

**“EVERYTHING I NEEDED TO KNOW ABOUT RESPONSIBILITY I  
LEARNED FROM SAM.”**

Sam was a beautiful girl, but she relied on me for all her needs. She was my responsibility. She was my dog. That big ole Dalmatian was a great listener when I had a bad day or needed a friend. She was also a wonderful instructor in that oh, so important building block of maturity called responsibility. I wanted a puppy, so I begged and I pleaded, I finagled, and I pledged to fulfill my duties as a proud pet owner. Food would be given and water buckets would be filled. It wasn't until we brought that hyper little girl home that I came to know the lengths to which my responsibility reached. It wasn't only food and water, it was late night walks (so she wouldn't bark), it was medicine administration, it was grooming, and dental care. Quickly I was informed of the methods for fulfilling these needs in the correct way. For example, I learned it wasn't enough to simply fill those water buckets, they had to be washed clean and kept clean. Basically I learned that my responsibility to my spotted pup meant that I would be meeting all of her needs in an appropriate fashion.

Meeting all our needs in an appropriate fashion is a good definition of my responsibility to myself. God created us with certain needs. Having those needs met will go a long way toward making us happy. Christ wants us to enjoy this life and the things that life has to offer. He proclaims that he was, *“come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly”* (John 10:10). An abundant life in Christ will meet our needs, and meet them in a way that is truly beneficial. We also hear the condemnation of one who shirks his responsibility to himself and his family. *“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel”* (I Timothy 5:8).

**I have a responsibility to meet my need for physical health by providing my body sustenance.** In the garden man is told how he would meet his need for food through the sweat of his brow (Genesis 3:18-19). The Proverbs writer encourages us to consider the example of responsibility set forth by our tiny mound builders. *“Go to that ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest”* (Proverbs 6:6-8). I have a responsibility to myself to provide for these most basic needs appropriately. While this responsibility is important we must also heed a personal responsibility that is even greater. *“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”* (Matthew 4:4).

**One has a responsibility to meet his need for emotional health by providing the mind with appropriate material for thought.** *“Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things of of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”* (Philippians 4:6-8). We have a need to provide our minds with peace. Satan tries to fill our minds with the cares of this world while Christ directs our thoughts elsewhere. *“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, what shall we drink? Or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”* (Matthew 6:31-

“...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel...” (Amos 7:8)

**WHAT DO YOU MEAN  
THANKSGIVING'S OVER?**

Text: \_\_\_\_\_

I. What About Our \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Notes:

II. What About Our \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Notes:

III. What About Our \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Notes:

**OCCUPATION HYMNS**

- Astronaut—"Nearer My God, To Thee"
- Baker—"I Need Thee Every Hour"
- Barber—"A Parting Hymn We Sing"
- Baseball Batter—"Seek Thee First"
- Builder—"How Firm a Foundation"
- Carpenter—"The Nail Scarred Hand"
- Civil Engineer—"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"
- Dentist—"Crown Him with Many Crowns"
- Electrician—"Send the Light"
- Fisherman—"Shall We Gather at the River"
- Golfer—"There is a Green Hill Far Away"
- Historian—"Tell Me the Old, Old Story"
- IRS—"All To Thee I Owe"
- Librarian—"We've a Story to Tell"
- Mathematician—"10,000 Times, 10,000 Times"
- Medical Technician—"Revive Us Again"
- Mountain Climber—"The Rock that is Higher Than I"
- Obstetrician—"He is Able to Deliver Thee"
- Philosopher—"I Am Thinking Today"
- Politician—"Standing on the Promises"
- Real Estate Agent—"I've Got a Mansion"
- Steeple Builder—"Lift High the Cross"
- Stonecutter—"Rock of Ages"
- Switchboard Operator—"A Call Comes Ringing"
- Trucker—"On the Highways and Byways of Life"
- Voice Teacher—"Sing Them Over Again to Me"
- Watchmaker—"Take Time to be Holy"
- Watchman—"Silent Night"
- Weatherman—"There Shall be Showers of Blessings"

33).

**Finally, we have a need to provide for our eternal safety by making the right choices.** *"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"* (Joshua 24:15). Christ makes the choice clear. *"Enter 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 thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"* (Matthew 7:13-14). Fulfill this, the greatest responsibility, by choosing to obey the will of the Lord. *"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"* (Romans 6:16).

My responsibility to Sam has long since been fulfilled. She lived a true dog's life. I met her needs as many a young person does for the family pet, imperfectly. I look back now and can see the value of the lessons she taught that young but growing child. I learned about responsibility. As a Man, a Husband, and a Father there are now many important responsibilities to fulfill. However, my responsibility to myself to provide for my eternal safety must override them all. *"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God"* (Luke 12:19-21).

-Brandon Jackson

**THE ONLY OPINION THAT MATTERS**

Babe Ruth was at bat and Babe Pinelli was the umpire behind the plate. The first pitch was a swing and a miss, as was the second pitch. Babe Ruth dug in for the next pitch. The pitcher wound up and delivered, and Ruth didn't move. From behind the plate the umpire cried out, "Strike three!"

Ruth got in Pinelli's face and said, "There's 40,000 people here who know that last one was a ball, tomato head." Pinelli took a look around the stadium, then responded, "Maybe so, but mine is the only opinion that counts. The batter's out!"

-Jerry Sutton

No matter what we think, no matter what anyone in the world thinks—God's opinion is the only one that matters."

**EACH ONE A MISSIONARY**

If you were to ask the average individual to name a missionary or just who a missionary is, they would no doubt make reference to someone involved in some religious work overseas. And in many ways that is what the term “missionary” has come to mean in the minds of most. What, though, would you say if you were to be told that you as a New Testament Christian were a missionary? What thoughts would immediately come to mind? Webster’s defines the term “missionary” as someone who is sent on a religious mission, and is that not what the purpose of each Christian is while on earth, to be about a religious mission? Our Lord, Himself, was a missionary as He was sent to do the will of the Father (John 5:30). When He ascended back to the Father, He then delegated that mission on to each disciple, beginning with the apostles and filtering to every single child of God who has ever lived (Matthew 28:18-20). Thus the mission of Christ is to be the mission of each one of us, to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). Notice some of the actions taken by Christ in the fulfilling of His mission and then ask, are we each one a missionary?

**Jesus taught those desirous of the truth.** On one occasion a gentleman came to the Lord and said unto Him, *“Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him,...if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honour thy father and thy mother: and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.”* It was rare for someone to be so blatant in their desire to hear the preaching of the Lord, but when the opportunity arose, you better believe that Jesus Christ took advantage of it. It perhaps is even rarer for someone today so blatantly come seeking the truth. Many are looking for a version of “truth,” but few actually are desirous of the whole truth. However, those opportunities do arise and the only question is are we ready and able to give an answer of the hope that is within us with meekness and fear (I Peter 3:15)? We must be equally willing to teach those desirous of the truth that the mission of our Lord might be fulfilled.

**Jesus taught those who were not necessarily looking for truth.** In Matthew 13, Christ related a number of parables related to the kingdom, one of which is the parable of the pearl of great price. *“The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it”* (Matthew 13:45-46). This merchant man was merely looking for good pearls that he might sell and make some money. He was not necessarily looking for this pearl of great price, but when he stumbled upon it he recognized its value and ensured his possession of it. That, likely, is how many with whom Christ came in contact received the truth. A number of times in Scripture it is recorded that knowing of Jesus’ reputation for healing and aiding that multitudes would flock to where He was, not necessarily looking for truth, but for help. However, our Lord took those opportunities to not only help, but also to teach them the truth. Similar opportunities abound today. Not everyone may be looking for the truth, but many are looking for help; and by providing one they are often open to receiving the other. We, like our Lord, must be equally willing to teach those who might not even necessarily be seeking the truth, for thereby will the mission of the Lord be fulfilled.

**Jesus taught those who did not want the truth.** More times than they would care to mention people like the Pharisees would confront the Lord, not wanting truth, but wanting vindication for His actions. But when the Pharisees, or any others, came across the Lord still did He take opportunity to teach them. Most of the time they still rejected the truth, but they had had opportunity to hear it at least. It reminds me of hearing a preacher talk about being out one day with a friend driving around when they were stopped by two men of a particular religion wanting to talk. Asking if they could have a discussion, this particular preacher told them they would be glad to talk with them and to get into the back seat of this two-door car. He immediately had a “captive audience” and took advantage of it. Such occasions are normally unlikely, but coming across folks who do not want truth is not. We may have a strong sense that no truth would be accepted if offered, but teach still we must, for that is what Jesus did. By doing so, the mission of the Lord will be fulfilled.

Are you a missionary? Hopefully, as it pertains to its general meaning the answer is yes. If not, what is keeping you. Look at the opportunities and become more like your Lord.

-Andy Brewer