

**PARABLE of the COMPUTER**

If computers had existed during the time of Jesus' physical presence on the earth, He would have included them in his parables. The Lord often used common activities with which the people were familiar in order to illustrate the message that He wished to impart regarding our relationship with God. There were the sower, the fish net, the lost sheep, and many others.

When Jesus completed his story (parable), He would say something similar to, "The Kingdom of God is like that." Usually, He would be referring to the dynamic within the analogy rather than the people or things in the story. In the parable about the shepherd and the lost sheep, the point was not that the shepherd had a flock of sheep. Rather, it was his considering the lost sheep important enough to leave the 99 and look for the one that was lost.

I bought a personal laptop computer for the home that I had built for my retirement. It came with an antivirus program. The license had expired, and I needed to get it renewed, which I was supposed to be able to do by logging on to the internet site and follow instructions. However, I was not having much success. So, I called the provider on the phone. A young man answered, who was very obliging, helpful, and patient. He tried to explain to me what I needed to do, but that did not appear to work, either.

Finally, the man asked if I would give him permission to take control of my computer. At this point, I had nothing to lose and I connected with the site address that he gave me, which linked me with his computer. It was amazing to watch him clicking the various icons on my screen in order to complete the order successfully. At one point, I moved my computer mouse, thinking that I was helping. He was aware of what I was doing and asked me to stop, as it was interrupting what he was doing. So, I let go.

The whole process was absolutely remarkable. That is especially so when one reflects on the fact that I was in Hollidaysburg and the person helping me was somewhere in India.

If this would have been one of Jesus' parables, He might have told his listeners that our relationship with God is something like that. We are not independent of God and only make a mess of things when we try to be. While the Creator (Who is very familiar with his product) is willing to be of assistance for us to achieve a successful outcome, He will not do so until two things happen.

First, we have to call on God. He does not impose himself upon us, nor does He violate our freedom to make choices. Secondly, we have to give him permission to take over our lives. That, perhaps, is the most difficult. I had to have trust in the man (without seeing him) that he will do what is best, when I gave him permission to take over my computer.

I guess that there could be a third similarity, illustrated by the moving of my computer mouse. Do not interfere after you have asked God to do something for you. At that point, we need to give up control and leave the matter completely up to him.

We do not think of parables in our day. Yet, they appear to be all around us. Jesus is still teaching. The ones that I have noticed in recent months all seem to be saying, "Let go, let God."