have been blessed with volunteers who await to assist you each Sunday in our current "Wilson" street parking area with wheelchairs and wheelchair transport. Thank you for your patience and God bless our volunteers who make all this possible.</p>		
 <p>Nursery Care Available Sunday Mornings</p>	<p>During our 8:00 and 10:45 Sunday morning worship services, Nursery Care services are available in the Multi-Purpose Building Nursery Room. During the 9:30 am Sunday School hour, we will be using the old nursery downstairs in the Sanctuary Building</p>		
	<p>AWANA AUCTION HEADS UP!!! Mark your calendars for May 6 for the annual AWANA auction. You may begin now to think/plan about what you can donate to the auction. If you feel the need to plan your early summer vacations around our annual auction, we won't complain.</p>		



Prison Ministry January 2017

HAPPY NEW YEAR!! It is especially *“happy”* for us because January 1 is Lois’ birthday. We had a great time signing birthday cards for her. It is always a joyful time when we can include the prisoners in our celebration; and, it was fun passing around birthday cards, which she had to pretend she didn’t see; and, presenting them at the end of each service.

The beginning of the year is also a time when we have to pass a health test in order to continue entering the facility. It is a State of Nevada requirement that each team member receive a TB shot to insure they are free of the disease. It is good to know that, even though they are under punishment, the State is concerned for the prisoners health. The gifts you sent to the Ministry covered the cost of this procedure; and, we thank you as you continue to support us with your offerings and prayers.

One Monday evening, after we had finished with our service at the prison, we were greeted with a heavy snowfall as we left the building. One of the Boot Campers asked if we would be able to manage driving in the storm. I told him that I used to live in Wisconsin; and, I had driven in many storms there. While that is true, I have never driven in such a heavy snowstorm before. It was 8:00 pm, dark; and, when the headlights hit the snow, everything else was out of sight. By the time we got to Route 95, the road was completely covered with snow; and, the marking lines were completely covered. The only way we knew we were too far over was by the loud noise our tires made when they came to the side of the road. That was a perfect time for prayer; and, by the time we reached

Indian Springs (about 10 miles down the road) a big truck pulled out on the road and we followed it all the way to the intersection with Rt. 160. Snow was still the only thing we could see except for those 2 WONDERFUL red lights on the back of the truck.

He led us all the way. Our prayer was answered that night in a way we would never have imagined. By the time we got to our turnoff the snow had turned to rain and visibility was restored and while at times it turned to snow, we could see well enough to complete the trip home.

Going to Inspirations Adult Living Center is a real inspiration to us. We have such a joyful time during our sing along and sharing with them. As we have mentioned before, you are welcome to join us in the singing every Tuesday morning at 10:00 am. It’s a great way to start the day!!

Our services at the Pahrump County Jail went well, three services each Sunday. During January, since it is the start of the year, we have shared the beginning of the Bible with the prisoners. Following the path God walked as he created the light, water, dry ground, fish, birds, animals and finally, humans. It was the first time some of them heard of God’s words, “let us make man in our image”. What a joy is it to share His word with them. We are so grateful for your gifts and prayers that carry us through each day.

God bless you,
Irene Hunt, Chaplain



STATISTICS FOR JANUARY MATERIALS GIVEN

Total Services—25
Total Attendance— 389
Total Team Hours —199
Ministry Miles— 673

Bibles—12 Daily Bread—13
Books—16 Writing Materials—132

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Camp Rock Springs and Rock House Loop Trail, California

By Bob Jacobs

If you were ever wondering how anybody could or would want to live in the remote desert that is now the Mojave National Preserve, take a walk along the Rock Springs Loop Trail to find the answers. The Rock House was constructed by Bert Smith in 1929. He came to this area to recover from poison gas exposure suffered during World War 1. Doctors told him he didn't have long to live, but the dry desert air proved so beneficial to Smith's health that he lived here for 25 more years. The second long term resident was artist Carl Faber, who lived and worked at the rock house in the 1980's, selling his artwork to passing travelers.

A few minutes into the hike, the remains of a milling operation from the 1930's are visible near the trail. Rich mineral deposits of gold, silver, copper and other precious metals have been found across this region. The trail continues to Rock Springs, one of a series of springs that dot the Mojave Desert every 20 to 30 miles, forming a natural travel corridor. This route eventually became known as the Mojave Road. Interpretive signs near the spring describe the Mojave and Chemehuevi Indians who formerly lived in the area, and Camp Rock Spring, an army outpost active briefly in the 1860's to protect mail and early travelers that passed along the route.

From the spring, the trail climbs a ridgeline overlooking Watson Wash with expansive views of the Hackberry and New York Mountains to the north and east. Leaving the ridgeline, you enter a small group of juniper and pinion pine trees that provide welcome shade as the trail leads you back to the Rock House.

This site is also known for its petroglyphs. The petroglyphs are carved in granite boulders. Both the Mojave and Chemehuevi Indians are known to have used the spring, so petroglyphs are possibly from both tribes. The designs are mostly abstract, circles and zigzag lines. A majority of the designs have a lot of wear from the elements, making them difficult to spot.

NOTE: PLEASE RESPECT THESE DRAWINGS AND THE AREA ITSELF AND TAKE ONLY PICTURES AND LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ENJOY THESE TREASURES.

This hike is easy and only about 1 mile long. To get here from Pahrump take State route 372/178 to Shoshone and go left (south) on CA state route 127 for about 55 miles to Baker. Go straight and continue onto Kilbaker Road and drive south for 34 miles to the Kelso Depot/Visitors Center. Drive north on the Kelso-Cima Road for 14 miles. Go right onto Cedar Canyon Road (after a few miles the road becomes gravel but it is well maintained and suitable for most vehicles except after rains). Follow this road for 10.7 miles and turn right (south) on a gravel road to the parking area and trailhead.

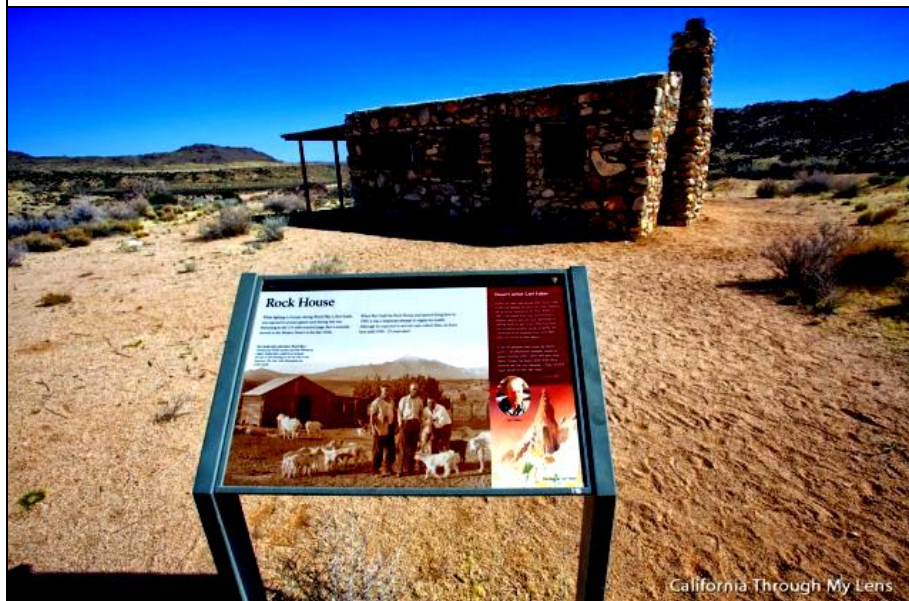
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This Plaque is dedicated to the Army base that used to be here. It states that out of the 75 people who served there 25 defected, I am guessing due to the remoteness.



The Rock House

***Photographs used provided by "California Through My Lens."**

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Cockeyed Optimist

I am known by many of my friends as one who has a "Doctorate" in "sarcasm." As one of my friends said, "Jacquie, you realize 'sarcasm' is not a "spiritual gift?" Well, I don't consider my "sarcasm" to be a gift. I consider it an "eastern" USA quirk. Some may describe it as a "dry sense of humor." But, I think a "dry sense of humor" is more closely related to a "British" sense/style of humor.

I realized long ago that when I say something that I mean to be humorous, I often have to say: "You know I'm kidding, don't you?" Often, that is after I see the startled look in their eyes. What can I say? That is just who I am. Maybe it is because I often feel like "laughing" to keep from crying. As analytical as I often am about myself, my heritage and my life; one thing I do know is I am a "cockeyed optimist."

I try to shut out "doomsday" talk and "gloom and doom" attitudes. I refuse to be swayed by media or social media influences. I just want to be able to make my decisions based on my own research and the promptings of the Holy Spirit. As much as I would like to say that my decisions are always right or in my best interest that is not the case. But, I do know that there is one I can always go to who will make "things" right. Why? Because I know He loves me. If I take the wrong

fork in the road, somehow, He always finds me and gets me back on "**HIS**" road. My assurance of His eternal presence with me doesn't make me perfect; but, it does make me "a cockeyed optimist."

Being raised on the "east coast" I had opportunities to attend many On and Off Broadway shows. One of them was "South Pacific" (*boy, that sure is age telling!*) where I first heard the song "Cockeyed Optimist."


"But I'm only a cockeyed optimist
And I can't get it into my head.

I hear the human race;
Is fallin' on its face
And hasn't very far to go,
But ev'ry whippoorwill
Is sellin' me a bill,
And tellin' me it just ain't so.

I could say life is just a bowl of Jell-O
And appear more intelligent and smart,
But I'm stuck like a dope
With a thing called hope,
And I can't get it out of my heart!"

I hear people often say, "God is in Control" and then the next thing out of their mouths are "gloom and doom" predictions. I can't understand it, if they believe God is in Control then why are they always complaining about "what

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the world is coming to." I hope the world is coming to Christ. That's my hope. Whatever else happens in this world, I hope all mankind will come to know Jesus Christ! The world's destiny is not in ANY man's hands – it is in the Father's hands; and, as for me I believe it, so why should I fear?

I don't think I am any less of a person because I am a "cockeyed optimist." I just feel that if "God is in Control," why should I spend my time fretting over "what is?"

A Psalm of David

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

Psalm 23 English Standard Version (ESV)

Optimist:

Someone who figures that taking a
step backward after taking a step
forward is not a disaster,
it's more like a cha-cha.