

# Keeping It Out of the Gutters

It wasn't pretty, but it was fun. To celebrate a couple of family birthdays, in addition to breaking a little bread together, we went bowling. I confess it was my idea, and I have no idea why. As I sat staring down the highly waxed hardwood lane, my memory recalled something amazing. I am pretty sure we had not taken our kids bowling since they were young. So something seemed missing from this picture. Then it came to me: *Gutter Guards!*

When the kids were young, to keep from turning fun into frustration (and tears for our youngest), we used lanes that had *gutter guards* down the entire length of the lane. No matter how badly you rolled the ball, it would eventually hit a pin or two.

Before dawn this morning as my thoughts turned to the Lord, the remembrance of that family fun brought to mind a different connotation. Life is very hard sometimes. We do the best we can to keep it "on the hardwood and out of the gutters." But the truth is we only need to glance at the news, around our cities and neighborhoods, and even our own circumstances to know that gutter balls happen. And, in life, there is no automatic ball return that always let's us try it again.

While the analogy the Spirit brought to mind may trouble some, I am going to share it anyway. Life gets hard whether or not we are Christians. The difference is this. As Christians, we have two "life gutter guards" upon which we must rely to keep it on the "hardwoods".

## **The Word of God and The Holy Spirit**

It seems silly, even foolish, to have the revealed heart of God and mind of Christ from His Word at our fingertips and infinite Power just a prayer away and not use them. Why are so many content to keep on rolling it by themselves—hoping to

keep it in the middle and out of gutters? Let these two verses remind and comfort you before you roll the next one.

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path."* (Psalm  
119: 105 NASB)

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon  
you..."* (Acts 1: 8a ESV)

I confess I rolled a couple of gutter balls the other night.  
It was my turn to wish we had the gutter guards up. Dad did  
not win!

*Walter*