
"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 eticad a te 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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Winter Camp Meeting Report

"Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen" (Psalm 72:18-19). The Psalmist's words well express the recent Winter Camp Meeting here at God's Acres. "Wondrous things" occurred throughout this abbreviated gathering. Psalm 74:12 says, "For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth." Certainly this meeting was one in which the Lord was indeed "working salvation." Numerous souls pressed their way into an experience of salvation and into the kingdom. Many young people were saved, giving heed to the words of the Wise Man when he admonished, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Also, backsliders for whom the saints had been praying and carrying a burden wept their way back into the fold of God as well.

The meeting began Monday night, December 27, 1999, with Brother C. H. Dickerson, who was the evening evangelist for the meeting, bringing a challenging message entitled, "Running Our Course Willingly." Tuesday morning Brother E. David Stegmeier from Canby, Oregon, who served as the morning evangelist, preached an enlightening message from Malachi's prophesy concerning "Purifying the Sons of Levi." In the afternoon services various brethren laid forth needful messages. Throughout each service the Lord sent just the fitting message of truth to minister to the needs of the hour.

The Spirit of God and conviction was so thick and saturating the midst that souls were getting saved in the young people's services. Wednesday night the Holy Spirit moved in such a manner that there was no preaching, and many were born into the Kingdom of God.

For this winter meeting, the Lord blessed us with favorable weather that did not hinder those traveling, and the meeting was very well attended. We were fortunate to have one brother from the mission fields in attendance, Brother Joseph Mbui from Kenya, East Africa.

The meeting was permeated with such a sweet spirit of love, unity and harmony that every person on the campgrounds could say as the Apostle Peter did in Matthew 17:4, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

The meeting closed Friday night, December 31, and the Lord moved in an unusual manner with the saints praising God. Yet, even as the saints were praising God, precious souls found their way to an altar. Surely God was "working salvation in the midst of the earth." It was a wondrous meeting, for which we give God the glory. Psalm 75:1 declares, "Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks." Surely that describes our sentiments concerning the Winter Camp Meeting. If you were unable to be in attendance, we heartily encourage you to purchase the tapes. We are anxiously looking forward to the Spring Camp Meeting, when once again we look for the Lord to do wondrous things. Now is the time to make plans to attend the Spring Camp Meeting so you can rejoice as the meeting is "filled with his glory."

Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth,

that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.



*God's Word
Is True and
His Harvest
Is Sure*

Brother Roger L. Decker

Man Is Not Justified by Works of the Law

Many consider the Book of Galatians to be one of the greatest and most influential books written by the Apostle Paul. There was a separation taking place between Christianity and Judaism, and this epistle played a key role in explaining that justification is by faith and not by works of the law. Galatians 2:16 says, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we

might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

You can neither work yourself out of sin nor work yourself free from the power of sin. It takes faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, who is the sacrifice for your sins. The Word of God compares sin with a strong man. Sin is stronger than the natural man. No matter how strong you are physically, how wise you are, or how long you have been around in this world, you are neither smart enough nor strong enough to handle sin. Sin is

called the strong man, and it is stronger than the natural man.

In Luke 11:21-22 Jesus said: "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." Jesus was talking about the devil being the strong man. The devil is stronger than the natural man. His goods are at peace when he has control of you. He feels very confident when he controls your thoughts, your affections, your spirit,

and your fleshly members. They are his goods as long as he has control of them, and you are in a state of wanting to do right but cannot.

Paul's testimony in Romans 7:14-21 reads: "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not [what you see in these verses of Scripture is that sin is stronger than your will]. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me."

Paul said that evil was present with him; in other words, he was under the control of the strong man. He said in verse 11, "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." Consider what sin, or the strong man, did to Paul. He said it deceived him and left him in a state of bondage, and he became a carnal, fleshly individual, unable to perform good. Sin and temptation are nothing to play around with. Sin carries deception with it, causing you to think you are right when you are wrong. You will feel justified in your own eyes for the wrong that you do. Also, it brings carnality, bondage, and confusion.

Justified by the Faith of Jesus Christ

The only way to be free from the strong man is to get hold of One who is stronger than he is, One who can drive away deception and darkness and allow the rays of the light of God to shine through. Only He can take away confusion, release you from bondage, and cause you to be spiritual. That One is Jesus Christ; He is

stronger than the strong man, and He has all power in Heaven and earth. No sin or power can stand up to Jesus Christ. That is the reason the Apostle Paul cried out against those who were trying to get the Galatians to go back to the old sacrifices of the Law.

The Law made nothing perfect. It was added because of transgressions. In other words, it came to bring sin out into the open. Paul said he was alive once without the Law, but when the Law came, sin revived and he died. The Law brings sin out in the open; it is a restraint to sin, and it was added because of transgression. When you come to Jesus Christ, the power of sin is broken, and your sins are cast away as far as the east is from the west, never more to be remembered against you.

Read what Paul wrote in Galatians 3:1, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" What does the word *bewitched* mean? It has several meanings, but one meaning is "fascinated by false representations." Paul was asking the Galatians, "Who has led you away from walking in the Spirit to walking in the flesh? Who has led you to the place where you have started warring in the flesh and caused you to disregard the Spirit of God?" Paul said that Jesus had been evidently set forth and crucified among them. In other words, he was saying that Jesus Christ had been preached plainly before them.

Paul said in Galatians 3:3, "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" It is a foolish thing to fight the good fight of faith and then go back to walking in the flesh. Paul, writing to the Philippians, said in Philippians 1:6, "Being confident [or convinced] of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." The same One who started the work of salvation will complete it if you will let Him. May

God help you to allow the Holy Spirit to have more controlled and not to lean on the arm of the flesh. Becoming deceived is very easy, especially in the day and age in which we live.

Reaping in Due Season

Today many have left the arms of Jesus Christ because they have grown weary. Our Scripture text says in verse 9, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." In other words, he was admonishing them not to lose heart and to keep their hearts with all diligence.

Some things are sure. One is that "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." We are going to reap what we sow. That is a solemn warning spread throughout God's Word. Many have tried to get around this law, only to find that God's Word is true and unmovable. You decide what your harvest will be by whether you sow to the Spirit or the flesh.

The farmer knows what his harvest will be by the seed he plants in the ground. When he plants corn, he does not expect a harvest of wheat. When harvesttime comes, he knows what kind of crop he can expect. Likewise, if you lean on the arm of the flesh, you are going to reap corruption. However, since God does not always send the reaping immediately, a deception can come to the one who does wrong. When someone does wrong, God does not automatically strike that person down. Nevertheless, the Bible says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). When is he going to reap? He will reap in due season. When is the "due season"? It is the time appointed by God Himself.

The deception is that people feel they can do almost anything because they have the freedom to do it. God is not necessarily going to throw barriers in their way, but He is going to be faithful to let them know they are wrong. In the Old Testament

King Belshazzar received the hand-writing on the wall. The Bible lets us know that it so shook him that his knees smote one against the other. Although he did not know what it said, he knew the message had come from God and that it was not good. How did he know that the message did not contain anything good? He knew that he had sown to the flesh and that what had been written on the wall was meant to deal with him personally. Also, he knew that since he had sown to the flesh, destruction was on its way.

You cannot expect anything in the harvest other than that which you have sown. If you sow to the flesh, you can expect a harvest of corruption. Now, it may be a while before the reaping comes, but it will come. Some crops come up faster than others; still, in due season, or at God's appointed time, you will reap the harvest. God is not mocked. No man can avoid His Law.

Be Not Weary in Well Doing

The Christian can become weary and discouraged because the battle is long and the harvest seems far out in the distance. When the battle is long, the Christian can lose heart. The church at Galatia was in a battle continually with those in Judaism who were trying to get them to turn to the old sacrifice of the Law, and it was calling them to become weary in well doing. That was the reason Paul admonished them not to be weary or to lose heart.

Friend, you are going to reap what you sow. If you sow to the flesh, you will reap corruption. On the other hand, if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap life everlasting in due season, or at God's appointed time. You can become weary battling the same thing day in and day out, but do not lose heart. God's Word is true, and the harvest is sure. Do not let the present things of this world cause you to forget the harvest. The harvest is on its way, and in due season you will reap. You need to keep sowing spiritual things.

Daniel, speaking of the birth of Jesus Christ, said in Daniel 2:45, "Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass, hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Christ was the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, or by virgin birth. He was born under the Law, and He has broken down every kingdom that opposed Him. Everything prophesied about Him was certain and sure. It might have taken a few hundred years before it came to pass, but it did happen. Daniel said the dream was certain and the interpretation was sure; in other words, it happened just as the Prophet said it would happen.

The harvest is in due season. Right at the time when pagan Rome was in its pomp and splendor and Caesar Augustus ruled the thenknown world, a babe was born in a manger. This stone was cut out of the mountain and born under the Law at God's appointed time. God could not have timed it any better. The Son of God was born of humble birth, and He came to save His people from their sins. That is how you can tell His people yet today—they are saved from their sins.

Dear Christian, be encouraged. God has not forgotten you. He sees all that goes on in secret behind every closed door. No one can shut out God. Always remember this: God is the One with whom you must deal.

You may say, "I have been going through a rough place, so I think I'll quit." Do you do that on your job at work? If things do not go well, do you just walk out? No, you do not. You may not like the way things are going, but you keep working. Why? Because you know that if you walk out, you will not have any money coming in. If someone should say something bad to you, you would not go to the boss and say, "I'm quitting." You might become aggravated, but

you would not walk out.

Oh, how quickly people quit God because someone has said some thing bad about them. Young man, if God has His hand on you for the ministry, you are going to face persecution. It is not easy to take, but be encouraged. God will not forget you, and He sees all that is going on. Being a Christian is not always easy, because at times you must face much opposition. Christianity is not just for people on their deathbeds and for sissies. It takes real men and women to serve God, because of the opposition. Nevertheless, when you sow to the Spirit, God will be with you.

Stay True to the End

In the Bible you can read how God was with Jesus, and He will be with you too. Acts 10:38 says, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." Saint, when you do good, you stir up the devil, but do not let that stop you. Sometimes when God exposes the devil in people's lives, you must suffer persecution, but do not become faint and disheartened.

Often when an individual gets saved, the devil pounces on that one and he has all kinds of trouble. That person may even think, "I had less trouble when I wasn't serving God." Well, the reason is that he has changed kingdoms and the devil is -stirred. He is the same devil that individual served in sin, but since he stopped serving sin, the devil wants him back. In Colossians 1:13 Paul was giving thanks to the Father and said, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Do not lose heart, church.

When persecution cannot cause the saints of God to stop serving God, the devil will try to get God's people to bite and devour one another. Saints of God should rally behind one another and not tear one another apart. That is carnal, and it should

not even take place in the Church of God. If someone makes a mistake, do not tear him or her apart; pray for that one. You may be the next one. You should give people the benefit of the doubt. If someone does something wrong, pray for that person. God can deal with that individual and help him or her.

Christ is still the Head of the church. He does not need you to lay your hand on it and hold it steady. He Himself can hold it steady and deal with each member. If someone gets out of line, He can bring that person right back in line. Who has kept you in line when no one else was around or when you stepped out of line just a little? God brought you back in line, and He can do the same for others. He still runs the church.

Though the church must face persecution, it is really sad when those who claim to be Christians persecute other Christians. Suffering persecution from the world is bad enough, but we should never have to suffer persecution from within our own ranks. How can you endure such persecution? You can make it to the end by the grace of God. Matthew 10:22 says, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Matthew 24:13 states, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Only those who endure to the end will be saved.

Divine Privileges for God's People

God has afforded us some real blessings and privileges as we go along this Christian way that help us to stay saved. He does not just save us and let us go on our own way. One privilege that He gives us is His Holy Spirit, and another privilege is prayer. Daniel had to go into a den of lions. Though he knew that men were plotting against him, he still enjoyed talking to God. You can read in Daniel 6:10, "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward

Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

Daniel did not let persecution stop him from talking to God. You cannot endure to the end if you stop communing with God. Sometimes if you are not careful, persecution will cause you to switch over from the spiritual to the carnal, and you will try to handle things in the flesh instead of in the Spirit. What happens? You will grow weary and lose heart because you will start looking for results right away. Remember, God will turn things around in due season.

Daniel did not let pressure detract his devotion to God. God has afforded us one of the greatest privileges given to mankind—the privilege of talking to Him. Talking to one another is good, but it is much better to talk to God.

Another privilege that God has afforded us is His Word. Psalm 107:17-20 reads: "Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses. He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."

When some people go through a battle, they lay down the Word of God and stop talking to God. Often they become weary in well doing and get tired of praying. Then they become critical of others. I am sure that none of us has ever had a trial like Daniel had. Things are not always going to go well, Christian friend. Sometimes it may seem as if you have one trouble after another, but hold steady and do not become weary and faint. Be like Daniel and keep praying, and in due season God will turn your situation around. God gave us the privileges of prayer and of reading the Bible to help us.

Another great privilege we have is gathering together to receive strength and encouragement from

one another. In many countries people have to gather in secret. We still have the privilege in the United States of being able to worship God openly. The Bible says in Psalm 122:1, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

You should not stay up all night Saturday night and go to the house of God sleepy eyed. You should go to bed early enough so that you are wide awake, because God has something for you. It makes a pastor feel good to look over the congregation and see certain ones always in their places.

When Paul wrote to the Galatians, a weariness had set in among them because of the battle with the Judaizers. We have many things working against us today, but we also have much working for us. One thing is that no one can take away God, the Holy Spirit, or the support of Jesus Christ.

Young person, when you are in school, remember that you are not alone, though you are the only one in the whole class who talks about God or thinks about God. You are in there with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Do not lose heart and become weary in well doing, for in due season you will reap. Some people need to have their hearts rejuvenated, because they have become disheartened.

Paul fought a good fight and kept the faith. The battle is over the faith. Keep up those things that God has shown you to do. Talk to Him and let Him talk to you, read His Word, and assemble yourself with your brothers and sisters in Christ. We enjoy many other blessings and privileges, but if you keep these things in the forefront, God will help you. He will be with you, and He will be your strength. You may be going through many trials, but remember, that is where your victory comes. You must overcome the devil and sin.

(Cassette C-4065M)

Job 8:1 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?

3 Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

4 If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression;

5 If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;

6 If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

7 Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

8 For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

9 (For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:)

10 Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

11 Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?

12 Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.

13 So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:

14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.

15 He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it

fast, but it shall not endure.

16 He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

17 His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.

18 If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.

19 Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.

20 Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers:

21 Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.

22 They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.

The Destiny of the Evil One



Brother C. H. Dickerson

Man Was Created to Serve God

The Word of God lets us know that we are on a road called life, and this road has a beginning (birth) and an end (death). In the beginning God created all of us in His image and after His likeness. In other words, He created us pure and holy, and He gave us a desire to serve Him. He

put a soul within each of us, and our souls cry out for the Living God. When our relationship with God is right, the only things our souls cry out for are the things of God. The righteous soul does not cry out for the world or the things of the world, but he has a desire to serve God.

When one comes to the place of knowing right from wrong, he

chooses to do the things of the flesh because he lacks the grace to do that which is right. The grace to live for God comes by Jesus Christ, and the Truth came by Christ. To do right, one must have grace and Truth. Despite our fleshly makeup, we can live holy. God placed the desire in each of our hearts to serve Him. If you were to take a wild animal out of

its natural habitat and put it in a cage, it would pace back and forth. Very seldom would it lie down, because it would be uneasy about being caged and being in a strange place. Likewise, the world is full of uneasiness because people are out of the realm that God created for them. Friend, God created you to serve Him. When you do not serve Him, you are out of that realm and it creates an unrest in your life.

God has placed within every heart the desire to serve Him, but there have always been false accusers. A good example is found in our Scripture text concerning Bildad and his accusation against Job. We know these accusations were not true about Job because God told the devil, "Job is an upright man, and there is none like him in the earth." So, we can see that Job was a man who loved God.

Since Job served God, the devil worked through Bildad, saying in verse 6, "If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous." He went on to tell what the end was of people who were dishonest before God. In verses 13-15 he said, "So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish: Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. [Just as the spider's web is easily torn down, so is man's hope without God—he has no hope. Man might have many things in mind, but that hope will never mature without God.] He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure."

People who are not serving God, people who are living in hypocrisy, and people who are in man-made religion are going to lean on their spiritual houses, but they are not going to stand. The only thing that can stand is God's eternal Truth, and until you get yourself set in the Truth and hold on to it, you have nothing on which to stand. If you are going to stand, you must get hold of God's eternal Truth. God's people need to love the Truth, stand for the Truth,

defend the Truth, and work to show the world the Truth.

Trusting in the Lord

The Truth will make you free. When you get God in your heart, you will be free from sin and you can have victory. You will be free from man-made religion and every binding thing; that is what God wants. When you are free, the devil has one thing in mind, and that is to captivate you, take your joy, cause you to doubt or question God, and try to kill your influence just as he tried to do with Job.

God had perfect confidence in Job; however, the devil told Job, "If you were pure and upright, God would do something in your favor." Child of God, what the devil says does not have to interfere with your peace or your experience with God. If you get saved and walk in the light, the devil will tempt you, but he can neither take away your experience nor mar it. Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The enemy cannot overtake you.

Verse 20 of our Scripture text says, "Behold [or take notice], God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers." God will not help the evildoer. On the other hand, when God is on your side, the enemy cannot do anything to cause you to lose your joy and peace.

Paul wrote in Romans 2:6-8: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath."

David said in Psalm 37:1-3: "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD [in other words, conform to the

Word of God and pattern yourself after God], and do good; so shall thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

God's people are going to be fed with the Word of God. When He gives you His Word, if you will measure to it, you will grow, and you will be fat and flourishing in the things of God. Also, you will have power that the devil cannot interfere with. He will try to oppress you, discourage you, and make an inroad into your life; however, God has promised that if you trust in Him, conform to Him, and do good, He will see that you are fed with the Word of God that will cause you to grow. Psalm 37:4-5 tells us: "Delight thyself [or have great pleasure] also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." What a promise, and it is one that will never fail! If you will pattern your life to the Word of God and to what God has told you to do, He will see that you are fed spiritually.

Overcoming the Spirit of Lukewarmness

Today we are living in a time of spiritual famine. The Word of God is not preached everywhere. It is being withheld. Nevertheless, God said, "If you serve Me, I will send a man of God around to see that you are fed the Word of God." Why does He do that? So that you will not starve to death spiritually and so that you will be as fat as stalled calves. Then the world can see that you have something real.

We see evildoers on every side, and many of them prosper in various ways. Child of God, do not get your eyes on them. The devil is working as never before to discourage people, but you need to stay true to God; that is what lie wants you to do. That is the reason lie has ministers who preach the Gospel and the reason He has sent His Spirit so that people can stay true to Him and work for Him.

There has never been a time that

the devil has been more determined to defeat the saints of God than he is in the day and age in which we are living. If you study the Revelation, you will find that the Gospel Day was divided into seven periods of time. In each of the first six ages, Jesus complimented the church. In fact, He complimented the Ephesus church age nine times. He praised every age for what they had done, except our age—the Laodicean church age. Not one thing in Jesus' letter to the Laodicean church was complimentary. He said, "I have somewhat against you." He let them know that they were spiritually lukewarm, yet they said they had need of nothing.

In this seventh-seal age in which we are living, there is not one thing to encourage us in any way as far as good works are concerned. However, do not take the attitude, "Well, then, there is no hope." That is not what Jesus said. My friend, if you are not where you know you ought to be spiritually and you repent and live for God, you can overcome the spirit of lukewarmness.

God has made a way for all of us to make it despite discouraging circumstances. The devil would like to discourage the saints of God by saying, "What is the use?" The devil has spoken discouraging words to each of us. Psalm 73:12-14 reads: "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning."

This is the way the devil works on the saints of God yet today. I want you to see that the devil will come around today just as he did with Job. David went on to say in verses 15-18: "If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into 'destruction.'"

Wait Upon the Lord

The main reason the enemy of souls tries to discourage you is this: if you become discouraged, you will not work for God wholeheartedly. If you do not work for God wholeheartedly, you will not receive a reward. Friend, if your employer were to take away the pay from your literal job, you would soon quit because you would not have anything to work for. The same is true spiritually. If you allow the devil to rob you of the joy and the peace that you have, he will cause you to feel, "What's the use?" If that happens, you will let down on your work for God. If there is no pay, you will become discouraged and soon become disobedient, and then the devil will have accomplished what he set out to do. However, God has promised the victory. He never promised an easy way, but He did promise victory. God saved you to work for Him.

Sometimes people have the idea that they can wait until they are on their deathbeds and then get saved, but God has work for them to do. God has given you a talent. You may be unable to sing or preach, but God has a work for you to do. My friend, if you do not use your talent for God, He will cast you out as an unprofitable servant, and then there will be no payday. When God saved you, He gave you a work to do. If you are not doing your job, discouragement will follow.

God has given us promises. He said in Psalm 37:9, "For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth." What a promise! If you wait on God, you shall inherit the earth. In other words, you can control your earthen vessel by the grace of God. People who do God's will are patient and content where God has placed them, and they can expect God to bless them. The Apostle Paul went through some hard trials, and we are going to go through hard places. Not every place that we go through is going to be joyous.

The devil will cause you to re-

member your sinful past just as he did the Apostle Paul. Nevertheless, if you will be content where God has placed you, He will do a work for you. He said in Philippians 4:11, "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

Paul wrote in Hebrews 13:5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." God wants you to learn to be content. If He lets you go through hard places, He wants you to be content. Do not get discouraged, because He said, in so many words, "I will never leave you nor forsake you. Whenever I let you go through a test, be content, because I am by your side. I will never let you go through more than you can bear. I will be right there to help you." I have found that God will do that very thing!

All of God's people have gone through hard places, but God has always been right there. As the writer of the song penned, "Standing somewhere in the shadows, you'll find Jesus." He is there to help and encourage you. However, sometimes He wants you to go by faith. Through it all, remember His promise: "I will never leave you nor forsake you." When you get to where it seems that you cannot go any further, He will be right there to help you. Psalm 37:3 states, "Trust in the LORD [or conform to God], and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

God will feed His people on His Word. There is nothing like the true Word of God! Sometimes it may get a little hard for you to chew, but it will make you free. It will give you everything you need. You will have a desire to hold on because God is so good to you. God's Word will give you the strength and the encouragement you need to press on.

Power to Stand

Psalm 37:11 states, "But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall

delight themselves in the abundance of peace." The meek can control themselves through Christ and have great pleasure in the peace of God. There is nothing like the peace of God! While you are going through spiritual battles, God has wonderful peace for you. One songwriter described it as "peace like a river." When His peace moves in upon you, you will be content in that peace. The Scripture says that "the meek shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

Jesus said in the Beatitudes that the meek shall inherit the earth. God will give you the power to control your spirit and your body, including your tongue. If you are not careful, the devil will cause you to speak too quickly or act in a way that will kill or damage your influence, which often takes a long time to repair. I am not saying that you cannot do what God would have you to do, to stand for the Truth and to stand against the enemy of your soul. That is not what Jesus was talking about. God wants you to control your spirit, and He will help you to do that.

You can stand for God's eternal Truth in a way that will not harm your influence and yet let people know what Truth is. Jesus stood against His enemies when they tried to make the house of God a place to sell merchandise. He took a stand against them, yet the Scripture lets us know that He did not sin at all.

God can give you the power to stand for Truth and what is right, and yet not do it in a carnal way. Saint, you can let the world know exactly what salvation is and what salvation will do for people. We are living in a time when there has been a great let down. Many people have not stood for the Truth. They have let little things cause them to deviate from God's eternal Truth. As a result they are losing the power to keep under their bodies, their spirits, and their tongues.

James said if one can keep his tongue, he can keep the whole body. He said in James 3:6, "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity:

so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." James wrote in verse 2, "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." God has given His people power to control their bodies and their tongues.

The devil has one thing in mind, and that is to rob you of your peace, your joy, and your experience of salvation. Since the day that the devil was released from the bottomless pit, he has set out to destroy every saint, but God can give you the grace to overcome him and be victorious.

You can read about the end of the saints' endurance in Revelation 21:6-8: "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable [those who are nasty, hateful, and disagreeable], and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." To "him that overcometh," God has promised, "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely," and "he that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God and he shall be my son." This promise is not to the fearful, or to those who are afraid to take a stand.

Many people today know that they ought to stand for Truth, but they are afraid to do it. This reminds me of when Jesus healed the blind man. When the people saw that he was healed, they asked the man's father, "Who did this for him?" he said, "You ask him. He is of age." The Scripture lets us know that he would not comment because he was afraid of being tossed out of the synagogue. It is the same yet today.

Many people know what they should do, but they are afraid of getting thrown out of the synagogue, so to speak. Child of God, you must take a stand for what is right. Jesus let us know where the fearful are going to go. God put the fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, the whoremongers, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars in the same category. Saint, you need to stand for God and Truth. God wants His people to stand for Truth, and Truth is the only thing that will take you through. When the enemy comes along to try to rob you of Truth, the Lord wants you to lift up a standard against him. He will give you the power to do that.

The Song of Deliverance

When John wrote to "him that overcometh," he was writing to the church. What do you need to overcome? You need to overcome spiritual Babylon and man-made doctrines. Spiritual Babylon has the same spirit that old literal Babylon had when she tried to make herself a name and an independent way to Heaven. God has given His people a name, and He has also made a way for them to go to Heaven. Jesus said, "I am the way." If you are going to make Heaven your home, you must come the way the Word of God says. If you will do that, you will overcome.

God wants His people to overcome Babylon. He told us in Revelation 15:2-3: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God [which is a song of deliverance], and the song of the Lamb [which is a song of redemption], saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." God has given every saint an experience so that he or she can sing the song of

Moses and the song of redemption, the song of deliverance, and also the song of the Lamb. His works are great and marvelous! You can sing a song of deliverance. You can sing, "I am redeemed. I have been delivered from sin. I am free from sin." You do not have to be in bondage; that is what He said you will overcome.

God will give you power so that you can overcome. You cannot do it in yourself, but through Christ you can overcome Babylonian practices and sin, and you can be free. God does not want you to be bound. He wants to have His way in your heart and life. Not only will He give you His name but also His power so that you can sing the songs of deliverance. You can sing "I am redeemed" from the depths of your heart because you have been delivered from the bondage of sin.

When God's people went down to Egypt, it appeared to be a perfect setup for them because they were going to get some relief from the famine. However, the longer they lived there, the harder it became. Finally, God delivered them, and they could sing a song of deliverance. This is how sin works. When people first go into sin, they find much pleasure in it; but before long they become bound by vices such as drugs and alcohol, and some even commit suicide. Thank God, some people bow at an altar of prayer and get delivered from sin.

Friend, you can get saved and can be free from the habits of life, free from an old nasty, filthy tongue, and free from man-made religion. You can be delivered from all these things! Not only can you be delivered from sin and false religion, but you can sing a song of redemption. Nothing thrills the soul of the Christian more than being able to say, "I am redeemed." They are not saying, "I am going to be redeemed," but "I am redeemed." God has an experience for you right here in this life. If you wait until this life is almost over to be redeemed, it may be too late. God wants you to be redeemed now so that you can work for Him.

Requirements for Overcoming

In every age there have been requirements for overcoming. In our age the devil is using every tool he can to defeat God's people. We are in the last days of time; there is no question about that. You might say, "I have heard that for a long time." However, I have never seen the signs of time like I have seen them today. The signs of time are being fulfilled. We are living in the last days of time, and the devil is using everything he possibly can to try to defeat the church. Throughout time he has used many tactics to try to destroy the saints of God, but never before has he used everything he has to try to defeat the saints of God.

Today the devil is trying to defeat the church with lukewarmness. If you are not careful, lukewarmness will make an inroad into your life and cause the joybells to quit ringing and cause you to quit, praising God. God wants you to overcome lukewarmness. It is bringing a hush over the people of God, and the praises of God are not what they ought to be. When you realize that the Truth has set you free and think of where God has brought you from and where you are today, that ought to cause you to rejoice and praise God until the church rafters ring. My friend, if you are not careful, you will listen to the Word of God, but it will just go over your head, and you will not have any praise for God. That is not what God wants. That is a lukewarm spirit working.

Today brotherly love is growing cold, and surmising spirits are working. Surmising is never to lift up people; it is always to press them down. These surmising spirits are for one purpose, and that is to get God's people to allow an inroad for the devil to work. If he can get you discouraged to where you do not work for God, there will be no pay. God is not a welfare director. Anything He has ever done, He told His people to do something for it. When He healed them, He said, "Take up your bed and walk." He healed another and

told him to go into the city and tell others. They had to work for what they received. Friend, if you quit working for God, you are not going to get anything, spiritually speaking, because this is part of God's plan.

You may wonder, "What do you mean by getting paid?" One way you get paid is by God blessing you. There have been times when I have been so pressed down that it seemed as if nothing was going right, and then God would impress me to pray. It was not long until God rolled back the clouds, and the sun seemed brighter than ever. Everything seemed new and different, and I was encouraged. This is some pay that God gives His people. Also, when I have been sick, I have gone to God in prayer and He healed me. This is a part of our payday. This is what God does for those who serve Him, and He does these things to encourage us.

The Cares of Life

God's Word tells us not to fret because of evildoers. Fretting will eat away your joy, disturb you, and irritate you. The devil wants you to fret so that you will not be your best for God. Also, he will work through people to try to cause you to have a bad spirit. What is the biblical answer? How can you get help? Peter said to cast all your cares upon the Lord, for He cares for you.

There are so many cares today. In Luke's Gospel Jesus talked about the cares of life. There has never been a time when the cares of life have been more pressing than they are today. People are so busy and cumbered with lots of cares. There is still the same amount of time in a day, just as in years past, yet it seems as if people are busier than ever. In fact, people are cumbered with so many cares that they do not even take time to read the Bible or to pray. One thing that people often come to the altar to pray about is their failure to read the Bible and to pray. They slacked off because they were cumbered with so many cares.

Martha was cumbered with many cares, but Jesus said, "One thing is needful," and it is needful yet today. People have so many cares and burdens that they do not take time to sit at the feet of Jesus. That is the essence of it! People are not praying because they do not take time to pray. Also, they do not take time to study God's Word.

The devil is pressing in on some people until they do not take time to go to the house of God. Church attendance is not as it ought to be. God has given you six days to do your work. However, if you are not careful, you will work those six days and still be too busy to go to the house of God. God's people continually need spiritual refreshing. Being in the world will drain your spirituality. If you are not careful, your attitude will be, "This is just prayer meeting night." However, when you miss that service needlessly, your spirituality will get so low that it will become easy to miss Sunday. The next thing you know, you will not see any need of going to the house of God at all. Too many people attend church in a spasmodic way. When the weather is right or when nothing else is pressing, they will go the house of God, otherwise they plan to do something else.

Many years ago my family used to have reunions, and they were always on Sunday. One Sunday after I finished teaching Sunday school, we left church to attend our family reunion. However, God spoke to me about it, and that was the last time we ever went to one. I wrote my family a letter and I told them that if they wanted me to attend any more family reunions, they would have to schedule them some other day besides Sunday, because that is the Lord's day. One thing more important than anything else is hearing God's Truth. You are not going to hear God's Truth at a family reunion or out on a highway. You need to be at the house of God. All these other things are just tricks of the enemy to discourage you and drain you spiritually.

God's people go to the house of God to be encouraged. When the man of God preaches the Word, he does it to encourage you and let you know whether you are on the right track. The Word of God lets us know there are landmarks on the highway of life, so when we pass them we can know that we are on the right track.

When we are at church, our undivided attention needs to be on the service. When you go to church, is your mind on the things of God or something else? In Luke 8:14 Jesus said, "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." Three things choked the Word that fell among thorns. People heard it, but it was choked by the cares of life, riches, and the pleasures of this life. Sometimes people could be at the house of God, but because of working overtime on the job, they miss church when they really do not have to.

The pleasures of life hinder many people from truly worshiping God. There has never been a time when people of the world were as pleasure hungry as they are today. Friend, I am not saying these things to criticize, but I am saying them because the devil wants to rob you of your Christian experience, your joy, and your payday. Child of God, when you get sick, you want God to come to your rescue. That is a payday. He does not owe it to you, but He will heal you. However, do you feel that you can really have faith in God if you have been neglecting the reading of the Word? Do you feel that you can have faith in God if you have been neglecting your prayer life? Do you feel that you can have faith in God if you have neglected to attend the worship services? Being neglectful of these things will hinder your faith.

Commit Your Way Unto the Lord

Concerning evildoers, those who do not do as God says and do not

manifest the Spirit of God, you should not fret or be alarmed over them. The Scripture says they are going to soon be cut down. Psalm 37:1-5 reads: "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed [with God's true Word]. Delight thyself [or take great pleasure] also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way [not what you want but what God wants] unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."

This might not be a message that will cause you to shout, but it is a message to warn you. The devil has set out to cause you to become lukewarm and so busy with the cares, the riches, and the pleasures of this life that you fail to take time to go to the house of God and get your soul fed. If there were ever a time when you needed to be at the house of God, it is in the day and age that we are living. Every time the church door is open, you should not allow anything to hinder you from getting to the house of God. Why? Because it is for your benefit. Every message that goes forth has something in it for you. However, if you are not careful, you will hold back when God shows you a move to make; then it will not be long until you forget it. When God wants you to make a move, He draws things to your attention.

Friend, if you have a need, let God have His way and get that need met now. If you have been careless in your home congregation church attendance or negligent in your prayer life or in your Bible study, ask God to forgive you and help you. That is where your power comes from. When you neglect those things, you will become weak spiritually, and then you will lose your desire to go to the house of God and become weaker still. If God has drawn a need to your Attention, you ought to do something about it now. Ask God to

help you, because it is for your benefit.

God wants you to be strong. He wants you to do a work so you can get paid, not in dollars and cents but by His blessings. This is what keeps

God's people going. If God quit blessing His people, getting them to attend the house of God would be hard. However, because God blesses us, we want to go back. If you neglect attending the worship services,

you will lose that blessing and, as a result, you will not have any praise for God. God will give you the power to overcome every hindrance.

(Cassette C-4142M)

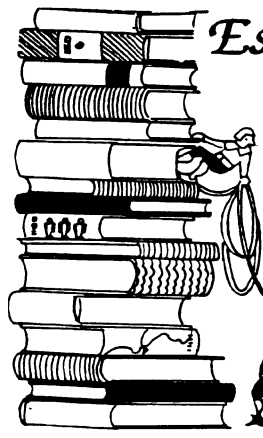
The devil is quite willing for a person to profess Christianity as long as he doesn't put it into practice.

Radio Log



LOCATION	STATION	DAY	TIME
Newark, Ohio	WCLT-AM 1430	Sunday	7:35 a.m.-8:00 a.m.
Akron, Ohio	WHK-FM 98.1	Sunday	2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Cleveland, Ohio	WHK-AM 1420	Sunday	2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Anderson, Indiana	WQME-FM 98.7	Sunday	7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Little Rock, Arkansas	KMLT-AM 760	Sunday	5:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Rochelle, Georgia	WQIL-FM 101.3	Sunday	7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Gaffney, South Carolina	WAGI-FM 105.3	Monday	8:30 p.m.-10:00 p.m.
Harriesburg, Mississippi	WBKM-AM 950	Sunday	12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Tune in to the radio station nearest you to hear an inspiring message from the Word of God. If you enjoy the broadcast, let us hear from you!



Especially for Young People

Definitely Guided By God's Spirit



What wonderful privileges are ours if we are truly living for God and our lives are completely given over to His control. One of the greatest promises Christ ever gave to the believer was that when the Holy Spirit would come that He would guide the children of God into the full light of the Gospel. He said, speaking of the Holy Spirit, "Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all Truth."

This is definitely speaking of the Holy Spirit leading us into the full light and Truth of the Scriptures. He will surely do this if we are willing to accept each ray of truth as it is revealed to us by His Spirit; but if we reject a part of the Truth, He is not obligated to continue revealing Truth.

Our only safety lies in accepting, with grateful hearts, what He does reveal. Then He will continue until our very souls will be illuminated with the light of divine Truth. As we follow on in His divine plan, our lives will be filled with grace and victory and glory and we will then become as lights in the world and draw others to the blessed Savior of men.

There is also another way in which He has promised to guide us, and sad to say, few Christians think of the great privilege that could be theirs; or of their responsibility in magnifying the Lord through these personal demonstrations of His power of His care.

Thank God it is possible for us to hear the voice of God clearly speaking to us, definitely trying to

guide us in clear paths of service to Him.

In the year 1929, I had a very definite experience of being guided by the dear Lord in a plain path in service to my fellowman. I lived at that time in Indianapolis and was pastor of one of the congregations. Sister Keith was a faithful member in my congregation. Her general health was good, but she had had a few serious heart attacks. These were not very frequent so we had not been deeply concerned about her.

One night, possibly 3:00 in the morning, I was definitely awakened from sound sleep as if someone had entered the room and called me. As I awakened, I sat up in bed, and after a moment's thought, knowing that was alone in the apartment, I realized that the Lord had awakened me. So I bowed my head in prayer and asked Him what He had awakened me for.' The answer quickly came, "Call a cab at once, and go to Sister Keith.

I quickly called the cab and rapidly dressed while waiting for it. In a few moments, I was there. Being so definitely sure God had spoken, I expected to see the house lit up and to see the family stirring, for I was sure something was wrong there. To my surprise, everything was in darkness and the family sleeping (as far as I could see).

'The cab driver stood by a few minutes and the enemy of all good said, "What a foolish thing you have done. They are all in bed asleep." Quickly looking to the Lord, I was

impressed to enter a small side gate and to try and go around to the back door. I sent the cab away and entered that dark passage for the first time in my life.

As I reached the kitchen door, I saw through a small crack, that light was in the house. Without knocking or speaking, I opened the door and entered. There in a chair sat our beloved Sister Keith, to all outward appearances gasping her last breath. She had awakened with a heart attack and had gone downstairs for water. When she got downstairs, she was so bad she could do nothing.

Her husband worked nights and the two daughters were both upstairs in bed asleep. From where she sank down in the chair, with much difficulty she had unlocked the back door. She could not speak a word, but as she saw me enter, the tears of gratitude flowed from her eyes. Without a word to her, I stepped to her side, and as I laid on hands, I felt invested with authority from Heaven over the affliction.

God enabled me to pray the prayer of faith, and the work was instantly done. Our praises awoke the girls, and they soon joined us. All together we prayed, worshiped, and adored our Savior and Healer. From that hour, Psalm 32:8 has been more real to me than ever before in my life. It says, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy name.

As I write this, I am convinced that some who will read it will doubt it; but the Lord does not change the fact of truth. Some will say, "But that was years ago. What good does it do us now?" Dear one, time never has or never will change or take from the power of God. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Some will say, "But that was a special case." Yes, that was just one special

case, but it can be multiplied if we listen to the voice of God's Spirit when He speaks and then move out in obedience to that voice.

In these latter days, many have fallen from the faith, but God has not changed. His word of promise has not changed; neither has His plan for the care of His people changed. What Christ needs today is an army of men and women, spirit filled and humble,

ready to sell out, entirely placing their lives in His hand, ready for sacrifice or ready for service. Will you enlist wholeheartedly in His service—ready to hear, ready to obey, ready to be used by Him to the fullness of your capacity coupled up with the Holy Spirit?

Selected

1999 Winter Camp Meeting



Tape List



TAPE NO.	DATE	MESSAGE TITLE	SPEAKER	COST
C-42961E	12-27-99	Running Our Course Willingly	Bro. C. H. Dickerson	\$2.50
C-4297M	12-28-99	Purifying the Sons of Levi	Bro. E. David Stegmeier	2.50
C-4298A		Sin—the Deceiver of Many	Bro. Irwin Seshar	2.50
C-42991E		Receiving Disappointments	Bro. C. H. Dickerson	2.50
C-4300M	12-29-99	A More Excellent Way	Bro. E. David Stegmeier	2.50
C-4301A		Formula for Success	Bro. Pete Bollinger	2.50
C-4302M	12-30-99	Our Greatest Glory	Bro. E. David Stegmeier	2.50
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John 11:1 Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thorn loveth is sick.

4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God aright be glorified thereby.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

7 Then after that with he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.

8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thorn thither again?

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in hint.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for Your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.



The Need for Discernment

Brother E. David Stegmeier

How to Be Successful in Your Walk With God

God gives us spiritual discernment when we listen to every word He speaks, even the nuances. He has many reasons behind what He says, that we need to understand. We are

living in a very dark day, a day that is very dangerous, spiritually speaking. Therefore, we need to be awake and alert, and we need to fully comprehend what is happening around us. Saint, may all that you say and do be to glorify God and not self.

Jesus said that Lazarus' sickness

was not unto death but for the glory of God. Jesus has everything under His control. Sometimes as I ponder situations, I wonder, "What shall I do?" I am learning more and more that if I do not know what to do, then I should stand still until I receive divine direction.

I once found a meaningful illustration in a book. A man was watching a butterfly come out of its cocoon, and it was working very laboriously to get out. The man felt sorry for it, so he pulled it out. However, it never did develop into a beautiful butterfly; it died and stayed a very grotesque mass of tissue. So it is with us as Christians. Sometimes we want to get out of our trials and hard places, but God is working those things for our good and wanting us to become more beautiful people. Often I would like to get out of my difficulties quickly, but sometimes the Lord keeps me there and turns the fire up a little hotter. My prayer is, "Lord, please help me. I need Your grace, Your wisdom, and Your divine direction."

The Lord knows what is good for us, and through all that we experience, He can give us discernment, understanding, and insight into how He works to make us more beautiful creatures for Him. He wants to make us more patient, more longsuffering, and more knowledgeable of the things of God so that we might help others who go through similar situations. I think of Brother C. W. Naylor. He was injured and could not walk, but God used him to write books and beautiful songs that we enjoy yet. God used his affliction to His glory. Also, God wonderfully used Fanny Crosby. She was the greatest and the most prolific hymn writer that mankind has ever known. She wrote more than eight thousand hymns, many of which we enjoy today, such as "Blessed Assurance."

God can use your hard places if you will commit them to Him. God has everything under control in our lives. Sometimes you may feel that the Lord needs to come on the scene immediately, but He may want you to learn to be more patient. He will take care of things in His time and vindicate His justice.

Our Scripture text states in verses 9-10: "Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this

world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." The Jewish day was from sunrise to sunset, and they divided it into twelve periods of time, some longer and some shorter according to the length of the day. I believe that Jesus was using a figurative expression in these verses to convey a spiritual meaning. In other words, He was taking a physical activity to teach a spiritual truth.

We can gather some lessons from these profound words of warning. Again, Jesus said, "If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." Too many are halting, stumbling, and falling into pits of all kinds. I want to be successful in my walk with God, don't you? To me, this is a top priority.

Take Heed to Yourself

The Bible warns us that we are living in a snare, and it says the snare has come upon the entire world. When I was in the military service, they trained us how to go into a field where there were land mines, and that was a scary situation. We are living in a spiritual realm where there are many spiritual land mines, and we need to know where they are. Do not be led blindly. You need to weigh everything by the light of God's eternal Word. Therefore, you must know what the Bible teaches and understand the principles of the Book. You cannot violate one principle in the Word of God knowingly and walk in the light.

Someone came to me with different Bible Scriptures and said, "We are following this and that." I said, "How about where the Word says, 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm?'" If you harm a prophet of God, you are guilty of violating God's law, no matter who you are, minister or laity. If you do another prophet harm, you are guilty before God. Friend, you had better keep your hands off a prophet of God

and his work, because the Bible says so.

Once a man came to our congregation who posed to be a minister and said he wanted to help us. The Bible says, "Know them which labor among you" and "lay hands suddenly on no man." That man caused me much heartache and damage and hurt. It was not long until he contracted cancer and was gone. God will vindicate His justice. There needs to be more godly fear on people who claim to be the Church of God.

Jesus, in cautioning His people in Luke 21:34-36, said: "And take heed to yourselves, [This is still good admonition. You had better be careful of yourself, for you are your greatest enemy. You can mislead yourself and become deceived. That is the reason you need to be weighed by the Word of God. I do not read the Bible to straighten out someone else. I read the Bible to straighten out myself and to keep my feet in the strait and narrow way.] lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting [living after the flesh, overeating, carrying on in the flesh], and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares [or unexpectedly]."

"For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. [The Bible says to buy the Truth and sell it not. We need the Truth so we can have the spiritual eyesight we need.] Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." There are more and more things occurring that we need to escape. Escape for your life and do not look back!

I often cite the example of Pilgrim in "Pilgrim's Progress." Perhaps you have read that old classic. Pilgrim was in the City of Destruction, and as his burden became heavier, his desire to know how to get rid of it became so strong that he left the City of Destruction, never to look back, not even to take care of his family.

Spiritually speaking, people criticize Christians for that, but they lose the essence of the Christian consecration. We must love God more than our own families, and sometimes that is hard. Nevertheless, Christ must come first.

The Dangers of Prosperity

Masses of people today are living in carnal security. We have never been more blessed as a nation than we are today, but as a whole, our nation is less spiritual. In the past our nation had never succumbed to such evil and wickedness as we see today. That which should be called evil is called good, and that which is good is called evil. May God help us. Too many are careless. They care less about the spiritual part of their lives—their souls. Their attention is focused upon things that only pertain to the outward man, which is perishing. Most of the world is occupied with the problems that concern only this time world. God's Word says we are living in a snare.

In Matthew, Chapter 13, Jesus spoke about the parable of the sower. In verse 7 He said, "And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them." Then to give us some insight into that Scripture, in verse 22 He said, "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." I want to be fruitful in my Christian experience. The Bible says that the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life. I want to see souls saved. I believe that a healthy congregation not only has older sheep but also new ones.

Too many have such a great desire for the wealth of this world that their zeal for God has waned. They are doing less and less to further the cause of God. I do not think that understanding why is difficult. In enlightened America, getting people out to the house of God to hear the Gospel is difficult. Why do you suppose that is true? It is due to

our affluent society. People do not feel they need God. They have everything they need, so they have no desire for God. There are too many distractions.

Paul said to "lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily besets us." You should get rid of all those things that hinder your spiritual progress and take time away from your reading the Word, praying, and attending the house of God. If something hinders you spiritually and your attendance to the house of worship, you ought to get rid of it. Prosperity can destroy spirituality in people more than persecution can. I have often thought, "Oh, if people would stay on fire for God, what a work could be done for God!" I want this Truth that we enjoy to be heralded throughout the world. We are so privileged and so blessed to know the Truth of God's eternal Word! Thank God for His Truth!

God warned people down through the annals of history about the dangers of prosperity. You may ask, "How does that relate to discernment?" It can keep you from reading and praying and attending the house of worship, which hinders your having the spiritual discernment you need. We are living in a very dangerous and difficult time, a perilous day.

Deuteronomy 6:10-12 reads: "And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers [Moses was speaking of the children of Israel], to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; Then beware . . ."

God was warning the children of Israel to beware when their lives became prosperous. Often when people come in from the world and from living in sin, they have nothing. Sadly, as God begins to bless

them with larger homes, nicer automobiles, and other things, their spirituality wanes.

I warn my congregation to be careful of prosperity. I do not lead them as a dictator or a tyrant, but the Bible says the man of God should be an example. We need to follow the shepherd. Do not go where he does not go. You need to watch what he does and where he goes, listen to what he says, and watch how he treats people.

Diligently Keep God's Commandments

Deuteronomy 6:12 continues, "Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage." That verse is applicable to each of us today. Saint, you were once in the house of bondage, but now you are free to do the will of God, not to do what you want to do.

If every saint does the will of God, we will have no division. Is Christ divided? No! If we are divided, a spirit is working somewhere that is not the Spirit of God. If there is division, contention, or dissension, then the devil is working. You see, when you and I have good fellowship, we work together, we are compatible, we enjoy each other, and we have no problems. However, should you listen to something that someone says about me, then we no longer have the sweet fellowship that we once had. The person who sows those things in your ear is sowing discord, and God hates that one who sows discord.

Deuteronomy 6:13-17 reads: "Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth. Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah. Ye shall diligently keep the command-

ments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee."

The Church of God should be a diligent people. You should never go to sleep in the house of worship. That is a very serious thing. What would happen if you were to go to sleep while driving a car? That would be extremely dangerous, and so it is in the house of worship. You need to sit up, be alert, and listen so that you can have the discernment you need. You need discernment. When you are in a quandary about what to do concerning a situation and many voices are speaking, you ought to do what is right. God's way is always right.

Verse 18 says, "And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee" I believe that our lives, the enjoyment of our lives, and the blessings of our lives are contingent upon the degree to which we are obedient to God and His Word. Also, our success as Christians is contingent upon the degree to which we obey every portion of the Bible. I believe in the old-fashioned Gospel.

A sister may ask sometimes, "Well, if I trim my hair a little bit, is that all right?" I always say, "You should give God the benefit of the doubt. Where the Word of God is explicit, be explicit. The Bible teaches that the men ought to have short hair and that the women ought to have long hair. I want to do the will of God. I believe people would suffer less and have fewer problems in their individual lives if they were more obedient to God. We must let God's will be done in our lives.

Deuteronomy 6:17-19 states: "Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee. And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, To cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the LORD hath

spoken." Child of God, you need to stay in God's Word and be obedient to Him, and ultimately He will take care of your enemies.

How to Help Your Children to Have Stability and Discernment

Deuteronomy 6:20-21 continues: "And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God hath commanded you? Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand." In other words, they were to tell their children how God had delivered them. Saint, the Lord wants you to tell your children how God brought you into the Truth.

When I was a small boy, our family came into the Truth, but we were in the Anderson movement then. You should rehearse these truths and your experiences with your children so that they might have strength and stability and discernment in their lives. Our pastor Brother R. L. Mullen was very concerned with the way the Anderson movement was letting down on the Bible standard. I perceived that. I was getting some spiritual discernment even as a young boy.

Verses 22-24 read: "And the LORD showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes: And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers. And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day."

If you do all that the Lord commands you to do, you will have the discernment you need. That is how you get discernment. If you will do the will of God, He will reveal things to you. The commands of God are not burdensome or oppressive. They are wonderful and enjoyable. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. God's

Word is true. I have found it so!

Sister, dressing modestly is for your good. There is a reason that the Church of God teaches what it teaches. I am proud of the doctrines of the Church of God; they make good sense.

I read in a newspaper several years ago of a case where a young man molested a young woman, and they tried him and put him in prison. However, they went on to try her too because of the way she had attired herself. They felt that she had seduced him. No man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself.

Verse 25 says, "And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us." Worldly possessions can be great hindrances to you in effectually working in the Kingdom of God, in being spiritual, and in having discernment so that you know how to position yourself in this very dangerous day. Worldly cares can distract you, draw you away, and divert you from what is most important in your life. Many people rely on worldly possessions. Some people think that God is blessing this one or that one because of his or her affluence, but that is not necessarily so. Which one was more blessed and more successful—Lazarus or the rich man?

The Time of Your Visitation

Going back to our text of Scripture, Jesus said in John 11:9-10: "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him."

Your life is divided into various stages and divisions. Young person, you are preparing for life. God may call you to a very important ministry. I felt God's hand was on me when I was five years old. I can remember the first time that God so strongly spoke to my heart. The song that they sang during the altar service said, "I will follow thee, My Savior,

wheresoe'er my lot may be." I answered that call, and I am not sorry that my parents raised me in a Church of God congregation. I am thankful for my Christian heritage.

God has appointed certain times and opportunities in your life. You need to be zealous about the things of God and alert and conscious of every opportunity that God affords you. This might be your day of visitation. This might be your day of mercy. The day of mercy has been closed for some already in this world.

In Luke, Chapter 19, Jesus wept over Jerusalem and said in verse 42, "If thou hadst known" Multitudes of people are completely ignoring their day of visitation. That is a serious thing. You should not reject the Truth that you hear. You should chew it, eat it, and allow it to become a part of you. You need to weigh it very cautiously and seriously. You must be careful that you do not think, "Oh, that's his idea" when a man of God preaches the Word.

Jesus said: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke 19:42-44).

Above all people in the world, the Jewish people have suffered more than any other. People who have turned down their day of visitation are going to bring the judgments of God upon themselves and their children. Parent, if you really love your children, you will be careful how you take the messages of God and how you treat the man of God. The day of opportunity is over for many; the door of mercy has been closed, and the eyes of their understanding have been blinded. They no longer understand and stand for the things they once stood for and recognized as

Truth. Many have rejected the warnings of the Spirit, the Word, and the man of God. The Word preached to you is to alert you and give you spiritual insight and discernment.

Perils of Our Day

Church, not only should you be zealous to further the Gospel of God, but you should be conscious that there are very serious enemies and perils all around you. When Jesus said, "If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not," in essence, He was saying, "If any man walk in the light, he stumbleth not." Those who walk in the day are walking in the light, and they have discernment, or we might say they have readiness and accuracy to really know what is going on.

Paul wrote about the perils of our day in 1 Thessalonians, Chapter 5. Verses 1-3 read: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them"

Today it seems that our country has never felt more secure in its history than it does now. However, the enemies on the outside are not our gravest danger but rather use inside our country. Our country is destroying itself through the lack of moral integrity, honesty, and work ethics. Homes are disintegrating, and the public schools are no longer safe havens for our children. In too many places the church is a battleground rather than a refuge for the oppressed. Jesus let us know that a house divided against itself cannot stand. Church, we need one another. Paul went on to say in 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that

sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober" In other words, you should be a responsible person. You should listen to the Word of God and give God your attention, your will, and your desire. Your attitude should be, "God, I am going to implement what I hear from the sacred desk in my life. I am going to do what the Word of God says to do."

I think of the words of a young man who went to a service in Ireland many years ago. He arrived late, and as the people were leaving, he said, "Oh, is the sermon over?" One worshiper said, "No, it remains to be lived."

In our house of worship we have these words hanging over the door: "Enter to Worship" and "Leave to Serve." This is a time when you need to be alert to conditions all around you. You need to be serious, to recognize that there are hidden enemies, and to be able to distinguish between that which is of God and that which is not of God. If you walk in the will of God, you can travel on with great confidence. I know where I have been, and I know where I am going. You can have that privilege and be sure of the direction in which you are going.

If you seek to do the will of God in all that you do and live according to that will and glorify God, you can have the discernment that you need. It is important that you run this Christian race successfully. The Spirit and the Word of God are the witnesses. They are our guides, and they give us the discernment we need. Many people are getting their directions from another source rather than from God.

Paul said, "I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Galatians 1:16). You should never lay aside the Word of God. No man of God will say, "I will interpret the Word of God and tell you what it says. Do not read it on your own." I tell people, "Bring your Bible to church with you and follow along in the Scriptures." You need to know the Truth, appreciate the

Truth, love the Truth, and live the Truth.

Too many are walking according to the crowds. Many people say, "Well, I am looking at the numbers." They might not say it quite in those words, but instead of getting direction from God, they look at how many ministers and others have taken a certain position. Playing the numbers game is foolish. When I was a young lad, a friend of mine who was Roman Catholic said, "Dave, how can fifty-nine million Catholics be wrong?" Nevertheless, they are wrong.

The Bible says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (Exodus 23:2). Noah stood alone, the Hebrew children stood alone, and many martyrs stood alone. Some are getting their direction from the world. They are walking according to the course of the world. I want to get my spiritual insight from God's Word, from those principles that I learned from a child on up.

There are many cults. The Roman Catholic church is one of the largest cults in the world. All religions that are not in conformity to the Bible are cults. In the Truth we have the prerogative to study the Word of God. I do not force people to do what I say. I tell them, "Look in the Book and follow the principles of the Word."

Lean Not to Your Own Understanding

Proverbs 3:5-6 states: "Trust in the LORD [People sometimes say, 'I have utmost confidence in this individual.' Friend, you had better have utmost confidence only in God.] with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." The word utmost means "the highest degree," and only God cannot fail. He is the only One who cannot err and will not mislead. I do not have utmost confidence in humanity. The Roman Catholics have utmost confidence in the Pope. God pity their souls. Cults

lay aside reasoning.

In having spiritual discernment, we have the ability and the prerogative to reason according to the Word of God. We must lay aside human reasoning, but reason according to the Bible. Cults take away people's reasoning ability, and that is wrong. Some have gone into situations where the leader says, "I will study the Word of God and tell you what it means." That is dangerous! That is the reason you need spiritual discernment.

You may say, "Oh, this minister said such-and-such." Well, go to the Bible: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways [that is all-inclusive, in everything you do, in all your ways] acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Verse 7 is also good admonition: "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."

If people would read Proverbs repeatedly, and apply all those principles, they would be such wise people. The central theme of the Book of Proverbs is this: you must consider God in every move that you make in life, even in your travels, your vacations, your purchases, your marriage, your disciplining, your choice of jobs, and so on. Unseen situations lurk all around us, things of which we are unaware. We need God.

Proverbs 3:7-8 tells us: "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones." In other words, you will be healthy, spiritually speaking. Lean not to your own comprehension, your own understanding, your own discernment, or your own carnal reasoning, but lean on the Lord. You must find out what His will is, lest you stumble and fall and be destroyed eternally. Just what the natural light is to our physical actions, the spiritual light is to our mortal actions. It is extremely important that we have discernment. The principles of the Word of God give us light and understanding. A mistake could be fatal, spiritually speaking. The Bible

says there are wolves in sheep's clothing. First John 4:1 instructs us, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." The Bible instructs you to try the spirits by the Word of God. Look into their history so that you can see what kind of tracks they have made. A wolf's tracks are different from a sheep's tracks.

Spiritual Darkness

Jude 12-13 tells us there are wandering stars that pose as ministers of light. Jude 11-13 gives this warning: "Woe unto them [false prophets]! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, [If you are in the ministry for anything but to win the souls of men to Christ because of a divine call from God, you are in the wrong profession. God never divinely called many who are posing as ministers. Had He divinely called them, they would do a divine work, a work commensurate with the will of God, a work that would glorify God.] and perished in the gainsaying of Core [rebellion and stubbornness are running rampant today]. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear [we need to take the Word with fear; do not let it drop to the ground, so to speak]; clouds they are without water, carried about of winds [the violent winds of doctrine—we need to have discernment to know what is and what is not Truth]; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame [often it is through their doctrine of 'I sin, you sin, we all sin more or less every day,' and it is usually more than less]; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

In the lives of many people, there has been an eclipse: something has come between them and the light. Could it be a root of bitterness? If you walk in the light as He is in the light, you have fellowship. Light gives you discernment. If there were no light in a building, you would stumble over everything.

In this day of great spiritual darkness, we need to see the great Light. Those who have sat in darkness have seen a great light, and that light is Jesus Christ. As never before, we need to exercise caution, and we need wisdom and discernment. Experience and examples of others should teach you that you need to use caution. Do not listen to everything. Too many are not heeding that admonition. We all need to be more spiritual. One prerequisite of having discernment is humility. Solomon, in his beginning, was very humble. Humility is a great quality. Saul was used of God as long as he was humble. Psalm 119:18 says, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." David prayed for wisdom, and God gave it to him.

Daniel also prayed for wisdom. Daniel 7:15-16 says: "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things." Too many are gullible today, spiritually speaking.

Walk Wisely

Proverbs 28:5 says, "Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things." Verse 26 says, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered."

First Corinthians 2:10-15 says:

"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man."

You need to be as spiritual as you possibly can. Also, you need to get into every service that you can. Listen to every message that you can hear in the house of worship and obey the man of God. Be an obedient Christian. As many Church of God congregations go on, they get further away from the old hymns. Besides the Word of God, the man of God, and the Spirit of God giving us discernment, the hymns we sing can give us understanding. Our songs are powerful and deep in spiritual understanding. One song that we sing is entitled "In the Light of God" by D. S. Warner, which says:

*Along a dark and gloomy path
I groped beneath the shades of death
No hope beyond my dying breath,
Till light from the Savior came.*

*My darkness now is passed away,
In Jesus all is perfect day;
And peace and comfort ever stay,
Since Christ is my perfect light.*

O Jesus, to my heart so sweet,

*Thy word's a light unto my feet;
How holy, happy, and complete,
I walk in the precious light.*

*All glory to my Savior's name!
To do thy will my highest aim;
Thy favor's more than earthly fame,
Thy smile is my constant light.*

*In the light of God,
Now my soul is singing,
All, all is bright,
In the light of God.
I'm now in the light of God.*

Christ is my hero. I have placed my utmost confidence in Him. Do I respect the men of God? I do. I have learned that obedience is the best policy, and I was taught respect as a boy. My parents taught me to have great respect for the man behind the pulpit. The best instruction that you can give your children is to highly respect the man of God, to give him double honor. That is what the Bible teaches.

Too many are looking for the favor of men, the favor of someone they may have befriended, or perhaps the favor of a good friend. Sometimes standing for Truth may mean saying goodbye to a very dear friend, but Jesus must come first. One of the most difficult times in David's life was when he and his dear friend Jonathan had to part ways.

In God's will and favor is protection. Everything you want from life comes by dwelling in His favor. As the songwriter penned, "Thy favor's more than earthly fame, Thy smile is my constant light." I hope you have received understanding concerning how you can receive more discernment.

(Cassette C-4145M)

**It is never the
right time to do the
wrong thing.**

Luke 12:13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul,

thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

A SURE CURE FOR A DREADFUL DISEASE



Brother Esau Brooks

"Beware of Covetousness"

As I read the Scriptures, often I have marveled at the fact that although it has been many years since these words were spoken, they are as up to date in their application as if they were being spoken today for the first time. As I read our Scripture lesson, I could not help but note how it resembles so many in our time who make provisions only for this life. Often people say, "Well, I have to make a living." No, you have to make two livings: you need to make one living down here, but do not forget that you have another living after this life is over. There are

two phases to our existence. This physical life is not all there is for us; there is a life to come.

So many things can hinder people; therefore, wisdom demands that you stop awhile and seriously look at yourself. Paul told the church at Corinth, "Examine yourselves." In other words, "Prove your own selves. Do not just believe and take for granted that you are saved, but you must know that Christ abides in you." Friend, once you have reached the end of life's journey, you will not have an opportunity to come back to right the wrongs of your life. You pass through this life only once, so whatever you are going to do, you

must do now. Once death calls, you will never have another opportunity.

Going back to our Scripture text in verse 15, the Lord was addressing an individual in His day. Though this was given as a personal direction, the meanings and the implications of the verse are extensive enough to include each of us today. Jesus stated in verse 15, "Take heed" This is something that requires one to take heed. The Hebrew writer penned, in so many words, "We owe it to ourselves for our own good to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard." In our Scripture text Jesus was not just calling for one merely to

take heed, but He was also admonishing and warning one to beware, as if to say: "Be on your guard; watch out. Do not get ensnared by covetousness. Do not allow it to take hold of you." You may say, "Well, I'm not bothered with it." Thank the Lord, but I pray that as you go on in this message you will discover for certain whether you are. Jesus was admonishing people to beware of covetousness. Some may say that it is simple and not of much consequence, yet it is so deep rooted and fatal that it warrants your immediate attention.

Consider what Jesus was calling covetousness. He went on to say in verse 15, "... for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." This covetousness concerns things that you can possess or already possess, which in turn can prove detrimental and even fatal to your spiritual well-being.

Jesus backed up His admonition by giving an illustration of what He was talking about. He said a certain man planted a piece of ground, and it brought forth plentifully. Verse 17 of our Scripture lesson says, "And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?" He could have done many things. He did not have to become perplexed. He could have shared it with many needy folks. However, his concern was not about laying up treasures in Heaven, but he was mainly concerned about his own well-being. Friend, you must learn to quit putting earthly things first in your life. It was wrong then, it is wrong now, and it will still be wrong when you arrive at the Judgment. These things have a place, but seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness far outweighs everything else that you may encounter on this earth.

Examine, the Chief Aim in Your Life

In our Scripture text we read of this man wondering what could be

done with his abundant harvest. In verse 18 he came to this decision: "This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods." Notice that he had no thought or plans for God or others. He was only concerned about himself. Now, you may feel sorry for this man, but first examine yourself. Are you doing any better? What is the chief concern of your heart? What is the chief aim and object of pursuit in your life? Is it personal interests or heavenly interests? The warning is, take heed and beware of covetousness. This move by men and women to lay hold of and grasp as much as they can of this world's goods is covetousness.

The man in our Scripture lesson was ready to go to work on his plans, but God broke in on his life. The man said, "I will say to my soul, Soul, you have nothing to concern you now. You have much goods laid up for many years. Take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry." Is that not the order of our time eating, drinking, and having fun with no thought of the hereafter? Friend, it is high time to awake out of sleep and know that the time is now.

Jesus warned very pointedly and very directly in this message, and He was giving direction concerning the proper handling of your physical life. There is a proper and an improper way to handle this physical life. You may say, "My life is mine, and I will do with it what I want." That is true, but you must also stand the consequences of your actions. Often people make choices, but they refuse to accept the consequences of their choices.

The rich man in the Bible made obtaining riches the goal of his life. However, as the few fleeting days of his existence came to a close and he died, he opened his eyes in hell and began to regret what he had done. He started to plead for mercy, but there was no mercy. Friend, a day is coming that will sober each of us. You may make light of or ignore this message; that is your privilege. But

remember, the time will come when you will be sorry that you have done it. You need to learn how to handle this thing called living. It is the most serious part of your existence, because it is the only time allotted to you by God to make your calling and election sure. If you miss it now, you will miss it forever.

Someone may say, "Why do some preachers talk about people having a second chance?" Do not listen to those dreamers. They are looking for a ship that will never come. The Bible does not teach that one will have a second chance, dear one. Once you have lived out your days and passed on to the shores of eternity, you will not have another chance to come back and straighten out the wrongs that you have done. The Bible says, "Today is the day of salvation." The Holy Ghost says, "If you hear My voice, harden not your heart."

In hell the rich man was not told, "Rest yourself for a while; you will have another chance." Money had been his god, but death had caused him to leave it all behind. He knew that he was in hell, and he knew that the very thing that had caused him to lose his soul was in the possession of his brethren. Therefore, he feared for them and trembled at what their future might be. In essence, he said, "Father Abraham, send Lazarus to warn my brethren. Tell them not to make money their god and not to make the same mistake that I have made. I am in hell today because of that." However, his request was not granted.

No doubt, if you could listen to inmates of hell, they would say, "Beware! Seek the Lord while He may be found!" Friend, your soul is the most serious part of your existence. Right now, you are setting in motion influences that will never die. You can pass on and leave this world, but your influences will remain. Your influences are either saving or damning the lives of others. Even if you are not concerned about getting saved for your own sake, you should get saved and live

right for the sake of others. You may say, "Well, I'm not concerned about what others do." Maybe not, but whatever you do is concerning them.

The Danger of Being Preoccupied With the Affairs of This Life

In our Scripture text the Lord was instructing a man about how to manage his life. In verse 4 he pointed out that the supreme purpose of life was not to accommodate self in the affairs of this life. Luke 12:4-5 states: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." God help people to have a greater fear of God before their eyes today. The world has lost the fear of God. When Jesus spoke to the generations of His time, He saw men and women so preoccupied and so taken up with the physical affairs of life that He warned them, "Do not be concerned with only that which affects your body."

The attitude of the day is, "God can wait, Heaven can wait, and the church can wait. I must attend to my own affairs now." However; Jesus was saying, "No! Do not fear one who can destroy only the body, and after that there is nothing he can do. Fear Him who can cast you into a devil's hell." If you want to be wise, put your soul's consideration ahead of all other considerations. According to this rendering, there is a certainty of the lost being cast into hell. Hell is not merely a dream, a thought, a belief, or an idea; it is a real place. God's Word tells us, "The wicked shall be cast into hell."

Some say, "Preacher, isn't hell the grave?" How many bodies do you see cast into the grave? They are lowered into the grave. I am talking about a place where the sinner is going to be cast. Sinner friend, you may ask, "Why am I going to be cast?" Because when the time comes for you to go there, you will not want

to go. Thus, you are going to be taken hold of and thrown in. No one wants to go to hell. They may be doing all they can to go, but they do not want to go there. Most people would tell you, "I'm not going to hell." Well, there is only one way to escape it, and that is to seek the Lord while He may be found.

In the early days of my ministry, I had an experience that I will never forget. I was at the bus station in Miami waiting for the departure of a bus. A young man came in the bus station to clean up the place, and to my surprise, it was a man who had once professed to be saved. He saw me, and we began to talk. After a little while I said, "Are you still saved?"

He said, "No, I'm sorry; I've lost out."

I said to him, "It will pay you a thousand times more to drop everything now and get right with God than to go on in the condition you are in."

He said, "Don't worry, brother; I'm not going to be lost. I'm not going to hell. I'm going to come back to the Lord." I exhorted him further, and then the time came for me to leave, and I left.

Several years later I met him again. As I walked toward him, I could see that something was radically wrong, so I asked him, "What is wrong?"

He said, "I am sick. I'm going to see the doctor to see what's wrong with me, but I haven't been feeling well."

I said, "Well, how is the matter between you and God? Have you settled the question yet?"

He answered, "Oh, not yet, but you don't need to worry; I'm going to do it, I tell you; I'm not going to be lost. I'm not going to hell. I'm going to be saved." Then we parted again.

For some time I heard nothing of him. Then one day I heard a knock at my house door, and as I looked out, I saw a couple of brethren there. They told me that this young man was calling for me to come and pray for him. Now, I did not know

anything more about the physical condition of this brother. I only knew that the last time I saw him, he told me that he was not feeling well. The moment we pulled alongside the dock, I heard lamentable cries. Yet it was the last thought in my mind that it was this young man. However, as we started up the trail, the nearer I got to the house where he was staying, the more assured I was that this was that same young man, and I did not like what I was hearing. I climbed the stairs and walked in that room, and the moment I made my appearance, he cast his eyes toward me and said, "Oh, Brother Esau, you have come! Pray for me! Pray for me! I'm lost, and I'm dying, and I'm going to hell!" The words were so piercing and so heartbreaking!

I said, "Just a minute, don't go too fast. Have you prayed?"

He said, "Yes, I have tried to, but I can't get through. Pray for me, pray!" I looked at the other brothers and said, "Let us pray." We knelt down and prayed, but it seemed as if the heavens were made of brass; nothing was going through. I recalled the words in Lamentations that read, "Thou hast covered thyself as with a cloud so that our prayers cannot pass through."

I rose and said, "Brother, you are going to have to pray. You are going to have to struggle."

He said, "I can't pray. Oh, pray for me. I'm lost, I'm dying, and I'm going to hell," and those were the last words he uttered. He just fell back on the bed, and his breath was gone.

I thought, "Oh, if he had only listened!" The job and the money—did they matter? What good were they to him at a time such as that? According to his own testimony, he was lost and he went to hell.

The Urgency of Needing to Seek God

My dear friend, it is time for you to sober up and recognize the urgency of your need of seeking God. Again, Jesus made it quite clear

that the supreme purpose of your life is not to accommodate yourself in the affairs of this life. The supreme purpose of your life is to get right with God and get ready for eternity. You may say, "You are very insistent about it." Yes, I am, because Jesus went on to say that the duty and the obligation of every man on this earth is to establish a relationship between himself and God.

In Luke 12:9 Jesus said, "But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God." Friend, can you afford that? Can you live with that throughout eternity? Sinner friend, your stay in hell will not be for a week or a month. The Bible says in Matthew 25:46, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Again, in essence, Jesus said, "If you deny me before man, I am going to deny you before the angels in Heaven." Your duty and obligation are to see that your life is not a constant denial of the Lordship of Christ or a constant reproof against all that God has said concerning seeking Him. You need to be watchful. Though we are living in a very wicked world and in a very sinful generation, you must get deeper in the things of God so that you will not be swept away with the current of wickedness.

Jesus made it clear that you must respect and regard God in your life. Luke 12:10 states, "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." What is that telling you? Just as the songwriter penned, "God has sent His Holy Spirit to our hearts an honored guest" God's Spirit has been moving on hearts. He is constraining them to come to Christ while there is yet time. Sadly, many are resisting, hoping that later they will have another chance. Sinner friend, now is the only time of which you are assured; tomorrow belongs to God. He may choose to give it to you or withhold it from you. For you to fail to regain God and respect God in

your life is to invite disaster.

Jesus warned about the desire to sin. Man's greatest enemy and the chief cause of man's destruction is selfishness. Sin is the root of it. When you shut God out of your life, you are placing your selfish desires above God. When you leave a service without yielding yourself to God, in essence, you are saying, "Lord, I know what I ought to do, but I have a few things left to take care of." Are you certain that you will have another opportunity? Take heed, and beware of covetousness. It is said that when the Spaniards went down to the Honduras, they cried, "Give us gold, for we have a disease that can only be cured by gold." Sometimes I wonder if only the Spaniards said that. That seems to be many people's attitude today. Their attitude is, "Give me pleasure; give me riches; give me gold. I have a disease that can only be cured by more pleasure, more money, and more gold!" They will wake up one day, as the rich man did, and find it all gone; just like the rich man, they will stand naked before an angry God.

Seek the Lord While He May Be Found

Notice what Jesus said in verse 21: "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." It is fatal to go on living away from God. Jesus said to beware of covetousness and selfishness. These things lead to greed, and greed will lead to your destruction. In verse 15 he said, "Take heed, and beware . . ." This is a serious call, and He was using two great words to enforce it. We are to take heed and beware. Unless one is willing to heed God's warning, he will never see the need of being on the alert and of being wary about this danger. Today it is becoming commonplace for people to sit in a revival meeting under the anointed preaching of God's Word and remain unmoved and unaffected. However, that is as fatal now as it has ever been.

God has a work for you to do,

and you need to get in shape to do that work. Many are unable to work because they are not in shape spiritually. Look at the mess man has made of religion. This grieves the great heart of God even to the point of pouring out His wrath.

Friend, this could be your last warning. Take heed before you get all wrapped up in the affairs of this life. You need to take heed how the affairs of this life are influencing you. Beware of getting so entangled with worldly things that the things of God lose their attraction. Serving God has lost its attraction for many today. God's Word warns you concerning the consequences of sin. It tells of the certainty of divine destruction because of selfishness, yet many people refuse to hearken. Like the antediluvian world and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, they are going to experience the wrath of an angry God.

Friend, take heed, and beware of covetousness. The warning is certain and the destruction is certain. God wants you to master your desires and ambitions and bring them under control. If a man's desire is right, his behavior will be right. On the other hand, if his desires are wrong, his actions will be wrong. Man is mixed up in his head and affected from his heart. You need to beware, because this sin is very subtle. It is a sin that the human eye cannot see. One can go on in covetousness without even realizing that he has it.

Selfishness means "inordinate desires, a longing for that which is unlawful to obtain." Selfishness is an act and an attitude one to judge success by how much he can obtain or accomplish in this life. The enthronement in your heart of selfish desires and wishes can cause you to put earthly gain before God. Too many people put saving money above saving souls. I know that some might think that making a living in this life is the chief goal of life, but Jesus said to beware of it. This is the very thing that caused the destruction of the antediluvians, Sodom and Gomorrah, and many

others.

So what should the Christian's position be regarding covetousness? God announced that there is only one course to take. Man's life consists not in abundance of the things he possesses. If you judge the success of life by your possessions, then you need to get your mind fixed on that which is going to be judged as a

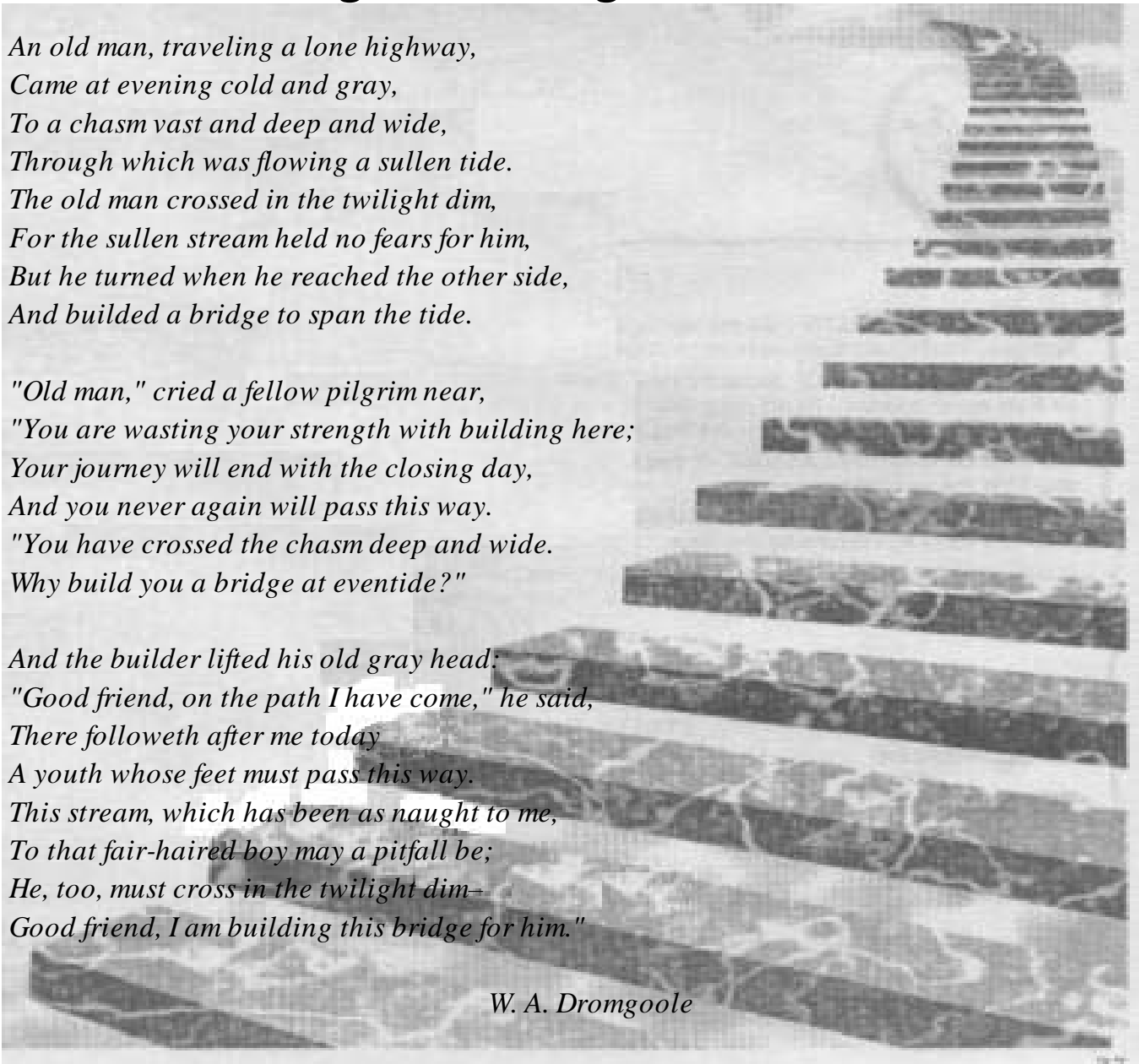
success. Man must recognize his obligation to God. God did not start man's life in sin; He starts man's life in righteousness and holiness. God made man in His own image and nothing less than that will satisfy His righteous demand.

Friend, you may not have much time left to do what you need to do. Seek the Lord while He may be

found. In what way must you seek Him? The Bible says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

(Cassette C-2634E)

Building the Bridge for Him



*An old man, traveling a lone highway,
Came at evening cold and gray,
To a chasm vast and deep and wide,
Through which was flowing a sullen tide.
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
For the sullen stream held no fears for him,
But he turned when he reached the other side,
And builded a bridge to span the tide.*

*"Old man," cried a fellow pilgrim near,
"You are wasting your strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the closing day,
And you never again will pass this way.
"You have crossed the chasm deep and wide.
Why build you a bridge at eventide?"*

*And the builder lifted his old gray head:
"Good friend, on the path I have come," he said,
There followeth after me today
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This stream, which has been as naught to me,
To that fair-haired boy may a pitfall be;
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim—
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him."*

W. A. Dromgoole