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A Spiritual Lesson In Video Game Language 9b

**Inspired By God, Written And Presented By
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(In God I Trust And Write)

Platform: Atari2600

Game: Pitfall!

Topic: Around The World 2—Unprepared

1: Opening Prayer

2: Opening Discussion: In our second part of Around The World, we are being whistled again and sent to the jungle.



This is Pitfall Harry. He is supposed to be the world's greatest explorer and treasure hunter, but as you will see, he needs to know how to

survive in a harsh environment like what is portrayed in this game. Likewise, as you will see, he is prone to seeming like he does not know anything about what he is doing and that's where this lesson comes from. The whistle (figuratively speaking) in this lesson did it again—same song, just a different tune; it brought another victim to a place where he doesn't need to be at this time.

Has there ever been a time where you needed to be ready for a big event in your life or someone else's and you weren't ready (this could even be something a little smaller if needed)?

I have been known to overestimate the time it takes to prepare myself for work, school, etc. I have also had to make people wait because I wasn't dressed to go somewhere and got people upset before.

In this lesson, we are discussing the game of Pitfall! for the Atari2600. This game is kinda tough for me and at one time, I was afraid of it.

There are few ways to succeed and a lot of ways to die in this game. The object is to collect 32 treasures scattered in this jungle and is complicated in its timing.

3: Picture Show: First, we will talk about the ways to die in this game. The list is below with the pictures.

Ways To Die In Pitfall! (The Atari 2600 Game)

1: Scorpion (Underground)



2: Coiled-up Cobra Rattler:



3: Campfire



4: Falling Or Jumping Into Quicksand (The Blue Pits)



5: Falling Or Jumping Into A Tar Pit (The Black Pits)



6: The Log In The Middle Of A Quicksand Pit Or Tar Pit--This Slows You Down So You Don't Get Across Before These Things Reappear (Some Of These Disappear and Reappear)



7: Crocodiles--Falling into the swamp they are in (also a blue pit) or they open their mouths to toss you in. When open mouth death happens, it looks like you're getting eaten.



4: Bible Study: First, I am going to quote the Atari2600 Pitfall! manual; look at what it says on the first page:

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INSTRUCTIONS



Picture this! You are deep in the recesses of a forbidden jungle — an unforgiving place few explorers ever survive. But you've got courage, because you're with Pitfall Harry, the world famous jungle explorer and fortune hunter extraordinaire. The lure of hidden treasures draws you and Harry deeper and deeper into the bush. But, being a great explorer, you wouldn't think of starting such a difficult journey without reading this manual first — very carefully.

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We are looking at the setup story of course. The text above reads like this:

“Picture this! You are in the recesses of a forbidden jungle—an unforgiving place few explorers ever survive. But you've got courage, because you are with Pitfall Harry, the world famous jungle explorer and fortune hunter extraordinaire. The lure of hidden treasures draws you and Harry deeper and deeper into the bush. But, being a great explorer, you wouldn't think of starting such a difficult journey without reading this manual first—very carefully.”

Pitfall Harry looks experienced and disciplined until you get a look at the ways he can die and what he has to defend himself. All Pitfall Harry has is 3 lives—one current and two in reserve. He doesn't carry any anti-venom for the scorpions or the snakes, he can't swim, and he is wearing clothes that beg to be burned by unruly and unfortunately placed flames (tight-fitting,

confining, uncomfy looking pants and a shirt that looks too big on the arms (you can't see hands). He looks like he could be passing for his “Sunday Best” rather than jungle clothes. The outfit looks kind of like the very hot temperatured polyester outfits that were popular in the 1970's and 1980's.

Have you ever not been dressed or equipped right for some occasion?

This, I believe is Pitfall Harry's problem and if he's not careful, his luck runs out sooner than he might think.

Let's look at Proverbs 8.

Pro 8:1 Isn't wisdom calling out; isn't understanding raising her voice?

Pro 8:2 On top of the highest places along the road she stands where the roads meet.

Pro 8:3 Beside the gates, at the city entrance—at the entrance to the portals she cries aloud:

Pro 8:4 "I'm calling to you, men! What I have to

say pertains to all mankind!

Pro 8:5 Understand prudence, you naïve people; and gain an understanding heart, you foolish ones.

Pro 8:6 Listen, because I have noble things to say, and what I have to say will reveal what is right.

Pro 8:7 For my mouth speaks the truth—wickedness is detestable to me.

Pro 8:8 Everything I have to say is just; there isn't anything corrupt or perverse in my speech.

Pro 8:9 Everything I say is sensible to someone who understands, and correct to those who have acquired knowledge.

Pro 8:10 Grab hold of my instruction in lieu of money and knowledge instead of the finest gold,

Pro 8:11 because wisdom is better than precious gems and nothing you desire can compare to it."

Pro 8:12 "I, wisdom, am related to prudence. I know how to be discreet.

Pro 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil. Pride, arrogance, an evil lifestyle, and perverted speech I despise.

Pro 8:14 Counsel belongs to me, along with sound

judgment. I am understanding. Power belongs to me.

Pro 8:15 Kings reign by me, and rulers dispense justice through me.

Pro 8:16 By me leaders rule, as do noble officials and all who govern justly.

Pro 8:17 I love those who love me, and those who seek me will find me.

Pro 8:18 Wealth and honor accompany me, as do enduring wealth and righteousness.

Pro 8:19 My fruit is better than gold, better than even refined gold, and my benefit surpasses the purest silver.

Pro 8:20 I walk on the way of righteousness, along paths that are just,

Pro 8:21 I bequeath wealth to those who love me, and I will fill their treasuries."

Pro 8:22 "The LORD made me as he began his planning, before his ancient activity commenced.

Pro 8:23 From eternity I was appointed, from the beginning, from before there was land.

Pro 8:24 When there were no ocean depths, I

brought them to birth at a time when there were no springs.

Pro 8:25 Before the mountains were shaped, before there were hills, I was bringing them to birth.

Pro 8:26 Even though he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the world's first grains of dust,

Pro 8:27 when he crafted the heavens, I was there—when he marked out a circle on the face of the deep,

Pro 8:28 when he made the clouds from above, when the springs of the depths were established,

Pro 8:29 when he set a boundary for the sea so the waters would not exceed his limits, when he marked out the foundations of the earth.

Pro 8:30 Then I was with him, his master craftsman—I was his delight daily, continuously rejoicing in his presence,

Pro 8:31 rejoicing in his inhabitable world and taking delight in mankind."

Pro 8:32 "So listen to me, children! Blessed are those who obey me.

Pro 8:33 Listen to instruction and be wise. Don't ignore it.

Pro 8:34 Blessed is the person who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at my doorways—

Pro 8:35 because those who find me find life and gain favor from the LORD.

Pro 8:36 But whoever sins against me destroys himself; everyone who hates me loves death."

The Bible says a lot about being prepared for the spiritual life that God wants us to have. Let's look at Matthew 22:1-14.

Mat 22:1 Again Jesus spoke to them in parables. He said,

Mat 22:2 "The kingdom from heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son.

Mat 22:3 He sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the wedding, but they refused to come.

Mat 22:4 So he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited, "Look, I've prepared my dinner. My oxen and fattened calves have been slaughtered. Everything is ready. Come to the wedding!'"

Mat 22:5 But they paid no attention to this and went away, one to his farm, another to his business.

Mat 22:6 The rest grabbed the king's servants, treated them brutally, and then killed them.

Mat 22:7 Then the king became outraged. He sent his troops, and they destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

Mat 22:8 "Then he told his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

Mat 22:9 So go into the roads leading out of town and invite as many people as you can find to the wedding.'

Mat 22:10 Those servants went out into the streets and brought in everyone they found, evil and good alike, and the wedding hall was packed with guests.

Mat 22:11 "When the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.

Mat 22:12 He asked him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' But the man was speechless.

Mat 22:13 Then the king told his servants, 'Tie his hands and feet, and throw him into the darkness outside!' In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth,

Mat 22:14 because many are invited, but few are chosen."

Why was this person thrown out?

It's because he wasn't dressed correctly. In the game, I believe that the clothes were not proper if we are talking about real life; Pitfall Harry should wear light and breathable clothes, but be protected from the elements with his clothes if possible (bugs etc).

Let's look at the last way Pitfall Harry can 'die'

in this game. I will also have a little fun with the explanation.

8: Time-Up--Although not a “death”, this ends the game. You are effectively frozen in time. Sometimes, I like to jump into a lake or tar pit right when the clock is hitting zeroes. This saves my life because I'm frozen for eternity This costs no lives and looks cool. **What is your favorite “death scene” regardless of death or not in life or in this game?**

Bankrupt On Score: Want to score 0 points?
Barrels do this trick. For every $\frac{1}{30}$ of a second, you lose 2pts, do the math, that's 60pts a second!!!

Minor holes and ladder problems lose you 100pts each.

These are not life-costers, just point thieves—oh so damaging to the bottom line. 0pts only happens though if you don't get any treasures/money and you cumulatively stay on a

barrel for $33 \frac{1}{3}$ seconds (much longer if treasures are had). To put it another way, my average score of 66,000 pts. would evaporate to 0pts in 18min. and $33 \frac{1}{3}$ seconds if the game, timed at 20min. would allow, but to get this average takes almost all the game so it's all but impossible to lose everything if treasures are properly found and banked. To put it still another way, a score of 72,000pts would evaporate in exactly the 20min. time period if allowed by the game which makes me hypothetically say that possibly 72,000pts is an average score. The math is a lot of fun though.

Let's look at Matthew 25: 1-13

Mat 25:1 "At that time, the kingdom from heaven will be comparable to ten bridesmaids who took their oil lamps and went out to meet the groom.

Mat 25:2 Now five of them were foolish, and five were wise,

Mat 25:3 because when the foolish ones took their

lamps, they didn't take any oil with them.

Mat 25:4 But the wise ones took flasks of oil with their lamps.

Mat 25:5 Since the groom was late, all of them became sleepy and lay down.

Mat 25:6 "But at midnight there came a shout: 'The groom is here! Come out to meet him!'

Mat 25:7 Then all the bridesmaids woke up and got their lamps ready.

Mat 25:8 But the foolish ones told the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are going out!'

Mat 25:9 But the wise ones replied, 'No! There will never be enough for us and for you. You'd better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.'

Mat 25:10 "While they were away buying it, the groom arrived. Those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet, and the door was closed.

Mat 25:11 Later the other bridesmaids arrived and said, 'Lord, lord, open up for us!'

Mat 25:12 But he replied, 'I tell you with certainty, I don't know you!'

Mat 25:13 So keep on watching, because you don't know the day or the hour."

Why were the foolish bridesmaids (virgins) thrown out?

These foolish women were thrown out because they were not prepared for the time the bridegroom came and didn't have enough oil; their time simply ran out because they waited too long to get extra oil.

When we look at the game and we get "game over" because of time, it doesn't matter how many points scored except for personal fun, but in this case, we are looking at "game over" because of time as a very bad thing. No matter how you slice this scenario, it means a failure to beat the game occurred. If we are not prepared for Jesus to come back, it means automatic failure.

Let's look at Matthew 25: 14-30.

Mat 25:14 "Similarly, it is like a man going on a trip who called his servants and turned his money over to them.

Mat 25:15 To one man he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, based on their ability. Then he went on his trip.

Mat 25:16 "The one who received five talents went out at once and invested them and earned five more.

Mat 25:17 In the same way, the one who had two talents earned two more.

Mat 25:18 But the one who received one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground, and buried his master's money.

Mat 25:19 "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.

Mat 25:20 The one who had received five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you gave me five talents. See, I've earned five more talents.'

Mat 25:21 His master told him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy servant! Since you have been trustworthy with a small amount, I will put you in charge of a large amount. Come and share your master's joy!'

Mat 25:22 "The one with two talents also came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two talents. See, I've earned two more talents.'

Mat 25:23 His master told him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy servant! Since you have been trustworthy with a small amount, I will put you in charge of a large amount. Come and share your master's joy!'

Mat 25:24 "Then the one who had received one talent came forward and said, 'Master, I knew that you were a hard man, harvesting where you haven't planted and gathering where you haven't scattered any seed.

Mat 25:25 Being afraid, I went off and hid your talent in the ground. Here, take what is yours!'

Mat 25:26 "His master answered him, 'You evil and lazy servant! So you knew that I harvested where I haven't planted and gathered where I

haven't scattered any seed?

Mat 25:27 Then you should have invested my money with the bankers. When I returned, I would have received my money back with interest.'

Mat 25:28 Then the master said, 'Take the talent from him and give it to the man who has the ten talents,

Mat 25:29 because to everyone who has something, more will be given, and he will have more than enough. But from the person who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away from him.

Mat 25:30 Throw this useless servant into the darkness outside! In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

Look at these pictures:



This depicts the end of a game where no penalties were incurred seemingly until you find out that this is the first swamp of the game. The game's journey just started and it's already over. Pitfall Harry is too scared here to jump on the aligators and time runs out. With this particular game (Pitfall! in general), I used to be

exactly like this—scared stiff and couldn't get myself past this level and would just sit there and sometimes literally turn the game off. In the spiritual life, this is not the way to go. Fear is crippling and faith is the victory. The servants, except one, made a profit for their master. The one that didn't got his taken away and given to a more worthy choice.

So, this servant looks more like this to his master:



**We need to be ready like Jesus says in Mark 13:
32-37**

Mar 13:32 "No one knows when that day or hour will come—not the angels in heaven, not the Son, but only the Father.

Mar 13:33 Be careful! Watch out! Because you don't know when the time will come.

Mar 13:34 It's like a man who went on a trip. As he left home, he put his servants in charge, each with his own work, and he ordered the doorkeeper to be alert.

Mar 13:35 So keep on watching, because you don't know when the master of the house is coming—whether in the evening, at three o'clock in the morning, or at dawn.

Mar 13:36 Otherwise, he may come suddenly and find you asleep.

Mar 13:37 I'm telling you what I'm telling everyone: Be alert!"

We can see that money and jewels aren't everything.

Look at these pictures and then let's look at Luke 12: 13-21 and then Luke 12: 25-48.



Gold



Diamond Ring



Silver



Money Bag

Luk 12:13 Then someone in the crowd told him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me."

Luk 12:14 But Jesus asked him, "Mister, who appointed me to be a judge or arbitrator over you people?"

Luk 12:15 Then he told them, "Be careful to guard yourselves against every kind of greed, because a person's life doesn't consist of the amount of possessions he has."

Luk 12:16 Then he told them a parable. He said, "The land of a certain rich man produced good crops.

Luk 12:17 So he began to think to himself, 'What should I do, since I have no place to store my crops?'

Luk 12:18 Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and I'll store all my grain and goods in them.

Luk 12:19 Then I'll say to myself, "You've stored up plenty of good things for many years. Take it

easy, eat, drink, and enjoy yourself."

Luk 12:20 But God told him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded back from you. Now who will get the things you've accumulated?'

Luk 12:21 That's how it is with the person who stores up treasures for himself rather than with God."

Luk 12:35 "You must keep your belts fastened and your lamps burning.

Luk 12:36 Be like people who are waiting for their master to return from a wedding. As soon as he arrives and knocks, they will open the door for him.

Luk 12:37 How blessed are those servants whom the master finds watching for him when he comes! I tell you with certainty, he himself will put on an apron, make them sit down at the table, and go around and serve them.

Luk 12:38 How blessed they will be if their master comes in the middle of the night or near dawn and finds them awake!

Luk 12:39 But be sure of this: if the homeowner

had known at what time the thief were coming, he would have watched and would not have let his house be broken into.

Luk 12:40 So be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at a time when you don't expect him."

Luk 12:41 Peter asked, "Lord, are you telling this parable just for us or for everyone?"

Luk 12:42 The Lord said, "Who, then, is the faithful and careful servant manager whom his master will put in charge of giving all his other servants their share of food at the right time?"

Luk 12:43 How blessed is that servant whom his master finds doing this when he comes!

Luk 12:44 I tell you with certainty, he will put him in charge of all his property.

Luk 12:45 "But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time to come back,' and begins to beat the other servants and to eat, drink, and get drunk,

Luk 12:46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he doesn't expect him and at an hour that he doesn't know. Then his master will punish him severely and assign him a place with unfaithful

people.

Luk 12:47 That servant who knew what his master wanted but didn't prepare himself or do what was wanted will receive a severe beating.

Luk 12:48 But the servant who did things that deserved a beating without knowing it will receive a light beating. Much will be required from everyone to whom much has been given. But even more will be demanded from the one to whom much has been entrusted."

What have we learned?

If we are going to go around the world to do ministry or anything for that matter, we have to be prepared for the task. We can't be ruled by rash decisions, fear, greed or anything of the kind.

When we do have an opportunity in life to have a certain place or job, we must be ready. Treasure hunting is fine if the right preparation is done, but we have also got to remember that we really only have one life and not 3 or more to get it right. We also must remember that the spiritual life is much

more important than the physical and we must be ready for Jesus' coming and His kingdom to come. Hell opens its mouth wide for the unprepared in spirit.

We can't be like this last picture.



We can't just sit on a fire that can kill us and expect it not to burn our bodies. Pitfall Harry can't swim so he is as good as dead. Being unprepared has a huge chance of killing physically and definitely spiritually and must be repented for and avoided. Make sure you are ready for Jesus' coming.

5: Closing Prayer