

Thank you, Alexis Brown...
...for being our speaker for today!

July Birthdays

19 Sal Contino

*"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the
Lord is, there is freedom."*

2 Corinthians 3:17

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

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Indio Informer

Vol. 37 No. 27
July 5, 2026

*"Trust in the Lord with all
your heart and do not lean on
your own understanding."*

Proverb 3:5

- *"Fight the good fight"*
- *"Keep the faith"*
- *"Finish the course"*

The Most Difficult Words to Say

By Sam Willcut

The four most difficult words to say: "I have done wrong." We generally do not like to admit that we have done wrong. One reason is pride. Pride is one of the most dangerous sins that affect humanity. It was the first one listed in God's list of hated sins: "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look..." (Prov. 6:16-17). Another reason is denial due to self-deception. As we have often stated tongue-in-cheek, "Denial" is not just a river in Egypt." The danger of deception is always prevalent (1 Cor. 6:9; 15:33; Gal. 6:7; Eph. 5:6; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 John 3:7), but the most dangerous is self-deception. "*Let no man deceive himself*" (1 Cor. 3:18; cf. Gal. 6:3; James 1:22, 26; 1 John 1:8). Satan is the great deceiver (Rev. 12:9), and he has convinced many who are plagued with sin that they have not done wrong. Thus, we must be true and honest with ourselves whenever we look to the word of God as a mirror of our souls (cf. James 1:22-25).

The three most difficult words to say: "I am sorry." Closely akin to the aforementioned words, this is the next step of digression. Even when one may be willing to admit that he

has done wrong, he may not be willing to apologize for it. This is where rationalization enters. We know that we have done whatever action, but we are unwilling to say, “I am sorry.” Apologies are often difficult to express. It must come from a heart free from selfishness and pride. Those who find it difficult to apologize have developed hard hearts. Conversely, the psalmist declared, “...*a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*” (Ps. 51:17). How many times have we planted ourselves behind our pews during the invitation song and refused to walk down the aisle because we are ashamed to say, “I am sorry” whenever we know we have done wrong?

The two most difficult words to say: “Thank you.” Ingratitude is among the ugliest sins (cf. Rom. 1:21). Even from youth, we as parents teach our children to express gratitude. Nevertheless, children who never learn to say, “Thank you,” grow up into adults whose character reflects unkindness. When individuals do things for us, whenever people help us, when friends even do little things to express kindness and love, we ought always to say, “Thank you” (cf. Luke 17:11- 19). How amazing it is that these two little words can signify so much!

The single most difficult word to say is, “No.” All sin comes from an unwillingness to say this single word. Whenever Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, He responded three times by quoting scripture that reiterated His expression: “No!” Whenever we face temptation, we are at a crossroads—do we give in and yield by saying, “Yes,” or do we stay resolute to what we know the Bible teaches and resoundingly say, “No.” It is so easy to give, but it is very difficult in the heat of various trials and temptations of life to say, “No.”

Let us resolve to learn how to say these difficult words. What a blessing our lives to God will be!

The Church is a Hospital

By Kevin Cauley

Perhaps you have heard the title of this article before. It is meant to illustrate the function of the church. A hospital is a place where people who are physically sick or injured go to get better. The church is also such a place, but in a spiritual way. People who are spiritually sick or injured should find healing through the efforts of the church. Sometimes people criticize the church as being a place of hypocrites precisely because there are spiritually sick or injured people in the church. That would be a valid criticism if the church were not doing anything to heal these spiritually damaged people. However, the goal is for spiritually sick people to become well through the work and teaching of Jesus. He said, “*I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance*” (Luke 5:32).soul hospital

We should be careful, though, that the church does not become a spiritual hospice care facility, where the sick go, not to be cured, but to die from their illness. Jesus expects members of his church to put away their sins, not remain in them. Forgiveness is a path to holiness, not a path to ongoing sinfulness. That is why Jesus also said, “*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven*” (Matthew 7:21). We are to “*put away*” all the sins of the flesh (Ephesians 4:22, Colossians 3:8). We are to be holy as He is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16). John wrote, “*My little children, let no man lead you astray: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous*” (1 John 3:7). We must make a serious effort to obey the teachings of Jesus Christ.
