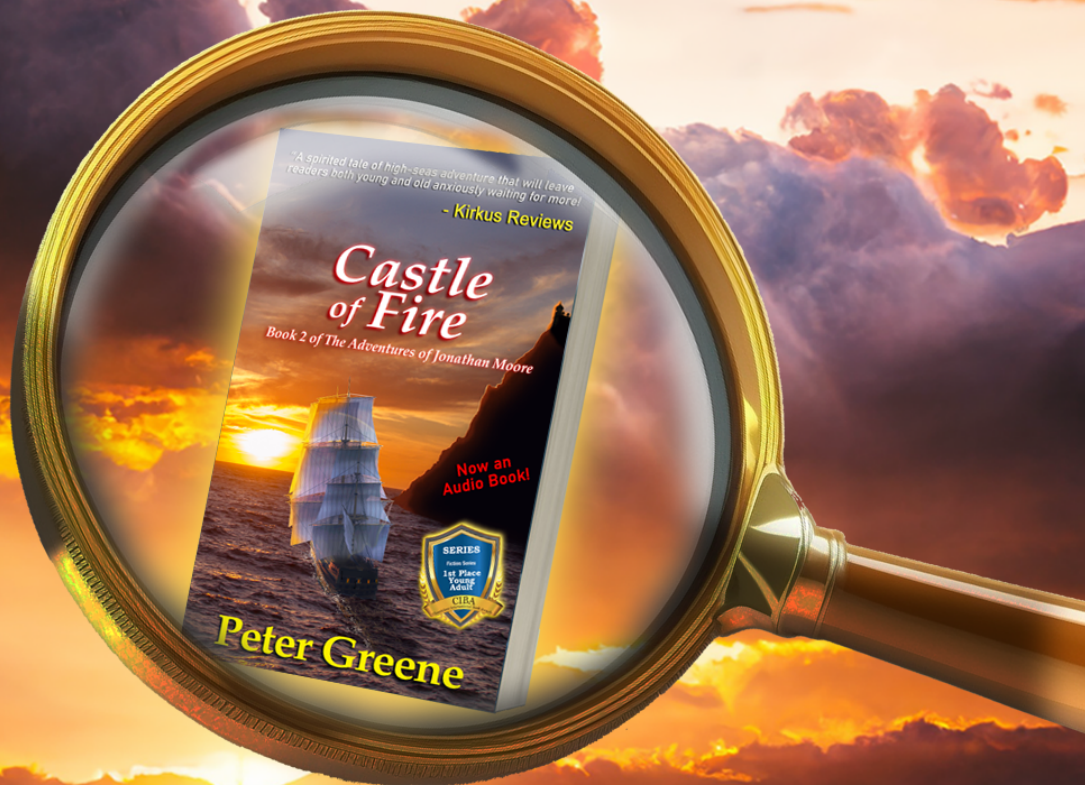


THINK ABOVE THE BOX

Looking at literature through a Biblical lens



Bible study guide for
Castle of Fire

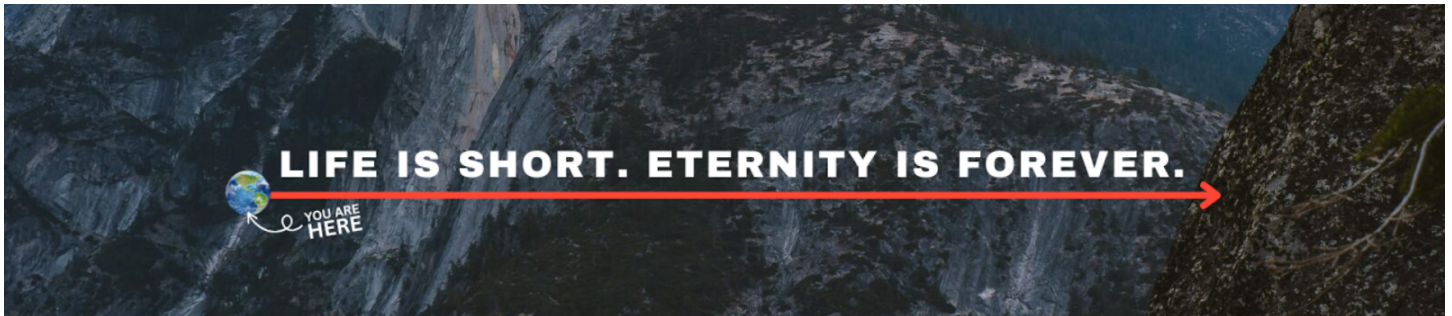
B.C. PIETSCH

Think Above the Box

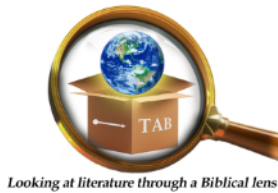
Bible Study Guide for

Peter Greene's
The Adventures of Jonathan Moore Book 2:
Castle of Fire

by
B.C. Pietsch



2 Corinthians 4:18 TLB So we do not look at what we can see right now, the troubles all around us, but we look forward to the joys in heaven which we have not yet seen. The troubles will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.



Think Above the Box Bible Study for
Peter Greene's The Adventures of Jonathan Moore: *Castle of Fire*
First Edition

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Think Above the Box Books

Our culture today has pretty much put God on the DO NOT TOUCH shelf for schools, teachers and students. The *Think Above the Box* series was born as an aid to counter the shutting out of all things Biblical in education today. This study guide is the first of hopefully a long series that will take more books into the theological realm.

n

Adventures of Jonathan Moore series, asked me to read and critique his rough draft of book 1, *Warship Poseidon*, I was honored. The book caught and kept my attention from the beginning in the dark alleys of London all the way through to the tearful and emotional final scene. Even though it was written as young adult adventure fiction, this story will touch people of all ages.

Warship Poseidon in so many ways throughout its nineteen chapters. As I was reading the story, Bible verses and concepts kept shouting at me from every page! I pitched my idea of doing a Biblical study guide to Peter and he agreed. This study guide will not ask for chapter outlines, plot points, character development, or word definitions but will provide an opportunity to take a secular story and use Scriptural references, videos, essays, music and thought-provoking questions to teach students how to comprehend a story using a Biblical worldview. *Think Above the Box Study Guides* for books 1 and 3 of the Jonathan Moore series are also available, with additional popular literature guides to come!

Think Above the Box study guides are now available for all three
Adventures of Jonathan Moore books
(books available on **Amazon** and free guides at **Think Above the Box**)



Send yourself back to the age of tall sailing ships and stow away with Jonathan Moore, Sean Flagon and Miss Delain Dowdeswell on their adventures to the Caribbean, the Black Sea, Africa and all points in between. Based in the early 1800's at the dawn of the Napoleonic Wars, the books are centered on Jonathan Moore and his adventures aboard various sailing ships of the British Royal Navy. Joining Jonathan on these journeys is his best friend and confidant Sean Flagon, their acquaintance made on the mean streets of London. In their travels they meet Delain Dowdeswell, an adventurer in her own right, challenging the order of things as she demands her fair share of excitement and intrigue.

Book 1: *Warship Poseidon* tells the tale of the seemingly-orphaned, twelve-year-old Jonathan Moore, as he is abducted by a gang and pressed into service aboard HMS *Poseidon*, a forty-four gun fighting frigate of the British Royal Navy. However, there is more to the event than just a change of address. How is it that some members of the crew, including the captain, already know his name? Why do the officers seem to favor him above the other new crew members? As Jonathan endeavors to solve these mysteries, he is thrust into a daring mission to recover a hidden treasure on a remote Caribbean isle. Unfortunately, the crew and officers of the *Poseidon* are not the only ones searching for the prize. In a desperate race across the Atlantic, Jonathan is pitted against sword-wielding spies, engages in terrifying ship-to-ship battles, and in the end, must match his wits and courage against a ruthless and

cunning French captain and his powerful warship.

Book 2: ***Castle of Fire***: Jonathan Moore is now reunited with his father, though soon leaves the comfort of family and London on what is considered by all to be a 'peach' of a mission. However, with the arrival of another midshipman holding a severe but unexplained grudge, life aboard HMS *Danielle* is anything but pleasant. Why are the new midshipmen his enemies? Who is stealing food from the ship's stores, and why must Jonathan and Sean sneak into a heavily guarded Spanish fort in the middle of the night to do some burglary of their own? In this second book of the *Adventures of Jonathan Moore Series*, Jonathan must capture a stolen British ship from blood-thirsty pirates, solve the mystery of the surprising stowaway, and defend his honor and his life during a fierce duel to the death with a murderous adversary. Alone and vastly outnumbered, the crew of the *Danielle* engages in a violent battle on the wild seas south of the farthest tip of Africa. Only Jonathan, Sean and an unexpected guest can turn the tide of the struggle by unlocking the secrets of a mysterious island and re-igniting the ferocious power of the *Castle of Fire*!

Book 3: ***Paladin's War***: 1802. Midshipman Jonathan Moore, Marine Private Sean Flagon and adventurer Delain Dowdeswell enjoy the company of family and friends during a delicate peace between France and England. However, mysterious spy networks now freely roam Europe's great cities, and the ships and armies of all nations remain on the edge of war. An elaborate scheme involves misleading and manipulating Jonathan, now aboard the eighteen-gun HMS *Paladin*, commanded by his friend and mentor, Lieutenant Thomas Harrison. Their mission: to deliver the King's treaty to a clandestine location in the Black Sea. Remaining in London, Delain encounters a shadowy black rider sneaking about the mansions of London's elite. Suspecting foul play, she investigates and enters a web of secret meetings, spies, coded messages and kidnapping. At first merely interesting, Delain's investigation soon turns deadly as she finds that all clues lead to the *Paladin's* mission, and to her friends, now thousands of miles away—and in grave danger. Led to waters far from home, the boys fight for their ship and their lives against a rogue naval commodore with a war plan of his own. Now in an impossible situation, Jonathan must find a way to defeat his powerful enemies in the Black Sea - and survive the final conflict of the *Paladin's War*.

Think Above the Box and this study guide are dedicated to
Mason, Tanner, Evelyn, Scarlett and Molly.
May you always remember where you came from and to Whom you belong.

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Think Above the Box

How To Use This Guide

What you will need:

- a copy of this guide. You can download more for free at [Think Above the Box](#)
- a copy or copies of the book *Warship Poseidon* by Peter Greene, available in paperback, hardcover and eBook on Amazon. There may be coupon codes available to Think Above the Box friends to discount the entire series of Jonathan Moore Books. Check our website before purchasing!
- The book is written on the fourth/fifth grade reading level, is clean, without magic, and contains mild violence. For more information on the series, see: [The Adventures of Jonathan Moore](#)

Reading and using the guide:

Have students read a chapter of the book, or read aloud together. At the completion of a chapter have students open their copy of *Think Above the Box Bible Study Guide for The Adventures of Jonathan Moore*, and answer questions individually or have the teacher guide the discussion.

► There are questions noted by a blue dot as shown in the following diagram.

► **TAB** (Think Above the Box) says:

The author has given you guidance on answering questions, in red! Check it out!



Think Above the Box: There are also discussion/reflective questions shown under the *Think Above the Box* logo (see above) that have no answer given due to the nature of the question.

Hyperlinks to featured articles, blogs, videos and music:

Hyperlinks listed in the guide are available within chapters in **bold orange**. Just click and go!

Links to music will be prefaced with a musical notation: 🎵

Guide for Chapter 1

Shadow and Son

1. Two very different men were waiting on the dock that chilly, damp night of the *Poseidon's* arrival in London. One's heart was bent on anger, hatred and revenge while the other was in a state of energized, joyful expectation of a long-awaited homecoming.

This sounds like a description of how non-believers and believers feel about God!

Revelation 16:11 (AMP Amplified Bible) ... and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their anguish and their sores (abscesses, boils); and they did not repent of what they had done *nor* hate their wickedness.

James 4:4 (ERV Easy to Read Version) You people are not faithful to God! You should know that loving what the world has is the same as hating God. So anyone who wants to be friends with this evil world becomes God's enemy.

John 3:16 (AMPC Amplified Bible, Classic Edition) For God so greatly loved *and* dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life.

Isaiah 25:9 (TLB The Living Bible) In that day the people will proclaim, "This is our God in whom we trust, for whom we waited. Now at last he is here." What a day of rejoicing!

Revelation 21:6-8 TLB It is finished! I am the A and the Z—the Beginning and the End. I will give to the thirsty the springs of the Water of Life—as a gift! Everyone who conquers will inherit all these blessings, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But cowards who turn back from following me, and those who are unfaithful to me, and the corrupt, and murderers, and the immoral, and those conversing with demons, and idol worshipers and all liars—their doom is in the Lake that burns with fire and sulphur. This is the Second Death.

Philippians 3:18-21 ERV There are many who live like enemies of the cross of Christ. I have often told you about them. And it makes me cry to tell you about them now. The way they live is leading them to destruction. They have replaced God with their own desires. They do shameful things, and they are proud of what they do. They think only about earthly things. But the government that rules us is in heaven. We are waiting for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come from there. He will change our humble bodies and make them like his own glorious body. Christ can do this by his power, with which he is able to rule everything.

You may be asking yourself, "*Why would anyone choose darkness over the light of God's love?*" Read or listen to the following blogpost for some insight:

"Picture a guy floating downstream on a raft on a hot summer day. He's having the time of his life, enjoying the ride as the cool water gently splashes on him. You're on the shore and you know that there's a deadly waterfall not far downstream. This guy is floating blissfully and ignorantly toward certain destruction! So you yell to warn him. You throw him a rope. But he rejects it and keeps floating toward certain death. Why won't he grab the life preserver? Because he loves what he's doing and he doesn't want to believe your warning." - Steven J. Cole

Lesson 18: Why People Reject Christ (John 3:19-21) | Bible.org

PS: Let's start this study out by giving yourself some **EXTRA CREDIT** for this one!

2. Read the following parable of the prodigal son:

Luke 15:11-24 AMP Then He said, "A certain man had two sons. The younger of them [inappropriately] said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me.' So he divided the estate between them. A few days later, the younger son gathered together everything [that he had] and traveled to a distant country, and there he wasted his fortune in reckless *and* immoral living. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to do without *and* be in need. So he went and forced himself on one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. He would have gladly eaten the [carob] pods that the pigs were eating [but they could not satisfy his hunger], and no one was giving *anything* to him. But when he [finally] came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough food, while I am dying here of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; [just] treat me like one of your hired men."' So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion *for him*, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Quickly bring out the best robe [for the guest of honor] and put it on him; and give him a ring for his hand, and sandals for his feet. And bring the fattened calf and slaughter it, and let us [invite everyone and] feast and celebrate; for this son of mine was [as good as] dead and is alive again; he was lost and has been found.' So they began to celebrate."

► How is the father in it like Captain Moore?

► **TAB says:** The father in the parable had missed and loved his son unconditionally and welcomed him home with compassion, forgiveness and love, even throwing a feast in his honor. Captain Moore implored his friends to help him locate Jonathan's whereabouts and on the day of his arrival desperately searched through the crowd on the pier for him. When he finally sighted him, Captain Moore greeted his son with total abandon and joy.

► How is Jonathan *not* like the son?

► **TAB says:** The prodigal son in the parable is *so* different from Jonathan because he took his dad's money (culturally 'wishing his father was dead'), left home voluntarily, squandered his inheritance, sinned and then returned seeking forgiveness. Jonathan, who had no control over his absence from his dad and never disobeyed him, had always longed to see his father again.

However, **both** fathers welcomed their sons with open arms.

► Is this how God says He welcomes repentant sinners?

► **TAB says:** Yes!

Luke 23:42-43 ESV And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Read this thought-provoking story from 1886 regarding repentance and admittance to Heaven:

"There was once a man who lived for seventy years in the world, and lived in sin all that time. He fell ill but even then did not repent. Only at the last moment, as he was dying, he wept and said: 'Lord! forgive me, as Thou forgavest the thief upon the cross.'"
- Leo Tolstoy

The Repentant Sinner (biblehub.com)

3. After an emotional homecoming on the dock, Jonathan, his father, Captain Walker and Steward cheerfully headed to the waiting carriage. Jonathan suddenly realized that Sean was not with them and ran back towards the *Danielle* in a frantic search for his friend. He found Sean walking dejectedly down the street. "I-I don't know where I am going," he cried to Jonathan, who assured him that Captain Walker's invitation certainly included him also.

► Isn't this how Jesus seeks and finds lost sinners who don't know Him?

Luke 15:3-7 TLB So Jesus used this illustration: "If you had a hundred sheep and one of them strayed away and was lost in the wilderness, wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine others to go and search for the lost one until you found it? And then you would joyfully carry it home on your shoulders. When you arrived you would call together your friends and neighbors to rejoice with you because your lost sheep was found. Well, in the same way heaven will be happier over one lost sinner who returns to God than over ninety-nine others who haven't strayed away!"

Luke 19:9-10 (ESV English Standard Version) And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Isaiah 40:11 (GW GOD'S WORD Translation) Like a shepherd he takes care of his flock. He gathers the lambs in his arms. He carries them in his arms. He gently helps the sheep and their lambs.

► **TAB says:** Yes!

"Even when we lose our way, we have a loving Shepherd ever present to pursue us and show us the way back to his gracious love. We are never out of His sight or out of reach. The Lord looks for us and looks out for us because He loves us unconditionally" - Andy McIlvain

The Hound of Heaven (Psalm 139) | Enacted Word

EXTRA CREDIT: Okay, so what's all this dog talk about? Watch the following modern adaptation of Francis Thompson's epic poem *The Hound of Heaven*. Hint: go to settings and put the captions on to read along.

The Hound of Heaven A Modern Adaptation

BRAGGING RIGHTS to those who read (the captions) of the 1893 poem in original form! Pro tip - click settings to slow the speed down if desired.

The Hound of Heaven by Francis Thompson, Read by Richard Burton

EXTRA EXTRA CREDIT: Read Psalm 139

Ps 139 ESV - Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart - Bible Gateway



Think Above the Box: Have you ever sensed God "hounding" you to come to Him? What was it like? Did you run or go to Him? If you didn't, why not?

REAL LIFE: Both Jonathan and his father had dreamt during their 'lost' years of what their reunion would be like someday and now it had actually happened on the dock that cold Christmas Day. Have you ever imagined how it

will be when you meet Jesus face to face in Heaven? Bart Millard of Mercy Me composed *I Can Only Imagine* after his father died and it envisions his own first moments in heaven:

🎵 **MercyMe - I Can Only Imagine (The Movie Session - Official Music Video)**

The relationship between a father and son can be profound, sometimes for the good and sometimes for the bad. Link to the following for the background story of Bart Millard and his dad, which inspired the movie *I Can Only Imagine*:

The Story Behind the Film I Can Only Imagine (lifeway.com)

EXTRA CREDIT: Watch the movie to get the whole story! Check out the trailer below:

I Can Only Imagine | Trailer

APOLO-GET-ITS: **Psalm 104:31-32** GW May the glory of the Lord endure forever. May the Lord find joy in what he has made. He looks at the earth, and it trembles. He touches the mountains, and they smoke.

The following videos discuss the aftermath of the 1980 Mount St. Helen's volcanic explosion and the process of coal formation that can take place fairly rapidly (rather than over thousands of years) and how geologic formations once thought to have taken millions of years to form could have been the result of volcanic eruptions and mudflows that took place in a matter of days:

📺 **How Do Floating Logs Help Explain the Origin of Coal? - Dr. Steve Austin**

(FYI: *milled* means to press flat by rolling)

What Actually Happened at Mount St. Helens? - Dr. Steve Austin

Guide for Chapter 2

Dragons in the Admiralty

1. After a heavenly dinner, Captain Walker and his guests retired to the study for a round of storytelling chronicling each one's recent adventures. When it was Sean's turn, he was unable to tell his tale as he had fallen fast asleep on the couch. This was an event he would not have missed, but physically, due to sheer exhaustion from his travels and the enormous meal he had just eaten, Sean couldn't stay awake a moment longer. As mentioned in the [Chapter 1, question 2] essay by Tolstoy, Jesus' disciples ran into a similar condition at the Garden of Gethsemane: spiritually wanting to be attentive and active but physically unable to stay watchful and vigilant:

Matthew 26:36-46 ERV Then Jesus went with his followers to a place called Gethsemane. He said to them, "Sit here while I go there and pray." He told Peter and the two sons of Zebedee to come with him. Then he began to be very sad and troubled. Jesus said to Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, "My heart is so heavy with grief, I feel as if I am dying. Wait here and stay awake with me." Then Jesus went on a little farther away from them. He fell to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, don't make me drink from this cup. But do what you want, not what I want." Then he went back to his followers and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, "Could you men not stay awake with me for one hour? *Stay awake and pray* for strength against temptation. Your spirit wants to do what is right, but your body is weak." Then Jesus went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if I must do this and it is not possible for me to escape it, then I pray that what you want will be done." Then he went back to the followers. Again he found them sleeping. *They could not stay awake.* So he left them and went away one more time and prayed. This third time he prayed, he said the same thing. Then Jesus went back to the followers and said, "Are you still sleeping and resting? The time has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the control of sinful men. Stand up! We must go. Here comes the one who will hand me over."

"In spite of their failure of the flesh, they try. And in spite of their continued failure, Jesus still loves them – indeed, loves us all – enough to die in their place, sacrificing Himself on the cross to pay our sin-debt and pave our path to eternal life with Him in Heaven...As we learn, God loves us despite all this."

- Jessica Brodie

The Spirit is Willing but the Flesh is Weak - Verse Meaning of Matthew 26:4 (crosswalk.com)

There are things we can do to make sure that we are not too fatigued and weary (living our lives in this world) to eagerly participate in spiritual activity. We should be on the vigilant lookout for temptation and worldly distractions that take us away from active prayer, worship, ministry, doing what's right and studying the Word. God gave us an eager and willing Holy Spirit that is more powerful than the flesh.

1 Corinthians 10:13 AMP No temptation [regardless of its source] has overtaken *or* enticed you that is not common to human experience [nor is any temptation unusual or beyond human resistance]; but God is faithful [to His word—He is compassionate and trustworthy], and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability [to resist], but along with the temptation He [has in the past and is now and] will [always] provide the way out as well, so that you will be able to endure it [without yielding, and will overcome temptation with joy.]

Proverbs 22:3 AMP A prudent *and* far-sighted *person* sees the evil [of sin] and hides himself [from it], But the naive continue on and are punished [by suffering the consequences of sin.]

► What are some things that we can do to keep the Holy Spirit more powerful in our lives than the flesh (world?)

► **TAB says:** We can be on guard and alert to temptation and pray to God to give us the strength to stay true to what

He would want us to do in any situation. Believers should be mindful of our moments each day, always setting time aside to spend with God and His Word.

Take a listen to Babbie Mason's song on this topic:

🎵 **The Spirit Is Willing (But The Flesh Is Weak)**



Think Above the Box: Discuss a time when you let your spiritual guard down due to being spiritually or physically fatigued and weary. What got you out of it? How can you avoid this happening again? Have you ever had a time when spiritual diligence saved you from choosing the wrong action?

2. After tucking the boys in for the night, Miss Thompson discovered that they had squirreled away food from dinner into napkins stashed under their pillows. Captain Moore told her, "It appears the lessons of the streets die hard." Jonathan and Sean *still* did not trust that their life of near-starvation and homelessness had left them for good. Sometimes believers can doubt their own salvation, feeling that they have to work harder, pray harder and *re-earn* their entry into Heaven. God clearly states in Scripture that we cannot lose our salvation:

1 John 5:13 AMP These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God [which represents all that Jesus Christ is and does], so that you will know [with settled and absolute knowledge] that you [already] have eternal life.

Romans 1:16 TLB For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is God's powerful method of bringing all who believe it to heaven. This message was preached first to the Jews alone, but now everyone is invited to come to God in this same way.

Romans 8:15 GW You haven't received the spirit of slaves that leads you into fear again. Instead, you have received the spirit of God's adopted children by which we call out, "Abba! Father!"

Romans 8:38-39 AMP For I am convinced [and continue to be convinced—beyond any doubt] that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present *and* threatening, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the [unlimited] love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 10:27-28 TLB My sheep recognize my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they shall never perish. No one shall snatch them away from me.

Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Watch or read the transcript of the following video that answers the question, "Can a Christian lose salvation?"

Can a Christian lose salvation? | GotQuestions.org

3. Upon arriving at the Admiralty at Whitehall, the boys saw that the building was immense but the entrance to it was rather small to the point of insignificance. The entrance to God's kingdom is similar in that Heaven is immense but the gate of entry is narrow:

Matthew 7:13-14 (NLT New Living Translation) "You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it."

Luke 13:23-24 AMP And someone asked Him, "Lord, will only a few be saved [from the penalties of the last judgment]?" And He said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow door [force aside unbelief and the attractions of sin]; for many, I tell you, will try to enter [by their own works] and will not be able."

Read the following about just how narrow that gate is:

Just how narrow is the narrow gate? | GotQuestions.org



Think Above the Box: Why do you think the majority of people choose the 'wide road' to destruction rather than the 'narrow road' to salvation?

REAL LIFE: Musician Zach Williams had embraced the wide road of worldly distractions until God got his attention through the song, *Redeemed* by Big Daddy Weave:

New Song Changes Pop Star's Life | CBN

and now for the music video:

🎵 **Big Daddy Weave - "Redeemed" (Official Music Video)**

Listen to Zack Williams' song *Chain Breaker*:

🎵 **Zach Williams - Chain Breaker (Official Music Video)**

APOLO-GET-ITS: Many nonbelievers and naysayers will state that there is no proof of Jesus' Resurrection and due to that, He is not God. Here are eight important facts about the Resurrection to consider:

8 Important Facts About The Resurrection Of Jesus (whatchristianswanttoknow.com)

and an article discussing the historical evidence:

Historical Evidence of Jesus Christ's Resurrection (whatchristianswanttoknow.com)

Guide for Chapter 3

Audience with George

1. At Windsor Castle, Jonathan and Sean had an audience with King George, along with Captains Walker and Moore, Gorman, Langley and Harrison. They were excited and fearful at the same time as they prepared to meet their ruler. The small group all received commendations and rewards from the King for their service, loyalty and dedication to the Crown. The admirals who *denounced* the captains received just the opposite-the King's disapproval and banishment to the primitive and bug infested continent of Australia. Scripture mirrors this scene with the following verses:

Matthew 25:23 AMPC His master said to him, Well done, you upright (honorable, admirable) and faithful servant! You have been faithful *and* trustworthy over a little; I will put you in charge of much. Enter into *and* share the joy (the delight, the blessedness) which your master enjoys.

Matthew 7:23 AMPC And then I will declare to them publicly, 'I never knew you; depart from Me [you are banished from My presence], you who act wickedly [disregarding My commands.]'

The following verse describes Jesus' judgement at the beginning of the future millennium after the completion of the tribulation:

Matthew 25:32-33 AMPC All the nations will be gathered before Him [for judgment]; and He will separate them from one another, as a shepherd separates his sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right [the place of honor], and the goats on His left [the place of rejection.]

The following gives a detailed discussion of the Parable of the Sheep and Goats:

What is the meaning of the Parable of the Sheep and Goats? | GotQuestions.org



Think Above the Box: Which group do you want to belong to?

2. Back in Chapter Two, Captains Walker and Moore appeared before the review board of the Admiralty to be questioned on the loss of the *Danielle*, the *Troy* and the *Helios*. The questioning Admirals had *already* decided their fate beforehand and subsequently stripped them of new assignments. In Jesus' trial, his fate was also predetermined by the Jewish leaders of the day:

John 11:45-53 ERV There were many Jews who came to visit Mary. When they saw what Jesus did, many of them believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus did. Then the leading priests and Pharisees called a meeting of the high council. They said, "What should we do? This man is doing many miraculous signs. If we let him continue doing these things, everyone will believe in him. Then the Romans will come and take away our Temple and our nation." One of the men there was Caiaphas. He was the high priest that year. He said, "You people know nothing! It is better for one man to die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed. But you don't realize this." Caiaphas did not think of this himself. As that year's high priest, he was really prophesying that Jesus would die for the Jewish people. Yes, he would die for the Jewish people. But he would also

die for God's other children scattered all over the world. He would die to bring them all together and make them one people. That day the Jewish leaders began planning to kill Jesus.

Now in Chapter Three, the king is filled in on the Admiralty's corrupt judgement of the men and vows to replace them immediately, taking Gorman's advice to station them to the British penal colony of Australia. Jesus also was angry at the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees and gave them a scathing criticism:

Matthew 23:27 NLT What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people's bones and all sorts of impurity.

► Could God possibly look at any one of us and say the same thing?

Romans 3:23 NLT For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.

► **TAB says:** Sadly, yes.

And now for an answer to the question, *"What does it mean that all have sinned?"*

What does it mean that all have sinned? | GotQuestions.org

3. The king bestowed honor, promotions and assignments to the men and boys for their heroic efforts aboard the *Poseidon* and the *Danielle*. Will God do the same for believers in heaven? Yes. Yes, He will!

Matthew 16:27 ESV For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Will all rewards be the same? No, no they will not...

Are There Different Degrees of Reward in Heaven? | Cold Case Christianity



Think Above the Box: Humans love to bestow honor and accolades to each other for their talents and accomplishments here on Earth. Take for example the many honors given out each year: the Academy Awards, the Grammys, the Nobel Prize, the Super Bowl and World Series championships and Olympic gold medals. How do you think those compare to the rewards God will give to believers in Heaven?

4. During the shopping trip to Piccadilly Circus with Captain Moore, Miss Thompson and Sean, Jonathan suddenly disappeared, causing a frenzied panic among them. When Jesus was a young boy, he also was lost from his distraught parents while returning home from Jerusalem. He was found on the third day in the Temple doing the Lord's work:

Luke 2:41-49 TLB When Jesus was twelve years old, he accompanied his parents to Jerusalem for the annual Passover Festival, which they attended each year. After the celebration was over they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't miss him the first day, for they assumed he was with friends

among the other travelers. But when he didn't show up that evening, they started to look for him among their relatives and friends; and when they couldn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there. Three days later they finally discovered him. He was in the Temple, sitting among the teachers of Law, discussing deep questions with them and amazing everyone with his understanding and answers. His parents didn't know what to think. "Son!" his mother said to him. "Why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere." "But why did you need to search?" he asked. "Didn't you realize that I would be here at the Temple, in my Father's House?"

Sean found Jonathan in an alley speaking to a small homeless boy as he handed him food and money. Before the adults knew it, Sean was doing the same with another child. As Jonathan and Sean were compassionate and giving with the homeless boys, God tells us to do the same:

1 John 3:17-18 AMP But whoever has the world's goods (adequate resources), and sees his brother in need, but has no compassion for him, how does the love of God live in him? Little children (believers, dear ones), let us not love [merely in theory] with word or with tongue [giving lip service to compassion], but in action and in truth [in practice and in sincerity, because practical acts of love are more than words.]

Acts 20:35 ERV I always showed you that you should work just as I did and help people who are weak. I taught you to remember the words of the Lord Jesus: 'You will have a greater blessing when you give than when you receive.'

Proverbs 19:17 ESV Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.

Deuteronomy 15:11 ERV There will always be poor people in the land. That is why I command you to be ready to help your brother or sister. Give to the poor in your land who need help.

Isaiah 58:10 ERV Feel sorry for hungry people and give them food. Help those who are troubled and satisfy their needs. Then your light will shine in the darkness. You will be like the bright sunshine at noon.



Think Above the Box: Describe a time when you had the opportunity to do as Jesus, Jonathan and Sean did to help someone. How did it make *them* feel? How did it make *you* feel? How do you think it made *Jesus* feel?

REAL LIFE: And now for a little interpretive dance! A viewer of the Lifehouse *Everything* skit proclaimed, "This video blesses me every time I watch it. It kind of puts into perspective just what Jesus does. No matter how far we go away from Him, he's always trying to pull us back to him. Then, when we decide to come back, he's there to take us back, no matter what the cost."

Luke 15:32 GW But we have something to celebrate, something to be happy about. This brother of yours was dead but has come back to life. He was lost but has been found.

🎵 **[HQ] Lifehouse - Everything Skit**

Here are the lyrics to this powerful song:

Find me here and speak to me / I want to feel you, I need to hear you / You are the light that's leading me / to the place where I

find peace again.

You are the strength that keeps me walking / You are the hope that keeps me trusting / You are the life to my soul / You are my purpose, you're everything.

And how can I stand here with you and not be moved by you? / Would you tell me how could it be any better than this? Yeah

You calm the storms and you give me rest / You hold me in your hands, you won't let me fall / You still my heart and you take my breath away. / Would you take me in, take me deeper now?

And how can I stand here with you and not be moved by you? / Would you tell me how could it be any better than this?

'Cause you're all I want, you're all I need / You're everything, everything / You're all I want, you're all I need / You're everything, everything

You're all I want, you're all I need / You're everything, everything / You're all I want, you're all I need / Everything, everything

And how can I stand here with you and not be moved by you? / Would you tell me how could it be any better than this? ...

Now read this 2007 post for the backstory:

Faith News Network » Jesus 'Everything Skit' Draws Millions



Think Above the Box: What do you think of the message here? Did it strike a chord with you? Is there anyone you know who might be influenced to change their life by watching the skit?

APOLO-GET-ITS: One of the biggest stumbling blocks to belief in God is the problem of evil. The blog below explains how the use of understandable terms and illustrations can help explain the concept of why there is evil in the world.

Teaching Kids about Why Bad Things Happen (str.org)

Guide for Chapter 4

The Nemesis

1. Jonathan traveled to the docks at Wapping with his father and Miss Thompson to see Sean off on his voyage with Captain Walker on the *HMS Doggard*. As he bid a melancholy, mournful goodbye to his longtime friend, Captain Moore unexpectedly decided to let his son go on the voyage. Jonathan wanted more than ever to be at sea, even though the parting was full of the sadness of separation from his newly found father. Jesus instructs us that sometimes we may have to let people go for the sake of following *Him*:

Luke 14:26 ERV If you come to me but will not leave your family, you cannot be my follower. You must love me more than your father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters—even more than your own life!

Sounds pretty severe, doesn't it? Check this out for more understanding:

Can putting your family before God be a sin? (blogos.org)



Think Above the Box: Have you ever had to choose between God and family? What did you do? Did you ask the Holy Spirit to help you make the most God-honoring choice? How did things turn out? Would you change any of your actions if you could re-do them?

2. Throughout this chapter, Wayne Spears was out to get Jonathan, from knocking him off the pier to bullying him and Sean in the midshipmen's cabin (not to mention possibly being Captain Moore's attacker the night of his son's homecoming.) The boys were definitely dealing with a bully, or as the chapter is titled, *nemesis*, which can mean a vengeful foe or adversary that is always bent on harm and retribution for a real or imagined crime that a person committed against them.

Spears certainly fit the bill, with Jonathan suspecting that he was the one who sent him flying into the frigid harbor waters to certain death by crushing. Letting anger get the best of him, Jonathan retaliated for the rough, disrespectful treatment of his friend by shoving Spears forcefully over Sean and onto the deck. Jesus had some words for how to handle someone like this:

Romans 12:17-21 TLB Never pay back evil for evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honest clear through. Don't quarrel with anyone. Be at peace with everyone, just as much as possible. Dear friends, never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God, for he has said that he will repay those who deserve it. Don't take the law into your own hands. Instead, feed your enemy if he is hungry. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink and you will be "heaping coals of fire on his head." In other words, he will feel ashamed of himself for what he has done to you. Don't let evil get the upper hand, but conquer evil by doing good.

"Although we do not find the word BULLYING in the Bible, we do find the word BRUTISH, a synonym of the brutal thuggery associated with thieves, assassins, and savage beasts (Psalm 49:10; Proverbs 12:1; Isaiah 19:11). The Hebrew and Greek words translated "brute" or "brutish" mean "stupid, foolish, and irrational, as cattle." We can derive from this that those who bully are

acting as cattle or other beasts incapable of rational thought. It is, unfortunately, not uncommon to see this type of abhorrent behavior in fallen man—even in the church—in both males and females throughout all life stages.”

- GotQuestions.org

How should a Christian respond to bullying? | GotQuestions.org



Think Above the Box: Have you ever been bullied? How did you handle it? Knowing what Scripture says, could you have dealt with the situation differently and been a better representation of a follower of Christ? Have you ever been on the reverse side and played the bully? What would have helped *that* situation?

3. There is quite a difference between self-defense and revenge. Sadly, Jonathan missed an opportunity to de-escalate the tense situation between Spears and Sean. God has no problem with protecting yourself, family and belongings from an unrighteous assault. It is actually good stewardship to protect your family and the innocent from harm.

Luke 22:36 GW Then he said to them, “But now, the person who has a wallet and a traveling bag should take them along. The person who doesn’t have a sword should sell his coat and buy one.”

Luke 11:21 AMPC When the strong man, fully armed, [from his courtyard] guards his own dwelling, his belongings are undisturbed [his property is at peace and is secure.]

Esther 8:11 TLB This decree gave the Jews everywhere permission to unite in the defense of their lives and their families, to destroy all the forces opposed to them, and to take their property.

“Nowhere in Scripture does it say that Christians can’t protect themselves or their family. What we should never do though is seek revenge. We must be slow to anger and handle all situations with wisdom.”

- Fritz Chery

20 Helpful Bible Verses About Defending Yourself (biblereasons.com)

Now, *revenge* is wanting payback, vengeance, restitution, and reparation for a loss or injury. When Jonathan was berating Spears for pushing Sean, he was defending his friend. When he crossed the line into seizing an opportunity to hit back at him, he was perhaps seeking revenge. There is a saying that goes, “*Revenge is sweet.*” But is it? God has another view on the subject:

Romans 12:19 NLT Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back,” says the Lord.

Proverbs 20:22 NLT Don’t say, “I will get even for this wrong.” Wait for the Lord to handle the matter.

“Not only did Jesus teach us to turn the other way, but He also showed us with His life. The sinful self wants to lash out in anger. It wants others to feel the same pain. It wants to curse, yell, and fight. We must stop living by the flesh and live by the Spirit. We must give all our evil and sinful thoughts to God.”

- Fritz Chery

25 Major Bible Verses About Revenge And Forgiveness (Anger) (biblereasons.com)

► What could Jonathan have done to avoid having his outrage cause an altercation, getting him in dire straits with the captain, and culminating in a dangerous duty assigned as punishment, right alongside the spiteful Wayne Spears?

► **TAB says:** He could have walked away; being the bigger man (as befitting a midshipman in the Royal Navy,) tried to seek peace instead of issuing threats of violence, and prayed to God for wisdom and strength to do all of the above. Of course, this can be extremely difficult in the actual moment of indignation and outrage, which is why spending regular time reading and meditating on God's Word will help build us up so that we will *automatically* react as Jesus wants us to, setting an example of restraint and being a good witness for Him.

4. Midshipman Spears seemed to have anger management issues towards the Moore family and had let his rage and jealousy get the better of him. There is hope for those consumed with fury and hatred, with God's help.

Proverbs 29:11 GW A fool expresses all his emotions, but a wise person controls them.

Proverbs 25:28 AMP Like a city that is broken down and without walls [leaving it unprotected] is a man who has no self-control over his spirit [and sets himself up for trouble.]

The following essay would have really aided poor Wayne, especially #6, which discusses the vicious cycle of how anger can become an addiction:

10 Biblical Truths to Overcome Sinful Anger - Topical Studies (biblestudytools.com)

REAL LIFE: Please read the following testimony of how a young girl opened her heart to God and forgave her tormentors using Jesus' math!

Matthew 18:21-22 NLT Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" "No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven!"

"On that day when God found me and spoke to me, I realized that Jesus was the cure my soul had been searching for all that time. By His gentle urging and help, I was able to forgive them. He infused my spirit with healing, washed my wounds in love, and soothed my tired and sore bones bones."
- Taylor Perkins

Bullying Almost Broke Me | Cru

APOLO-GET-ITS: How can algor mortis, aromatic spices and a change in the Sabbath convince hard-core atheists of the truth of Jesus' resurrection? Watch this!

The Case for the Resurrection is Stronger Than You Might Think

Also read and/or watch the following. Ponder factor: high!

"Investigating the Resurrection is a historical question that you can do with eyes open; it's not a blind faith kind of thing, like believing in the Easter Bunny or a lucky rabbit's foot. This is

real-world kind of stuff. And you can investigate the data for it."

- Professor Jonathan Morrow

**The Eyewitness Testimony That'll Boost Your Faith in the Death and Resurrection of Christ
| CBN News**

Guide for Chapter 5

Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea

1. Claise, the ship's cook, spent his entire earnings on exotic spices which he brought onboard to use in his recipes for the crew. This was quite a sacrifice, but he was happy to do it. The men were most appreciative of this, even concluding that he was a master chef!

Hebrews 13:16 ERV And don't forget to do good and to share what you have with others, because sacrifices like these are very pleasing to God.

Philippians 2:4 AMPC Let each of you esteem *and* look upon *and* be concerned for not [merely] his own interests, but also each for the interests of others.

Acts 2:44-45 GW All the believers kept meeting together, and they shared everything with each other. From time to time, they sold their property and other possessions and distributed the money to anyone who needed it.

"Christians are to show loving-kindness to all not only to people we know, but to strangers as well... We are to be there for the cares and needs of others and always put out a helping hand. Just like many people welcomed Jesus in their homes with open arms, we should do the same. When we serve others we are serving Christ."

- Fritz Chery

25 Inspirational Bible Verses About Hospitality (Amazing Truths) (biblereasons.com)



Think Above the Box: Has there been a time in your life that you were able to do as Claise did? Has anyone ever sacrificed for you like this? How did it feel?

2. Jonathan hung on ropes suspended over the ship brushing hot pitch between the planks. This was a way to waterproof the vessel (not to mention a horrible, extremely dangerous chore, which made it a great punishment!) God instructed Noah to do the same with the ark and Moses' mother also used this method for his floating basket:

Genesis 6:14 GW Make yourself a ship of cypress wood. Make rooms in the ship and coat it inside and out with tar.

Exodus 2:3 AMP When she could no longer hide him, she got him a basket (chest) made of papyrus reeds and covered it with tar and pitch [making it waterproof]. Then she put the child in it and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile.

Did you know that God has applied "tar and pitch" to the believer's soul to protect us also?

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 AMP Now it is God who establishes *and* confirms us [in joint fellowship] with you in Christ, and who has anointed us [empowering us with the gifts of the Spirit]; it is He who has also put His **seal** on us [that is, He has appropriated us and certified us as His] and has given us the [Holy] Spirit in our hearts as a pledge [like a security deposit to guarantee the fulfillment of His promise of eternal life.]

Ephesians 1:13-14 AMP In Him, you also, when you heard the word of truth, the good news of your salvation, and

[as a result] believed in Him, were stamped with the **seal** of the promised Holy Spirit [the One promised by Christ] as owned *and* protected [by God]. The Spirit is the guarantee [the first installment, the pledge, a foretaste] of our inheritance until the redemption of *God's own* [purchased] possession [His believers], to the praise of His glory.

Ephesians 4:30 AMP And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God [but seek to please Him], by whom you were **sealed and marked** [branded as God's own] for the day of redemption [the final deliverance from the consequences of sin].

But what exactly does it mean to be sealed by the Holy Spirit? Go to this link for some insight!

Sealed by the Holy Spirit: Meaning and Significance in the Bible (christianity.com)



Think Above the Box: Jonathan and Wayne were toiling literally “between the Devil and the deep blue sea” but this phrase also commonly refers to a dilemma where you have to choose between two equally bad choices. What to do? Call upon God! The following verses tell of the time when the disciples were in dire straits during a severe storm on the Sea of Galilee:

Matthew 14:22-33 TLB Immediately after this, Jesus told his disciples to get into their boat and cross to the other side of the lake while he stayed to get the people started home. Then afterwards he went up into the hills to pray. Night fell, and out on the lake the disciples were in trouble. For the wind had risen and they were fighting heavy seas. About four o'clock in the morning Jesus came to them, walking on the water! They screamed in terror, for they thought he was a ghost. But Jesus immediately spoke to them, reassuring them. “Don’t be afraid!” he said.

Then Peter called to him: “Sir, if it is really you, tell me to come over to you, walking on the water.” “All right,” the Lord said, “come along!” So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he looked around at the high waves, he was terrified and began to sink. “Save me, Lord!” he shouted.

Instantly Jesus reached out his hand and rescued him. “O man of little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?” And when they had climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. The others sat there, awestruck. “You really are the Son of God!” they exclaimed.

“Sooner or later every one of us finds ourselves in the ‘deep waters’ of life that require total dependence upon God’s mercy and grace.”

-Matt Crouch, of Hillsong United

Watch the group’s music video of *Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)* based on the above Scripture:

🎵 **Oceans (Where Feet May Fail) - Hillsong United lyrics**



Think Above the Box: Have you ever been between ‘the Devil and the deep blue sea?’ Did you rely on the Holy Spirit to help you get through when your ‘feet failed?’

3. Harrison and Jonathan had a most enlightening conversation about his recent altercation with Midshipman

Spears, Captain Moore's attack on the dock in London and the bitter rivalry felt by Spear's father, Captain Derrick Spears, not to mention the love triangle involving Miss Barbara Thompson. Have you ever gotten the definitions of *envy* and *jealousy* mixed up? *Envy* is when you want to possess something that somebody *else* owns. *Jealousy* is when you are afraid someone will take away what *you* possess (as in a relationship.) Looks like Captain Spears was guilty of both! Sad to say, he had passed on his hatred of all things *Moore* to his son, Wayne. The following verses detail God's view of these two emotions:

Exodus 20:17 TLB "You must not be **envious** of your neighbor's house, or want to sleep with his wife, or want to own his slaves, oxen, donkeys, or anything else he has."

James 3:16 AMP For where **jealousy** and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder [unrest, rebellion] and every evil thing *and* morally degrading practice.

Proverbs 14:30 ERV Peace of mind makes the body healthy, but **jealousy** is like a cancer.

Proverbs 27:4 AMPC Wrath is cruel and anger is an overwhelming flood, but who is able to stand before **jealousy**?

► Sounds like a recipe for disaster. According to the following verses, how should Jonathan have dealt with Spears?

1 Corinthians 10:13 ESV No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 13:4 NLT Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud.

Colossians 1:11 GW We ask him to strengthen you by his glorious might with all the power you need to patiently endure everything with joy.

Psalms 143:8-9 ESV Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul. Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord! I have fled to you for refuge.

► **TAB says:** He should have remained firm, leaned on God and been patient and kind, not paying back evil to Spears, remembering how God loves him (and Spears) and will provide a way for him to diffuse the situation.

Did you know that *God* is jealous for *us*?

Exodus 20:3-6 ESV "You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a **jealous** God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

Take a listen to a song about this Scripture:

🎵 **Exodus 20:3-5a - God Is Jealous**

REAL LIFE: Yale professor Dr. Paul Lim chronicles his journey from an atheist to a Christian in this speech.

PS: You get **EXTRA CREDIT** 'cuz it's 48 'well-worth your time' minutes!

From Atheist to Christian at Yale - Dr. Paul Lim

APOLO-GET-ITS: *Intelligent design* is the theory that everything in the Universe is a product of an intelligent being and not a result of natural forces that *evolved* over long periods of time. The following video features Dr. Stephen Meyer discussing how scientific discoveries point to an intelligent designer and not to chance:

Discovery #1 | The Four Great Discoveries of Modern Science That Prove God Exists

Guide for Chapter 6

A Loose Gun

1. Just as Captain Walker kept hearing sounds and rattles which would start and stop intermittently, the Holy Spirit, in the same way, can *prompt* us by speaking in a still, small voice as a means to draw us near to Him. We can either respond to Him or dismiss Him.

Luke 2:27 NLT That day the Spirit led him to the Temple.

John 16:7-14 AMP But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengtheners, Standby) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him (the Holy Spirit) to you [to be in close fellowship with you]. And He, when He comes, will convict the world about [the guilt of] sin [and the need for a Savior], and about righteousness, and about judgment: about sin [and the true nature of it], because they do not believe in Me [and My message]; about righteousness [personal integrity and godly character], because I am going to My Father and you will no longer see Me; about judgment [the certainty of it], because the ruler of this world (Satan) has been judged *and* condemned. “I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear [to hear] them now. But when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth [full and complete truth]. For He will not speak on His own initiative, but He will speak whatever He hears [from the Father—the message regarding the Son], and He will disclose to you what is to come [in the future]. He will glorify *and* honor Me, because He (the Holy Spirit) will take from what is Mine and will disclose it to you.

Romans 8:26 AMP In the same way the Spirit [comes to us and] helps us in our weakness. We do not know what prayer to offer *or* how to offer it as we should, but the Spirit Himself [knows our need and at the right time] intercedes on our behalf with sighs *and* groanings too deep for words.

John 14:26 AMPC But the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengtheners, Standby), the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name [in My place, to represent Me and act on My behalf], He will teach you all things. And He will cause you to recall (will remind you of, bring to your remembrance) everything I have told you.

Read the following blog about how to discern promptings from the Holy Spirit:

How to Discern Promptings from the Holy Spirit | Open the Bible



Think Above the Box: Have you ever sensed the Holy Spirit speaking to you? How did you discern that it was Him? Did you feel prompted to draw closer to God through the experience?

2. Ever the entertainer, Sean was caught by Spears dancing on a table and got ordered belowdecks to be disciplined far away from the crew, a very dangerous predicament to be sure! Spears’ punch to his face blindsided the young crewman. As Sean prepared to retaliate and suffer the consequences of hitting an officer, Steward came upon the scene and the altercation ended. Sean told Steward that he was set to knockout Spears and was admonished with “We all know ya could, but we also know that ya shouldn’t.” Steward saved Sean from an action that may have felt

good at the moment but would have had dire repercussions. In our lives, we won't always have a 'Steward' to save us from ourselves! This is a life-long struggle for us but God knows that we can lose our temper and gives us His Word and the Holy Spirit to assist at such times.

Ephesians 4:26-27 ERV "When you are angry, don't let that anger make you sin," and don't stay angry all day. Don't give the devil a way to defeat you.

Romans 12:19 ERV My friends, don't try to punish anyone who does wrong to you. Wait for God to punish them with his anger. In the Scriptures the Lord says, "I am the one who punishes; I will pay people back."

Matthew 5:43-44 TLB "There is a saying, 'Love your *friends* and hate your enemies.' But I say: Love your *enemies*! Pray for those who *persecute* you!"

Ephesians 4:31-32 ESV Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

► Do you think the above verses would have helped Sean?

► **TAB says:** Definitely!

*"Being angry and not sinning requires the discernment of constant practice (**Hebrews 5:14**) because so much of our anger is rooted in our prideful, selfish sin nature. And if we've suffered under the tyranny of a sinfully angry person, emotionally it can be very difficult to distinguish between sinful and righteous anger. But because it is something God calls us to, we must press into it."*
-Jon Bloom

How Can We Be Angry and Not Sin? | Desiring God



Think Above the Box: Discuss the difference between sinful and righteous anger. Which do you think Sean displayed? How about Spears? Which type did Steward advocate? Name examples of both that you have experienced in your own life.

3. After Spear's impertinence of calling an officer by his first name and suggesting that the order given was unnecessary, mild-mannered Lieutenant Harrison responded with a perfectly outraged Captain Walker impression. Steward said, "If I didn't know better, and if the timbre was a wee bit lower, I'd 'ave thought it was the grand dragon himself!" Now replace the name *Jesus* for the *grand dragon*. When we deal with conflict and indignation in our lives, would anyone say the same of us, that *we* sound like Jesus? Here's what Scripture says about being Jesus to the world:

1 John 2:6 AMP Whoever says he lives in Christ [that is, whoever says he has accepted Him as God and Savior] ought [as a moral obligation] to walk *and* conduct himself just as He walked *and* conducted Himself.

1 Corinthians 11:1 NLT And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ.

Ephesians 5:1-2 GW Imitate God, since you are the children he loves. Live in love as Christ also loved us. He gave

his life for us as an offering and sacrifice, a soothing aroma to God.

Luke 6:40 AMPC A pupil is not superior to his teacher, but everyone [when he is] completely trained (readjusted, restored, set to rights, and perfected) will be like his teacher.

Colossians 3:10 NLT Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.

Just as Harrison knew Captain Walker's character so well that he responded to Spears in the exact same manner, can we know Jesus well enough to respond to what life throws at us just as He would? How can we transform our character to be like Jesus? What, exactly, is Godliness all about?

"Godliness is simply becoming more like God every day, which is to say, it's you becoming more like Christ all the time."
- David P. Jeremiah

Christlike Character – FaithGateway

4. Captain Walker more than suspected that Wayne Spears was behind the strange series of calamities and mishaps that were plaguing Jonathan. Rather than solve his problems for him, he told his men, "If we step in and solve it for him, well, that does not give him a chance to work it out." God also wants us to 'work it out' in our lives:

Romans 5:3-5 AMP And not only *this*, but [with joy] let us exult in our sufferings *and* rejoice in our hardships, knowing that hardship (distress, pressure, trouble) produces patient endurance; and endurance, proven character (spiritual maturity); and proven character, hope *and* confident assurance [of eternal salvation]. Such hope [in God's promises] never disappoints *us*, because God's love has been abundantly poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

James 1:2-4 ERV My brothers and sisters, you will have many kinds of trouble. But this gives you a reason to be very happy. You know that when your faith is tested, you learn to be patient in suffering. If you let that patience work in you, the end result will be good. You will be mature and complete. You will be all that God wants you to be.

Philippians 4:12-13 ERV I know how to live when I am poor and when I have plenty. I have learned the secret of how to live through any kind of situation—when I have enough to eat or when I am hungry, when I have everything I need or when I have nothing. Christ is the one who gives me the strength I need to do whatever I must do.

► Seems like God allows us to work through our problems and adversity for our benefit. Why do you think He does that?

► **TAB says:** By not solving our problems for us, God provides the opportunity for us to learn how to handle the complexities of life. Conflicts, suffering and afflictions, when a person draws upon guidance from the Holy Spirit, can build endurance, patience, and spiritual maturity. It will also strengthen character and allow us to lean upon God for help. It also provides a Christian witness to others that see that our behavior is different from non-believers.

Philippians 2:12 GW My dear friends, you have always obeyed, not only when I was with you but even more now that I'm absent. In the same way continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

Wait, now I have to work out my *salvation*? And with *fear* and *trembling*? Help!!!

"So why do we need to work out salvation when our works do not save us? Because though we are saved by God's unconditional electing grace through the gift of faith, the works we do prove that our faith is real. Works are evidence of election."
-Jon Bloom

Do go on....

Why Must We Work Out Our Salvation? | Desiring God

REAL LIFE: Trouble can hit us in many ways: job loss, financial problems, health issues, depression, addiction, etc. Singer Jack Cassidy went from being a famous Hollywood offspring to being a contestant on *The Voice* to being a drug addict to being a saved soul:

*"If you could sum up Jack Cassidy's experience in Hollywood in one Bible verse, it might be **Proverbs 14:12**. There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death. (NIV)"*

'There's Power in the Name of Jesus': How God Saved This Christian Singer From The Grips of Drug Addiction (pureflix.com)

"Dark sleeps like a monster under my bed / When fear dances round and round in my head / For every single time I thought I was dead / You were with me in the valley / You were with me."
- Jack Cassidy

Jack Cassidy - Run At The Giant (Official Lyric Video)

APOLO-GET-ITS: There is an ongoing battle in our culture between science and the Bible. But are they really on opposite ends of the spectrum? Watch this video to find out if science argues for or against God:

Does Science Argue for or against God? | "The more we learn about our universe, the more the hypothesis that there is a Creator gains in credibility." -Dr. John Lennox, Professor of Mathematics... | By PragerU

Guide for Chapter 7

One for Adventure

1. The Stredney brothers were excited that the famous hero, Jonathan Moore, would now be bunking 'before the mizzenmast.' Colin wondered if he would even speak to them as they were poor and lowly. Jones told the boys, "He knows what it's like to be a poor man, yet he discovered his father again, after being lost." Mankind has always looked down on the poor, but God doesn't. One can be poor in material things but much worse is to be poor *spiritually*. Conversely, one can be rich in spiritual things while being totally destitute of earthly possessions!

Mark 10:23 NLT Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God!"

1 Timothy 6:8-10 ESV But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

"The human perspective sees wealth as a blessing and poverty as a curse. God's plan is much greater and uses both wealth and poverty to accomplish His will. We are to avoid the temptation to see wealth as God's only blessing and instead be content in any and every circumstance, knowing that God's blessings are not defined by our possessions in this world but are found in their fullness in a kingdom not of this world."

- GotQuestions.org

Is it better, spiritually, to be poor than to be rich? | GotQuestions.org

How is Jonathan being lost and then finding his father like a believer finding Jesus? Check this out:

*"Every human being is either lost or found. We all belong to one of those two categories. The first step in becoming found is to admit that we are lost. We agree with God that our sin deserves punishment, and we acknowledge that the punishment Jesus suffered was sufficient to pay for it. We humbly receive that gift through faith (**Ephesians 2:8-9**). In a divine exchange, God transfers our sin to the cross and transfers Christ's righteousness to our account (**Colossians 2:14**). We then enter into a new relationship with God as His own beloved children. We are no longer lost. We have been found, forgiven, and given a fresh start (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). That's why Christians can joyfully sing, 'I once was lost, but now am found; Was blind, but now I see.'"*

- GotQuestions.org

What does it mean to be spiritually lost? | GotQuestions.org

How about a virtual choir rendition of this famous hymn recorded in May of 2020 during the Covid lockdown?

Amazing Grace • A beautiful hymn in lockdown



Think Above the Box: Have you ever lost something precious to you and finally found it? How did you feel? Do you think that God feels that way when someone becomes a follower of His? Has He found *you*?

2. Once the *Danielle* docked in port, Captain Walker stated that he hoped that the Governor would invite them to dinner. The three Dowdeswell sisters arrived at the dock and Rebecca announced, "...I have been sent by my father, the Governor, to personally request your attendance at dinner tonight at the mansion, if that is agreeable." He accepted the invitation and stated that there will be eight attending: himself and the officers. But Penelope insisted that Sean Flagon, a lowly seaman, be included.

Luke 14: 15 NLT Hearing this, a man sitting at the table with Jesus exclaimed, "What a blessing it will be to attend a banquet in the Kingdom of God!"

Let's read the whole chapter, shall we?

Luke 14:1-24 ERV - Is It Right to Heal on the Sabbath Day? - Bible Gateway

That evening, young Sean even proceeded to tell the dinner guests about meeting the King! Jesus also offers an invitation to ALL of mankind: rich, poor, worthy and unworthy.

"Jesus likened the kingdom to a feast to which many were invited, but for various reasons they all refused. This was how most of the Jews treated Jesus' invitation. They felt they were good enough already and did not need to repent (Luke 14:16-20). Consequently, the religiously respectable people were left out of the kingdom, but outcasts such as beggars, tax collectors and prostitutes were included. Even Gentiles from far off places accepted the invitation that the Jews refused (Luke 14:21-24)."

- StudyLight.org

Luke 14 - Bridgeway Bible Commentary - Bible Commentaries - StudyLight.org



Think Above the Box: Do you see yourself as one of the guests who *rejects* God's invitation or as one of the undeserving who *accepts* it? Do you invite others to God's banquet?

REAL LIFE: Corrie Ten Boom and her sister Betsie endured horrific experiences in a Nazi concentration camp during World War II. The author of *The Hiding Place* had an amazing faith and trust in the Lord:

The Faith of Corrie ten Boom (crosswalk.com)

She discusses how the Holy Spirit enabled her to offer forgiveness to one of her Nazi tormentors, as she could not do it on her own:

Matthew 6:15 ERV But if you don't forgive others, then your Father in heaven will not forgive the wrongs you do.

Luke 18:27 NLT He replied, "What is impossible for people is possible with God."

Corrie Ten Boom, "How to Forgive"

APOLO-GET-ITS: Ever stare up at a starry sky or across a beautiful meadow and wonder why we can be moved by seeing magnificent sights? Could this beauty be for us?

Luke 12:27 ERV Think about how the wildflowers grow. They don't work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you that even Solomon, the great and rich king, was not dressed as beautifully as one of these flowers.

"Faced with a natural world brimming with beauty and engineering, scientists should reconsider the dogma that all of this created itself. Instead, they should consider that the mind-boggling beauty we see around us was always intended for our eyes—designed by a master Engineer and Artist, to display His genius and glory through the language of beauty—in a language best understood not by peahens, but by people."
- John Stonestreet

Could This Beauty Be for Us? - Breakpoint

The Magic Hour song from Counting Stars by Andrew Peterson:

*Here at the magic hour/ Time and eternity mingle a moment in chorus. / Here at the magic hour /
Bright is the mystery / Plain is the beauty before us / Could this beauty be for us?*

*What is this voice that sings / Holy and hovering / Over this hill in the still of the evening? /
(Son of God, speak...)*

Andrew Peterson - The Magic Hour

EXTRA CREDIT: *"We can experience the beauty of God's creation no matter where we are. Whether it's the birth of a new family member or the spiritual peace that we experience whilst out in nature, there are constant reminders of God's handiwork in our world."*
- Alannah Francis

11 Bible verses on the beauty of God's creativity (christiantoday.com)

Guide for Chapter 8

The Turtle and the Fiero

1. Delain was granted her wish to go to Conception Island to see and sketch the nesting turtles she had learned so much about. Upon arriving at the beach, she and Jonathan raced against time to save as many baby turtles as they could from the clutches of the predatory seagulls in the air above. As Delain cried over the lost babies, Jonathan told her, “Think of the ones you are saving, not the ones you are losing!”

Matthew 9:37 ERV Jesus said to his followers, “There is such a big harvest of people to bring in. But there are only a few workers to help harvest them.”

Have you ever heard the story of *The Star Thrower*?

Starfish Story (aka The Star Thrower)

► How is the act of saving baby turtles (and starfish) like Christian evangelism?

► **TAB says:** Jesus calls upon all Christians to share the Good News of the Gospel to everyone we can, through discussion, relationships and how we live our lives. This does not guarantee that everyone that we speak to will open their hearts and become believers. Our portion of the job is to tell them about Jesus’ story of forgiveness and redemption. The Holy Spirit will take it from there!

Sometimes, the thought of trying to bring others to Christ is overwhelming. The following article lists 40 Bible verses and how they can help you share the Gospel:

40 Verses about Evangelism - Jesus Film Project

2. Around sunset, Jonathan discovered that pirates were approaching the island, most likely to get at the vast store of bottled rum. The odds were about twenty pirates to five crewmen plus Delain and Mr. Tuttle, advantage - pirates! Jonathan devised a plan to deceive the buccaneers into thinking that a crew of over twenty was drunk and incapacitated on the beach. Here, the application of a ruse was to hopefully save the lives of the vastly outnumbered little entourage. In our lives, there is someone who uses deceit not to save but to *harm*. Satan employs cunning and lies to convince people that God doesn’t exist, which encourages them to continue in sinful living. Many people actually often deceive themselves into NOT believing in God:

Romans 1:20 AMP For ever since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through His workmanship [all His creation, the wonderful things that He has made], so that they [who fail to believe and trust in Him] are without excuse *and* without defense.

James 1:14 AMP But each one is tempted when he is dragged away, enticed *and* baited [to commit sin] by his own [worldly] desire (lust, passion).

John 12:37 AMPC Even though He had done so many miracles before them (right before their eyes), yet they still did not trust in Him *and* failed to believe in Him.

The following essay explains why God allows deception:

Why does God allow deception? | GotQuestions.org

► How can we understand this?

► **TAB says:** God always gives us the power to *choose* whether to believe in Him or not. If someone rejects the belief that Jesus is his Savior, God will allow that. God will not force anyone to believe and love Him. If He did, heaven would be filled with robots!

REAL LIFE: Like a baby turtle destined for the gulls that makes it to the water, Gianna Jessen defied the odds and survived a saline late-term abortion. She has given her testimony around the world and her incredible story has even inspired a movie, *October Baby*. Here she gives her testimony:

Gianna Jessen's POWERFUL Abortion Survival Story

EXTRA CREDIT: How about watching the film and hearing Gianna sing?

October Baby | Official Trailer

🎵 **October Baby, Soundtrack #12 Ocean Floor-Gianna Jessen**

APOLO-GET-ITS: Atheists love to state that the Resurrection never happened. But then, why did the eleven apostles suffer torture, persecution and even death if they knew it was all a lie?

“Sadly, those who don’t believe in the reality of the resurrection, which is the key doctrine on which Christianity either rises or falls, believe that the early disciples made up the entire Christian story and thus the story of what happened to Jesus is really based on a colossal lie. The question before us is simply this could the early apostles and disciples of Jesus have made up the entire gospel story including His resurrection from the dead.”

- Curt Blattman

Would You Die for a Lie? - Bible Apologetics - A DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Guide for Chapter 9

The Ghost and the Gun

1. The sight of sailors engaged in drunken revelry on the beach was enough for the pirates to confidently launch a sneak attack upon them for the promise of rum and booty. They were tempted by the desire for conquest and greed. Unbeknownst to them, the scene was part of a clever plan to get them ashore so their ship, the *Fiero*, could be taken. They ended up losing their ship and two jolly boats, swimming for the beach to save their lives.

James 1:15 ESV Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

People are deceived by the thought of an easy road to relationships, riches, fame, material goods, etc. that involves sinning...they are tricked into believing that those things are better than a relationship with Jesus and eternity in Heaven with Him, even convincing themselves that He doesn't exist. How can you train yourself to be wise and know how to recognize temptation when you see it and to be able to resist it?

Matthew 26:41 AMPC All of you must keep awake (give strict attention, be cautious and active) *and* watch and pray, that you may not come into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Colossians 3:2 AMPC And set your minds *and* keep them set on what is above (the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth.

Proverbs 4:14-15 ERV Don't take the path of the wicked; don't follow those who do evil. Stay away from that path; don't even go near it. Turn around and go another way.

Watch or read the following blog post on how you can overcome temptation:

"God spares us much temptation we'll never even know about. But when we are tempted, God doesn't automatically remove it; we must actively fight it."

- Mark Altrogge

2 Keys to Overcoming Temptation - Explore the Bible (biblestudytools.com)



Think Above the Box: Think about a time when you overcame a temptation to do what you knew wasn't right. Did you rely on Scripture and the Holy Spirit to guide you?

2. As Jonathan and the crew shimmied up the ropes of the pirate ship, Delain's teacher, the mild-mannered Mr. Tupper, declared, "I am afraid I am too weak to climb" and asked to stay in the launch to hunker down through the entire taking of the *Fiero*. His fear kept him 'sitting on the sidelines' just when the crew needed all the help they could get fighting the two pirates and repelling Petterwick's approaching boats. Have you ever felt like Mr. Tupper? We all have! The Bible offers wisdom on how to 'get in the game!'

"Whether we feel capable or not, if God (our coach) calls us up and gives us playing time, it is our job out of obedience to not sit on the sidelines but to go into the game. If we have absolute faith in

Sitting on the Sidelines Ready "For God has not given us a spirit of fearfulness, but one of power, love, and sound judgment."

EXTRA CREDIT: Discuss the questions at the end of the post and give the four Bible verses a look! Mr. Tupper gained a chance to redeem himself, which he took by suggesting that flying Delain's bloomers (to display their colors) would get the message to Captain Walker that the *Fiero* was now in British hands, thereby saving both ship and crew. *Everyone* has something to offer. Jesus knows that we are not perfect and provides opportunities for us to 'get down on the field':

1 Corinthians 12:7 ERV Something from the Spirit can be seen in each person. The Spirit gives this to each one to help others.

Ephesians 4:11-16 ERV And that same Christ gave these gifts to people: He made some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to go and tell the Good News, and some to care for and teach God's people. Christ gave these gifts to prepare God's holy people for the work of serving, to make the body of Christ stronger. This work must continue until we are all joined together in what we believe and in what we know about the Son of God. Our goal is to become like a full-grown man—to look just like Christ and have all his perfection. Then we will no longer be like babies. We will not be people who are always changing like a ship that the waves carry one way and then another. We will not be influenced by every new teaching we hear from people who are trying to deceive us—those who make clever plans and use every kind of trick to fool others into following the wrong way. No, we will speak the truth with love. We will grow to be like Christ in every way. He is the head, and the whole body depends on him. All the parts of the body are joined and held together, with each part doing its own work. This causes the whole body to grow and to be stronger in love.

"Christians should be on the frontlines, not the sidelines"

- Our Daily Bread, September 21, 1997

Sitting in the Stands/Ephesians 4:11-16



Think Above the Box: Name a time when you 'got in the game' to help someone instead of staying on the sidelines. How did it make you feel? Did they see the love of Jesus in your behavior?

3. Fresh off of their victory of securing the pirate ship, the triumphant little crew of the *Fiero* was fired upon by the *Danielle*. That's no way to treat conquering heroes, is it? This was due to the fact that the pirate ship had no flag flying and was assumed by Captain Walker to be an enemy target. Luckily he started with a warning shot! Once Delain's 'flag' was flown, it was recognized as a friendly vessel.

Matthew 5:14-16 TLB You are the world's light—a city on a hill, glowing in the night for all to see. Don't hide your light! Let it shine for all; let your good deeds glow for all to see, so that they will praise your heavenly Father.

Sometimes, our actions and behavior are so similar to sailing a pirate ship into the British navy's path that people might be shocked to learn that we are Christians! The following illustrates how we are to be Christ to others and not hide our light.

"Jesus said we are 'the salt of the earth' and 'the light of the world.' Being salt and light is not optional. Jesus did not say YOU CAN BE...OR YOU HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO BE...He said YOU ARE. Everyone who has trusted Christ for salvation and is born again is the salt of the earth and the light of the world."
- Michael Youssef

Christian: You Are Salt and Light (christianity.com)

🎵 Salt And Light Lauren Daigle Worship Video with lyrics

EXTRA CREDIT: Be sure to read the commentary by Daphne Delay in the YouTube [... *more*] box!



Think Above the Box: Have you ever 'not displayed your colors' and been mistaken for a non-believer? How could you have handled things differently?

REAL LIFE: 1 Peter 1:6-7 GW You are extremely happy about these things, even though you have to suffer different kinds of trouble for a little while now. The purpose of these troubles is to test your faith as fire tests how genuine gold is. Your faith is more precious than gold, and by passing the test, it gives praise, glory, and honor to God. This will happen when Jesus Christ appears again.

"I truly believe that if we lean on the strengths of God, and the strength that he gives us, that we're capable of handling a lot more than we give ourselves credit for." - Hillary Scott

Read Hillary's testimony and watch the music video of her song *Thy Will*:

Lady Antebellum's Hillary Scott says it was God who helped her deal with miscarriage and recent death of loved ones (christiantoday.com)

🎵 Hillary Scott & The Scott Family - Thy Will (Official Video)

"It is powerful to praise God in any season, but these are the most precious praises of all, when we cling to Christ in life's most horrible moments, knowing that he has walked our path, felt our barb, received our nail, and that suffering is precisely the place where we will know him best."
- David Mathis

Though You Slay Me | Desiring God

Watch the video of *Though You Slay Me* by Shane & Shane:

🎵 Though You Slay Me – Shane & Shane featuring John Piper

APOLO-GET-ITS: Every year at Easter time, we see our culture go overboard for bunnies, ducklings and colored eggs but there is hardly a mention of what Easter really means, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ! How sad...

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 TLB I passed on to you right from the first what had been told to me, that Christ died for our sins just as the Scriptures said he would, and that he was buried, and that three days afterwards he arose from the grave just as the prophets foretold.

But how can we know Jesus *really* rose from the grave?

“No tomb anywhere in the universe holds Jesus’ remains! He Died, He was buried, and He arose again on the third day. This is the Gospel. This is the foundation of Christianity.”

- David Jeremiah

The Undeniable Proof of Jesus’ Resurrection—Bible Study - David Jeremiah Blog

Guide for Chapter 10

Finally, a Pirate

1. Upon welcoming the band of turtle-loving pirate-fighters back aboard ship, the Captain hosted a feast of sugared puffy rolls, peppered eggs, toasted cheese, sliced ham, coffee and tea for the hungry company. Certainly the most appreciative were Sean and Jonathan, who always smiled when facing a delectable dinner due to their past ordeal trying to survive on the miserable streets of London. They never forgot what it was like to suffer and starve from not having food to eat.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 NLT Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

Whenever we have experienced being deprived of something, don't we always cherish it that much more when we get to have it again? Like the boys facing a scrumptious meal with gratitude, we should always be thankful to God for the blessings in our life. Sometimes, it is easier said than done as the distractions and busyness of life take our attention away from the Giver of all things!

"'What do you say?' How often do parents have to remind their children to respond in thankfulness for things that are given or done for them? Yet even as mature believers—how often we forget to thank God? We can be so enamored with an answered prayer that oftentimes we forget to say thank you."

- Crystal McDowell

Top 7 Bible Verses About Being Grateful (whatchristianswanttoknow.com)



Think Above the Box: Name something you really appreciate in your life that you did without in the past and cherish deeply because of that experience. Thank God today for the blessings in your life.

2. Once back aboard the *Danielle*, all the participants involved in the commandeering of the *Fiero* assembled at the Captain's table to discuss the incident that had transpired. Jonathan was in awe of Delain, who could launch cannonballs at buccaneers and then be a proper lady all in the same day. While she may appear as *two* in one, our God is *three* in one, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!

2 Corinthians 13:13 ERV I pray that you will enjoy the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:19 GW So wherever you go, make disciples of all nations: Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

How can we fathom this?

"A finite human being trying to understand an infinite God is like an amoeba trying to understand quantum physics."

- CompellingTruth.org

What is the Trinity? (compellingtruth.org)

Perhaps putting it to music will help...

*"God the Father, Lord you reign / Over everything / Above heaven earth and sky / You're the sovereign King...
God the Son you gave your life / To atone for mine / A humiliating death / Proving you're the Christ...
God the Spirit give me peace, / Help me when I'm weak / Be my guide in times of need / Lead me to the King ...
Father, Mighty King, Elohim. / Jesus, Lamb of God, Prince of Peace / Spirit, Comforter, who intercedes /
Praise the Holy Trinity"*

- Michael Monroe, Koby Orr, Dave Morgan, Triston Johnson, Adam Geortzen, Carson Heffner

🎵 Holy Trinity - Canyon Hills Worship



Think Above the Box: Is the concept of the Trinity clearer to you now or are you feeling more like that amoeba? Explain how, in man's defense, it is still a mystery for our finite minds.

3. While debriefing the Captain, Jonathan explained how many bottles of rum were squandered for the cause. A confounded Steward exclaims, "Tis a sin to waste, Mr. Moore!" Did you know that in the Bible, the disciples actually got angry at someone for 'wasting' something valuable on Jesus, Himself? Take a look at this:

Matthew 26:6-13 AMP Now when Jesus was [back] in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very expensive perfume and she poured it on Jesus' head as He reclined *at the table*. But when the disciples saw it they were indignant *and* angry, saying, "Why all this waste [of money]? For this *perfume* might have been sold at a high price and *the money* given to the poor." But Jesus, aware [of the malice] of this [remark], said to them, "Why are you bothering the woman? She has done a good thing to Me. For you always have the poor with you; but you will not always have Me. When she poured this perfume on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. I assure you *and* most solemnly say to you, wherever this gospel [of salvation] is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told in memory of her [for her act of love and devotion]."

Who knew that 'wasting' something could actually be a positive thing? The sacrifice and emptying out of both rum and expensive perfume (*rum agricole* and *spikenard*, respectively!) was done for good; one to save the crew and take the *Fiero* and the other to anoint Jesus for his upcoming burial. The following sheds more Biblical light on the subject:

SPIKENARD - The Costly Oil Of Spikenard In The Bible (bibleversestudy.com)



Think Above the Box: Jesus also sacrificed something precious (His very life) for the greater good (saving men from their sins.) Have you ever had to sacrifice something dear to you to rescue, save, free or protect someone else? How did you feel doing it? Did someone ever do that for you?

REAL LIFE: One astrophysicist's fascination with astronomy and cosmology convinced him that belief in God is rational and true.

"The only reasonable conclusion I could see was that the Bible must be the inspired Word of God."

- Dr. Hugh Ross

My Story: Dr. Hugh Ross | Cru

APOLO-GET-ITS: One of the first steps to belief in God is the appreciation of creation both here on earth and in the cosmos. Scripture tells us the following:

Romans 1:20 TLB Since earliest times men have seen the earth and sky and all God made, and have known of his existence and great eternal power. So they will have no excuse when they stand before God at Judgment Day.

Job 12:7-10 ERV But ask the animals, and they will teach you. Or ask the birds of the air, and they will tell you. Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you. Or let the fish in the sea tell you their wisdom. Everyone knows that the Lord made these things. Every animal that lives and everyone who breathes—they are all under God's power.

Psalms 19:1 ESV *To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.* The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Psalms 104:24-25 NLT O Lord, what a variety of things you have made! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your creatures. Here is the ocean, vast and wide, teeming with life of every kind, both large and small.

Sadly, with all of our modern distractions, many are missing the evidence. Read/listen to the following Breakpoint podcasts on appreciating God's creation:

Have You Been Outside Today? - Breakpoint

BreakPoint: Consider the Pokémon of the Field

Now go outside and look all around you!

Guide for Chapter 11

Planted Seeds

1. At dinner the second night in Nassau, Captain Walker informed the Governor that there had been a revision of their itinerary. The *Danielle* would be going to Africa on an urgent mission and the *Fiero* would now be transporting his daughters to London. After assuring him of the comfort and safety of his daughters, the Governor agreed that it was best. We all have experienced unexpected changes of plans in our lives. Most times, we react negatively, but God wants us to make the most of whatever occurs!

Proverbs 16:9 AMP A man's mind plans his way [as he journeys through life], But the LORD directs his steps *and* establishes them.

"...there is a common saying, 'If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans!'"

- Dave Keehn

When God Changes Our Plans - Topical Studies (biblestudytools.com)



Think Above the Box: Name a time when your plans were changed and how you reacted. How did things turn out? What did you gain and/or lose from it? Did you sense God's grace from the experience?

EXTRA CREDIT: Read all of Proverbs 16 and contemplate God's wisdom! Hint – try this link:

Proverbs 16 AMP - Contrast the Upright and the Wicked - Bible Gateway

2. Wayne Spears, the young Midshipman, decided that *he* had a better plan for ship assignments than Captain Walker. He was then met with a tirade from a fire-breathing dragon. In this case, the questioning of assignments was for a selfish reason, mainly to get rid of Jonathan and send him back to England. Sometimes questioning authority is solely based on personal advantage, but it can also be to gain knowledge and understanding. God encourages the latter!

Isaiah 55:8-9 GW "My thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways," declares the Lord. "Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts."

Judges 6:13-14 TLB "Stranger," Gideon replied, "if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors have told us about—such as when God brought them out of Egypt? Now the Lord has thrown us away and has let the Midianites completely ruin us." Then the Lord turned to him and said, "I will make you strong! Go and save Israel from the Midianites! I am sending you!"

Romans 9:20 TLB No, don't say that. Who are you to criticize God? Should the thing made say to the one who made it, "Why have you made me like this?"

James 1:5 AMPC If any of you is deficient in wisdom, let him ask of the giving God [Who gives] to everyone

liberally *and* ungrudgingly, without reproaching *or* faultfinding, and it will be given him.

"Some believe that to question the Bible, God's direction, or even God Himself is tantamount to blasphemy or, on a smaller scale, a sign of disbelief. I think it all goes back to motive."

- Laura Bagby

Is It Wrong for Christians to Question God? | CBN



Think Above the Box: Have you ever questioned God as to why something happened? Was it for your own self-centered benefit or for spiritual insight?

"It's easy to sing / When there's nothing to bring me down / But what will I say / When I'm held to the flame / Like I am right now? / I know You're able / And I know You can / Save through the fire / With Your mighty hand / But even if You don't / My hope is You alone." - MercyMe

🎵 MercyMe - Even If "Song & Testimony" Live!

REAL LIFE: Sometimes what *we* envision for our future isn't what God envisions! Read the following post about how a devastating journey resulted in learning that God's plan is always best:

God Bless Endometriosis

That's it in a nutshell.

Looking back, I can see how God had a plan for my husband Paul and I and our family, even though we didn't realize it for a very long time.

When we were first dating, we spoke about adoption. Paul had worked with children in an orphanage in Saigon when he was in the Air Force. When I was five, our neighbors adopted a four year old girl from South Korea and my two best friends were adopted also! So, adoption was not something unfamiliar in our lives. I think God was getting us ready for the path that He had prepared...

Paul and I went through the whole "infertility experience" before it was cool (or prevalent!) At the time, no one I knew was having any difficulty getting pregnant, just me. This was a really trying time for I had always been a goody two shoes and took care of myself - I didn't smoke, drink or use drugs (my mother always warned me about the effects of such things on the developing baby) and then I'm the only one in my circle of friends not getting pregnant. During those long seven years, I remember asking God, "Why me? It doesn't seem fair."

I was eventually diagnosed with endometriosis and two surgeries later, it looked like I was always going to be somebody's aunt, but not a mom. We looked into adopting locally, but at the time, all the agencies were so restrictive and things did not look too promising.

Then, in 1984, my father was working with a Korean businessman who gave him the opportunity to travel extensively throughout South Korea for over a month. Dad mentioned to him that Paul and I were interested in adoption and he referred my father to Holt International Children's Service in Seoul. Since the end of the Korean

War, this agency (started by two American Christians) has assisted in over 200,000 international adoptions.

Dad visited Holt's office in Seoul and came home with a business card that would change our lives! We contacted Bethany Christian Services, who works with Holt in South Korea, here in Chicago and began the adoption process for our first daughter, Gina.

I was a corporate travel agent at the time and had a great opportunity to visit Seoul right after we sent in our adoption application. I was able to meet with the social workers at the Holt orphanage who would be matching a child to us. It was really something to walk into a room filled with toddlers that all want to hug you at the same time! It turned out that Gina and I were only about 20 miles apart from each other, she 'in utero' and me at the Seoul Hilton!

It took so long for her to arrive. She was born a preemie and every month we would get a medical report stating that she had pneumonia or bronchitis, patches on her lungs and was 'probably adoptable.' It was a very scary time for us - we didn't know from month to month if the Korean government would let her leave. Fortunately, she grew healthy and strong and was able to come home to our family at eight months old. Overall, the time from our application to her arrival was 18 months long.

Now our second child was another story! Due to the upcoming Seoul Olympics in January of 1988, South Korea wanted as many orphans sent out to their new families as possible before the games commenced. They did not want to be seen as a third world nation and desired to keep a low profile in regards to international adoption. Alicia arrived about seven months after our application was submitted, on Christmas Eve no less, at the age of three months.

Now our daughters are ages 36 and 38. Boy, did the time go fast! I remember the months spent looking at our empty pink nursery wondering if Gina was ever going to get there and now both our daughters are married and we have five amazing grandchildren!

I can truly say that I was blessed to have endometriosis, because without it, Paul and I would not have our wonderful family. We have been able to assist others throughout the years with their adoption journeys, including the arrival of a nephew from Incheon, South Korea! I truly feel that it does not matter if we share the same DNA, God wanted Gina and Alicia to be with us, and so He worked it all out perfectly. Adoption is truly a creation of God, uniting parents and children and filling all of their hearts.

- Barbara Pietsch

Ephesians 1:5 AMPC For He foreordained us (destined us, planned in love for us) to be adopted (revealed) as His own children through Jesus Christ, in accordance with the purpose of His will [because it pleased Him and was His kind intent].

James 1:27 AMPC External religious worship [religion as it is expressed in outward acts] that is pure and unblemished in the sight of God the Father is this: to visit *and* help *and* care for the orphans and widows in their affliction *and* need, and to keep oneself unspotted *and* uncontaminated from the world.

Deuteronomy 10:18 ESV He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.

Matthew 19:26 ESV But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Watch the video link below about Harry and Bertha Holt and how their faith and trust in God led to almost 50,000 orphans finding forever families in the United States alone through international adoption (after being told that it would take an act of Congress!)

"They pioneered international adoption, and founded Holt International. But long before that, they were child sponsors — driven by their faith, compassion, generosity and desire to do what they could to make the world a better place."

- Holt International

Holt International Children's Services - History



Think Above the Box: Do you know of any examples where the odds seemed impossible for man, but succeeded with God's help? (As Christians like to say, "It was a real God thing.")

APOLO-GET-ITS: Have you ever wondered what *this* crucifixion phenomenon is all about?

Luke 23:44-45 AMPC It was now about the sixth hour (midday), and darkness enveloped the whole land *and* earth until the ninth hour (about three o'clock in the afternoon,) while the sun's light faded *or was darkened* ; and the curtain [of the Holy of Holies] of the temple was torn in two.

"The preternatural darkness reported at Jesus' crucifixion was no metaphor. It was a real historical event based on eyewitness accounts and independently corroborated by a number of highly qualified ancient historians. And just as the darkness recorded in the gospels was based on real history, the reason for Jesus's death is rooted in the real history recorded in the Book of Genesis."

- Daniel Anderson

Free definition (such a deal!): *preternatural* means existing outside of the natural, something that is unique, incomprehensible and unexplainable.

Darkness at the Crucifixion / metaphor or real history?

Guide for Chapter 12

Planted Weeds

1. The *Danielle's* resident prisoner, American Captain Walter Kozak, knew that he needed a backup escape plan to save himself from the British gallows. As this would require the aid of an accomplice, he found a likely patsy in Midshipman Wayne Spears and immediately started befriending him. He played on Spear's jealousy and hatred of Jonathan to manipulate the young man to do his bidding. Satan does the same with all of us, searching for our vulnerabilities and making full use of them to get us to sin against God. Just who *is* this guy?

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 TLB If the Good News we preach is hidden to anyone, it is hidden from the one who is on the road to eternal death. Satan, who is the god of this evil world, has made him blind, unable to see the glorious light of the Gospel that is shining upon him or to understand the amazing message we preach about the glory of Christ, who is God.

"Who is this enemy we face who we know as Satan or the devil? If you have tried to understand Satan, you have probably come across some common conceptions and misconceptions that are associated with his name. Whatever you have believed before, let's set the record straight."

- Clarence L. Haynes, Jr.

What the Bible Says About Satan - Bible Resources

Jonathan chose to follow Captain Walker's advice about having no discussion with the prisoner and promptly departed the brig, but Wayne lingered and allowed himself unwittingly to become part of Kozak's evil escape plan, even contemplating the murder of his adversary!

James 4:7 AMP So submit to [the authority of] God. Resist the devil [stand firm against him] and he will flee from you.

2 Timothy 2:26 ERV The devil has trapped them and now makes them do what he wants. But maybe they can wake up to see what is happening and free themselves from the devil's trap.

It's great news that Jesus sends him packing in the future, but we have to deal with him in the here and now! So how can we protect ourselves?

"God does not promise that we will never be tempted, but that when we are, He will provide a way of escape. However, there are things that we can do as a Christian to avoid unnecessary temptation."

- David Peach

7 Tips to Avoid Temptation (whatchristianswanttoknow.com)



Think Above the Box: Think of a time when you walked away from Satan's "bait" when a friend didn't. Was it difficult? What were the consequences of the choices that were made? Did any Bible verse or story help you to resist the temptation to sin?

How 'bout some old-school ska from the W's, circa 1998? Try it, you'll like it!

🎵 The W's - The Devil Is Bad

PS: Your parents might have heard this in youth group...

2. Kozak used many tools to catch Spears in his web of deceit. So does the devil! Here is a list employed by both: lying, befriending, appealing to ego, preying on weaknesses, putting bad influences (people and things) in your path, establishing trust, empathizing with wrongs done to you, complimenting and stressing your value and intelligence, convincing you that you are a righteous victim, using bait and hook strategies and affirming that you deserve revenge for wrongs done to you.

"Satan is not some mythical character with horns, tail, and pitchfork. He is very sophisticated and specialized. He is the greatest under-cover agent of all times., Biblical descriptions of him include everything from an angel of light to a ravenous beast. Anyone is a welcome challenge to him, from Adam to Jesus himself. Nobody is too good or powerful for his advances." - bible.ca

How Does the Devil Control Human Life? (bible.ca)

Ephesians 2:1-2 AMPC And you [He made alive], when you were dead (slain) by [your] trespasses and sins in which at one time you walked [habitually]. You were following the course *and* fashion of this world [were under the sway of the tendency of this present age], following the prince of the power of the air. [You were obedient to and under the control of] the [demon] spirit that still constantly works in the sons of disobedience [the careless, the rebellious, and the unbelieving, who go against the purposes of God].

1 Peter 5:9 GW Be firm in the faith and resist him, knowing that other believers throughout the world are going through the same kind of suffering.

"The question is not whether you want to be in this war. Everyone is in it. Either we are defeated by the devil and thus following, like cattle to the slaughter, 'the prince of the power of the air' (Ephesians 2:2), or we are resisting — 'resist him, firm in your faith!'" (1 Peter 5:9)."

- John Piper

Satan's Ten Strategies Against You | Desiring God

3. Even though Kozak was the *prisoner* and resided in a small cell with bars for a door, he was still able to manipulate and control Spears as his puppet to implement his breakout strategy. We could draw a parallel to the actions of Satan. He may have free reign on earth but God has absolute control over him.

"Practically speaking, however, we must understand one vital piece of information: God has Satan on a leash. In other words, Satan can only do what God permits him to do. He is restricted to God's sovereign rule and reign."

- Blake Long

God Has Satan on a Leash – Theology & Life (theology-and-life.com)

► How is being unable to inhabit Heaven with Jesus for eternity a form of prison?

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 ERV God will do what is right. He will punish those who are causing you trouble. And he will bring relief to you who are troubled. He will bring it to you and to us when the Lord Jesus comes from heaven for all to see, together with his powerful angels. He will come with burning fire to punish those who don't know

God—those who refuse to accept the Good News about our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with a destruction that never ends. They will not be allowed to be with the Lord but will be kept away from his great power. This will happen on the day when the Lord Jesus comes to receive honor with his holy people. He will be admired among all who have believed. And this includes you because you believed what we told you.

► **TAB says:** God gives us, as he did the angels, the choice to love Him and want to be with Him forever. He will not force anyone. If a person refuses to love God and wants to go their own way, He is gracious and gives them their wish. Sadly, eternity without God, who is everything good, results in existing where there is nothing good and everything is evil.

REAL LIFE: Let's talk about *yours* for a change! Have you spent much time contemplating eternity and where you might be in two trillion years from now? Perhaps our graphic will give you some perspective.



2 Corinthians 4:18 TLB So we do not look at what we can see right now, the troubles all around us, but we look forward to the joys in heaven which we have not yet seen. The troubles will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 TLB Everything is appropriate in its own time. But though God has planted eternity in the hearts of men, even so, many cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end.

Titus 1:2 ERV My message is based on the confidence of eternal life. God, who never lies, promised this eternal life before the world began.

John 5:24 AMPC I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, the person whose ears are open to My words [who listens to My message] and believes *and* trusts in *and* clings to *and* relies on Him Who sent Me has (possesses now) eternal life. And he does not come into judgment [does not incur sentence of judgment, will not come under condemnation], but he has already passed over out of death into life.

"Eternal life with Jesus starts the minute we ask Him into our lives. The life we start with Jesus on Earth will continue into eternity. And likewise, if we choose to live without Jesus on Earth, we'll continue to live without Him in eternity."

- Newspring.cc

Nine times Jesus talks about eternity

APOLO-GET-ITS: *Probability* can be defined as the likelihood that something will occur by chance. *Odds* means the probability that an event *may* happen as opposed to it *not* happening. Did you know that the prophet Micah wrote the following about 700 years before the arrival of Jesus? What are the *odds* that his prediction would come true?

Micah 5:2 TLB “O Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are but a small Judean village, yet you will be the birthplace of my King who is alive from everlasting ages past!”

“If you still happen to be unconvinced that the baby born in Bethlehem 2000 years ago was anything more than just an ordinary human baby, let me challenge you with a few of ‘the odds’ in that regard.”
- ChristianAnswers.net

PROPHECY—What are the odds surrounding Jesus Christ? - ChristianAnswers.Net

Guide for Chapter 13

Rendezvous Incognito

1. While on night watch at one in the morning, Jonathan was privileged to witness the amazing beauty of all the stars in the night sky, their brilliance doubled by the reflections on the water. It must have been a marvelous sight and the young midshipman found it both dreamlike and magical. Seems like the perfect setting to read the following:

Psalm 147:4 NLT He counts the stars and calls them all by name.

Psalm 19:1-6 NLT The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world. God has made a home in the heavens for the sun. It bursts forth like a radiant bridegroom after his wedding. It rejoices like a great athlete eager to run the race. The sun rises at one end of the heavens and follows its course to the other end. Nothing can hide from its heat.

For a commentary on how the heavens declare the glory of God, watch/read:

What does it mean that the heavens declare the glory of God? | GotQuestions.org

Living in modern times, we are often robbed of the ability to behold the sky's stunning beauty due to light pollution. Being able to see the stars and the Milky Way on a dark, clear evening can remind us of God's great power. It is sad that many people have the opportunity to see the natural wonders of creation and still chalk it up to *chance*.

Psalm 8:1-9 TLB O Lord our God, the majesty and glory of your name fills all the earth and overflows the heavens. You have taught the little children to praise you perfectly. May their example shame and silence your enemies! When I look up into the night skies and see the work of your fingers—the moon and the stars you have made—I cannot understand how you can bother with mere puny man, to pay any attention to him! And yet you have made him only a little lower than the angels and placed a crown of glory and honor upon his head. You have put him in charge of everything you made; everything is put under his authority: all sheep and oxen, and wild animals too, the birds and fish, and all the life in the sea. O Jehovah, our Lord, the majesty and glory of your name fills the earth.

Isaiah 42:5 ERV The Lord, the true God, said these things. (He created the sky and spread it out over the earth. He formed the earth and everything it produced. He breathes life into all the people on earth. He gives a spirit to everyone who walks on the earth.)

Romans 1:20 GW From the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly observed in what he made. As a result, people have no excuse.



Think Above the Box: If you can, go outside on a clear, dark night and view the heavens as you think about our Creator. Perhaps this song by Scott Brenner with lyrics from Psalm 19 will inspire you:

2. After a failed attack on Jonathan the night before, Spears revealed to Kozak his new plan to *goad* his enemy into a fight that he self-confidently believes he can win. So what is to *goad* anyway? It means to move or force action on something or someone by use of a goad. Great! Now, what is a *goad*? It can be defined as a long rod with a sharp point that is used to move an animal such as an ox. Taunting Jonathan with the truth about how Spears attacked Captain Moore on the dock in London and how Wayne's father tried to fix the verdict with his connections at the Admiralty would certainly be goad enough! Did you know that there is a person in Scripture who was an even angrier and more vindictive person than Wayne Spears? Read the following spoken by the Apostle Paul about himself:

Acts 26:9-14 AMP "So then, I [once] thought to myself that it was my duty to do many things in opposition to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; I not only locked up many of the saints (God's people) in prison after receiving authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being condemned to death, I cast my vote against them. And I often punished them [making them suffer] in all the synagogues and tried to force them to blaspheme; and in my extreme rage at them, I kept hunting them even to foreign cities [harassing and persecuting them]. "While so engaged, as I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and commission *and* full power of the chief priests, at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven surpassing the brightness of the sun, shining all around me and those who were traveling with me. And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice in the Hebrew dialect (Jewish Aramaic) saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick [repeatedly] against the **goads** [offering pointless resistance].'

Read the following essay to discover the meaning and the message of the ox goad:

Kicking against the goads?: The meaning and message - (goodnewsfl.org)



Think Above the Box: Can you name a time when you "kicked against the goads?" What was the particular goad that you rebelled against (God's Word, parents, teachers, peers, etc.?) Did your defiance work out for you? If you could do it over again, what would you change? How could the Holy Spirit help you next time?

REAL LIFE: **Jeremiah 29:11 NLT** For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

"In a day when drug abuse and addiction has crossed every geographic, economic, cultural and ethnic barrier, Teen Challenge is a refuge where freedom can be found. Every day God's love and forgiveness is transforming lives from the inside out. We offer hope for those who have grown up in families and communities where substance abuse creates a spiral of addiction, as well as those who come from stable and loving homes in good neighborhoods. Change can happen."

- Teen Challenge.cc

Watch some of these stories of hope showing how people went from rebellion to having Jesus radically change their lives:

Stories of Hope - Teen Challenge

APOLO-GET-ITS: [Isaiah 45:18](#) ESV For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it empty, he formed it to be inhabited!): “I am the Lord, and there is no other.”

As mentioned in the link in Question 1 above, the *teleological* argument for God’s existence argues that a *design* requires a *designer*:

Teleological Argument for God’s Existence (whatchristianswanttoknow.com)

Let’s revisit Psalm 19 via video, ‘cuz you can never get enough of the wonders of creation!

The Heavens Declare the Glory of God

EXTRA CREDIT: Time to take an additional look at some of that design we’ve been talking about. By *chance*, have you seen the following music video? Sorry/not sorry for the evolutionary pun!

 **"Creation Calls" Worship Music Video**

Guide for Chapter 14

The Duel

1. This chapter begins and ends with the subject of goats, specifically in regards to *cuisine*! Jonathan was reluctant to consume any at Garvey's favorite pub, recalling his experiences with the grey meat while living on the streets of London, only to find the Santiago Island version delicious! When he invited Spears' toady Lane to join Sean, Garvey and himself after the duel for some goat sandwiches, he replied, "*Sounds disgusting. I accept.*" Did you know that Jesus compares people to sheep and goats? Wouldn't you rather be described as a lion or eagle rather than a lowly grass muncher? Read the passage and pick your animal!

Matthew 25:31-46 NLT But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the **sheep** from the **goats**. He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!' Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink. I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.' Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?' And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me. And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.'

Here is an interesting article on the part played by goats in the Bible, their positive and negative attributes and why you don't want to be one in Jesus' eyes:

Goats on the Left (bibletools.org)

2. A 'chance' meeting on the street between Jonathan and Wayne resulted in the bully divulging the Spear family's treacheries against the Moores. These revelations so enraged Jonathan that he fell prey to Spears' cleverly devised trap and challenged him to a duel to the death, much to Sean's horror. Just as men have always been drawn to clashing with their enemies, God's angels, holy and fallen, have engaged in battle throughout the Bible. In fact, in Daniel Chapter 10, the angel Gabriel was in a 'duel' with a fallen demon, the Prince of Persia, for twenty-one days! This minion of Satan attempted to thwart God's messenger on his mission to reveal prophecy to Daniel, being so strong and powerful that the archangel Michael had to assist in the battle!

Daniel 10:12-14 TLB Then he said, "Don't be frightened, Daniel, for your request has been heard in heaven and was answered the very first day you began to fast before the Lord and pray for understanding; that very day I was sent here to meet you. But for twenty-one days the mighty Evil Spirit who overrules the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the top officers of the heavenly army, came to help me, so that I was able to break through these spirit rulers of Persia. Now I am here to tell you what will happen to your people, the Jews, at the end times—for the fulfillment of this prophecy is many years away."

Ephesians 6:12 TLB For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies—the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world.

For some insight into God's angels, take a look at the following blog posts:

What are archangels? | GotQuestions.org

What does the Bible say about the angel Gabriel? | GotQuestions.org

Who is Michael the archangel? | GotQuestions.org



Think Above the Box: People have always been intrigued by tales of otherworldly entities with amazing super-human powers and abilities locked in the battle of good versus evil. This could explain the current popularity of superheroes in comic books, novels and movies. We seem to be hard-wired to desire that right triumphs over wrong. Do you think that it is because we intrinsically sense the true spiritual battles that are waging unseen by us? The Apostle Paul tells us:

Romans 8:37-39 TLB but despite all this, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ who loved us enough to die for us. For I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from his love. Death can't, and life can't. The angels won't, and all the powers of hell itself cannot keep God's love away. Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow, or where we are—high above the sky, or in the deepest ocean—nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God demonstrated by our Lord Jesus Christ when he died for us.

Name a fictional “superhero versus villain” matchup that you feel resembles Gabriel and Michael fighting the Prince of Persia.

3. As Jonathan had his moment of triumph over Spears, whom he could have easily killed, he was hit with a wave of pity, empathy and sadness at what his nemesis had become, knowing that Spears' life was not Jonathan's to take. His opponent was utterly crushed, defeated and appalled that he had actually conspired to murder Jonathan. Through his exhaustion, Wayne also realized that his perspective of the situation might have been misguided. He was counseled by Harrison to stay true to his pledge. He heartened him by stating, “At this point, your word, and its value and quality, is a great foundation with which to begin a new life.” There is an event in the Bible that is similar, involving the confrontation of David with King Saul:

1 Samuel 24:1-6 NLT After Saul returned from fighting the Philistines, he was told that David had gone into the wilderness of En-gedi. So Saul chose 3,000 elite troops from all Israel and went to search for David and his men near the rocks of the wild goats. At the place where the road passes some sheepfolds, Saul went into a cave to relieve himself. But as it happened, David and his men were hiding farther back in that very cave! “Now's your opportunity!” David's men whispered to him. “Today the Lord is telling you, ‘I will certainly put your enemy into your power, to do with as you wish.’” So David crept forward and cut off a piece of the hem of Saul's robe. But then David's conscience began bothering him because he had cut Saul's robe. He said to his men, “The Lord forbid that I should do this to my lord the king. I shouldn't attack the Lord's anointed one, for the Lord himself has chosen him.”

1 Samuel 24:7-11 GW So David stopped his men by saying this to them and didn't let them attack Saul. Saul left the cave and went out onto the road. Later, David got up, left the cave, and called to Saul, "Your Majesty!" When Saul looked back, David knelt down with his face touching the ground. David asked Saul, "Why do you listen to rumors that I am trying to harm you? Today you saw how the Lord handed you over to me in the cave. Although I was told to kill you, I spared you, saying, 'I will not raise my hand against Your Majesty because you are the Lord's anointed.' My master, look at this! The border of your robe is in my hand! Since I cut off the border of your robe and didn't kill you, you should know and be able to see I mean no harm or rebellion. I haven't sinned against you, but you are trying to ambush me in order to take my life.

1 Samuel 24:12-15 ESV May the Lord judge between me and you, may the Lord avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you. As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes wickedness.' But my hand shall not be against you. After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea! May the Lord therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand."

1 Samuel 24:16-22 AMPC When David had said this to Saul, Saul said, Is this your voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. He said to David, You are more upright in God's eyes than I, for you have repaid me good, but I have rewarded you evil. You have declared today how you have dealt well with me; for when the Lord gave me into your hand, you did not kill me. For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away unharmed? Therefore may the Lord reward you with good for what you have done for me this day. And now, behold, I well know that you shall surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hands. Swear now therefore to me by the Lord that you will not cut off my descendants after me and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house. David gave Saul his oath; and Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

And now a little treat for you visual learners:

David Spares Saul's Life (theBiblecollection.net)

EXTRA CREDIT: While reading the following in depth commentary, think about the parallels to Jonathan and Spears:

Enduring Word Bible Commentary 1 Samuel Chapter 24

REAL LIFE: **Mark 11:25** ESV And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

Marcus Doe was a victim of a bloody civil war in Liberia in 1990 and had built his life on the quest for revenge. Here is his testimony of how he overcame it by forgiving the soldier that had murdered his father.

"Revenge fantasies were darkening my heart before I trusted in Jesus."

- Marcus Doe

Why I Forgave the Man I Once Plotted to Kill | Christianity Today

APOLO-GET-ITS: Skeptics often argue that King David was a mythological figure and not an actual person, but archeologists have had some definitive finds that show he existed. Let's take a little tour of his stomping grounds to see what proof archeologists have dug up:

Archeological Proof of King David in Israel | FULL EPISODE | Insights on TBN Israel

Psssst – give yourself **EXTRA CREDIT** for watching all 23 minutes!

► What does the archeological term *tell* [sometimes spelled *tel*] mean?

► **TAB says:** A *tell* is a hill or mound of earth in the Middle East composed of traces of multiple peoples and civilizations that existed in that spot over many years.

Guide for Chapter 15

The Mouse Takes the Bait

1. During their early morning audience with the Captain, Spears and Harrison were perplexed as to how he was already aware of the particulars involving the duel with Jonathan. Could Walker possibly be *omniscient*, (which is defined as possessing all knowledge) regarding all things involving the *Danielle* and her crew? To the young sailors, he might even be considered God-like.

Proverbs 15:3 TLB The Lord is watching everywhere and keeps his eye on both the evil and the good.

Psalms 139:1-4 TLB O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit or stand. When far away you know my every thought. You chart the path ahead of me and tell me where to stop and rest. Every moment you know where I am. You know what I am going to say before I even say it.

Take a look at this:

Omniscience of God (allaboutgod.com)

But wait, there's more! The Lord has many more amazing attributes besides the three "*omnies*" (omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient.)

"When we talk about the attributes of God we are talking about His nature—who God is in His manifested character. These 10 attributes are not the only ones set forth in scripture. However, these will give you a better appreciation of who God is."
- David Peach

10 Awesome Attributes of God (whatchristianswanttoknow.com)



Think Above the Box: Does knowing more about God's character affect how you perceive Him? Do you think it will affect *your* character and behavior? How?

2. In discussing the strategy needed for procuring the manifest from *La Fortaleza de la Selva*, Gorman advised that the mission would require smaller crewmen to "*squeeze and skulk and commit a little burglary.*" The Captain cautioned Jonathan and Sean explaining that they would be executed if caught by the enemy: "*The choice is yours,*" and the boys readily accepted!

Jesus offers a similar proposition:

Matthew 10:34-42 AMP Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword [of division between belief and unbelief]. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his [own] household [when one believes and another does not]. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross [expressing a willingness to endure whatever may come] and follow Me [believing in Me, conforming to My example in living and, if need be, suffering or perhaps dying because of faith in Me] is not worthy

of Me. Whoever finds his life [in this world] will [eventually] lose it [through death], and whoever loses his life [in this world] for My sake will find it [that is, life with Me for all eternity].

If the mission was successful, the boys, by helping their country in a time of war, would receive accolades, honor and favor from King George. There are rewards for being on God's team also:

Matthew 10:40-42 ESV "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

Matthew 5:10-12 AMP Blessed [comforted by inner peace and God's love] are those who are persecuted for doing that which is morally right, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven [both now and forever]. Blessed [morally courageous and spiritually alive with life-joy in God's goodness] are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil things against you because of [your association with] Me. Be glad and exceedingly joyful, for your reward in heaven is great [absolutely inexhaustible]; for in this same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Revelation 2:10 AMPC Fear nothing that you are about to suffer. [Dismiss your dread and your fears!] Behold, the devil is indeed about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested *and* proved *and* critically appraised, and for ten days you will have affliction. Be loyally faithful unto death [even if you must die for it], and I will give you the crown of life.

"In Luke 14, Jesus lays out the terms of discipleship. There were great crowds following Him. Everyone loved the miracles, healing, and free food. Jesus was cool, the talk of the town, and the latest fad. But He knew their hearts. He knew they desired the benefits of what He did rather than an understanding of who He was. They loved His gifts, not the life He was calling them to."

- **Got Questions**

What does it mean to "count the cost" (Luke 14:28)? | GotQuestions.org

► Have you seen those prescription drug commercials where they show people doing fun activities with family and friends because they take their medication, but at the end the announcer lists all the horrifying side effects? How is that like Jesus' offer in Matthew 10? How is it different?

► **TAB says:** Just as medications have their side effects, the life of a believer will often be accompanied by persecution, from mere snide comments to actually being martyred. In both cases, not all will suffer the same consequences. Prescription drugs can *possibly* cure your ailments whereas when Jesus warns us of the steep cost of believing and following Him, He also *guarantees* His followers that they will gain eternal life in heaven, which is worth any oppression we may suffer here on earth.

REAL LIFE: Watch the story of a young woman whose family suffered severe persecution for believing in Jesus, resulting in her father's imprisonment and likely execution. Her remaining family then escaped from North Korea into freedom. Despite all the hardship and heartache endured for their faith, Kim Eun Jin states, *"I know that my father is in Heaven..."*

Secret Worship: N. Korea Defector Tells of Survival | CBN

APOLO-GET-ITS: Have you ever looked up at the night sky and been overwhelmed at how immense *it* is and how miniscule *we* are?

Psalm 8:3-4 ERV I look at the heavens you made with your hands. I see the moon and the stars you created. And I wonder, “Why are people so important to you? Why do you even think about them? Why do you care so much about humans? Why do you even notice them?”

Read and/or listen to the following on how improbable our existence really is and how our loving God cares for us:

Breakpoint: Asteroids and the Improbability of Our Existence (libsyn.com)

Guide for Chapter 16

La Fortaleza de la Selva

1. Captain Walker gave last minute instructions and encouragement to the boys right before the jolly boat departed on the very perilous mission to procure the prized French cannon manifest. He admonished them to listen to Gorman, make no mistakes and be quiet as mice, “*You can gain more treasure sneaking in the **back door** than stomping through the **front**.*” That may be true for a clandestine undertaking, but Jesus tells us to do the exact opposite-enter through the **front** gate!

John 10:1-10 TLB “Anyone refusing to walk through the gate into a sheepfold, who sneaks over the wall, must surely be a thief! For a shepherd comes through the gate. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice and come to him; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. He walks ahead of them; and they follow him, for they recognize his voice. They won’t follow a stranger but will run from him, for they don’t recognize his voice.” Those who heard Jesus use this illustration didn’t understand what he meant, so he explained it to them. “I am the Gate for the sheep,” he said. “All others who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them. Yes, I am the Gate. Those who come in by way of the Gate will be saved and will go in and out and find green pastures. The thief’s purpose is to steal, kill and destroy. My purpose is to give life in all its fullness.”

Jesus not only tells us to go in *through* the front door, He *is* the front door!

What did Jesus mean when He said “I am the door” (John 10:7)? | GotQuestions.org

And yes, another visual aid:

John 10: The Sheepgate Scandal

EXTRA CREDIT: for the eagle-eyed: find the two goats’ photobomb in the video above!

► **TAB says:** They are located at minute 2:43.



Think Above the Box: A husband would never tell his wife that he loves her and enjoys sharing his life with her but due to a busy schedule of work, friends and activities, he can only pencil her in for sixty minutes once a week! That relationship would not last very long and rightfully so. Sadly, this is what so many of us do in our relationship with Jesus. Is He just for Sunday mornings or are you living your life in a relationship with Him? Does anything need to change in your daily life? Are you on the path to the front door in your walk with Jesus or “sneaking in the back door?”

► How can you improve your relationship with Jesus?

► **TAB says:** Here are some ways you can draw closer to God everyday: by having a quiet time, being in prayer, praising and thanking God for His many blessings, reading the Bible (and taking notes,) attending a Bible believing church and youth group, listening to Christian music, going out in nature to enjoy the beauty of God’s creation, and having a Christian accountability partner.

2. After coming upon a drunken guard slumped against the outside door that they needed to unlock for Gorman to enter and retrieve the manifest, Jonathan told Sean, “*We have to alter the plan. We must find the manifest ourselves!*” The following centuries old phrase applies: “*The best-laid schemes o’ mice an’ men gang aft agley*” or if you don’t like Scottish, “*The best laid schemes of mice and men go often askew,*” as written in the 1785 poem, *To a Mouse, on Turning Her Up in Her Nest with the Plough* by Robert Burns. There are times we think God needs our help to fulfill what we feel is His plan for our life. This doesn’t always work out! There is a story in the Old Testament that shows how Abram and Sarai couldn’t wait for God’s promise of a son so they took the matter into their own hands by having Abram impregnate his wife’s maid. What could go wrong? Their impatience set the stage for conflict and heartache.

2 Peter 3:9 NLT The Lord isn’t really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

Psalms 37:34 TLB Don’t be impatient for the Lord to act! Keep traveling steadily along his pathway and in due season he will honor you with every blessing, and you will see the wicked destroyed.

Watch and/or read the following, along with a little revisiting of David’s robe-cutting caper:

Let God Fulfill God’s Promises to You | ApplyGodsWord.com



Think Above the Box: Often people yearn, wish and pray for some event, relationship, job, opportunity, friendship, material possession, emotion, feeling, etc. to come into their lives. Many have been tempted to “hurry it along” on their own power. Has this ever happened to you? Did it make you realize that you were not operating on God’s timetable but your own? If you look at the plot of most stories, a lot of the conflict involved is based on someone rushing to obtain something or someone they desire through sinful worldly ways. Name a novel or movie that comes to mind and discuss how it might have worked out differently for the characters involved if they had done things God’s way and waited upon Him.

EXTRA CREDIT for the brave: Read the original mouse poem here. Try reading it aloud for fun!

To a Mouse by Robert Burns - [Scottish Poetry Library](http://ScottishPoetryLibrary.com)

3. Just as Jonathan and Sean were ready to depart with the coveted manifests, the *Generalissimo* surprised them in the closet doorway, effectively blocking their escape. They promptly drew their swords, only to have the man pull a much larger blade on them. As the boys pressed their attack, their opponent dropped his sword and pulled a pistol out from under his nightshirt. Sean yelled, “*Not fair!*” to which the *Generalissimo* replied, “*life ees not fair!*” Almost everyone has heard the smallest child declare that very thing. It seems like this concept is one of the first for a human to contemplate. Could it be because we instinctively know that we live in a fallen world, full of sin and trouble?

Ecclesiastes 9:11 ERV I also saw other things in this life that were not fair. The fastest runner does not always win the race; the strongest soldier does not always win the battle; wise people don’t always get the food; smart people don’t always get the wealth; educated people don’t always get the praise they deserve. When the time comes, bad

things can happen to anyone!

The following two blog posts have something to say about this:

Why Does Life Seem Unfair? A Christian Study (whatchristianswanttoknow.com)

Life is Not Fair | The Daily Choice Devotional. (thechoicedrivenlife.com)

Back in the Old Testament, a guy named Asaph penned **Psalm 73**, lamenting the same issue and choosing to trust in God and keep an eternal perspective on things. You can read it on the following link (note-you can pick your Bible version too!):

Psalm 73 AMP - Book Three - The End of the Wicked - Bible Gateway

► How can an eternal perspective help you deal with all of life's unfairness?

► **TAB says:** Life is not just the short amount of time we spend living on earth compared to eternity. God will punish, reward and serve justice fairly, although not always on *our* timetable!

REAL LIFE: Many people think that they are inadequate, different, and not like other people. What they envision as a sad future can change with God's help!

2 Corinthians 5:17-18 NLT This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him.

"I must be the most ordinary person in the world!" Those were the words of Ethan, a boy who wondered why he was even born! From a young age, Ethan felt like he never quite fit in. His clothes were seconds that his mother bought at a used clothes store. His dad gave him a buzz haircut once a month. No matter what sport he tried, he felt like he stunk at them all. He didn't think he was good-looking or smart. Nor did he excel in any particular area of his life. If there was a word for the opposite of cool, that was how Ethan felt."

- Tim Burt

An Inspirational Story! The Most Ordinary Boy in the World

APOLO-GET-ITS: Is Smokey the Bear really a distant relative of Moby Dick?

Isaiah 11:7 ESV The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

Psalm 104:26 TLB And look! See the ships! And over there, the whale you made to play in the sea.

Genesis 1:20-30 GW Then God said, "Let the water swarm with swimming creatures, and let birds fly through the sky over the earth." So God created the large sea creatures, every type of creature that swims around in the water and every type of flying bird. God saw that they were good. God blessed them and said, "Be fertile, increase in number, fill the sea, and let there be many birds on the earth." There was evening, then morning—a fifth day. Then God said, "Let the earth produce every type of living creature: every type of domestic animal, crawling animal, and wild animal." And so it was. God made every type of wild animal, every type of domestic animal, and every type of creature that crawls on the ground. God saw that they were good.

The following video explores the vestiges of the vestigial features hypothesis (try saying *that* three times fast!)

That's a Fact - Whale Evolution - Institute for Creation Research

EXTRA CREDIT: Did you know that Charles Darwin once wrote this, *"I can see no difficulty in a race of bears being rendered, by natural selection, more and more aquatic in their structure and habits, with larger and larger mouths, till a creature was produced as monstrous as a whale."* God (and His design) begs to differ!

From Bears to Whales: A Difficult Transition | Discovery Institute - Evolution News

Guide for Chapter 17

The Stowaway

1. As the crew and Delain waited nervously for their comeuppance about to be delivered by the dragon, otherwise known as Captain Walker, they watched the “*wisp of vapor*” from his steaming hot coffee float upward towards the ceiling beams and vanish into nothingness. The Word of God also compares our very *lives* to a vapor!

James 4:14 AMPC Yet you do not know [the least thing] about what may happen tomorrow. What is the nature of your life? You are [really] but a wisp of **vapor** (a puff of smoke, a mist) that is visible for a little while and then disappears [into thin air].

Psalms 144:4 GW Humans are like a **breath of air**. Their life span is like a fleeting shadow.

Luke 12:19-20 ERV Then I can say to myself, I have many good things stored. I have saved enough for many years. Rest, eat, drink, and enjoy life!’ But God said to that man, ‘Foolish man! Tonight you will die. So what about the things you prepared for yourself? Who will get those things now?’

Well, that’s certainly a bummer! This is a sobering subject, but an important one. We probably all know or have heard of someone very young whose life was snuffed out way too early. It is easy to forget that a long life on earth is never guaranteed. How is a Christian to deal with this?

Psalms 90:12 TLB Teach us to number our days and recognize how few they are; help us to spend them as we should.

No matter the length of our lives, we can choose every day to do something with eternal significance.

“It is important to recognize the brevity of life so that we don’t squander the time we’ve been given.”
- GotQuestions.org

What does it mean that life is a vapor? | GotQuestions.org



Think Above the Box: Tragic events often cause us to think about the shortness of our lives, although most people gradually go back to living for the day. A disheartening example of this was the overflowing of people attending church services and singing hymns in public shortly after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 9/11/2001 only to slip back into complacency within weeks of the event. Have you lost someone way too young and too soon? Did it change your perspective on life? Did it make you contemplate your own ending and where you will be for eternity? How do you keep an eternal perspective on events?

Check out the following video of Casting Crowns’ song, *Who Am I?* and take the time to contemplate its insightful lyrics:

🎵 **Who Am I - Casting Crowns (w/ lyrics)**

2. As the Captain and crew were discussing strategies for acquiring the French cannons, it became very apparent to Delain that her little stowaway escapade would affect them all and possibly even upset Britain's war with France. Returning her to the safety of London would add another ten thousand miles to their journey and result in missing the opportunity to overtake the French squadron. Those are rather big consequences for a girl that 'just wanted to have fun!'

Titus 3:3-7 ESV For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Romans 15:4 NIV For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

"No matter who we are, all of us have made choices in our lives that have had consequences: some good, some not so good."
- Dr. Michael L. Williams

Choices and Consequences: 5 Examples to Learn From (whatchristianswanttoknow.com)

"Sin is always destructive, but repentance is always constructive."
- Derek Hill

5 Biblical Consequences of Sin (whatchristianswanttoknow.com)

► How are we, as Christians, to go about exercising our free will and making wise decisions in our lives?

► **TAB says:** We can test our possible choices by seeing if they fall within God's will for us by turning to Scripture and the Holy Spirit for guidance. This is where our ever-increasing knowledge of God's Word will help us decide which paths to take throughout our lives.

3. As Delain and Jonathan strolled along the deck, she tried to explain her motivations for stowing away. As a female living in the early 1800's, Delain felt that her options for thrills and action were almost nil so she took matters into her own hands and 'took control' of her life. In her eyes, the life set before her was going to be dismal, dull and boring and she wanted another chance at adventure and excitement. Here's a rhetorical question for you - is life really all about pursuing good times and pleasure?

Galatians 6:8 TLB If he sows to please his own wrong desires, he will be planting seeds of evil and he will surely reap a harvest of spiritual decay and death; but if he plants the good things of the Spirit, he will reap the everlasting life that the Holy Spirit gives him.

Is life about loving God and people or pursuing the 'good life'?

When Life is Boring: 10 Questions & 9 Bible Verses - Barb Raveling



Think Above the Box: Read the questions and Bible verses at the end of the blogpost and contemplate!

REAL LIFE: Perhaps Delain felt that she needed thrilling exploits and dramatic pursuits to feel validated as a person, but God thinks differently about such things.

2 Timothy 2:22 AMPC Shun youthful lusts *and* flee from them, and aim at *and* pursue righteousness (all that is virtuous and good, right living, conformity to the will of God in thought, word, and deed); [and aim at and pursue] faith, love, [and] peace (harmony and concord with others) in fellowship with all [Christians], who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart.

Rachael, the young lady below has a serious case of **FOMO** (fear of missing out), similar to Delain:

*"I've been a Christian all my life, as long as I can recall. I'm not perfect. I have a ton of issues and God is still working in me. But I've never indulged in alcohol, never done any drugs, never engaged in premarital sex. I guard my heart to the best of my ability and pray often when I'm struggling with temptations. I'll be the first to tell you that I need God's grace just as much as, if not more so than, anybody else. But sometimes, I get a case of **FOMO**, the fear of missing out. Sometimes I feel like the older brother in the prodigal-son parable. Like when I see people at church who turned away from sinful hedonism and became Christians, I'm happy for them and rejoice with them. But at the same time I feel like, 'Wow, no one cares that I've always said no to drugs and sex and wickedness my whole life, but boy, they all care when all the people doing that stuff turn away from it.' And I know that's not what I should be thinking. I shouldn't be bitter or resentful. But sometimes those feelings manifest. I'm not proud of these thoughts and I often pray to God that these feelings would flee so I can just bask in his presence, but it's hard. Any advice you have would help. Thank you!"* - Rachael

Listen and/or read the following post for Pastor John Piper's response to her:

For Christians Whose Testimony Seems Boring | Desiring God

APOLO-GET-ITS: **Jeremiah 9:23-24** ESV Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord."

Many atheists will emphatically state with pride that there isn't enough evidence for the existence of God.

Is this really true? The following blog delves into the issue:

What to say when someone asks for proof of God's existence – Solas (solas-cpc.org)

EXTRA CREDIT: The above author, David Robertson listed "... 10 different reasons for believing that Christianity is true. The creation, the human mind and spirit, the moral law, beauty, religion, experience, history, the church, the Bible, and Jesus." He then challenges the reader to add to the list. What would you include?

1 Peter 3:15 AMP But in your hearts set Christ apart [as holy—acknowledging Him, giving Him first place in your lives] as Lord. Always be ready to give a [logical] defense to anyone who asks you to account for the hope *and* confident assurance [elicited by faith] that is within you, yet [do it] with gentleness and respect.

The use of apologetics is vital for enlightening both non-believers and Christians. Scripture commands that we have a defense for our belief and the following post discusses four reasons why apologetics is so essential:

Why Apologetics? (str.org)

EXTRA EXTRA CREDIT: Watch this video about ten of the top scientific facts in the Bible and how Roy Comfort, a Christian apologist, discusses them with non-believers:

Ten of the Top Scientific Facts in the Bible

Guide for Chapter 18

The Castle of Fire

1. Upon disembarking onto the large rock shelf and bidding goodbye to Harrison and the jolly boat crew, Jonathan decided that the first order of business is for the two boys and Delain to explore their new surroundings. They stayed together as a group and sadly concluded that the island had little to offer them around the base of the mountain.

► Why do you think they didn't split up at this point and cover three times the territory in the same amount of time?

► **TAB says:** By sticking together as a team, they could assist each other in case of danger or injury and help with climbing the many rock formations and cliff walls. They also could avoid getting lost from each other in the strange and perilous environment.

God also tells us in the Bible that three are better and stronger than one!

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NLT Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

Read the following message on how Christian fellowship is like a cord not easily broken:

Unbreakable | Redeemed (wordpress.com)



Think Above the Box: Have you ever had something happen in which you got through it as a single cord? How about a time when you were one of three or more strands working through an event or issue? Did you see a definite advantage to being part of a team rather than a solitary person? Is God one of *your* cords?

2. As the trio got acclimated to their temporary home on the island of Isla Sello, Jonathan wondered about the castle behind the shrouded crest and Delain became somewhat unnerved by the eeriness of their new surroundings and said out loud, "Maybe if the fog would clear, we could see the top of the hill and therefore a way upwards." It was maddening to look upward, knowing that there was a cliff with a castle perched atop it and not be able to see it. Isn't our search for God like that sometimes? He has revealed things about Himself, but not *all*. Like the mist burning off the cliff and exposing the Castle of Fire, we will have our eyes opened when we are in Heaven with the Lord for eternity:

1 Corinthians 13:12 TLB In the same way, we can see and understand only a little about God now, as if we were peering at his reflection in a poor mirror; but someday we are going to see him in his completeness, face-to-face. Now all that I know is hazy and blurred, but then I will see everything clearly, just as clearly as God sees into my

heart right now.

Romans 11:33-34 TLB Oh, what a wonderful God we have! How great are his wisdom and knowledge and riches! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his methods! For who among us can know the mind of the Lord? Who knows enough to be his counselor and guide?

Isaiah 2:2-3 NLT In the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house will be the highest of all—the most important place on earth. It will be raised above the other hills, and people from all over the world will stream there to worship. People from many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of Jacob's God. There he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For the Lord's teaching will go out from Zion; his word will go out from Jerusalem.

The following blogpost provides some more thoughts on how *our* fog will be cleared when we go to our eternal home to dwell with God forever:

We See in a Mirror Dimly | Hallelujah (wordpress.com)



Think Above the Box: 1 Corinthians 2:9 GW But as Scripture says: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined the things that God has prepared for those who love him."

Get yourself some Kleenex and watch the moment ten-year-old Xavier McCoury, who has only seen shades of grey, black and white since birth, had the 'fog' of colorblindness lifted and saw the world in all its vivid colors:

Xavier seeing color for the first time!

Now view this video compilation of deaf people hearing for the first time thanks to cochlear implants:

Cochlear Implants: People hearing for the first time!

Have you ever had a time in your life when the 'fog' lifted and enabled you to see or know something as it really is? What was your reaction? Do you think your first seconds in Heaven will be like the people's reactions in these videos?

3. Upon reaching the summit, Jonathan, Sean and Delain entered "the belly of the beast" whereupon in the darkness, they appeared to be stepping on twigs, small branches and coconuts. Once the room became bathed in crimson sunlight, the horrible realization that they were stepping on the dry, rotted bones of about one hundred soldiers caused them to shudder and shake. Jonathan assures Delain that the dead men are totally harmless and no danger to the living. Were you aware that God talks about a scene similar to this but not in a castle room but in an entire valley?

Ezekiel 37:1-14 NLT The Lord took hold of me, and I was carried away by the Spirit of the Lord to a valley filled with bones. He led me all around among the bones that covered the valley floor. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out. Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones become living

people again?" "O Sovereign Lord," I replied, "you alone know the answer to that." Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to these bones and say, 'Dry bones, listen to the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you live again! I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'" So I spoke this message, just as he told me. Suddenly as I spoke, there was a rattling noise all across the valley. The bones of each body came together and attached themselves as complete skeletons. Then as I watched, muscles and flesh formed over the bones. Then skin formed to cover their bodies, but they still had no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to the winds, son of man. Speak a prophetic message and say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, O breath, from the four winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so they may live again.'" So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet—a great army. Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones represent the people of Israel. They are saying, 'We have become old, dry bones—all hope is gone. Our nation is finished.' Therefore, prophesy to them and say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel. When this happens, O my people, you will know that I am the Lord. I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live again and return home to your own land. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done what I said. Yes, the Lord has spoken!'"

"All mankind is in the valley of death. The valley of dry bones illustrates mankind's moral and spiritual condition apart from the life-giving, transforming power of the Holy Spirit. We too must recognize the inability of our efforts to earn our way to heaven and hopelessness of our self-righteousness."

- Crosswalk.com

Bible Pathway Daily Devotional (crosswalk.com)

The artist Lauren Daigle commented on the meaning of her song *Come Alive (Dry Bones)*, "We all have times in our life when we feel things are dead, but I have to remember I have the power in me through Christ that can create anything from dust."

Come Alive (Dry Bones) with lyrics Lauren Daigle

How about another worship song with some rap mixed in?

"Awake, awake, awake my soul / God resurrect these bones / From death to life / for You alone / Awake my soul." - Jason Ingram/Chris Tomlin/Daniel Carson/Jesse Reeves/Lecrae Moore

Chris Tomlin - Awake My Soul (Live)

EXTRA CREDIT: Take a listen to the following song "*Dem Bones*" written in ancient times (the 1920s!) by James Weldon Johnson, based on the Book of Ezekiel :

Dem Bones (Ezekiel Bible Story) - Clovercroft Kids

REAL LIFE: [Jeremiah 17:14](#) ESV Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise.

Mark Franzman is a police officer who almost lost both legs due to severely broken bones resulting from a drunk driver. He is both literally and spiritually, a walking testimony:

Mark Franzman: Literally, A Walking Testimony | CBN

APOLO-GET-ITS: Since we are on the subject of bones, let's delve into macroevolution, naturalism, uniformitarianism and Darwinian evolution. Yay! Were you aware that even Darwin questioned his own theory, "*Why, if species have descended from other species by insensibly fine gradations, do we **not** everywhere see innumerable transitional forms?*" Sounds heavy, but hang in there! Food for thought:

No Bones About It! There's No Evidence Humans Evolved | The Institute for Creation Research (icr.org)

PS: Here's some background definitions for you:

Macroevolution – Evolutionary changes that occur over a long span of time resulting in *new* species.

Microevolution – Small evolutionary changes and mutations within a *single* species.

Naturalism – Everything that we see in the world and universe is a result of *natural* forces and has nothing to do with supernatural or spiritual causes (such as a Creator.)

Darwinism – All life forms mutated by *natural* selection (creatures with the best genetic traits will survive) into new species over long periods of time and are related to a common ancestor.

Guide for Chapter 19

Point of No Return

1. At the conclusion of Chapter 18, we find our heroes discussing the need to have a signal, their 'Lady of the Lake', for the *Danielle* to recognize. Delain asked, "what can we do to make sure Captain Walker knows we are ready to fight and that he needs to bring the ship close to us?" Their beacon had to be precise, one that wouldn't be mistaken. What better plan than to hoist up Delain's bloomers once again? There is a story in the Bible about another young woman named Rahab who also used a distinct signal to save the lives of herself and all her family members from destruction and which placed her firmly in Jesus' family tree:

Joshua 2:14-18 GW The men promised her, "We pledge our lives for your lives. If you don't tell anyone what we're doing here, we'll treat you kindly and honestly when the Lord gives us this land." So she let them down by a rope from her window since her house was built into the city wall. (She lived in the city wall.) She told them, "Go to the mountains so that the men who are pursuing you will not find you. Hide there for three days until they return to Jericho. Then you can go on your way." The men told her, "We will be free from the oath which you made us swear, [if you tell anyone what we're doing here]. When we invade your land, tie this red cord in the window through which you let us down. Also, gather your father, mother, brothers, and all your father's family into your house..."

Who was Rahab in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org

2. The young men, each on a raft, braved the rough, shark laden sea in order to anchor the *Lady of the Lake* in the channel to signal Captain Walker. One terrifying moment had a large grey-eyed shark launch its head onto Jonathan's raft, only to be repelled by a jab from his paddle. Shortly afterward, another shark got between the boats, almost capsizing them and aiming to have Sean for lunch! Quick thinking saved him when he used his letter opener to stab the monster's snout. One could see the sharks as symbolic of sin and the paddle and knife as part of the believer's **armor of God** (did you see this analogy coming a mile away? If so, congratulations, you are starting to see literature from a Biblical worldview!)

Ephesians 6:13-17 AMPC Therefore put on God's complete armor, that you may be able to resist *and* stand your ground on the evil day [of danger], and, having done all [the crisis demands], to stand [firmly in your place]. Stand therefore [hold your ground], having tightened the belt of truth around your loins and having put on the breastplate of integrity *and* of moral rectitude *and* right standing with God, and having shod your feet in preparation [to face the enemy with the firm-footed stability, the promptness, and the readiness produced by the good news] of the Gospel of peace. Lift up over all the [covering] shield of saving faith, upon which you can quench all the flaming missiles of the wicked [one]. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword that the Spirit wields, which is the Word of God.

James 4:7 NLT So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Ephesians 4:27 AMP And do not give the devil an opportunity [to lead you into sin by holding a grudge, or nurturing anger, or harboring resentment, or cultivating bitterness].

1 Corinthians 10:13 AMPC For no temptation (no trial regarded as enticing to sin), [no matter how it comes or where it leads] has overtaken you *and* laid hold on you that is not common to man [that is, no temptation or trial has come to you that is beyond human resistance and that is not adjusted and adapted and belonging to human experience, and such as man can bear]. But God is faithful [to His Word and to His compassionate nature], and He [can be trusted] not to let you be tempted *and* tried *and* assayed beyond your ability *and* strength of resistance *and* power to endure, but with the temptation He will [always] also provide the way out (the means of escape to a landing place), that you may be capable *and* strong *and* powerful to bear up under it patiently.

So, how about a little detail on the armor of God for some clarity:

The Armor of God: What It Is and How to Use It | ReasonableTheology.org

Below is an interesting post on a film crew's experience with sharks off the northern coast of Africa and how they became complacent with these dangerous beasts of prey, almost costing them their lives! It is the same with people and sin:

Playing With Sharks, Messages of God's Love - Children's Corner Wholesome Words



Think Above the Box: Have you ever felt like Jonathan and Sean on the rafts, with 'sharks' swimming all about, ready to devour you? Discuss an event where you or someone you know had to use their armor of God to resist sin.

3. After much plotting and preparation, the moment to execute his escape plan had finally arrived. Spears ordered Smith and Jones to secure the lashings and remove the tarp on the smaller jolly boat in preparation for his escape to a new life in America with the prisoner, Walter Kozak. This would enable both to evade the results of their lies, crimes and humiliations. They put themselves in charge of their destiny, regardless of right or wrong. A famous poem, *Invictus* by William Ernest Henley, comes to mind (invoked by *Star Trek's* Captain Lexxa, no less!).

Invictus Read by Captain Lexxa of Star Trek: Renegades

Invictus is Latin for 'unconquered and undefeated.' Many worldly successful people might brag that they are the person in the above poem. But are we really the masters of our fate and the captains of our soul? Am *I* really 'the boss of me'? Isn't that *God's* job?

2 Chronicles 13:12 ERV God himself is with us. He is our ruler, and his priests are with us. God's priests blow his trumpets to wake you up and make you excited about coming to him. Men of Israel, don't fight against the Lord, God of your ancestors, because you will not succeed!

Hebrews 2:9-11 TLB And it was right and proper that God, who made everything for his own glory, should allow Jesus to suffer, for in doing this he was bringing vast multitudes of God's people to heaven; for his suffering made Jesus a perfect Leader, one fit to bring them into their salvation.

1 Chronicles 29:12 TLB Riches and honor come from you alone, and you are the ruler of all mankind; your hand controls power and might, and it is at your discretion that men are made great and given strength.

Psalms 103:19 AMP The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, And His sovereignty rules over all [the universe.]

Let's probe whether the notion that 'no matter what comes, we can be in charge' is a valid motto to hold in life, starting with another freebie definition for *stoicism* which means being apathetic to one's inner feelings and indifferent to happiness, joy, anguish or pain:

I Am the Master of My Fate: Luke 19 | A Chapter a Day (carolinecolemanbooks.com)



Think Above the Box: Name a famous person that let themselves be captain of their soul rather than God. How did things turn out for them? Were the consequences of not following God in their life positive or negative in the end?

REAL LIFE: So far in the story, it appears that both Wayne Spears and Walter Kozak have squandered their lives in sin, but is it really too late to turn things around? Scripture says no:

1 Peter 2:9-10 TLB But you are not like that, for you have been chosen by God himself—you are priests of the King, you are holy and pure, you are God's very own—all this so that you may show to others how God called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were less than nothing; now you are God's own. Once you knew very little of God's kindness; now your very lives have been changed by it.

"Have you ever felt like you've wasted something? It's an experience we've all had and we all hate. And yet, so many people waste their time and energy trying to earn something that God has freely offered to give them in Jesus. We are either God's chosen people or we're just people choosing where to waste our lives."

- Alex Gowler

Chosen People || Identity Crisis on Vimeo (message starts at the 21:27 minute mark:)

Give yourself **EXTRA CREDIT** because the video is about a half hour long!

APOLO-GET-ITS: Romans 1:20 AMPC For ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature *and* attributes, that is, His eternal power and divinity, have been made intelligible *and* clearly discernible in *and* through the things that have been made (His handiworks). So [men] are without excuse [altogether without any defense or justification.]

Here's a video, short and sweet, on the many similarities of design evident in creation:

Evidence for Creation | Answers in Genesis

Guide for Chapter 20

The New Marine and the New Commander

1. The battle's aftermath found the night sky dark and somber which should have enabled all of the enemy merchant ships to retreat unseen. Due to haste in navigating an escape, several vessels let their guard down and failed to snuff out the lanterns on the ships, thus enabling the British *Echo* to capture the French *Orleans* handily. A couple of moments of due diligence would have prevented capture. In this case, haste surely made waste! Rushing a decision due to fear, busyness, stress or anxiety can cause us to sin and make mistakes just as did the captain of the *Orleans*.

Proverbs 21:5 NLT Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty.

Proverbs 19:2 AMP Also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge, and he who hurries with his feet [acting impulsively and proceeding without caution or analyzing the consequences] sins (misses the mark).

Read about how to avoid being like those ships:

The Dangers of Having a Hasty Spirit: 3 Ways to Avoid Operating in the Spirit of Haste | ladies loving god by Tonika Breeden (wordpress.com)



Think Above the Box: Have you ever noticed (if you watch soap operas, that is) that whenever a character has a choice, they always make the wrong one? Of course, the writers want to make compelling episodes full of drama to sell commercials and keep you coming back next week to see what happens. It may be intriguing for the viewer, but for the character, not so much! Discuss a movie or TV show that has a plot based on the conflict and strife that occurs by making hasty decisions for a quick fix. How could the characters have avoided their problems?

1 Chronicles 16:11 ESV Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually!

If they had based their decisions on God's Word would it have changed the outcome in any way? Give an example from the Bible that may have guided them and imagine how the story ends now.

2. The *Paladin* pursued and engaged the runaway French ship *Rodez*, commencing with a warning shot. Unlike the captured *Orleans*, which struck her colors almost immediately, this merchant ship chose to go it alone and fight back against insurmountable odds and the fact that she was almost defenseless against a gun-laden warship. After taking a severe pounding, the *Rodez* and all her crew were lost to the sea. Sadly, her captain stubbornly refused to see the odds stacked against him. Surrendering control is bad, but dying is worse! Many of us take this same attitude in regards to God, wanting control over our lives, hoping we will come out on top, but regretfully, the ending can be as tragic as this foolhardy ship's was. Thankfully, God doesn't want to sink us, he wants us to have the best life possible for eternity with Him:

John 4:14 ESV "...but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Jeremiah 29:11 NLT “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

Isaiah 40:31 NLT But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

“Surrender is the way to abundance.”

- **In Touch Ministries**

Unconditional Surrender (intouch.org)

*“Take all of these impurities / Giving You this wretched soul / I’m giving You these insecurities /
/ Giving You all control.”*

- Jeremy Camp

Giving You All Control-Jeremy Camp (Lyrics)

EXTRA CREDIT for listening to Lauren Daigles’s *Trust In You!*

Lauren Daigle - Trust In You (Live)

3. An observant Langley noticed that the name given to Captain Walker’s ship by the deceptive and jealous admirals in London, the *Doggard*, had been changed back to her original name, the *Danielle*. Claise, obviously distraught and crying, confessed to the Captain that he was the one sneaking around, loosening the Doggard plaque until it fell into the ocean. The name *Doggard* was just not fitting for such a beautiful craft. You may have noticed in your Bible reading that sometimes people’s names get changed, either by other men or by God Himself, such as Abram to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah, Jacob to Israel, Naomi to Mara, and Saul to Paul.

Genesis 17:5 GW So your name will no longer be **Abram** [Exalted Father], but **Abraham** [Father of Many] because I have made you a father of many nations.

Genesis 32:28 GW The man said, “Your name will no longer be **Jacob** but **Israel** [He Struggles With God], because you have struggled with God and with men—and you have won.”

John 1:42 NLT Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, “Your name is **Simon**, son of John—but you will be called **Cephas**” (which means “**Peter**”).

The post below gives us some insight:

Why do some people in the Bible have more than one name? | GotQuestions.org

4. Jonathan, Sean, Delain and Lane stood at the port side rail and realized, as they saw the shores of England, that their long journey was ending. Wayne Spears’ situation came up and Lane stated, “He will forever be looking over his shoulder as a result of his decision to lead a life of piracy, to which he has now condemned himself.” Sean added that he could be found, captured and tried as a criminal. Sounds like a great future, right?

Romans 2:5-9 NLT But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed. He will judge everyone according to what they have done. He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that God offers. But he will pour out his anger and wrath on

those who live for themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness. There will be trouble and calamity for everyone who keeps on doing what is evil—for the Jew first and also for the Gentile.

► What is unrepentance and what might happen to Wayne if he keeps on his sinful, rebellious path?

TAB says: *Unrepentant* means having no remorse, sorrow, guilt or shame over an act that was committed and having no desire to alter the behavior. Someone who is not sorry for their sins gives up eternity in Heaven with God and consigns himself to Hell.

What is unrepentance? What does it mean to be unrepentant? | GotQuestions.org

But on the other hand, Jonathan suggested that the move to America might be a change for the better, “His old life is done, his family name disgraced and his future dashed. I have no doubt he felt that a new life, no matter how low, was better than his broken old one. Maybe he can remake himself.” Hey, Jesus offers us the same deal!

2 Corinthians 5:17 AMP Therefore if anyone is in Christ [that is, grafted in, joined to Him by faith in Him as Savior], *he is* a new creature [reborn and renewed by the Holy Spirit]; the old things [the previous moral and spiritual condition] have passed away. Behold, new things have come [because spiritual awakening brings a new life].

Romans 6:6-7 AMP We know that our old self [our human nature without the Holy Spirit] was nailed to the cross with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin. For the person who has died [with Christ] has been freed from [the power of] sin.

Watch and/or read about how a Christian is a new creation:

What does it mean that a Christian is a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)? | GotQuestions.org



Think Above the Box: Spears had the choice to continue in his sinful ways or become a new man. Judging from his character, what do you think he will do? Are there any hints in the story that influenced your answer? What about you? Are you a new creation in Christ yet?

5. Once reunited with Captain Moore and Miss Thompson on the dock, the trio recounted the battle at Isla Sello. Sean added, “*Who would have known that cannon that old could be made workable?*” Even rusty old cannons and cannonballs could be rejuvenated and useful when cleaned, just like a person’s soul upon accepting Jesus as their savior. It’s never too late to make the choice to believe!

2 Peter 3:9 AMPC The Lord does not delay *and* is not tardy *or* slow about what He promises, according to some people’s conception of slowness, but He is long-suffering (extraordinarily patient) toward you, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should turn to repentance.

I've heard some people say that it's never too late to turn to God, but I've heard others say that this isn't true. Who is right? (billygraham.org)

REAL LIFE: So many times, people are judged by their origins, not their actions and the life they lead:

"The circumstances of our conception don't change the condition of our worth ... See, the thing is, when you love Jesus, the natural outflow of loving Jesus is loving people, and sacrificing what you need to sacrifice — sacrificing yourself, so that you can bring what was once broken to wholeness."

- Ryan Bomberger

'I Am Not the Residue of the Rapist. I Am the Resilience of My Birth Mom,' Pro-Life Speaker Declares | Christian News Network

APOLO-GET-ITS: You have probably heard a hundred times in school, television shows and movies that the dinosaurs lived many millions of years ago. That theory is *ubiquitous* (a fancy word which means being all over everything at the same time or omnipresent.) A person's worldview can influence how the same set of evidence results in different conclusions about how these *antediluvian* (the time period prior to the Great Flood of Noah's time) creatures came about:

Dinosaur Bones | Answers in Genesis

Scientific discoveries often change and/or challenge established belief. In 2005, Dr. Mary Schweitzer made just such a breakthrough regarding the age of dinosaur DNA:

One Step Closer to Jurassic Park | Answers in Genesis

And check this out:

Job 40:15-19 NLT Take a look at Behemoth, which I made, just as I made you. It eats grass like an ox. See its powerful loins and the muscles of its belly. Its tail is as strong as a cedar. The sinews of its thighs are knit tightly together. Its bones are tubes of bronze. Its limbs are bars of iron. It is a prime example of God's handiwork, and only its Creator can threaten it.

Dinosaurs and the Bible | Answers in Genesis

Dinosaurs—Part of God's Creation | Creation Today

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY! How about showing off and composing a do-it-yourself question in the same style as this study guide? Now that you have completed two Think Above the Box Bible Studies, can *you* view literature through a Biblical lens? Pick your favorite chapter from *Warship Poseidon* or *Castle of Fire* and pull a Biblical concept out of it! Add relevant Scripture, blog posts, videos and maybe even a song or two.

EXTRA-EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY!! Now give me a **REAL LIFE:** and an **APOLO-GET-IT!**

LOVE TO LINK!

The depth of content offered in the Think Above the Box Study Guides would not have been possible without the many talents and Spirit-inspired links that are included for each book. Isn't it great that while you use the study guides you can click on a link and go to these great sites without searching for them?

We would like to express our deep appreciation and gratitude to all the Bible publishers, pastors, bloggers, filmmakers, musicians and Christian media websites for the vast amount of information they provide online. Your efforts are truly a blessing to all who access your sites!

TAB highly encourages students to explore each of the links at their leisure as it is like going down a holy rabbit hole!

CASTLE OF FIRE

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[Christian Today](#)

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[Desiring God](#)

[SHANE & SHANE](#)

[David Jeremiah Blog](#)

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[AllAboutGOD.com](#)

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Christian News Network

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Afterword

Please check out **THINK ABOVE THE BOX - Home** for more study guides, blogs, and links to thought-provoking material.

*And please leave us a note on our site about your experience!
We would love to hear your comments!*



Looking at literature through a Biblical lens



2 Corinthians 4:18 TLB So we do not look at what we can see right now, the troubles all around us, but we look forward to the joys in heaven which we have not yet seen. The troubles will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.