

*In search of...*

# Truth & Right

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## Extreme Cold

The new year, 2015, is barely been here for a month and yet so far we have seen temperatures in the single digits and more than half a foot of snow, along with ice and crazy wind chills. Looking ahead, we are predicted to have temperatures well below zero degrees in the next week or so (and who knows how much more snow is headed our way). I'm not telling you anything you don't already know: in this area, January and February are COLD. But when we talk about the weather, and talk about the cold, what do we say? In what context & tone do we refer to it? Some verses that you may not be familiar with are found in Psalm 147:12-17.

"Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! For He strengthens the bars of your gates; He blesses your children within you. He makes peace in your

borders; He fills you with the finest of the wheat. He sends out His command to the earth; His word runs swiftly. He gives snow like wool; He scatters frost like ashes. He hurls down His crystals of ice like crumbs; who can stand before His cold?"

Most of the time, when speaking about winter, we say that it is pretty as long as you don't have to drive in it. So people, Christians and unbelievers alike, readily acknowledge that the snow and ice is beautiful to look at and has a kind of majesty all its own. Yet such statements are wrapped up in complaints about how uncomfortable we are in the cold and how inconvenient it is for us to travel and go about our usual routines. There is another passage that gets across the same point that was made earlier in Psalm 147; Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite proclaims God's majesty in Job 37:6-10.

"For to the snow He says, 'Fall on the earth,' likewise to the downpour, His mighty downpour. He seals up the hand of every man, that all men whom He made may know it. Then the beasts go into their lairs, and remain in their dens. From its chamber comes the whirlwind, and cold from the scattering winds. By the breath of God ice is given, and the broad waters are frozen fast."

How often, when looking at the forecast (either happily or grumpily), do you stop to think: my God, who created me, and loves me, also made all of this? He is certainly a God of extremes! He created such frailty as the butterfly and also created hurricane force winds and volcanoes. The extremity of the Lord is not just seen in the creation around us, however; we can see it in the very nature of God that He has revealed to us through His word. His wrath is severe, to be certain. "For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth." (Rom. 1:18)

Thankfully, God's love is beyond measure as well-- the Scriptures go so far as to say that He IS love (1 John 4:8). His capacity to forgive and be longsuffering is also to the extreme. "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses,

made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—" (Eph. 2:4-5) We may not be able to accurately predict the weather, but we can know what the Lord says and what He is like.

When we consider the power and glory of God, we should experience a number of emotions; first of all, we should be humbled. Nothing puts things in perspective better and makes you feel small than to consider our all-knowing, all-powerful Creator. Secondly, glimpsing His power should put fear in us. Usually, when we talk about fearing God, we mean in terms of reverence; while that is true, actual fear should be present as well to an extent. I mean, be honest, are you not scared of what ice and snow can do? Ever seen footage of an avalanche? Do you not feel fear when it comes to hurricanes, tornadoes, or other forces of nature? Of course you do.

In addition (and perhaps best of all), we should rejoice in seeing & knowing the power of God because we can be on His side! With sins forgiven through the blood of Jesus, and if we are faithful to Him, we have fellowship with God. We can confidently say that He is our Father, and go to Him in times of joy and sorrow. Now, I ask you, is that not a wonderful thought?! The psalmist said, "who can stand before His cold?" and we all know that the answer to the rhetorical question is

a loud NO ONE. But while none of us could ever hope to stand before God's cold, we can be with God and live in awe of His great might, rather than in abject terror of it.

Does knowing all of this change the way you feel about winter weather? Maybe, maybe not; but even though we are all still just as likely to complain about being cold, hopefully we will also be thinking about all that God has created & set into motion. Freezing temperatures are a good reminder to us of how delicate we are, and that this life is not forever. Another good side effect is that we should appreciate our blessings of warmth and comfort that much more! "But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content." (1 Tim. 6:6-8)

Passages like the ones we looked at from Psalms and Job fly in the face of the image of God that so many denominations put forth. They teach about a mild deity who does not get upset, does not judge, and is gentle. While the Lord desires us to come to Him and be His children and has promised that if we do so, He will care for us, do not lose sight of who He is and what He has done. He is a consuming fire! He is anything but mild! Who can stand before His cold? Follow God, and serve Him with a humble heart & willing mind.

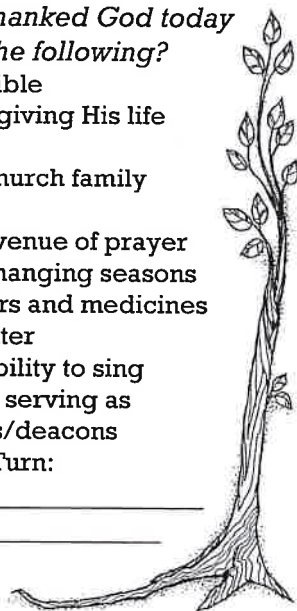
Jarred Currence

God gave you a gift of  
**86,400**  
seconds today. Have  
you used one to say  
**THANK YOU?**

*Have you thanked God today  
for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- Jobs
- The avenue of prayer
- The changing seasons
- Doctors and medicines
- Laughter
- The ability to sing
- Those serving as elders/deacons
- Your Turn:

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**WELLSBURG CHURCH OF CHRIST**

92 Rose Cottage Lane  
Wellsburg, WV 26070  
304-737-1422

<http://www.truthandright.org>



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# Taming the Tongue

J F O Y H P H D J U X Z A C B Y Z T N P  
 B L E S S N V T I Q N O U K D G L G U Q  
 S N E C Q K I K J Y L O N H T B T Q O D  
 Z X S T A I N I N G D C R U D D E R N D  
 I Y L E M N O V F B U Y I O R I D J I A  
 U R Y A B Y V O W S N F G S U K A E K N  
 S H Y C A P M L K N O K H P B Y X M W A  
 P G V H C A Y W Y L A H T D H R O A S R  
 P P C E Y H I L G I B I E Z M V W N V A  
 I Z Z R Q O C V P D N E O K B L H K Q R  
 S R S S P R L H N E J B U S U R I I D O  
 T S Q A Y S D O V X S N S A M E M N S B  
 U B W L M E V B F O Y Z N Z R S N D I X  
 M F O R E S T D V E T C E A Y E Q D Y S  
 B D H A M M W A A P T B S E P E K K S W  
 L N I L B Q C K A Y R W S Z W O U S G E  
 E Z C D E P X R B E S D D M U E J B O H  
 H B F L R A A T A Q O X G C P R N Q E L  
 V Y S C P B Y I T I H H A C O L N F H N  
 H H S H V H V B B R P O I S O N U B T J  
 R N J Z L K D I G A F F X G G D E H J W

**DIRECTIONS:** Look up the scripture in the Bible, and find the answer in the crossword above.

James 3:1, Not many of you should become \_\_\_\_\_, my brothers

James 3:2, For we all \_\_\_\_\_ in many ways.

James 3:3, We put bits into the mouths of \_\_\_\_\_ so that they obey us,

James 3:4, The large ships are guided by a very small \_\_\_\_\_

James 3:5, So also the tongue is a small \_\_\_\_\_, yet it boasts of great things.

James 3:5, How great a \_\_\_\_\_ is set ablaze by such a small fire!

James 3:6, And the tongue is a fire, a world of \_\_\_\_\_.

James 3:6, The tongue is set among our members, \_\_\_\_\_ the whole body,

James 3:7, Every kind of beast and bird... has been tamed by \_\_\_\_\_

James 3:8, It is a restless evil, full of deadly \_\_\_\_\_.

James 3:9, With it we \_\_\_\_\_ our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people...

James 3:10, From the \_\_\_\_\_ mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.