

Bermudian Church of the Brethren

WEDNESDAY'S WORD – a midweek thought from Pastor Larry M. Dentler
to share a word of inspiration ... encouragement ... challenge ... a smile ... in the middle of your week
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Bath Time

As most of you know we have a new baby in the house. Our fifth grandchild, Jaxsen, is just four weeks old tomorrow. I love having a new baby in the house. There's something about rocking a newborn and looking into that sweet, innocent face that has a calming blessing upon the soul. And there's something really great about being able to hand him back to his mother when he gets fussy!

The other night Jes was giving Jaxsen a bath. I was in the other end of the house and could hear the wee boy screaming. In the morning I said to Jes with a smile, *"I take it Jaxsen didn't like his bath last night?"* She laughed and rolled her eyes, *"You'd have thought I was torturing him! He made himself stiff and squirmed and screamed bloody murder!"* I really suspect that big brother, eight year old Jericho, has been planting the thought in Jaxsen's young mind that baths are not a good thing!

Isn't it funny? Even with the warm water and *Johnson's Calming Baby Bath* in the lavender bottle that makes me sleepy just looking at it, Jaxsen resisted! It was good for him. It would certainly make him feel good. It was a blessing to be caressed by his Momma as she washed him. But he resisted.

God's Word is a lot like that bath. And we are too often like Jaxsen. God's Word is full of guidance and truth that is good for us. It can calm the stress of life. It can protect us from hurt and pain. If we follow God's plans & counsel we can avoid a lot of suffering. God's Word guides us with wise protective counsel about life, marriage, human sexuality, parenting, morality, finances, relationships, possessions. But no! We so often think we know better. God's Word seems too restrictive! His ways seem oppressive. The Bible is surely outdated. So we make ourselves stiff. We scream, *"I'll do it my way!"* And we wind up suffering. Making something intended for our good ... our help ... our protection, into something negative.

We'll do morality our way! *"If it feels good I'll do it!"* We'll handle our finances & possessions our way! *"You have to take care of old number one!"* If someone offends us we'll take care of it our way! *"Don't tell me what to do!"* And we wind up suffering. This was certainly true of Israel who faced horrible times of suffering for not following God's loving guidance. And it is true for us. Even in the Church today many are making themselves stiff against the Lord's clear teachings. And they ... we ... wind up suffering.

Jaxsen will learn eventually that a warm, soothing bath is a great blessing. There'll come a time in his life when he looks forward to lingering in the tub or shower. I wonder ... will **we** learn? Will we stop being stiff to God's Word? Will we accept the loving guidance of our God, who loves us so much, as an expression of His care and provision and not something we choose to disregard or figure we have to explain away? Will we stop pretending that we, or the latest so called "scholar" or "expert" know better than God? Will we humble ourselves in obedience to His Word ... His care ... His counsel ... His love?

"Your Statutes are wonderful; therefore I obey them. The unfolding of Your Words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple. I open my mouth and pant, longing for Your Commands. Turn to me and have mercy on me, as You always do to those who love Your name. Direct my footsteps according to Your Word; let no sin rule over me. Redeem me from human oppression, that I may obey Your Precepts. Make Your face shine on Your servant and teach me Your Decrees. Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for Your Law is not obeyed." Psalm 119:129-136 NIV

Dear ones ... enjoy bathing in God's Word!
Pastor Larry <><