

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound,
who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

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This monthly religious journal is published for the benefit of the
Church of God universally. It is our supreme purpose to reach the
world for Christ through the printed page. Our burden is to reveal
the truth of God's Word to all mankind, to expose sin and error, war
against apostasy, and to eradicate the longstanding traditions of
men that have no biblical foundations.

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

- A personal God (John 4:24)
- A divine Christ (John 1:1, 14)
- An infallibly inspired Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- Salvation from sin (Matt. 1:21)
- The new birth (John 3:3, 5-7)
- A holy life (Luke 1:73-75; Titus 2:12)
- Sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23)
- Unity of God's people (John 17:21, Eph. 4)
- Divine, physical healing (James 5:14-16)
- The ordinances (Matt. 28:19-20; John 13;
1 Cor. 11:23, 34)
- Eternal life (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43)
- The Trinity (1 John 5:7, 8)

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

- Jesus organized it (Matt. 16:18)
- On a good foundation (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11)
- Christ governs it (Eph. 1:22-23; Isa. 9:6)
- God admits members (1 Cor. 12:13-18)
- Sin puts you out of it (Rom. 11:22; Ex. 32:33)
- The saved only are members (John 15:2-6)
- Membership is offered to all (Rev. 22:17)
- Final rewards (Rev. 20:12-15; 21:3-4; 22:14)
- Bible name of the Church (Acts 20:28;
Gal. 1:13; John 17:11)

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We reserve the right to edit and/or decline any material for any
reason. Not responsible for unsolicited articles or items.

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Website: www.godsacres.org

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Annual Financial Report

Isaiah 52:7 states, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" Indeed it is a "beautiful" work to see the saints laboring together in unity and harmony to publish this monthly holiness journal, *The Gospel Trumpeter*. This magazine has been publishing salvation for thirty years. In Mark 13:10 Jesus said this concerning the Gospel work: "And the gospel must first be published among all nations." In fulfilling this commission, we send this periodical to many nations and have a monthly mailing of approximately eighteen thousand issues. This is a labor that requires many dedicated saints who labor consistently. We are very thankful for all the dear ones who expend many, many hours in this missionary endeavor.

As you can see from the figures below, this ministry is a very costly venture. It has always been our practice not to affix any subscription rate to *The Gospel Trumpeter*. The local congregation in Newark bears the majority of the expenses. Costs of paper, supplies, and postage are ever increasing, causing the financial commitment to be larger as well. Should you feel a burden to help defray these expenses, you may send a donation to: *The Gospel Trumpeter*, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, Ohio, 43055.

We are endeavoring to put this truth forth in every form possible. *The Gospel Trumpeter* can also be viewed on our web page, which you may access at www.godsacres.org. It is our prayer that *The Gospel Trumpeter* will continue to be a blessing to you and yours in the year to come. All of us who labor on *The Gospel Trumpeter* earnestly covet your prayers that we may continually publish this great message.

Statement of Condition

for 12 months ending
January 31, 2000



	Income	Expenses
Supplies		\$ 29,819.56
Utilities		3,932.24
Labor/Payroll Taxes		20,894.46
Donations/Offerings	\$16,380.00	
Equipment Purchased		8,573.15
Postage		45,035.56
Maintenance & Repairs		<u>14,801.60</u>
Subtotals	\$16,380.00	<u>\$123,057.57</u>

Balance paid out of the general fund of the Church of God congregation at Newark, OH	\$106,677.57
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Acts 27:7 *And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone;*

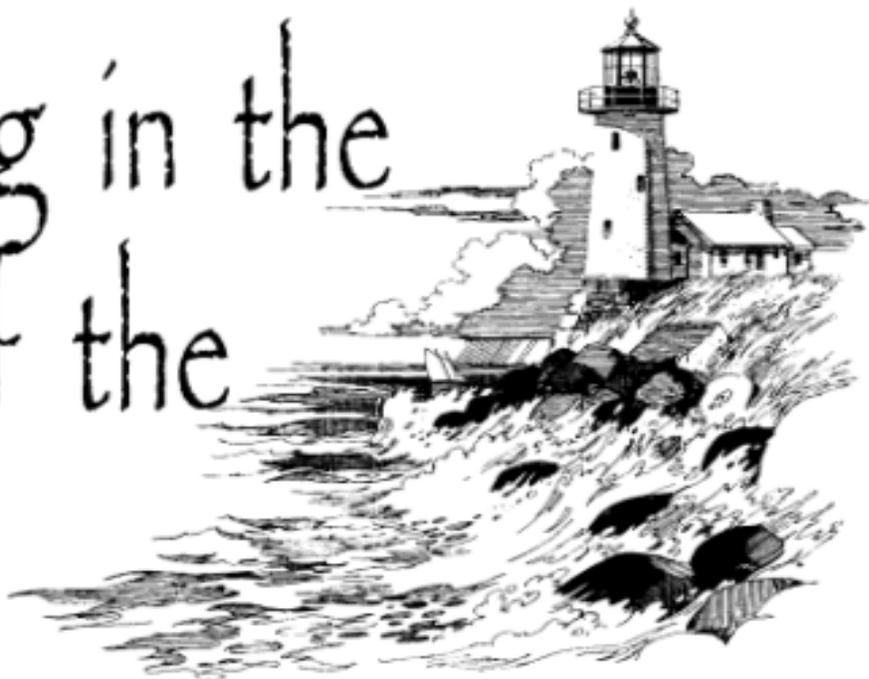
8 *And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.*

9 *Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,*

10 *And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.*

11 *Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul. [How we see that coming to pass today! People believe most anyone except the words spoken by a man of God.]*

Standing in the Midst of the Storm



Brother Roger Decker

The Journey of Life

During this journey, the Apostle Paul encountered many hardships, but God was faithful to him and the others and they completed the trip without loss of life. Though the storm was great and the crew struggled to keep the ship afloat, God protected Paul in the midst of the storm from the soldiers and even from a serpent. Paul's journey is proof that there is no safer place than being in the perfect will of God. Acts 27:14 says, "But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon," or a great northeast wind. In the Scripture lesson we find that Paul went from being a prisoner to one giving the orders. He was the only one on board the ship who was hearing

from God. The others on board the ship were blessed to have that brother with them.

I want to use this lesson to compare it to our journey from earth to Glory. On our journey we are going to encounter many hardships and storms, but we can reach the other side safely if we stay in the perfect will of God. Some people seemingly think that Heaven is going to have a different area for each religious group. On the contrary, there is only one Heaven and one hell. I repeat, if you are going to make it into Glory, then you must stay in the perfect will of God. If you get outside His perfect will, you are going to make shipwreck and go down. People need to realize that just because the moves they are making are going smoothly does not necessarily mean

that what they are doing is right. Remember, that is not the end of the matter.

Third John 6 says, "Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well." These were people whom John said the brethren had been witnesses of their love and it would be well if they sent these brethren on their way with Christian love. They were on a journey filled with many pitfalls, and they needed the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We also need the Holy Spirit's guidance, wisdom, and strength to make it. There are circumstances that you cannot handle in your own strength. Some things are very trying, and if you try to stand in your own strength, you will fall. Many today

are on the journey of life without the Captain, and they are going astray. It takes the Captain, Jesus Christ, to guide you safely to the other shore. Unless you are close to God, you will become shipwrecked and washed upon the enemy's shore. Some people think they are standing, but their spirits are wrong. If your spirit is wrong, then you are wrong.

Begin Your Journey With God

You can do some things as a Christian that will help you to stand in the storms of life. First, you need to make sure that you have God in your soul. Do not start this journey without God. Before the Apostle Paul's conversion, he was a threat to the church and would have persecuted many more had Jesus Christ not met him on the road to Damascus. Paul was a changed man after the Lord saved him, and so is everyone who truly repents and turns his life over to Him.

Away with this so-called salvation where a person's life remains unchanged. Some still run to the same places, talk the same way, and do the same things. When you meet Jesus Christ, a change takes place in your life. Old things pass away and all things become new. You get the mind of Christ and a new Spirit. God takes out the old disobedient spirit and puts in a right spirit. He gives you a new heart and causes you to rise up filled with His Spirit on your journey in the kingdom of His dear Son. You no longer run with the same crowds and do the same things. You cannot serve God and be shallow. You can join a church and be shallow, but to have God in your soul you must clean out every chamber and room in your heart. It takes digging deep to live for God. Paul said in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

To get a real experience with God, you must turn from sin completely, turn from those things that are wrong, and turn your life over to Him. You may say, "Well, I'm afraid of giving up to God completely." Friend, God knows how to handle your life, and He knows how to handle you. If God asks you to do something, He will give you the grace to do it, even if He should call you to preach. However, you should never take up preaching merely as a profession. You need to make sure that God has called you, because when you get in a pulpit, you are a prime target for critical spirits. You are going to get shot with the devil's fiery darts. Consider David. He spent many years of his life running from King Saul. To live for God, you are going to be tested and tried, but you can stand in the midst of the storm.

Jesus said in Luke 6:46-49: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."

You must do more than cry over your sins to get victory over them. You must have godly sorrow to turn from your sins and leave the road of sin. Sometimes when people get in trouble, they have sorrow and cry tears and make promises, but often they do not have godly sorrow. Godly sorrow works repentance. It will cause you to turn from sin and repent, ashamed of what you have done and ashamed that you have hurt God. Also, by the grace of God, you never want to do it again. On

the other hand, when people have worldly sorrow, they are sorry they have gotten caught but would do it again if they were not afraid of getting caught again.

When you come to Jesus Christ, you need an experience just like Paul got. He said, "Lord, what would you have me to do?" You need to line up with the Word of God. When you line up with the Truth of God's Word, you will have the power of God in your life. There is too much shallow repentance and shallow living. When real salvation comes to you, it will clean up your tongue. The telling of smutty, filthy jokes will stop.

Paul had God in his soul. The Bible says in Acts 27:23, "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve." What a testimony! No one greater than God could stand by you.

Obedience and Faith in God Is a Must

Second, to stand in the storms of life, you must obey godly instructions. You need to be pastored, and you must submit to a pastor. Paul testified to King Agrippa in Acts 26:19, saying, "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Paul was obedient. You cannot stand in the storms of life and be disobedient. When you become disobedient, you remove your armor. To be disobedient is to leave light and journey in darkness. God gives you one pastor, not several pastors.

Third, to stand in the midst of the storm, you must have faith in God. If you journey successfully from earth to Glory, it is going to take God. You must have God in your life initially and in the end. He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. Paul said in Acts 27:25, "Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." The angel told Paul what would happen, and that was how it happened. You need

to place your faith and confidence in God. You can arrive safely in Heaven if you will believe God.

The Christian's life is a life of faith. The Hebrew writer wrote in Hebrews 10:38, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Hebrews 11:2 reads, "For by it [faith] the elders obtained a good report." Faith will work, but feelings will disappoint you. You cannot go by feelings alone. Sometimes you may not feel like going to church. Now, if you went by feelings, you would probably sit at home. However, if you do that, that feeling will come regularly.

If you were to go by feelings, you would not read your Bible and pray as you ought. Thoughts such as, "It's no use to pray; it doesn't do any good," would cause you not to pray about situations; therefore, you cannot go by your feelings. Often God is working when you do not know a thing about it. Things are not always visible to your eyes, yet they will come to pass: God's Word is true; no one can deny it.

As for visible signs, a situation may look terrible and look as if it is getting worse; nevertheless, you need to look to God and trust Him to work it out. He has everything under control. Also, you cannot go by impressions. Again, the Bible says, "The just shall live by faith." You must believe in God, His Word, and the principles of His Word. That is what will take you through.

God has magnified His Word above His Name. Some people do not understand what that means. Let me illustrate it to you. Many people know about God, but the mere knowledge of God does not do anything for them. It is only when one believes His Word that a change takes place, not just believing there is a God. When one believes His Word and confesses and forsakes all sin, that is when His Word is magnified above His Name. If you were to ask worldly people, "Do you believe in God?" most of them would reply, "Yes, I believe in God; I'm not an

atheist." Then, if you were to inquire, "Do you believe His Word? His Word says if you confess and forsake your sins, He will have mercy," no doubt, they would answer, "Well, I'm not going to do that." They do not want to get so serious about their souls that they are ready to say, "I'm sorry for my sins. I will confess and forsake them." If they were to do that, then they would receive the mercy of God, but not until they do it in accordance with His Word.

Today people say, "I believe in God." Well, do they believe His Word? His Word says they must repent; they must confess and forsake their sins. Also, His Word says to wear modest apparel and that the men should have short hair and the women should have long hair. Many people get hung up on these things and say, "Well, I'm not going that far." Then no change will take place, because God does not make partial changes; He changes the whole man.

Giving Thanks to God

Fourth, to stand in the storm, no matter how rough situations get, you ought to give thanks to God, even in the midst of the storm. Often the shouts of praise come from those who are going through the toughest trials and tests. Acts 27:35-36 states: "And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat [giving thanks to God is encouraging to everyone, because it is uplifting]. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat." Paul's praises to God caused others to be of good cheer. Real praise is catching.

First Thessalonians 5:18 admonishes, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." The words "every thing" include everything that concerns Christian living, even the perils and the storms. Complaining and murmuring can discourage many and cause them to lose faith in

God, and it displeases the Lord. Numbers 11:1 reads, "And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp." Those who have discontented spirits will always find something to criticize and complain about. They do not like this preacher or that singer. That is out of order.

Some people think too highly of themselves. They think they can handle things better than others can. They make such statements as, "Well, I would have done it this way." Now, that may sound good until they have tried to do it themselves. You need to let the man of God handle the services as God directs him. It takes a special calling and a special anointing from God.

Someone may say, "I would like to be a pastor or an evangelist someday." My advice to you is this: first be a good follower. You should not try to lead a flock until you can follow. Do not try to go out and preach to people when you cause problems. Paul said in Philippians 2:14, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings."

Lay Aside Every Weight

Fifth, to stand in the storm, sometimes lightening the load is necessary. Acts 27:18 reads, "And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship." Verse 38 says, "And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea." They cast the wheat into the sea to lighten the load.

We read in Hebrews 12:1, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Some are carrying around too many weights, and those things are

hindrances to them in the storms. They get bogged down. People cannot stand upright for Truth as they ought when they have spiritual weights. The captain of the ship that Paul was on had enough sense to lighten the load before the ship broke apart.

God is not going to take things away from you. You have to drive some things out of your life. God will give you the power, but you must drive them out. For instance, I had the habit of smoking tobacco before I got saved. God did not give that habit to me. The devil tempted me and I yielded to it. After I got saved, I had to lay down that habit. I had to suffer a little, but God gave me the power to drive it out. Christians do not go around puffing on tobacco, the weed, or anything else. That is just one example of driving something out of one's life.

Other things that people need to drive out of their lives are temper tantrums or throwing fits. When some people do not get their way, they kick walls, throw things, or slam things down. If you allow your temper to get out of control, you need to drive that out of your life. Again, God will give you the power, but you must drive it out of your life. You need temperance to keep your temper under control and to use that temper against the devil and that which is wrong.

Today people want to blame their past for their disobedience and say, "Oh, I was abused when I was a little child; that's the reason I go out and shoot people" or "I was a child in a divorced family; that's the reason I do this and that." People must take responsibility for their own actions. Giving curt answers or speaking sharply to others to get your point across is displeasing to God and should be driven out of your life. Also, judging your brother and sister in Christ should be left to God.

Some are overloaded with the cares of life. Others are overloaded with sports. You should not allow sports to control your life. Some are

so overloaded with working and making money that they have forgotten their souls. If you are overloaded with the cares of life, you need to lay those things down at the feet of Jesus Christ and lighten the load so that you can stand when the storms of life come. Others are lovers of self. To stand in the storm, you cannot cling to that which is of no value to your soul. Also, you cannot hang on to that which amplifies the flesh and decreases the life of the soul.

"Abide in the Ship"

Sixth, to stand in the storm, you must stay in the ship. Do not let anyone draw you away. Remember that Satan is as a roaring lion, walking about seeking whom he may devour. In the natural sense, when a lion comes upon a herd of antelope, it does not go after the whole herd. It gets down in the grass and waits patiently for the lame one, one separated from the herd, an older one, or a young one. It does not charge into the herd. Then when the time is right, it attacks that one. That is the way the devil works. He tries to separate you from the people of God, because he knows that if he can get you alone, he has you. If you stay with the rest of the flock, there is protection. It works that way in the animal kingdom, and it works that way in the Kingdom of God.

Paul said in Acts 27:31, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." You are not going to make it if you do not stay in the church. You cannot stand in the storm and continually miss services. People need to realize that when it is time for the church services, they ought to be at the house of God.

Someone may ask, "Do you believe it is critical that I attend the church services?" When you go to work, do you just walk in whenever you want to? Do you miss a day whenever you want to? If you were to do that, you would get fired or you would not draw a paycheck. If you miss the services unnecessarily, you

will not receive a blessing. God has a covenant by which you must abide. If you disobey God's covenant, you have to pay the price.

God has something for you if you will stay in the ship, or stay with the church. Wednesday night prayer and praise service is just as important as any other service; it is not a night to take off and do as you please. Many people do not want to attend prayer services anymore. People want to do anything but pray. They will preach and sing, but how about praying? God is more interested in the effectual, fervent prayers that go up than He is in some of these other things that take place.

Often when you go to the house of God, someone may testify of something similar to what you are going through and talk about how they got victory and how God blessed them. What can that do for you? It can encourage and strengthen you, and then you can say, "If he can do it, I can do it." If you were to stay home, you would miss that and become weaker spiritually. Staying in the ship is so important.

What will happen on your journey if you obey God's Word and His instructions? What will happen if you have faith in God, give thanks to God, and lay aside every weight? Acts 27:43-44 says, "But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land." If you will abide by these principles, you will make it safely to the other shore. First, you must have God in your soul; then you must obey His Word, have faith in God, believe God, give thanks to God, lay aside all weights, and stay with the church. If you do these things, you will make it safely to the other shore.

God has a plan for each of us,

and it will work. Then, when you leave this world, others can say of you as it was written of Paul: "And so it came to pass that he or she escaped safe to the land." None of us is going to be in this world long. If you

live one hundred years, that is nothing compared to eternity. If you are going to get anything done for God, you need to do it now, while you have the time and the opportunity. You need to denounce all fleshly

things and get closer to God. If you obey God, you will land safely on the other shore.

(Cassette C-4191E)

Faithfulness

The Fate of the Apostles . . .

Matthew suffered martyrdom by being slain with a sword at a distant city of Ethiopia.

Mark expired at Alexandria, after having been cruelly dragged through the streets of that city.

Luke was hanged upon an olive tree in the classic land of Greece.

John was put into a caldron of boiling oil, but escaped death in a miraculous manner and was afterward banished to Patmos.

Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downward.

James the Greater was beheaded at Jerusalem.

James the Less was thrown from a lofty pinnacle of the temple, and then beaten to death with a fuller's club.

Philip was hanged up against a pillar at Heiropolis in Phrygia.

Bartholomew was flayed alive.

Andrew was bound to a cross, where he preached to his persecutors until he died.

Thomas was run through the body with a lance at Coromandel in the East Indies.

Jude was shot to death with arrows.

Matthias was first stoned, and then beheaded.

Barnabas of the Gentiles was stoned to death by the Jews at Salonica.

Paul, after various tortures and persecutions, was at length beheaded at Rome by the Emperor Nero.

Jeremiah 6:10 To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

11 Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with him that is full of days.

12 And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives

together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD.

13 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealth falsely.

14 They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.

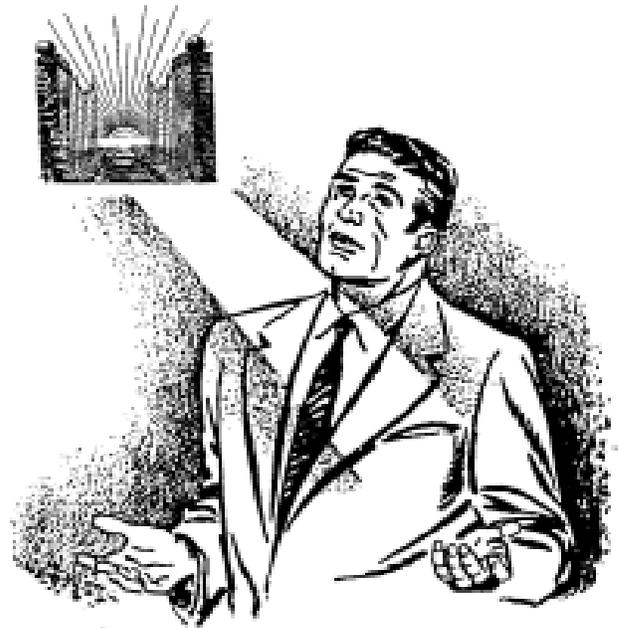
15 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could

they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

17 Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.

Ask for the Old Paths



Brother Esau Brooks

God's Warning Concerning Today's Conditions

The world is in the midst of a very serious time. We are seeing the Scriptures fulfilled right before our eyes. It is alarming that so few have eyes to see what is really happening all around us. Christian friend, by the help of the Lord, I intend to do

what I can to encourage your heart in your stand for God and the Truth.

No matter what the devil says or does, God's way is still the best way. I am not talking about God's ways, but God's way. Jesus told the disciples in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Dear heart, God has not changed His

mind about that; it remains as firm, as solid, and as true as the day He said it.

Understanding the conditions that existed at the time when the Prophet Jeremiah delivered this message is not difficult for many people. This was a message that God directed the Prophet Jeremiah to lay out before the people of that time.

Often I have stood amazed at how the Bible has revealed conditions down through the ages and even as they stand today.

The greatest problem that confronted the prophet of God then was that God could not speak and deliver His warning to anyone. The reason was that their hearing was affected. Using biblical terminology, their ears were uncircumcised and they would not hearken. Reading these Scriptures and thinking that they only applied to those people of yesteryears would be easy; however, had this message been only for those people, we would not have a trace of it today. God saw to the preservation of this message so that we might find direction as we live in this sinful world today. He described the condition that the people were in. It was a condition in which the Word of the Lord was more a reproach than a source of rejoicing.

As you look around today, you must acknowledge that this message is as up to date as today's newspaper, for in our generation we have come to the place where the Word of God has become a reproach to many instead of a source of inspiration and blessing. We need to be warned, for as it was in those days, so it is today. Danger is pending. God said, "I am full"; in other words, He was saying, "I am fed up." He went on to say, "I am weary with holding in" (Jeremiah 6:11).

Dear friend, things are not going to continue the way most of us would like for them to continue. Conditions are dark, but they are going to get darker. I am not a prophet of doom, but I am realistically reminding you that the Word of God has been spoken. God revealed to the prophet the judgment that was going to be visited upon the people. Verse 12 states, "And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD." Someone may ask, "Do you believe that such a time as this will come today?" God is

explicitly declaring it. That is the reason we are in a very serious time.

Verse 13 of our Scripture lesson says, "For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely." It seems that we have reached a time when finding trustworthy individuals is difficult. One year we see people shouting and thanking God for the Truth, but the next year we see them fighting against the same Truth. We cannot stick our heads in the sand, so to speak, and pretend that this is not happening. The sooner we recognize what is going on, the better it will be for the world and the church.

Someone may ask, "Who are you to be speaking this way?" I am nothing. I would say as the old Prophet Amos said, "I am no prophet." Yet, God has placed His words on my heart. Jesus told me to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. Matthew 28:20 says, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Saint, I want to exhort you to hold fast to the faith, the Lord, Truth, and righteousness.

"Stand Ye in the Ways"

God had a question for the prophet in verse 15 of our lesson: "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay" Apparently, some were glorying or rejoicing in what they had committed. It makes no difference to some what damage they do to the cause of God just as long as they can carry out their own selfish purposes; that is all that matters to them. He went on to say, ". . . they were not ashamed, neither could they blush . . ." Many things going on in our world should cause us to blush. We sing a song that says, "Without spot and blameless, my brother." What a glorious church God has! Many seem to be dedicated to destroying the glory of the church, but she is still glorious. I still see the church as a glorious church! Glory

be to God! She is a church without spot, and she is blameless. No matter what you or others do, it is what God is doing that I am concerned about.

Again, verse 15 states, "Were they ashamed . . . ? nay . . . neither could they blush [because of this God said]: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD." This was God's judgment for those people, but we do not need to make it our judgment.

In verse 16 God is giving us, as He gave them, the one solution to the whole problem: "Stand ye" You should not worry who is not standing. No matter how many fall or stumble, you must stand. I am not talking about standing today and falling tomorrow. You need to stand. Notice, in language of this Scripture, where the stand ought to be taken: "in the ways." Right in the midst of the ways, stand. Do not be affected or influenced by others who are not standing. If there were ever a time when God was counting on His people to stand, it is now. This is not the time for you to be wondering who is right and what is right.

Just as God said in the days of the Prophet Jeremiah, "Stand ye," this is not a time for weak knees. This is the time to find strength from God to stand. It is going to mean something to stand. A crowd may be clamoring for you to join them and another crowd may be clamoring for you to join their group. Jesus saw this coming, so He said in Matthew 24:23, "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not." In other words, "Do not follow them." You may ask, "What am I supposed to do?" You need to stand. You do not have to be confused.

Years ago when I first visited the United States, I told many congregations to which I preached, "Confusion can be over me, under me, and all around me, but I am not confused." The reason I am not confused is that I keep the Lord before

my eyes. David said in Psalm 16:8, "I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." I have nowhere to move.

Some time ago I was in a meeting with some people who said, "Are you with us?" I said, "Who is us? I am with the Lord. What Heaven do you have for me? When did you hang on a Cross for me?" These are times to be planted on the Solid Rock, Christ Jesus. The message from the Lord today is, "Stand ye in the midst of the ways." I do not have any moving to do except to go further with the Lord. I will not turn to the right or the left, but I will keep following the Lord. I want to encourage you to do the same.

So many poor hearts are in a mess and do not know which way to turn or what to do. Their condition is due to their listening to the voices of others rather than listening to the voice of God. They look at personalities and do not rely upon the Lamb of God. When John came as the forerunner of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, had he followed the people, he would have been confused, for they came to him and said, "Are you the Christ?"

He said, "I am not."

"Well, are you Elijah?"

"I am not."

"Then who are you?"

John said in John 1:23, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord . . ." This is still the message. We need to prepare the way of the Lord, because the One for whom we are looking is going to appear suddenly, and we need to make sure that He does not find us sleeping.

How to Stand Right

I would like to emphasize three points in this message. The first point is the need of standing. The second point is the need of seeing why you need to stand. I am not going to paint a false picture before you. It is going to get much more serious than it is now. We are head-

ing to the end. Jesus is coming again, and I believe with all my heart that He is on His way. If you go to the Word of God, you will see there is no room for confusion concerning this matter.

The third point is the need to know where the old path is, the one the saints tread upon and Jesus Christ gave His life to establish. There was and still is the unity of God's people. If you get in the unity, you will be spoiled for anything else. Some great men have come along worthy of our confidence and our trust, but as great as they have been, you should never replace Christ with them. Erring is human, but with God there is no erring.

It is no wonder that Paul wrote to the Ephesians in Ephesians 4:1-2: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering [in other words, walk worthily, demonstrating these qualities], forbearing one another in love." Where do people get the idea that they need to set a limit on how long they must put up with others and that if someone does not do things the way they think they ought to, they separate themselves from that one? What if God were to treat you that way? Consider how long-suffering He is with each of us. I thank God for that. Anytime Christians do not have the grace to bear with another, something is radically wrong.

The Scripture says to forbear one another in love, not in throat cutting or undermining. If you are a sinner who is counting on getting saved and going to Heaven, this is the way you need to get saved. No wonder God told the people in Jeremiah's time, "Stand ye." One cannot see what is happening if he is tossed about by every wind of doctrine. There is a church on one corner saying, "I am right" and one on another corner saying, "I am right," but they are not doing right. You cannot be right if you do not do right, and the only way you can do right is to get

right. Right is not right because I say it is right or because someone else says it is right; Right is right because it is right. That is the reason you need to stand and stop wobbling at everything you hear. Do not allow things that people say to cause you to wobble and say, "I wonder who is right?" You need to know what is right. That should keep you from any confusion.

Right will hold you together. Some say this and that, but you can understand these things if God allows you to understand them. If He does not want you to understand them, you need to trust Him. Whenever I come up against something that I do not understand, I put it in God's hands and leave it there. That is the only way I can keep peace of mind. Otherwise, I would be as many are today: wandering from pillar to post without finding a resting place. It is time for people to grow up spiritually.

"Keep the Unity of the Spirit"

Ephesians 4:3 says, "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." If this business of staying together were such an easy matter, we would not have to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit. However, because there are going to be conditions that arise, there is going to be opposition. It is a constant struggle to keep the unity of the Spirit. It is not up to us to make unity. Unity comes with the Spirit whenever we allow the Word of God to have its rightful place in our lives and allow the Holy Spirit of God to direct our paths. Jeremiah 10:23 tells us, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." If man cannot direct his own steps, he cannot direct your steps.

What are you supposed to do? The Word of God instructs you not to lean to your own understanding. You may say, "Well, this is the way I understand it." Nevertheless, lean not to your own understanding. Proverbs 3:6 says, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall di-

rect thy paths." This is the only way that you can receive divine direction. Dear heart, are you dependent on God for direction?

God has called, equipped, and prepared men and set them on the wall as watchmen. He told Ezekiel, in so many words, "You take the Word from My mouth and give the people warning from Me." Friend, you need to follow what God's man says. You may ask, "How do I know whether he is telling me what is right?" You must know what right is to know whether a man is telling you what is right. You cannot go by everything one person says and call that Truth. Disgruntles are always going to be around. Jesus had them, the morning-time church had them, and we have them today. They are people who walk around and speak whatever comes to their minds. You have to stay clear of such people by the help of the Lord.

Ephesians 4:3 says to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit. It does not say the unity of individuals or the unity of certain groups, but the unity of the Spirit. The unity of the Spirit is one thing, and the unity of a group is another. The bad thing about having the unity of a group is that as long as you do everything they say, you have unity with them. However, the moment God opens your eyes and touches your heart and you are inclined to follow Him, your unity with the group will no longer exist. If it were the unity of the Spirit, they would have stayed with the Spirit.

Every man who deals with God must deal with Him on an individual basis. God never saved en masse; He saves individually. As He saves, He reveals Himself and His ways. As long as you follow Him, you will be going one way and you will be following one thing. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit are we, all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." That is still true today. As sure as you see these

things, your next questions will be: Where is the old path and the good way? and Why is it the good way? It makes people good and makes people treat one another well. The old path is the only good way.

Often people say, "Well, I like the ways of these people." However, if it is not doing you any good, you need to be careful. You have only one soul to make ready for Jesus' coming. When you find the good way, you ought to walk therein. How can you know when you have found the good way? You will find rest for your soul; all your wandering will cease. One song says, "My wandering is o'er." Where has it gone? God is not like man. He does not change with every moon; He remains faithful.

God Has Only One Way

God gave this message to the Prophet: First, He wanted to point out the seriousness of the time in which they were living, for despite all the warnings they were getting from God, they were going on heedlessly. Therefore, God was about to pour out His anger and wrath upon them. As always, He did not want them to perish. Under the ministry of Ezekiel, the Lord said in Ezekiel 18:31-32: ". . . for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." Ezekiel 33:11 says, ". . . turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" He was calling on those people to stand. You have to find a place to stand for whatever you are going to stand for. If you are going to stand for God, then stand for Him. You cannot stand and move at the same time. How are you going to convince anyone that you are standing when one week you say, "Here is the Truth. This is the glorious church," but the next week you say, "I made a mistake." How will people know whether or not you are making another mistake?

One fellow once tried to con-

vince me that sin started in Heaven by the devil, so I asked him, "Where was God?"

"He was right there."

Then I asked, "Who is the greatest, God or the devil?"

He said, "That is the reason they had war in Heaven." God is so great that He spoke this world into existence; yet, people say the devil sinned in Heaven and God had to have a war to get him out? Come on. We need to find a place in God and stand for what is right, not egotistically but humbly, meekly, and submissively. When you find that place to stand and have done all to stand, then you can look around and see that there is something wrong with religion today. You must stand and see the conditions, and then ask, "Is this the good way and the old path? Differences and misunderstandings will come; yet, a misunderstanding should not cause you to endeavor to tear the body to pieces. You should think more about the body of Christ than what people are thinking.

If you are walking in darkness, you cannot blame anyone else; you made that choice. Is that the old path? No. When you find the old path, the Prophet said you would find rest for your soul. That is what Jesus offered the people of His day. He said in Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [not confusion and unsettledness]." You may ask, "What about the Scripture that says, 'Come out from among them'?" Who are them? They are the ungodly. Who is ungodly? You need to look in the Bible for the answer. Psalm 1:1 says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." It is ungodliness when people get in other people's way so that they cannot find the Lord and receive salvation. God did not put the church here to cause confusion or to add to the confusion already in the world. He put the church here to be a light and an example to the world. Matthew 5:16

says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Believing what way is right is not enough. The Bible says you must see and you must know. Today many are changing ways without any examination. Dear friend, God has only one way, and nothing else will satisfy Him. You need to stand despite all these ways. These ways

are multiplying more as the days go by. Many people are opening churches as one would open a new retail shop. It is time to quit acting like children and be men. There is only one way. If you are starting a new church, you cannot be the Church of God. What happened to all of those down through the years before you came along? Are they lost because you say they are lost? It is too late for these new churches

that are opening to be the church. The church has always been here. By the grace of God, you need to stand within the pale of the church. You need to ask for the old path and the good way. When you find it, walk therein, and you will find rest for your soul. May God bless you.

(Cassette C-4141E)

The Paradoxes of Christ

He was the Light, yet He hung in darkness on the Cross.

He was Life, yet He poured out His soul unto death.

He was the Rock of Ages, yet His feet sank into deep waters.

He was the Son of God, yet He died a felon's death.

He was holy, undefiled, separated from sinners, and knew no sin, yet He was "made sin" when He took the guilty culprit's place and suffered in his stead.

He bade the weary to come to Him for rest, yet not on earth, could He find rest until He said, "It is finished," and gave up His life to God.

He was the Mighty God, yet He became a man and was crucified through weakness.

He was the Image of the Invisible God, yet His visage was marred more than any man.

All the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Him, yet He took on Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men.

He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast; yet He humbled Himself and became obedient even unto death.

He was the Desire of All Nations, yet He was despised and rejected of man.

He is the Fountain of life, yet upon the Cross He cried, "I thirst."

Can you understand these mysteries? These are the things that angels desire to look into. The heavens cannot contain Him, yet He died for us.



In Memory of Brother Ronnie Kane



The Lord called Brother Ronnie Ray Kane home to receive his reward Wednesday, January 12, 2000. He was born on March 23, 1945. Brother Kane resided in Roseville, Ohio, and worked at Philo Steel Mill until he gave his heart to the Lord just before the June camp meeting in 1982. Brother Kane was very essential in the Kingdom of God. While in Roseville, Ohio, He became a church bus driver, transporting saints from Zanesville to Newark for the church services.

September 1982 Brother Kane lost his job at the Philo Steel Mill because the factory shut down. In December of 1983, Brother Kane and his family moved to the Newark area. Little did he know then that God had a great work planned for his life. Shortly after Brother Kane moved to Newark, he began helping to drive the bus to pick up the elderly for the church services. This soon became a permanent duty for him. When the roads were bad, the people who rode the church bus could count on his being there on time to take them to church. When the church decided to build new dormitories for the camp meetings, Brother Kane was very active in helping.

In the June camp meeting of 1983, Brother and Sister Kane started helping with the laundry at God's Acres. They took over the job of doing the laundry beginning August camp meeting of that year, which is a full-time job during the camp meetings and carries throughout the year. They served in that position for several years.

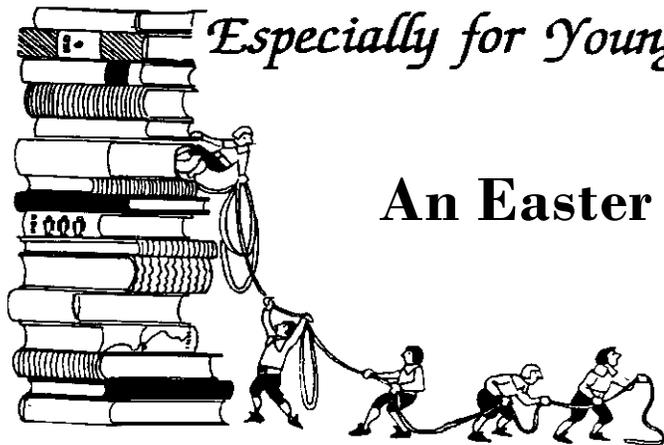
In 1990 Brother Kane started as a helper in printing *The Gospel Trumpeter*. He spent many nights laboring, helping to get each monthly issue in the mail. After God took the former printer home to his reward, our pastor, Brother Roger Decker, appointed Brother Kane to be the printer. Brother Kane printed, folded, cut, and stapled *The Gospel Trumpeter*. Also, he was active in the mailing process. Truly Brother Kane had a burden and a desire to do the things of God and to work for the Lord. Brother Kane also printed Gospel tracks, choir music, and Sunday school quarterlies. If he was not busy in the print shop, he helped with other church work, whether he was mowing grass on God's Acres or working on the church machinery. In addition, Brother Kane was very good at working on automobiles, and he worked on many saints' vehicles.

When Brother Kane passed away Wednesday, January 12, 2000, a little after three o'clock, he was in the bus garage and had been working on church equipment. Truly he would not have wanted to go home any other way than working for the Lord. Although he was a quiet and backward man, those who really knew him knew what a true saint of God he was; he stood for Truth and lived Truth.

We held a memorial service Saturday, January 15, 2000, at the Church of God, God's Acres. It was a wonderful service. Sister Cummings, Sister Decker, and Brother Randy Tigner provided the singing. Brother Decker took his passage of Scripture from 1 Corinthians 12:18, which states, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."

Truly Brother Kane was a member set by God in the body of Christ. He carried a heavy burden for the work of God. Brother Kane never complained about anything when it came to working for the Lord. He was a quiet member, but he labored faithfully in the body of Christ. God gave him a great responsibility, and he did an awesome job!

Especially for Young People



An Easter Gift



Bessie Elroy looked at her last year's spring coat as if it were the cause of the struggle that had been going on within her for some time. She had saved every penny until a crisp ten dollar bill lay in the drawer of her little desk.

On Saturday she had gotten the catalog and picked out the very coat she wanted. Then on Sunday when the minister had spoken of the Christian's duty of making a sacrifice to help those in need, she had vaguely wondered what she could do. Like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky this thought came to her, "Your old coat isn't so very bad!"

"But it is shabby! And I have worked hard for that money!"

And so the struggle went on. Several times she had told herself that she could get along very well, but each time she looked accusingly at last year's coat and added, "But that coat is shabby."

At length she said, "I will go over to Granny Barnes, and she will tell me what to do."

Now Granny Barnes was not Bessie's grandmother at all. She was an old lady who lived alone, except when her house was full of visitors. Perhaps the gold of her character was so in evidence because of the refining fires she had gone through. She seemed to be the counselor for the old and young in the whole village, and every one called her Granny Barnes.

So to Granny Barnes Bessie went with her problem that afternoon. The old lady looked eagerly up from

her sewing at Bessie's cheery, "Hello, Granny!" It would have seemed as absurd to knock at Granny's door as at the door of one's own home.

"Come right on in and sit down," said the old lady.

After commenting on the beauty of Granny's geraniums and speaking to Dick, the canary, Bessie brought her problem to the sympathetic ears of her listener.

"Well now, it would be fine to have that new coat after working so hard for that money, but come to think about it, I have never noticed that your old one is so bad."

Bessie laughed, "Well, it really isn't worn out! And Granny, do you really think I owe that money to someone else when I have earned it myself?"

"Well, let us see. The money after all is the Lord's, isn't it? So now since it belongs to Him, I think it would be best to ask Him about it. If He wants you to have the coat, get it; and I trust you will find much happiness while wearing it. But if He wants your money, you will be far happier wearing your old coat."

Bessie's pretty face looked thoughtful as she said, "I will do that, Granny. I will ask Him about it."

"Let me tell you something, dear," Granny continued.

Bessie sat up and listened, for Granny's quaint, old stories were always a treat.

"Perhaps somewhere out in the cold, large world I have a son. Harry was young, and a merry lad he was, but he got in with the wrong com-

pany. He left home and joined the navy—that was twenty years ago. I sometimes think he isn't living, for he has not written for fifteen years. But there are many other mothers' sons and daughters wandering about in the cold world, and it takes sacrifices on the part of God's children that they may learn of Jesus.

"It is almost Easter now, Bessie. That joyous season never comes around, but that it brings with it a pang of sorrow for me. I wonder so, at this time, about my Harry. Is he perhaps still a wanderer away from home? If he is no longer living, I trust he turned to the Lord before he went, for I have been praying for him every day since he left. Then on the resurrection morning we will meet. And then I wonder how many other mothers are sad on this day of life because some of their loved ones are dead—dead in sins. For that causes far more sorrow than to lay one whom you love away into the grave to await the resurrection."

For some time Granny looked far away with those faded blue eyes in which tears quivered, but presently she looked up and said brightly: "But you came to me for help and I have been pouring out my troubles into your ears."

"You have helped me more than you realize, Granny; but I must go."

And Bessie was gone. When she came home, she did not go near her last season's coat, for she had made up her mind, and nothing must turn her from the decision of which she felt the Lord had led her.

"I will make this Easter gift to the Lord," she said.

Several days later at a mission in a distant city the postman left a letter that caused no small excitement among the workers.

"Quite a coincidence that it should come from the very town where he says his mother lived," said the pastor to his wife.

"Will it be enough to pay for a ticket?" she questioned.

"I called the station and they said a ticket will cost nine dollars and eighty-seven cents."

"Let us tell him about it," they said in concert. In the next room a man sat in thoughtful silence. His unusually sad face did not look old, although his hair was graying around the temples. His cheeks were still pale from the recent fever he had passed through. He could remember staggering into the warmth of a church, without money, with scarcely enough clothes to cover him, and too sick to go farther. Then there were weeks of which he remembered nothing. But at length he responded to careful nursing and kindness and awoke to a new, better life.

"Here is the letter we have been praying for," said the pastor, as they entered the room. "We shall miss you here, but in another day you can be on your way home."

For some time there was silence, save for the choked sobbing from the man before them.

"The Lord has been too good to me, when I have rebelled against Him so long. If only Mother is still living after all these years. I wrote her this morning, but now I will be there about as soon as the letter."

His voice was almost boyish with eagerness as he added, "I will be home in time for Easter."

Because of her "rheumatiz" Granny did not go to the post office every day. When she went for her groceries she would stop and eagerly ask if there was any mail for her. Sometimes there was an advertisement, but usually she walked away just a bit dejected. But today she felt a flutter of excitement as she was handed a real letter. She wanted to read it in the post office, but she did not have her glasses, so there was nothing left for her to do but wait till she came home. She turned up the home path, beside which the

crocus blooms were pushing through when the shrill whistle of the afternoon train could be heard. Once at home, she read by the aid of her spectacles the letter from her only son. How she praised God for His goodness. She still had the open letter in her trembling fingers, when the door burst open and without further ceremony Harry her Harry had his arms about her.

When Granny finally found her voice she said, "This my son was dead but is alive again."

"Yes," replied her son, with subdued joy, "alive because I have found a living Savior. For your Christ is now my Christ too."

This news that Harry Barnes had come home was soon noised abroad throughout the village. The next morning the little church was crowded. Many came because it was Easter, and perhaps some came to get a glimpse of Harry Barnes.

When Granny Barnes came up the aisle, supported by her son, no one noticed Bessie's old coat. In fact she herself had forgotten about it, for the joy that was in her heart.

Selected

Recipe for Life

1 cup of good thoughts

1 cup of kind deeds

1 cup of consideration for others

2 cups of sacrifice for others

3 cups of forgiveness

2 cups of well-beaten faults

Mix thoroughly and add tears of joy and sorrow and sympathy for others. Flavor with gifts of love, fold in 4 cups of prayer with faith to lighten. Add other ingredients. Raise the temperature to great heights of Christian living. After pouring this in your daily life, bake well with the best of human kindness and serve with a smile. And read the Bible.

John 10:1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice

: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

The Shepherd and His Sheep



Brother C. H. Dickerson

What Is a Shepherd?

Today sometimes when a person is used to teach a Sunday school class or preach a message, instead of people letting the Spirit of God do the leading, they go to that person and say, "You ought to be in the ministry." Because of that, that person may feel he is qualified to counsel others. Consequently, some people override the pastor. However, according to God's eternal Word, the

only one qualified to counsel people in a congregation is the pastor (the shepherd of the sheep) or one whom he designates to help him in certain situations. You need to realize that the shepherd is the leader; he is tender and he guards the flock. The Bible defines a shepherd as one who has a flock to lead. God must call a shepherd of God and place him. Without a flock one is not classified as a shepherd.

According to Webster's Dictio-

nary, a shepherd is a person who herds and takes care of sheep; he is the leader of a flock, and he is to tend, herd, control, guard, and lead the flock, or the congregation. Filling in for another pastor and speaking occasionally does not make one a shepherd. Also, one is not a shepherd because he has retired. The word retired means "one who gives up his work or career and withdraws from use." In that light, there are no retired Presidents of the Unit-

ed States. If we speak of Ronald Reagan, we refer to him as an ex-president, not as a president or a retired president. Likewise, when we speak of a shepherd who has retired, we do not refer to him as a retired shepherd, or pastor, but as an ex-shepherd. Keeping this in mind, we can readily see that God has no inactive shepherds. Therefore, an ex-pastor is not qualified by God to be a leader, an adviser, or a counselor.

Each flock has only one shepherd, or pastor, and counseling someone in a congregation is the pastor's job. No one knows the sheep as well as the pastor. Someone else may know only one side of the story and give the wrong counsel; invariably, that works a hardship on the shepherd. I am not qualified to counsel anyone except the flock that God has given me, and I will not counsel anyone but the flock that God has given me to oversee. No one else is qualified to counsel or lead another brother's congregation, no matter how much he thinks he knows. If anyone else tries to do that, he is entirely out of divine order. Furthermore, anyone who does so must give an account to God for it. That brings confusion upon people and causes souls to be lost.

I repeat, God places only one shepherd over a flock, and he is the only one qualified to counsel and lead the people of that flock. A pastor may have helpers, but there is no such thing as an assistant pastor in the Church of God. Having more than one leader in a congregation brings confusion.

Biblically, an evangelist is not a shepherd. Sometimes an evangelist will come in and preach, and people will try to get him off to the side to ask counsel of him; however, he has no business counseling anyone because he is not a shepherd. Paul said in Ephesians 4:11, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." These are gifts that God has given; one does not earn them. Paul defined a pastor

and an evangelist as two different gifts.

Webster's Dictionary says that an evangelist is a traveling preacher. Our text of Scripture says in verses 2-3: "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." Verse 7 reads, "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep." Jesus let us know that a pastor is God-called and God-placed, and He places a pastor over one flock, not many flocks.

A Shepherd's Duty

I read an article that contained quotes from a man who was a native of Palestine, where there are many sheepfolds. He stated that a shepherd's gear is a rod, a staff, a sling, a script, a bottle of hog oil, a flute, and a lamp. Every piece of his gear has value and a purpose.

First, we want to consider a shepherd's duty. The Word of God lets us know that a shepherd's duty is to feed the Lord's sheep and His lambs. This is found in John 21:15-17 when Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Feed my sheep" and "Feed my lambs." He was simply letting us know that a shepherd is to provide the flock with something for growth, support and development. Throughout the Word of God, shepherds are referred to as leaders. In the Word of God, sheep are referred to 187 times, lambs are referred to 105 times, and a shepherd is referred to 83 times.

Part of the shepherd's duty is to watch for anything that would harm the sheep and protect them. His eyes are to watch the sheep constantly to make sure that nothing harms them. God sets a shepherd on the wall, high above the flock so that he can see when an enemy is approaching and warn them. You see, the enemy does not approach with horns, a tail, and a pitchfork over his shoulder. He works through individuals. Often he works through an individual

sitting in the congregation who thinks God has called him to preach when God has not called him. That person has one thing in mind, and that is to divide the flock. On the other hand, the shepherd labors to preserve the flock, to make sure that no one divides it. A true shepherd will lay down his life to do that. He will stand right there and guard his sheep, no matter how much the devil works against him.

Ezekiel 33:7 states, "so thou, O son of man, I have set thee [God was speaking, not Ezekiel or another man] a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." When your pastor stands up and preaches God's eternal Word under the anointing of the Spirit, you need to perk up your ears and listen to what he says instead of closing your ears. Why? God is speaking to you through him to warn and instruct you about what is right and what is not right. When a pastor gets up to preach, some people close their ears, crack their bubble gum, run in and out, and whisper to the one next to them. Such people are bound for hell, because God has called a ministry to speak for Him and tell people what He expects of them.

God said, "I have set thee"; He did not say that a headquarters or a college sets you. A college may instruct you, but no one can make you a pastor. God must call you to that position and place you where He sees fit. If God does not call you to pastor, you ought to sit down and listen to someone else preach.

Ezekiel 33:8-9 reads: "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die [God was saying this through the man of God]; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

A pastor's duty is to seek God's face, get a message from God, and then deliver it to the flock. I think it is sad when a pastor prays and studies all week, gets a message from God, and delivers it to the flock, but some are elsewhere goofing off instead of being at the house of God where they ought to be. Only one person can give you that message, and that is your pastor. God gives your pastor a message to deliver to your soul and help you. Too many people plan to do other things on Sundays.

The Importance of Heeding the Pastor's Warnings

I want you to realize that God calls a pastor and sets him over a congregation to feed His sheep. The sheep are the saints in the congregation, not those who cause trouble and will not listen. Some people always want to stir up trouble, but God will put the fire under those people and put them to flight if the saints will listen to what God says and not pay attention to them. It will cause a separation; nevertheless, the saints will know who the sheep and the goats are.

The sheep will not move until the shepherd leads them. You see, in some areas where a shepherd oversees a literal flock of sheep, the terrain is not always smooth, and there is danger of falling. Also, there are vipers in holes in the ground in that area; therefore, the shepherd pours hog oil in the holes so that it is too slick for the vipers to get up out of their holes to bite the sheep on the nose and kill them. The shepherd has to watch for many other foes such as wild dogs and bears that can kill the sheep.

The shepherd goes and checks the land to make sure it is safe for the sheep to move. The sheep do not move ahead of the shepherd. Likewise, God has ordained that the pastor go before the congregation and watch for anything that would harm the flock. The spiritual sheep let the pastor check out things and

make sure there are no foes out to destroy them. Oh, if only more people would heed the warnings of their pastor. What happens today? Too many do not pay attention to the shepherd and, as a result, get contaminated with lukewarmness or tales, and eventual it kills them, spiritually speaking.

Peter said in 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." You must practice self-control, because your adversary, the devil, is seeking to destroy you. My friend, the devil is stalking you, looking for an opportunity to devour you. How is he trying to devour you? One way he works is to try to kill your influence by the company you keep. If there were ever a time when you needed to be careful of the company you keep, it is today. There are disgruntled people sitting around who find fault with the pastor and what he preaches. Also, they find fault with the Sunday school teachers, the janitor, the heat, the air conditioning, and everything else. If you keep company with a disgruntled person, soon you, too, will become critical.

The devil has set out to destroy your experience, and one way he works is by using people who are disgruntled. What is the answer? You must avoid those who are disgruntled. When you hear someone criticizing the pastor or the saints, stay away from that person. You should do what the Bible tells you to do: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause division and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17).

Proverbs 6:16-19 states: "These six things which the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: . . . he that soweth discord among brethren." Now, if God hates the person who sows discord and you have God's Spirit in you, you will hate everything that God hates and love everything that God loves. Who does God love? He loves His chil-

dren, and that is who you ought to love and keep company with. When someone tries to sow discord, you ought to mark that person, get away from that one, and let that one know why you are getting away from him or her.

You may say, "You will never help souls by doing that." Yes, you will. That is the only way you can help such individuals. You cannot help them by joining in with them. You can only help them when you take a stand against them. You see, the shepherd pours hog oil into a viper's hole so it cannot come up and bite the sheep on the nose to kill it. If a viper were to come up and bite a sheep on its nose, the viper would inject poison into the sheep and it would die.

The Sheepfold

In the morning the shepherd leads the sheep to meadows that are fresh with dew. In the heat of the day he leads them to the shelter of the rocks, or a place of coolness. Then, in the evening he leads them into the fold where they will be safe. I want you to realize that the well being of the sheep hinges upon the shepherd's leading the flock. However, he cannot lead people if they will not follow. Also, he cannot lead people if they counsel with others instead of him.

I say again, no one knows the people in a congregation as well as the pastor. Therefore, no one else has any business counseling people in a congregation but the pastor. If anyone outside my congregation calls me, I refer that person to his or her own pastor, and any true pastor will do the same. A true pastor will not meddle or try to counsel and advise anyone in another brother's congregation. God does not give anyone else the wisdom or a vision of another brother's congregation.

The sheepfold is not a personal or an individual fold. All shepherds bring the sheep into one fold at night, and all the shepherds lie at the door to protect their sheep. Jesus

said in verse 1 of our Scripture lesson, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

Bears have a defense, lions have a defense, and even rabbits have a defense, but sheep have no defense. They rely totally upon the shepherd. When the butcher slaughters sheep, he does not tie them down. He just lays them in a trough and the sheep lie there and let him cut their throats, because they are totally defenseless. If a sheep gets his back downhill, it will lie there and die unless the shepherd comes along and picks it up. It depends totally upon the shepherd.

True sheep listen to their shepherd and pay absolutely no attention to anyone else. God has called us sheep to let us know that if we are going to survive spiritually and be examples to this lost and dying world, we must assume our position as sheep and be totally dependent upon our shepherd, not another flock's shepherd.

The Sheep's Responsibility

The sheep have a responsibility. They must have an ear to hear their own shepherd's voice. As I mentioned earlier, at night many flocks of sheep go into one sheepfold together. Each morning when one shepherd goes to the door and calls his sheep to go out to graze, each sheep hears and follows its own shepherd. No doubt, other sheep perk up their ears, but when a shepherd calls, only his sheep come out from the midst of the flocks. After one shepherd leads out his sheep, another shepherd calls, and his sheep hear his voice. They do not heed the voice of another shepherd. In verse 3 of our Scripture lesson Jesus said, "To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out."

When a dear pastor seeks God's face week in and week out and God

gives him the messages, they may not always be the messages he would like to preach; nevertheless, he preaches what the Lord tells him to preach. More people ought to take heed when they hear their shepherd instead of thinking, "That really hit So-and-So." The message that God lays on the pastor's heart is for the whole flock, not for just one or two. I will guarantee you that there is something in every message to help each one.

The man who was a native of Palestine stated that one day he went out and listened to a shepherd call his sheep and then tried to disguise his voice and called that shepherd's sheep, but the sheep did not pay any attention to him. "Well," he said to the shepherd, "I know what the trouble is. You let me put on your clothes, and I will go out there and get them to come to me when I call." So the shepherd traded clothes with him, and the man went out in the shepherd's clothes and tried to disguise his voice again. Still, the sheep ignored him. (Oh, if only more people would be more like sheep.)

A person may look like a shepherd and try to imitate a shepherd's voice, but you had better close your ears to that man. On the other hand, when a true shepherd gets up, you ought to open your ears and accept what God tells you to do. If God says, "You must break away from this or that," you had better break away from whatever He tells you to.

Should someone try to come around to influence you against the pastor or the saints, you ought to take a stand against that one try to sow discord. You may say, "I have a lot of confidence in him as a pastor." He is not a true pastor, and he has no business trying to influence someone else's sheep. You should not listen to that person or even give him the time of day, because he has only one thing in mind, and that is to scatter the sheep.

Jesus said in verse 5 of our text of Scripture, "And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from

him . . ." My friend, this is how the Church of God operates. You must flee from anyone who sows discord, even if that person is your grand mother. You should not heed the voice of anyone who tries to scatter a flock. You should flee from that individual. All the devil wants to do is sow a seed. I have never seen a seed sown yet that did not grow, unless it was plucked up and thrown out. If the devil can get a seed sown, he is planning to produce something.

Spiritual Sheep Follow Only Their Shepherd

Another characteristic of sheep is that they will not follow other sheep; they only go where the shepherd leads them. The flock does not go where the shepherd does not go. If your pastor does not go somewhere, you should stay away also. Do you know why the shepherd does not go? God has placed him on the wall and he sees things that you cannot see.

Often the devil tries to get people to run down a pastor's character to kill his influence. That is a work of the devil, and his motive is to destroy that shepherd. He will accomplish that unless the sheep do their job. Again, the shepherd has a job, and the sheep have a job. Part of the sheep's responsibility is not listening to others run down their pastor. If a pastor needs to ask someone from another congregation to fill in for him, he ought to go through that person's pastor. The pastor knows that man better than the pastor of another congregation knows him.

True sheep will recognize it when something is wrong, and they will not be partakers of it. They will follow the shepherd. Today many sheep are being led by other sheep, and this is a direct violation of God's Word. Jesus said to follow the shepherd, not other sheep. God does not give a sheep the wisdom to be a leader. The only one with the God-given wisdom to lead the sheep is the shepherd. When one sheep de-

cides to stray, do not follow that sheep. Too often Papa gets crossways, so Mama follows him, and the children go along too. That ought not to be. If Papa gets crossways, Mama ought to stand true and hold the children true. I repeat, do not follow other sheep; follow the shepherd.

Often the reason people go to another flock is that they refuse to be led by their own shepherd. Do you remember who the shepherd is? The shepherd is not someone who thinks he has been called. It is not God's plan for sheep to follow other sheep. Going against God's plan only leads to destruction. He said in our text of Scripture in John 10:12-13: "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep." Again, a true shepherd will defend his sheep no matter what others think, even if people cut him off.

The Rod and the Staff

Only the shepherd has the rod and the staff. The rod is a weapon. John wrote in Revelation 11:1, "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod [the Word of God]: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God [the saints], and the altar [Christ, or the Word], and them that worship therein." You need to make sure that you are measuring to the Word of God. He was not speaking of measuring your physical stature, but of measuring your spirit. He said to measure Christ (or the Word), the altar (which was Christ, or the Word), and the temple (which is the saint of God).

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" He wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:7, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the

excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Paul made it quite clear what the temple is. It is not a building but the saint of God. How is the angel (or the man of God) going to measure the temple of God (or the saint)? He must measure the temple by the Word. He said to measure those who worship or dwell there. I repeat, you need to make sure that you are measuring to the Word of God and that you are doing what the Word of God tells you to do.

Again, the sheep have no defense. Literal sheep as well as spiritual sheep do not buck and carry on. Their only defense is the Word of God. When Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, afterward He was tempted of the devil, but He told him, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The Word of God was His defense.

As saints of God, our defense is not bucking and carrying on and threatening to leave, but our defense is the Word of God. When a man of God stands up and pours out his heart and preaches the Gospel, you ought to defend that man and the Gospel. Moreover, you should put to flight anyone who speaks contrary to your pastor or God's Word.

The shepherd has a staff to rescue trapped sheep. If a sheep falls down into a crevice, the shepherd can reach down with the staff and pull it out. He also has a lamp. The Psalmist said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). Isaiah 62:1 tells us, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

God gives each shepherd a lamp, and He said He would not hold His peace until the light shines with brightness, or until everyone sees it; then it is up to each individual to do what he or she chooses to do with it. The shepherd's responsi-

bility is to pour out the light, and that light is the Word of God.

The sheep do not have a lamp; only the shepherd has it. God gives it to the shepherd. What is it for? It is a light to their pathway. You need to get focused on the light that the shepherd has and walk in the strait and narrow way behind him. As long as he has the light, he is the shepherd. If a shepherd's light goes out and he begins to wander, then the sheep had better do some scrambling, and do it quickly.

Have You Wandered Away From the Fold?

The shepherd has a sling to lob a stone ahead in case a sheep should wander, to turn it back. Likewise, when the pastor sees someone drifting, he uses the Word of God to warn him. A word to the wise is sufficient. My friend, when the preacher lobs a stone out ahead, so to speak, you had better stop and check to see where you are and where the rest of the sheep are. If you have drifted, then you need to get with the rest of the flock. The devil wants to get you separated. You see, dogs will not tear into a flock of sheep, but if one sheep gets separated, then the dogs will go after it. That is what the devil has in mind. He wants to divide the flock of God and work havoc on them; then they will no longer hear the shepherd.

Our Scripture text says in verse 3, "To him [the shepherd] the porter [or the Holy Spirit] openeth" Romans 10:13-15 reads: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" We are living in a time when people have become very

strongheaded. Some people who have sat around the Truth for years think, "I know more Truth than that young preacher knows." They might know more Truth, but that does not give them a license to become a counselor. If they know so much about the Truth, why are they opposing the pastor?

The shepherd does not drive the sheep; he leads them. The man who wrote the article that I read said that one day as he was walking along, he saw people driving the sheep. He watched them for a few days, and he thought, "I can't understand this. A shepherd is supposed to lead the sheep." So he walked up to one man and said, "I would like for you to explain to me why you are driving the sheep." He said, "I'm not a shepherd; I'm a butcher."

A true shepherd never drives the sheep. He leads them and sets

the right example for them. The shepherd does not say, "You do this and do that." No, he says, "Come on, let's do it. Let's walk in the light and do what is right." He leads them by setting the example.

God has called you to be either a shepherd or a sheep ;and you need to find your place. If He called you to be a shepherd, then you ought to be a shepherd. You may say, "I was a shepherd, but I am a sheep now." Then you ought to be a sheep, and you should not try to counsel others or put out orders. If someone comes to you and asks you a question, you ought to say, "You need to go to your pastor; I am just a sheep." If you are not a shepherd, then you need to take the position of a sheep and follow the orders that the shepherd gives.

What are the symptoms of when a sheep and the shepherd are losing

contact? That sheep follows afar off and fails to heed the shepherd's voice. Goats are discontented and restless, and this brings irritability. Irritability results in murmuring against the church, the ministry, and the saints. Restless and discontented people wander about and neglect the Word, and the thoughts of men replace God's thoughts.

Friend, if you have been following afar off or have become discontented, I trust that the message has opened your eyes. Won't you ask God to forgive you, take you back into the fold, and give you an ear to hear what the shepherd says? Ask God to give you feet to follow the shepherd, not another sheep. Will you make a clear break, go with God, and follow your shepherd?

(Cassette C-4139M)

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Matthew 13:51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.



The Responsibility That Comes With Blessings

Brother Allen Polston

Understanding God's Word

Jesus asked His disciples, "Have ye understood all these things?" God is concerned that you understand the things of God. Perhaps you were not raised in the Church of God or around religion at all, but that does not take away from the fact that God wants you to understand spiritual things. If you were raised in the Church of God, He wants you to understand more about the precious things of God. No matter what your background is, God is interested in your learning and receiving blessings through the understanding of His Word.

God's people do not have meetings just for people to take vacations or to break away from their secular work, but we have meetings so that God's Word can go forth and people can prosper spiritually and shine brighter than ever before. Though

you may be very knowledgeable of the Scriptures, as you sit under the Gospel, God wants you to profit in your soul.

Living for God is such a wonderful life! Also, it is a challenging life as you walk in Truth, gain grace, and gain more of God's presence in your soul. You need to be thankful when you see how He has help you to higher heights and deeper depths in the things of God. He is interested in that! God has given us His precious Word and has told us to gather together to worship Him so that we will know what "Thus saith the Lord."

Often Jesus spoke in parables, and He used the common things to which people could relate to teach the things that cannot be seen with the physical eyes. In Matthew 13:10-11 the disciples asked Jesus this question: "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" He answered

ed them, "Because it is given unto you [the disciples] to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [those who are not His disciples] it is not given." There was some confusion about what Jesus was saying. That is the reason the Bible says that you must be born again to see the kingdom. Jesus told Nicodemus, in so many words, "If you are not born again, you cannot understand the Kingdom of Heaven."

God tells us in His Word that He gives things to babes that the wise and the prudent cannot understand. Child of God, there are some things that you can understand that worldly people cannot grasp. Have you ever tried to explain the things of God to someone who is unsaved? You must be saved before you can understand spiritual matters. However, God wants everyone to know about salvation.

The Mysteries of the Kingdom

In Matthew 13:10-11 Jesus was saying that knowledge is not given to those who have not come this way. However, for those who have, it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. He said in verse 12, "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." Jesus made a distinction between two types of individuals: whosoever has and whosoever has not.

You may ask, "If a person does not have anything, how can something be taken away from him?" He was talking about two separate things. Again, Matthew 13:12 reads, "For whosoever hath [a desire], to him shall be given [understanding], and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not [a desire], from him shall be taken away even that [understanding which] he hath."

Child of God, the blessings and the help you receive from God have much to do with your desire and what goes on in your life. All of this has everything to do with whether you prosper in the things of God and prosper from His Word, and it has everything to do with the desire of your heart. Therefore, as God's people, we have a very responsible position in this matter of serving God.

Those people about whom Jesus was speaking had lost their burning, vehement desire to follow Him. So He taught them using parables to try to cause those people to recognize their spiritual condition and say, "I need to turn everything over to God."

Jesus said, "Unto you [the disciples] it is given to know the mysteries." Why was it given them to know the mysteries? To people who focus their lives around doing God's will and learning about His Word, it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. On the other hand, to those who turn deaf ears

and walk away from light, God has to use special efforts to get hold of their hearts. Therefore, He speaks to them in ways that really drive home His point so that 14 might cause them to repent. Sinner friend, God loves you, no matter what you are involved in, and He wants you to be saved and walk in the Truth. This is the plan that He designed from the foundation of the world. God is concerned about every person on the face of the earth; He wants everyone to serve Him. He even loves people who do not have any desire to serve Him, and He wants to penetrate their hard hearts.

Staying Committed and Consecrated

God's people are such a blessed people. If living for God is most important in your life, you should nourish and feed that desire by attending the worship services at the house of God, reading and studying the Scriptures, and praying. No matter what age you are, you should guard your desire to serve God.

God speaks in a clear, precise manner so that you can understand and yield your life to Him in a greater way. He wants you to keep your life on the altar and stay committed to Him. We are living in a world that is trying in every way it can to lead the people of God astray. You need to keep your consecration fresh and have the same attitude that Isaiah had when he said, "Here am I, send me." A child of God's prayer should be, "Use me, Lord; I'm yours. I'm going to stand for you." When God slows you a need in your life, you ought to take care of it as soon as He deals with your heart. You should not kick against that which God is trying to do.

In verses 51-52 of our Scripture text we find that Jesus was concerned about the understanding of His disciples. He had just spent some time speaking to them about the Kingdom of God, likening it to many things, and when He came down to the end, He said, "Have

you understood all these things?" His disciples said, "Yea, Lord."

You need to thank God when you can say, "I see the beautiful Church of God, I see the Truth on the standard, I see the beauty of holiness, and I see the truth on living free from sin." I thank God for the light and the Word of God that I see. I am thankful for the understanding of how God wants me to live and for the power that enables me to live that way.

Responsibility comes with the blessings of understanding. Church of God, we have a great responsibility. As we enjoy the Word of God and hear the wonderful things of God declared, it makes us even more responsible. The devil is trying to destroy the Church of God. He will continue to try until Jesus comes. Saint, he is going to try to discourage you.

Jesus said in verse 52 of our Scripture lesson, "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." The way Jesus began this verse lets us know that something was pending, because He said, "Therefore" In other words, because they understood, He wanted to show them what their position was going to be like. He continued, ". . . every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven"

A scribe in Jesus' day wrote the law and was directly involved in religious matters. Jesus used a scribe to show how accountable one is for that which God has given concerning Truth. A knowledge of Truth makes you responsible before God and your fellowman. God has allowed you to understand and be blessed by His Word to spread the Gospel and let others see the beautiful Church of God. We are living in the last days, and it is high time to awake out of sleep, get busy for God, and labor in the Kingdom of God as never before. Friend, if you have been sleeping spiritually, it is

time to awaken from that sleep. If you have been spiritually relaxed, get out of that state and let God begin to use you. You need to put away some fleshly ventures and start living for God in a greater way. You may say, "I belong to this group, and they do not see it that way." Friend, that does not release you from your responsibility to God. No matter what group or denomination you are affiliated with, when God gives you understanding, you are responsible to God, no matter what you may have lived in days gone by. Once a man told me, "I see that truth, but my church doesn't teach it that way, so I just can't accept it." If you obey God, He will take care of His own. You might go through hard places because others talk about you, but God will help you.

Consider the Latter End

Again, Jesus said in verse 52 of our Scripture text, "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder" Jesus compared one who has light and understanding to a man who is a householder. Today being a householder does not hold the significance that it once held. A householder, as described here in the Scripture, is a very wealthy person. Jesus likened a person who had received understanding to a very wealthy person. Saved or unsaved, if you have listened to God's Word and He has made things clear to you, you are in a very wealthy position, because God has revealed to you what you stand in need of. When you go to church and listen to your pastor and other ministers who declare "Thus saith the Lord," that puts you in a wealthy place.

Saint, hell is full of people who would like to have your opportunities. That makes you a wealthy person. Understanding from God and blessings from His Word will cause you to bring forth fruit in a greater way. If you accept the understand-

ing that God gives in the way that He wants you to receive it, it will cause you to produce; then others will profit and God will be glorified. When people look upon your life, God will be exalted in their minds.

The devil is working to make the way of sin look glamorous. He works through the billboards that show people smoking cigarettes or drinking alcohol and seemingly having a good time. He is trying to make sin look attractive. However, the devil does not show what these vices can do. He does not show the wrecked cars or the ruined lives because of the effects of those things. The devil is trying to make adultery, fornication, drunkenness, and partying look appealing. People need to look a little further down the road and consider the consequences of such sins.

Young person, if you think the things of the world are enticing, you would be wise to search out the matter to see what those things bring down the road. Sin will cost you more than you want to pay and keep you longer than you want to stay. Sin is a terrible thing. Although the world tries to make sin look alluring, when your reaping begins, it will no longer be so attractive. Friend, if you are thinking about living your life in sin, you would be wise to ask God to help you see the end of those things. Isaiah let you know that you should "consider the latter end" (Isaiah 41:22). The world is trying to make sin look attractive but if people would only look down the road, they would see differently.

Glorifying God

Saint, you need to lift up living for God and make it look glorious. One song says, "By making attractive the way." Let others see that living for God is a glorious life. Its glory does not fade after a few days, but it gets better. The glory of sin rises momentarily and then goes down. However, the glory of living for God ever increases. Church, you need to show others the glory of

living for God. You need to show others how glorious Christ is. While the world is lifting up their way of living, you need to exalt God.

One who is blessed is likened to a man who is a householder and brings forth out of his treasure things new and old. When Jesus said "which bringeth forth," He was speaking of one who produces things in his life for others to see. What are those things new and old? When you get understanding from God, it will cause you to move up spiritually and put away some things. Receiving light from God will cause you to make some changes in your life.

Some people are stuck in a spiritual routine. I heard someone say, "I have been going this way for many years; don't ask me to change now." However, if you are going to live for God, you should be willing to change according to His Word. You ought to be willing to add or take away some things if God tells you to. The Spirit of God will show you where you need to measure up. You must be willing to walk in the light that God shows you.

When I got saved, I had a large music collection, but it was not long until God began to show me that I needed to get rid of it. So that is what I did, because I could not glorify God listening to songs about drinking, using drugs, adultery, and fornication. Also, God has helped me to see some new things down through the years through His Word. I am not saying that I have received some "new light," but God is showing me things that are new to me as I go along. When a person receives light, he is likened to a wealthy person who brings forth out of his treasure (out of his understanding, or out of his heart) things new and old.

We have looked at things new. What are those things old? Those old things are old paths that God showed you a long time ago. If understanding that comes from God is new to you, it will not contradict old truths that God revealed to you

years before. Any understanding that God brings will not contradict deep-rooted truths in His Word, truths that in the past enabled you to live with the power of God in your life. Understanding that God brings will not lead you away from holiness; it will draw you closer. Understanding from God will not lead you away from the church, God, or a godly pastor. It will not cause you to divide from the people of God, but it will cause you to be drawn together in unity and to live more like Jesus.

These things are what Jesus was trying to reveal to His disciples.

After you have received understanding, you need to put it into practice. Desire combined with understanding with help you to go forward for God, and you will be more solid and stable in the things of God.

Friend, if you are unsaved and God has helped you to see your need, you are in a valuable position, because God has given you under-

standing. Therefore, you need to act upon that. Child of God, if God has given you understanding, you need grace and determination to carry out to the fullest that which God would have you to do. You can gain the strength and grace you need by asking God to help you. If you need help from God to put these things into practice, ask God to give you what you need.

(Cassette C-4151M)

Safety Amid Danger

"How safe is the soul that abides in the Lord,
Securely from sin hid away,
His anchor the promise of
God's written Word,
To keep him by night and by
day."

Yes, there are apparently very dangerous places into which the Lord sometimes leads His children or through which He permits them to pass. Joseph, one of the Lord's beloved children, was permitted to travel a very rough road and apparently his life at times was in great danger; yet God was watching him with great care as a refiner watches his gold in the fire, which he values so very highly but from which he desires the dross separated.

The Israelites, on their journey to Canaan, appeared to be in great danger when they came to the Red Sea, because there was no way of crossing the great body of water and the Egyptians were closely pursuing after them. Yes, to all appearances they were in the greatest of danger, but Moses knew to trust in the Lord for deliverance, and surely a wonderful deliverance came to them. Oh, how happy they were and how their faith in God was increased

when they safely reached the eastern shores of the Red Sea and saw their enemies all drowned in the midst of the sea.

Daniel appeared to be entering great danger when the Lord permitted him to be thrown into the lions' den, yet he was perfectly safe. He was not safe because the lions' den was so safe a place but because God was on his side; and when God is on our side, we are sure to win regardless of apparent danger.

Think of the Hebrew children, as they are called. They were by no means entering a comfortable appearing place as they were tossed into that furnace heated seven times hotter than usual, yet they were really safe there because they were in the will of the Lord.

Friend, when you are in the will of the Lord, you are perfectly

safe regardless of where you may be or of how great may be your threatened danger. On the sea or on the land, in the fiery furnace or in the lions' den, among friends and acquaintances or among foes and strangers, in poverty or wealth, you are perfectly safe while abiding in the will of God if you will only count God faithful throughout the test and patiently expect and await His deliverance.

God help us to say with the Psalmist, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4). He will be with us in six troubles and in the seventh He will not forsake us, praise His mighty, never-failing name.

Selected

**Service was never intended
as a substitute
for a godly life.**

DON'T *Miss Out* On These Meetings

MECHANICSBURG, IN

April 12-16

REVIVAL: Church of God, Mechanicsburg, Indiana
Evangelist: Brother C. H. Dickerson, Medina, OH.
Service times: Wednesday- Saturday 7:00 p.m.; Sunday School 9:45;
Sunday Morning 10:30 a.m. & Sunday Evening 6:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor Allen Polston, 2020 Ralph St.,
New Castle, IN 47362. Telephone: (765) 521-8284

MEDINA, OH

April 24-30

REVIVAL: Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH 44256
Evangelist: Brother E. David Stegmeier, Canby, OR
Service times: Monday-Saturday 7:00 p.m. & Sunday 6:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor C. H. Dickerson, 215 Montview Dr.,
Medina, OH 44256. Telephone: (330) 725-6853 or (330) 725-5993

HONDURAS

May 14-21

CONVENTION: Church of God, Honduras
Evangelist: Brother E. David Stegmeier, Canby, OR
For further information contact: Pastor Esau Brooks
Telephone: (Honduras) 011-504-451-514 or
(Grand Cayman) 1-345-947-2114

NEWARK, OH

June 18-25

OLD-FASHIONED CAMP MEETING: Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St.,
Newark, OH. Three services daily: 10:00 a.m., 2:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
First service begins Sunday 10:00 am. Dormitories, dining hall, & snack bar.
Meals for full-time evangelists and pastors (with spouses) are half-priced. The
meals are reasonably priced. Lodging-free will offering.
For further information contact: Pas* Roger L. Decker, 83 Decrow Ave.,
Newark, OH 43055. Telephone: (740) 344-2543

NEWARK, OH

August 6-13

OLD-FASHIONED CAMP MEETING: Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St.,
Newark, OH. Three services daily: 10:00 a.m., 2:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
First service begins Sunday 10:00 a.m. Dormitories, dining hall, & snack bar.
Meals for full-time evangelists and pastors (with spouses) are half-priced. The
meals are reasonably priced. Lodging-free will offering.
For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker, 83 Decrow Ave.,
Newark, OH 43055. Telephone: (740) 344-2543

CANBY, OR

August 21-27

OLD-FASHIONED CAMP MEETING: Church of God, Canby Grove Conference
Center. First service begins Monday 7:00 p.m. Three Services Daily: 10:00 a.m.,
2:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. Buildings on the grounds include dormitories, cabins,
lodge, trailer-tent sites, dining room, snack bar, and laundry facilities. All the
buildings are equipped with heat.
For reservations contact: Pastor E. David Stegmeier, 103 Main St., Canby OR
Telephone: (503) 266-9297