

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

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

Brother Roger L. Decker ..... Editor  
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

**THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:**

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS  
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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# Guest Editorial

## Gog and Magog Part 4 of 6

### Examining Magog

*Ezekiel 38:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*

*2 Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him,*

*3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.*

*Ezekiel 39:1 Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:*

*6 And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the LORD.*

*Revelation 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,*

*8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*

In part three of this series, we learned that the time frame in which these events occurred was the latter days, or this Gospel dispensation. We also learned that we cannot take the nature of the language literally, but rather figuratively. Then, we clearly identified Gog and Magog. We showed you by the Scriptures that Gog and Magog in Revelation 20:8 ties in with Revelation 16:13, the beast and the false prophet. The beast is Gog, which represents the system of papalism, and the false prophet is Magog, which represents Protestantism. We also pointed out that these false systems of worship came about as a result of the apostasy that occurred in the morn-

ing-time.

Proverbs 22:28 says, "Remove not the ancient landmark." These landmarks were used as boundary markers to show where the bounds were, to identify what was in and what was out. Religion, specifically Protestantism, has moved these markers and shifted the landmarks, or the boundaries, so that they take in things and people that God never ordained to be take in.

Jesus said in John 10:9, "I am the door." In John 10:1 He said if anyone climbs up any other way, "the same is a thief and a robber." Paul let us know in 1 Corinthians 6:10 that such cannot enter the Kingdom of God. If they are not in the kingdom of light, despite their profession, they are in the kingdom of darkness.

Jesus said, "I am the door," but Protestantism (or Magog, which literally means increase of family or expansion) has increased its family without the new birth. It allows expansion but does not require the new birth. It has devised many other avenues to expand and increase the family. To expand the family, the ranks of Protestantism have catechism classes, confirmations, church membership, shaking the preacher's hand, and many other religious moves.

This system has a very deceptive appearance. John wrote in Revelation 13:11, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb [he looked good until he opened his mouth], and he spake as a dragon." His teachings were not scriptural or godly, but heathenish and pagan, and they opposed the Truth.

The Book of Revelation is broken into seven series, and Revelation 12:1 begins the fifth series. It starts at the beginning of the Gospel Day with the woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, which is a picture of the morning-time church in her pristine glory; then it goes on in *[continued on page 24]*

*1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;*

*2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)*

*John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

*4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*

*5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

*6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.*

*7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.*

*8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.*

*9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*

*10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*

*11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

*12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

*13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the*

*will of man, but of God.*

*14 And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

*15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.*

*16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.*

*17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

*18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

# The Two Covenants

## Part 1 of 2



**Brother Roger L. Decker**

### **The Old Covenant**

We want to focus our study on verse 17 of our Scripture text, which reads, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Here we find two covenants and also two mediators: Moses and Jesus. To one the Law was given, but grace and Truth was brought by the other. Both were mediators of a covenant: one, the Old Covenant, and the other, the New. The Bible says that the Law was given by Moses.

We want to look at both

covenants and compare them with each other. First, we will study the Old Covenant, or the Law. In reading the Word of God, especially the Gospels, you find that two Old Testament names stand out, and the children of Israel revered them: Abraham and Moses. Jesus was always measured in the light of those two names, wherever He traveled and whatever He did in the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). His healings, His miracles, and His messages were always measured or contested in the light of Abraham and Moses. They were

great leaders, and there was a close relationship between the life of Moses and Jesus Christ.

Moses was an orator, a historian, a leader, a patriarch, and a prophet. The Bible lets us know that he lived very close to God. Numbers 12:3 says, "(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)" That is quite a testimony to have recorded in God's Word. Several meek men are mentioned in the Word of God, but Moses towered above them all, except Jesus. Jesus said in Matthew 11:29, "Take my

yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

How was Moses associated with Christ? He was associated with Christ through faith. Dear one, you ought to be thankful that you are under the New Covenant. Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. Hebrews 11:23-27 says: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

When we think of the Law, we also think of the leader Moses, because the Law and Moses were inseparable. The first five Books of the Old Testament are called the Pentateuch, and those Books are also called the Law of Moses. The Law followed God's covenant with Abraham, and Abraham's covenant was one of justification by faith.

Under the covenant of the Law, certain conditions had to be met to receive the blessings. We read in Exodus 19:5-6: "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: [That is still true today. If you live and obey the Gospel, then you will be a peculiar treasure above all people] for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel." The blessings under the Law were conditional. The little word "if" was before the word "then": "if you obey, then . . ."

Now, you need to understand what a covenant is. It is an agreement between two parties, and both parties must carry out the terms for it to be in force. For example, if you get a loan for the purchase of a home or a vehicle, you must sign an agreement. That agreement is in force by both parties, and it is conditional. Should you fail to make the loan payments, you will find that the right to live in that house or drive that vehicle will end. The bank will keep its part of the agreement, but you must keep your part. Both parties must carry out the terms for the agreement to be in force. The one who breaks it loses the right to claim any benefits from it.

You will find that if you get in trouble with God, it is never on God's part. God's part of the covenant is always secure, and it is always true. You will receive the blessings of it as long as you keep your part.

#### **The Purpose and the Effects of the Law**

What was the purpose of the Law? Why did God give a law if people could not keep it? Did He make a mistake? Certainly not. Did He just put a law on people and then punish them because they could not keep it? No. The Law was given to make people aware of their sins and to bring conviction of sin. In Galatians 3:19 the Apostle Paul wrote, "Wherefore then serveth the law? [we could paraphrase that and say, 'What was the purpose of the Law?'] It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

The difference between the Law and the Gospel was that the Law condemned, or brought conviction of sin, but the Gospel always points to a Deliverer, a Savior, One who is a helper. Without the Law the Gospel was not possible, and the Law without the Gospel was

incomplete. When Jesus came, He did not do away with the Law; He fulfilled the Law. The New Testament church has to have a foundation, and the foundation is the Law. The Law and the Prophets were fulfilled in Jesus Christ; He is the end of the Law.

What were the effects of the Law? The Law made sin exceedingly sinful. I could illustrate it this way: Suppose you were to get involved in sin, and you felt bad. You would feel worse if you were to come around the Gospel. Sin becomes exceedingly sinful when the preacher names it out.

In Romans, Chapter 7, you can read the testimony of the Apostle Paul before he received New Testament salvation. In this chapter he was not testifying concerning when he had New Testament salvation. He wrote in verse 1, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?" He was talking to people who knew the Law, and he was telling them the effects that the Law had on his life when he was a Pharisee.

Paul wrote in verses 5-13: "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead [or it was inactive]."

"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by

the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

What purpose did the Law serve? The Law was added because of transgressions. In other words, the Law was added to make man conscious of sin and to make sin exceedingly sinful. Again, verse 5 says, "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Paul was saying, in the Law we were in a carnal state without the Gospel. He said the motions of sin (or the passions of sin), which were by the Law, worked in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. Without grace the inclination to sin excites our members. When the Law goes forth and an individual is not saved, it excites the passions, or the motions of sin. The flesh is going to rebel against the Gospel.

### **The Rebellious Passions of the Flesh**

Again, verse 5 reads, "For when we were in the flesh, the motions [the passions, or the desires] of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Those motions of sin worked to produce sin, which has a penalty of death. When the Law commanded obedience, the rebellious passions of the flesh transgressed. The flesh rebels against the commandments of God. That is the reason the Apostle Paul said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into submission" The flesh does not want to serve God; you have to make it serve Him.

Paul was telling of his testimony when he was under the Law, not under grace. He said "the motions of

sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." The Law aroused those desires. Christian friend, when those desires got excited, they did not take you to Christ. They drew you away from the commandment, because the flesh did not want to be told what to do. The Law aroused these desires; they had been dormant. What did the Law say? "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." The flesh did not want to take that. People without God will not take that. The carnal man says, "You aren't going to tell me what not to do." What happens? Those passions, or desires, get excited and no longer lay dormant; they take control. This was what was going on under the Law. Unsaved men and women have not changed today. They are as people were under the old Law. When the Gospel goes forth, it brings the commandments of God. Without grace the flesh will still rebel rather than obey.

One terminology quite prevalent in the religious world today is "inherited sin." Now, think with me for a minute. One who claims that he has inherited sin is an individual without the grace of God in his life to obey. You may say, "I have an inclination to sin." Then you need the grace of God in your life. Without the grace of God, you are going to follow the flesh. Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Without the Spirit of God, Who gives us the grace of God, nothing can empower you to mortify the flesh. There is no power to bring the flesh under. That is the reason the flesh becomes stronger and stronger when one becomes lean in his soul. Next, if the flesh has its way entirely, it will cut off the soul from the things of God; then that one will stop praying and reading the Bible. Next, he will busy himself in things not conducive to Christian living. That is the reason Paul repeatedly admonished people in his letters to be filled with the

Spirit of God, to be led by the Spirit of God, and to walk in the Spirit. That is the only way one can overcome the carnal man, or the fleshly man.

### **Mortify Your Members**

Now let us go to Romans, Chapter 8. There you will find that a change took place. In Chapter 7, Paul described the state of a man under the Old Covenant, without the grace of God. Romans 8:11-14 states: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: [To whom was he speaking? He was talking to people who were alive spiritually; they were not dead. He said if you live after the flesh, you shall die. The same rule applies yet today.] but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The word mortify means "to put to death, to kill, or to become dead."

Paul wrote in Colossians 3:1-13: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them.

"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice,

blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth [or making something smutty of conversation, twisting people's words]. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

Paul said to mortify your members that are on the earth. He certainly was not instructing the saints to kill the members of the congregation. When He said to mortify your members that are on the earth, what members was he talking about? He was speaking of making your fleshly members powerless. In other words, he was stating that you must mortify, kill, or make them become dead to the things of sin.

When Paul said to mortify your members, he was talking about the different areas of the natural man, such as the mind, the eyes, the tongue, the feet, the hearing, the passions, the desires, and so on. Paul was telling the saints to make them become dead to sin. This is where holiness comes in. You must let the Spirit of God keep your members in check, and when the Spirit of God keeps them in check, they are rendered powerless; they no longer control the man. Now, you cannot do that in your own strength. That is the reason the Apostle Paul said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7:18). You do not have the power within your flesh to do it.

### **Dead to Sin, But Alive Unto God Through Christ**

In Romans 8:13 Paul said, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The Apostle Paul made it very plain in Romans 6:11-14: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace [where there is power to keep the Law]."

In essence, Paul said, "Do not yield your members to the service of sin, but yield yourselves unto God. Devote yourselves to God." You should devote your tongue to praise God and to promote the Gospel, the Truth, kindness, and hospitality. It should not be used to run down your brother or your sister; that will work death. You are yielding the wrong way. Your tongue is a little member, but it can get out of control more than any other member that you possess.

Your hands should be used to labor in the work of God for His cause. The Bible says to "lift up holy hands." You should use your hands to praise God. You should not be afraid to raise your hand in the song service or when someone is testifying or preaching the Word. There is not a thing wrong with lifting up your hands. As long as you are not out in sin, you have a right to lift up your hand, whether you are struggling or not. Almost everyone is battling something. I am not talking about advocating sin, but I am saying that people are working to get victory over things

to become more useful in the Kingdom of God.

Your feet should be swift to carry out God's will, not to walk in the paths of iniquity. Your eyes should be used to look on good things and to be a guide or a help to your soul. Do not use them as instruments of the flesh. You need to be careful of what you let your eyes see. They have the power to retain images in the mind. Your ears should be used to hear the voice of God, not to listen to words of deceit or persuasion that would lead one astray.

Paul said to mortify your members. You must bring them in check. Do not let them get out of control. What is a sinner? A sinner is one whose members are out of control; they are not in check. Today finding a sinner is hard. They have some kind of label on them; nevertheless, it still comes down to right or wrong: holiness or sin. The reason many people do not receive help is that they do not think they are as bad as they really are. Friend, when you commit sin, the title of "sinner" goes with it. When you live godly, the word "saint" goes with it. There is no middle ground. The Apostle said to mortify your members, not gratify them.

The more you feed the members of your body, the more it intensifies the fleshly desires. For example, when one starts smoking cigarettes, he has a struggle. The body rejects them, but the more a person keeps at it, the more the desire intensifies. Next, the desire has a strong hold. The Christian does not gratify his members; he mortifies, or brings under his members. The only way one can do that is to be filled with the Spirit of God.

### **Serving God in Newness of Spirit**

Let us read Romans 7:6 again: "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Paul said we are delivered from the Law, or

delivered from the yoke of the Law. Why? It sentenced every sinner to death but provided no grace, no pardon, and no deliverance for an individual. The Law did not have it. Oh, it had sacrifices, but no grace came with those sacrifices, and there was no power to deliver. That is the reason grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.

The Law, which kills, ceases to bind us any longer. Why does the Law not affect you as a Christian? Why are you not under the law? You believe in Christ, and what does the Scripture say about that? Romans 10:4 says, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The Law made sin exceedingly sinful, but when you are no longer in sin, there is nothing to be made sinful.

When Sabbath keepers come around and tell you, "You should keep the Sabbath," you ought to tell them, "I don't want to go back under that sin-more-or-less condition. I have been delivered from the bondage of the Law." Why have you been delivered? Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes, that he should serve in newness of Spirit. God, through the Prophet Ezekiel said in Ezekiel 36:26, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

Paul said in Romans 7:6, "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." What was he saying? When you come to Christ, your worship must be spiritual worship. It is no longer ceremonial rites and literal sacrifices. You go from an imperfect state to one of perfection and excellence.

Second Corinthians 3:5-6 states: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able

ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The letter without the Spirit kills. It makes sin exceedingly sinful. That is the reason people without the Spirit of God fight holiness, and that is the reason you have a hard time getting them to go to church. When ones have backslidden, that is the reason that getting them back into the fold is difficult. To them it is just some rules and laws, and it is a bondage to them. In essence, they are saying, "The flesh is free to do as I please." They have yielded their members to unrighteousness, and their flesh will not take the law. The Law shows them their need of a Deliverer, a Savior.

### **Living a Life of Holiness**

When one gets saved, that which he once hated becomes the number one priority in his life. He loves to hear about the things of God, he loves to hear the Gospel, and he loves to hear the commandments and the ordinances of God. Why? He has his members, or his desires and passions, in check. He still has passions and desires, but they are subject to the Spirit of God. He uses his members as members of righteousness in accordance with God's plan and His law.

Saint, you should be very thankful for the Gospel, because with the letter (or the Law), the commandments, and the ordinances come the grace to obey them. Again, verse 17 of our Scripture text states, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Moses delivered the commandments to the children of Israel, telling the Israelites how they should live and conduct themselves. That is what those commandments were: they consisted of "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." Moses told the Israelites how they should conduct themselves if they wanted to receive God's blessing upon them. I like to sum it up this way: one was told

and the other was shown. The Law was given by Moses—it was told; but grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. What does that tell you? It was in His life. Moses told the Israelites how they should live. But Jesus did not come telling; He came showing. This is how you should live. Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.

One was told, and the other was shown; that is what I see as the difference between the covenants. Child of God, when you went to the house of God and got saved, you found others with grace and Truth in their lives. You were not just told how to live; that is the way sectism operates. Grace and Truth show you how you should live. As the Gospel goes forth, others are living the very message that is being preached.

Why is the Law not for us today? The Law was given for sinners, or the ungodly. Why should it affect a child of God when he is living godly and without sin? Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. He showed us how to live a life of holiness, believing in Him all the days of our lives. The Gospel goes forth to give you life everlasting.

John 10:10 reads, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." If you want to know how to live, what should you do? You need to look to the life of Jesus Christ. He showed us, for grace and Truth came by Him. I am so thankful that we have been shown grace and Truth.

In closing, I ask you, Are you yielding your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin or as instruments of righteousness unto God? Remember, the Apostle Paul said in Romans 8:13, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

*(Cassette C-4562M)*

*Matthew 11:15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

*16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,*

*17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.*

*18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.*

*19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.*



### Brother Allen Polston

#### Having Ears to Hear

Jesus said in verse 15 of our Scripture lesson, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Not everyone was a recipient of what Jesus had to say. The reason was due to their spiritual condition. Friend, your spiritual condition can be a determining factor in what God grants to you in the way of understanding and exaltation into His Word and into the things of God. In this verse Jesus was speaking, at least in part, to a particular type of person, one who has ears to hear. He made it clear that this classification was distinguished, not by whether one could receive audible sounds into his physical ears, but by the desires of the heart.

Jesus let us know that "he that hath ears to hear" went beyond

merely having ears on the sides of the head that pick up tones and sounds in the air. He was talking about one who has a desire in his heart to hear what God has to say. God administers to one who has a desire to hear that others never realize or seem to grasp. That ought to be a warning to guard your desires and to make sure that the motives of your heart (in other words, the reason you are doing what you are doing) are right. You need to make sure that your motives come from a desire to serve God and to be a child of God.

Of all the many things that the devil uses to try to hinder a child of God from spiritual growth, none of those things can be successful if he or she will maintain a strong desire to live for God. If you do not have a desire and a willingness to be a

child of God, then God is limited in what He can do with you. On the other hand, if your heart's desire is to hear from God, it causes a fire to burn down in your bosom, and God can accomplish much. Then you will detect things that the world does not know anything about. The devil, in his various forms of opposition, will try to hinder you from receiving and hearing from God. If you maintain a strong desire to hear from the Lord, He will speak to you and show you things that others may not be able to receive.

Again, verse 15 says, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Jesus did not say, "Let everyone hear," but He singled out one who has ears to hear, or one who has a vehement desire to hear from God and live for God.

If you have a desire, God wants you to hear. He wants you to get hold of something. The devil tries to use many things to keep people from hearing the Gospel, because it all begins with hearing. Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Salvation and spiritual growth start by hearing the Gospel and realizing a need. Often the Spirit of God has already been working on individuals, sanctifying them to an extent, but the Holy Spirit begins to work in a greater way when they hear the Gospel. That is the reason the devil works in many ways to try to keep people from hearing. Nevertheless, God says, "He that hath ears [or a desire] to hear, let him hear."

### **Guard Your Desire to Serve God**

In the Scriptures whenever God has said "Let," there has always been power to accompany that command. God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 2:5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." It can be just that way if you are willing to give yourself to God wholeheartedly. God would not say "Let" and not supply the power for it to come to pass. If you have a strong desire to receive what God has to say, He will make a way for you to hear His Word.

The problem in today's world is that many people have begun to lose their desire to hear the Gospel. Many who once had ears to hear God have let other things steal the affection of their hearts. Friend, the affection of your heart belongs to God. Friends and family may try to interfere with your Christian experience, doubts and fears may come from time to time, and worldly influences will try to work; but if you have a desire to hear from God, He will work it out so that things will not hinder you.

God has given the authority to those who will nourish the desire to hear the Gospel. The devil has all

kinds of inventions that take up people's time, attention, and affection, to cause them to lose their desire for the things of God. Therefore, when men of God see what the enemy is doing and how he is working, they must sound out an alarm against those things. Child of God, you need to keep your desire to serve God strong and fervent. As a pastor, it greatly concerns me when I see a lack of desire and a lack of interest in the things of God. Friend, if you lose your desire to serve God, to do His work, and to do His will, then you will lose all that He has for you. You will begin to distance yourself from the things of God.

Some people do not hear what God has to say because they have no desire to hear. God does not intend to take them deep into the doctrines and truths of His Word. He has a different message for them: "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). They need to be born again to get their desires in the right place, and then they can begin to grow with God. He does not put the cart ahead of the horse, so to speak, by trying to teach the unsaved deep truths and doctrines. First, He wants them to be brought into an experience of salvation.

To those who are saved, there is a word of caution: do not let the things of this world take your desire. Each of us has to watch, whether he is a minister or a member of the congregation. No one is exempt from allowing something to steal the affection of his heart to the degree that he no longer possesses a desire to read God's Word, to be in the house of worship, to pray, to visit, and to do the things that God has called upon the saints to do. We each must guard against this. The Church of God preaches against things that will cause you to lose your godly desire. If you flirt around with the devil, you will begin to weaken and lose your desire. Soon the time that you used to spend praying, reading and studying the Bible, and meditating will become less and less.

### **Giving Wholehearted Service to God**

Christian friend, you have to watch out for the enemy of your soul. Jesus, speaking in Mark 12:30, said, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." Did He say to love God with one-third of your heart, one-third of your soul, one-third of your mind, or one-third of your strength? Absolutely not!

God will not tolerate your having any other gods before Him. He will not put up with your bowing down to something else instead of Him. Certainly there are other things in life that you have to do, such as working, eating, raising a family, and so on. However, God will not permit you to put those things before Him. He must be first. If you do not put Him first, something else will take your affection, and you will lose your desire. This is the reason so many places have canceled their Sunday night and Wednesday night services. Something else seemed better, so they decided to discontinue those services. Seemingly, their attitude is, "After all, one service a week is enough."

Hebrews 10:25 says, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." You need to make use of every time you can to get together with the saints and worship God. Someone may say, "Well, I am not going to backslide if I miss one service." Chances are you probably will not backslide if you miss one service, but you may begin to lose your desire, and that will make the next service a little easier to miss. Gathering together with the people of God is encouraging and strengthening. It brings inspiration, instruction, and from time to time, correction. It helps you to press on when you see the saints come in and hear



them sing and testify.

Friend, you are not just hurting yourself when you miss the church services. Someone may be looking to you for encouragement. What about causing your brother to worry when you do not show up and he does not know where you are? You have to realize that serving God is more involved than just self. You should have given up self a long time ago when God saved you. You cannot be in this thing for selfish reasons. You need to consider how your actions will affect others.

I understand that sometimes people get sick, and sometimes it is good to take the family on vacation. However, you should not carelessly miss the church services. Staying home because you have a little sniffle or because you have only a quarter of a tank of gas and you want to make sure that you get to work the next day causes others to be affected. Even if you do not hold a position in the church, others are looking for your encouraging face, your smile, or wanting to hear your testimony. They are looking to see others who are excited about living for God. These things do affect people.

### **Controlling Your Desires**

The Church of God preaches the Bible standard. God has helped the ministry to see that certain things can win your affection and cause you to lose your desire for God. There are ways that you can dress that will cause you to become fonder of the world's fashions and less interested in being modest, as God has called us to be. When the man of God sees that, what does he do? He sounds the trumpet long and loud to let you know what God has to say. He warns you that you ought to get away from those things because they are causing your affection for God to diminish. God's Word says to "cry aloud and spare not." Men of God must sound out against the things that God has shown them are causing people to

lose their desire and their closeness with Him.

Your desires determine much. As we look into our Scripture lesson, remembering that you are in control of your desires is necessary. Saint, as you take inventory in your mind of what your days consist of, you need to stop and think: "Is my life consistent with godly living? Are my actions nourishing my desire to be a Christian or causing me to be less interested in what the pastor has to say? Are the things that I am doing throughout the week, on the job site, and in the home causing me to be more inspired to win souls and to be a sold-out, sanctified child of God or are things causing me to feel that this way of living is just too hard?"

You need to take inventory of your life, because good, honest, Christian people can sometimes lay hold of things that, at first, seem harmless. With a biblical insight and a little heavenly vision applied to your earthly eyes, you can begin to see that some things are not quite as safe spiritually as you thought they were. This is the reason you need to take inventory and see if the way you are living is causing you to be more encouraged and devoted to God or causing you to be less interested.

Child of God, if something is stealing your attention, your time, and your mind from the things of God, you should not go on any further with it. Little things can cause people to walk away from God. Often people become bitter, hateful, proud, and lost. Little things can cause people who once stood for Truth and preached the Gospel to abandon the standard and all the truths that God so mightily impressed upon their hearts in days gone by.

If you are a minister, what should you do about the danger of people losing their desire to serve God? You should sound the trumpet. Paul wrote to young Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:2, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season;

reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." Friend, you should not get upset when your pastor preaches the Word to you. He is doing it because he is concerned about your soul. Preaching the Word is not easy, especially when some are not in agreement and have not measured to the message. You should not get upset when a man of God preaches the Word and declares God's truths and doctrines faithfully to your soul. It ought to make you happy that someone will preach God's Word despite the persecution. He is concerned about your soul.

The world is exalting many things and causing them to appear to be something glamorous. However, if you go that way and resist God, you will lose your soul in hell. The glory of this old world and all it has to offer is temporal. It will only last for a season, and then it is going to be gone. You need to work for the exaltation of God in your heart and life, and strive for the glory of God, for that which is eternal. It does not come and go, but it stays as long as you remain faithful to Him. Saint, you need to guard your desire. Do not let little things steal your attention and your affection from the precious Word of God and from living a godly life.

### **Keep Pressing Your Way Toward Heaven**

A man of God will not cut corners, but he will tell you plainly what "thus saith the Lord" because he does not want you to lose your desire for the things of God. He wants you to maintain your willingness and your readiness. Paul, speaking to the Corinthians about when they were converted, said, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Corinthians 7:10). He said in verse 11, "Yea, what zeal." In other words, he was saying, "What desire it produced in you to do the things of God."

Child of God, you must not let anything steal away your desire to serve God. Some things have come into my life, and before long, I began to see that they were taking too much time. Things can come in and seemingly do not have any danger attached to them, but before you realize it, they can get hold of you. They can steal time that belongs to God. Therefore, you have to watch and be careful.

Jesus spoke of these things at the end of His teaching in Matthew, Chapter 11. Many people of Jesus' day were just as people are today. They did not have any desire to do any differently than what they had been doing. They did not have a desire to be saved and to live for God. Thank God, some people really have a desire to be Christians. Some may still be bound in sin, but they have a desire within to be free from the bondage of sin. May God help us to find and reach out to these souls.

Awhile back I was in the home of a dear lady who has been a member of a denominational church for many years. I began talking about how good God has been to me and how He has blessed me. She said, "You know, Allen, I don't even know whether I am a born-again Christian." She had been involved in all kinds of religious activities, yet she did not know whether she had been born-again. I said, "Well, God wants you to know that you are a born-again Christian." I told her that God said in 2 Peter 3:9 that it is not His will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. There are still people who are interested in serving God.

God has something for those who really have a desire to live for Him. God looks out for His own, and He gives them what they need. He gives good and perfect gifts to those who walk uprightly so they will continue to be saints of God and to grow and become more like Jesus. God sends us things to equip us so that we can continue with victory, building up the kingdom

and ever pressing our way toward our eternal home in Heaven.

### **Yielding Yourself to God**

In our Scripture text, Jesus encouraged and warned by letting us see that He knows all about His creation and the condition of mankind. In verse 16 He said, "But whereunto shall I liken this generation?" Do you think Jesus asked that question because He did not know what to liken this generation to? He knew what to liken it to, but He asked the question so that people might think about this matter. He knows how the devil tries to discourage you. If the devil has been working on your mind and you have begun to think in a discouraging way, it might be that what you have been thinking is not accurate as God sees it. Many people have lots of opinions, but that does not change how it really is. He knows all about every situation, and He knows how it really is. He has the record. That is something to be very encouraged about.

Let us look again at our Scripture text: Jesus asked, "But whereunto shall I liken this generation [first He gets people to think, and then He begins to lay it out in the following verses of Scripture]? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children."

Some are determined and purposed to live for God. Their friends and families may leave the church and others may falter along the way, but thank God for a few backboned people who have determined that no matter what others do, they are going to live for God and make

Heaven their home. They have settled it. They read and study God's Word and help with the work of God. Even if their place is lowly, they want to help. They want to labor and do what God has called them to do. They want to see other souls saved and make Heaven their home.

Young person, you need to settle it. I wish I could go back to when God first began to deal with me, and I wish that I would have settled it right then. However, it was not until ten years later that I gave my heart to God.

God tells us in His Word that we must become as little children to be saved. In Matthew 18:3 Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." A change must take place. In other words, you have to forget everything you thought you knew and yield yourself to God. This childlike quality of being humble, meek, and reliant upon your Heavenly Father is not something that you abandon after you get saved, but you must continue in that. God encourages each of us to grow spiritually, to learn more truth, and to learn how to labor in a better way for God. Concerning your attitude, He wants you to remain as a child.

### **The Process of Buying and Selling**

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:20, "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." In malice and in your attitude, you need to be as children. How pleasant it is when children play together. They may get a little upset with one another from time to time, but it will not be long before they are playing together, enjoying one another, and laughing. God wants each of us to be as children, in the sense that we do not let little things cause us to get angry or upset or to feel sad and blue. Also, we

must be obedient children. Peter said that we need to be "obedient unto our Heavenly Father's will."

We read in 1 John 2:1, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Child of God, God has called you to be a child in many respects, to manifest the characteristics of little children in your spiritual living, in your reliance upon your Heavenly Father, and in your determination to stay in His will and do His plan; not in your understanding and not in your work ability in the Kingdom of God. In these ways He has called upon you to be as a child. You are to take the position as a child under the leadership and direction of your Heavenly Father, through the pastor and the other saints of God.

God is aware of those who have become as children, spiritually speaking. They have laid down all the other things they once carried with them, and they rely upon God and trust in Him. As God gives a heavenly report of these modern times, He still sees that there are those who are as children. They are just as they ought to be. In our Scripture lesson Jesus said, "But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows." What is the place that we hold as God's people? What is our position in this world? We are in a position of ever buying and selling. We are selling more of self and more of our own ideas. Why are we selling those things? So that we can buy what God says about matters. We are ever in the marketplace going through the process of selling that which would be contrary to God, holy living, and righteous principles so that we can buy up more of what God has for us.

### **Buying From God's Great Storehouse**

Saint, God has more for you. If you are willing to sell, God has

things for you to buy. We read in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding." No one can truthfully say, "I have bought all the Truth there is to buy." You can buy more trust, more understanding, and more wisdom. You need to sell self—sell your ways and your ideas—and buy everything that you can possibly buy of what is of God. As the man of God stands before you and preaches God's Word, buy the Truth and sell it not.

God wants us to sell some things. He told the rich, young ruler in Luke 18:22, "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." God requires that we sell self to get hold of that heavenly treasure. To buy from God's great storehouse, you have to sell self. You cannot use a credit card to purchase Truth, understanding, and the wisdom of God. You must do it by selling yourself, by giving yourself to God, and by selling more of your time.

Saint, how much time do you give to God weekly? When you figure up how much time you are giving to God, you will see that you need to sell more of your time. You can buy more truth and more understanding by selling more of your time. It could be that you have something sitting in your home that you need to sell. You could then take that money and give it to God. Not long after I was saved, the first thing I did was to go into the living room where I had a particular thing sitting. I had centered everything in that room around it. I took it outside, loaded it in my truck, and took it to a pawn shop and came back with a Bible and a guitar. Friend, you may need to do some selling so that you can buy more of what God has for you. You should not expect God to come down and lay it in your lap. You have a responsibility. If you sell some things that you have, God will bless you with more than anything that you could have

had. Saint, we are ever in the marketplace, buying the Truth and not selling it, but selling self.

Friend, what do you have that you could sell so that you could buy some more of God? Some clothes may be hanging in your wardrobe that do not bring glory to God. You should sell them and buy modest apparel, something more representative of holiness. Maybe you could sell things that are just lying around collecting dust, and you could use the money to witness and be a light for God. We are ever in the marketplace, buying and selling in this Christian life.

As Jesus looked on, He said, "It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows." Thank God for those who are still calling to their fellows. They are calling out to those who are lost, calling out to those who are confused in false religion, calling out to those who have done them wrong, saying, "Come and hear the Gospel. Come and get some help for your soul."

Christian friend, you should not call and say, "What do you think about what the pastor had to say?" or "Did you see that in the service?" No, you need to forget that kind of calling. You need to call individuals to try to get them to the church services, where they can learn how to be a real child of God. How many people have you called and invited to church recently? One thing that I have learned as a pastor is that you need to work at it consistently. If you relax your efforts and do not do much calling or visiting, getting back into it will be hard. You have to keep working at it.

Jesus saw some calling out, and He wanted to let us know about them so that we might be encouraged. God wants each of us to be in that place where He would have us to be and to have the right attitude. We need to be engaged in the proper kind of business, buying and selling. We should not be solely concerned about our own lives; we should be concerned about others

and constantly calling and working so that we might see people get into the Kingdom of God.

### Are You Making Excuses?

Now, that is the good side of it. Unfortunately, some are not where God would have them to be. Friend, are you where you need to be with God? Has something distanced you from where you know you ought to be or is there something in your life in defiance to God's will? Are you ready to meet God? You may try to dismiss this message from your mind, but if you are not where you ought to be, the best thing to do is sell out to God. You need to yield your heart entirely to the Lord. Living unprepared to meet God is too risky. If you are not ready to meet God, it is not worth going on in sin. What sinful pleasure is worth spending eternity in hell? What enjoyment, pride, fashion, or thrill is

worth being lost forever? While Jesus gave a picture of some who were in good standing with God, He also spoke of those who were in need. When those individuals in our Scripture text were confronted with conviction and their own needs, they began to make excuses. Everything they needed to be happy (represented here by the mention of dancing) had been given to them, yet they were not dancing. Everything they needed to be a child of God and to carry a burden for the work of God had been presented to them by the way of mourning, yet they were not lamenting. When God has so plainly, so mercifully, and so faithfully laid out before individuals the way and has said, "Walk in it," why do people not do it? They want to make excuses.

In verse 18 of our Scripture text, Jesus said that John the Baptist came. He was a good man, and he came to prepare the way. Yet peo-

ple made excuse, saying, "He hath a devil." Next, Jesus came on the scene, but again, the people began to make excuses and say, "He is a winebibber, a gluttonous man. I am not going to follow Him."

Today God is again reaching out to people and sending forth the things they need so that they can get where God would have them to be, yet people are saying, "I am not going to listen to that preacher. I am not going to go to that church." Again, people are making excuses.

Dear one, why make excuses when you could be just what God wants you to be? This very day, if you have a need in your soul, you need to take care of it before it is too late. Will you do it with all your heart and not back away? You need to respond to God today. Living in sin, unprepared to meet God, is too risky.

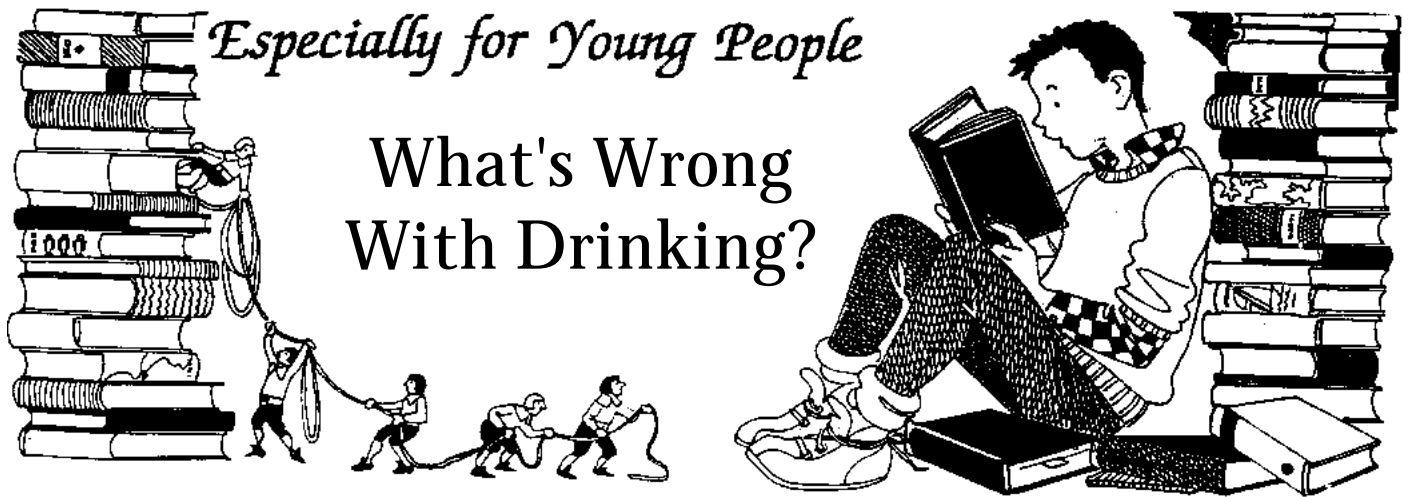
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# Radio Log



| LOCATION                       | STATION      | DAY      | TIME                |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|---------------------|
| Wellston, Ohio                 | WAJB-FM 92.5 | Thursday | 8:05 a.m.-8:35 a.m. |
| North Little Rock,<br>Arkansas | KMTL-AM 760  | Saturday | 2:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. |
| Newark, Ohio                   | WCLT-AM 1430 | Sunday   | 7:15 a.m.-8:00 a.m. |
| Anderson, Indiana              | WQME-FM 98.7 | Sunday   | 8:00 a.m.-8:30 a.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!*



From the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean, highways and byways are lined with road houses and taverns. They are the rendezvous for millions of young people. Nearly every drug and grocery store sells liquor and beer, and it is hard to find a restaurant where beer is not served. The young people have been made booze-conscious. Newspapers advertise it, magazines display it, as well as billboards along the highways, and the radio brings the advertisements into the home.

In the old saloon days women were ashamed to go into a bar and would occasionally go through the back door, but today girls and women boldly stand alongside the bar with men, drinking. Legalized booze is debauching the youth of our land. While Belshazzar drank before the thousands, judgment hung over the nation. Through Noah's drunkenness the curse came upon the race of Ham. Lot's drunkenness made him the father of his daughters' children.

A large percentage of all the automobile accidents can be traced to booze. It fills the hospitals and crowds the psychiatric wards. It enlarges penitentiaries, breaks up thousands of homes, and robs many innocent children of food and clothing. It is the cause of many murders and diseases. Truly, "wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby

is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1).

The reason is that there is not much preaching against the movies, the dance, and the bars is that some church officials are financially interested in this soul traffic.

There is only one remedy for sin and drunkenness, and that is not reformation, eradication, or suppression, but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His shed blood.

Casey J - was brought up in a good home, and as a child went to Sunday school and church. However, he did not know the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, and when he was just a boy, he had his first taste of liquor. Perhaps they said to him, "Be a sport." That was the beginning of Casey's downfall. He began to drink and said to himself, "I can take it or leave it alone," but he found out before very long that booze had such a hold upon him that he could not leave it alone, and he became a hopeless drunkard.

Time after time, Casey was locked up in the local jail. The jailer got disgusted with him at last and said to the judge, "What's the use of releasing him? Why not lock him in his cell and throw the key in the river?" For, after being released, it would not be twenty-four hours before Casey would be earned back into his cell, drunk.

Casey made many resolutions. One time, after signing a pledge that he would never touch another

drop of liquor, the first saloon that he came to he entered. He could not resist the smell of liquor that came through the door, and that very same night he was back of the bars, dead drunk. He tried every way to break himself of this habit, but went from bad to worse.

One day when he was released from jail, he wandered into a gospel meeting. Friendless and in rags, he listened attentively to the sweet story of Jesus, Who could set the prisoner free. That night Casey surrendered to the Lord Jesus. The booze habit was taken away.

Today Casey is a Christian worker, warned, and the father of two fine children. A few weeks after his conversion, in a testimony meeting, Casey stood to his feet and said, "I was a drunkard, but tonight I'm sober," and then he sat down. The preacher pointed his finger at him and said, "That's the greatest testimony I have ever heard," for in a few words he had told what God had done for him.

Selected

Sin deceives,  
then defiles, and  
then deadens.

*Matthew 11:8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.*

*9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.*

*10 For this is he, of whom it is writ-*

*ten, Behold, I send my messenger before he. thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.*

*11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than*

*he.*

*12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*

*13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.*

# The Peculiar Traits for Entrance Into the Kingdom of Heaven

Part 2 of 2



**Brother Esau Brooks**

## **The Kingdom Experience**

As I read this Scripture text, it made me wonder how those people must have felt when Jesus first made this announcement. Notice that first He questioned them, "But what went ye out for to see?" That question could well be put before us today. Though things were going on all around those people, many were totally unaware of what was taking place. It is not much different today. With all the advancements that we have made in technology and the material knowledge, men are not any more aware of what is going on around them in the spiritual world than they were in Jesus' day.

When Jesus said, "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," that must have struck them as a thunderbolt out of a clear

sky. Right then, they were awaiting and looking forward to the time when Jesus would set up His Kingdom. (Today many people are looking for Jesus to come and establish His Kingdom in the Middle East, so they are no further ahead than those people were.) In the midst of all their expectations, Jesus was declaring that the kingdom was presently suffering violence. Many people are of the persuasion that the kingdom is yet to come; but it has already come. While others dream of an age to come, He is reigning in our hearts today. Praise the Lord!

Note carefully that Jesus was referring to the kingdom as already being in existence. He was not speaking in future terms, but rather in present terms when He said that "the kingdom suffereth violence." I would like to reemphasize that the kingdom is already here, and it is

being assaulted by violent assaults. My friend, if you are counting on being in the kingdom, this is what you are going to have to face.

Jesus was talking as if the kingdom was already in existence. Notice that He did not say it will suffer, but it suffereth. If it were still in the future, then how could it have been suffering then? If that was true way back yonder, how much more so it is true today. Someone may say, "Well, don't you believe that Christ is coming back to set up His Kingdom?" He has already done that; therefore, the kingdom experience is a present-day reality. You do not have to wait for a thousand-year reign to come. You can enjoy that reign today.

I remember a few years back there was much talk along that line. Some people were talking about how wonderful it would be when

Jesus comes to set up His Kingdom, how He would bind Satan with a chain, and then how we would reign over Satan on this earth. I thank God that I have something better than that! I do not have to wait until the old fellow is chained up to reign over him. I thank God that I am reigning while he is loose, and you can too!

### **The Rule of Heaven in Your Life**

Sin was not meant to be your master; it was not meant to dominate your life. That is the reason Christ came. He is your spiritual emancipator, and He alone can deliver you from sin. You could join every church in the world and shake every preacher's hand, but that would not touch your trouble. However, if you humble your heart and come to terms with the Lord, it can happen. Sad to say, today many people are in the dark about these things. With all their churchgoing and with all their religious professions, they are yet in the dark regarding this kingdom reign.

Friend, what you should be concerned about is whether you are in this kingdom. Is this kingdom in you? You cannot be in this kingdom if you are still living in sin. This concerns your eternal, spiritual welfare. If you do not get your mind cleared up regarding the kingdom, you are in trouble. You may ask, "What do you mean when you speak of the kingdom?" The Bible used different phrases to describe the wonderful experience of salvation. In one place Jesus referred to it as a "new birth" and in another, a "conversion" Here He was referring to it as a "kingdom reign." Salvation is the establishing of God's Kingdom on this earth.

This kingdom is not in the form that many people are looking for. In Luke 17:20-21 we read: "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not

with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, to there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." The experience of salvation is what establishes the kingdom in your heart.

Many people say that the kingdom it is in the future, but Jesus was dealing with it as something already in existence. Why? Because the kingdom experience is no more than the rule of Heaven in your life. To have a kingdom, you have to have a king and subjects. If this were a literal composition that Jesus was talking about, it could not be within you. In those days as well as today, a kingdom denoted rulership. When speaking about the kingdom, we are talking about Heaven ruling in your life.

If Heaven had more to do with people than what it does, things would be in better shape than what they are today. That is where all the trouble lies. Men and women are destitute of God's rule in their lives. They think that God's Kingdom is a worldly kingdom. However, Jesus told Pilate, in essence, "If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would have fought to keep Me from being delivered to you; but it is not of this world." Friend, I beg you to stop dreaming of a time when Jesus is going to come, chain Satan, establish His Kingdom in Jerusalem, and reign over the earth for a thousand years. If He is not reigning over your life today, and you do not do something about that, you will never experience the kingdom. Those who are in the kingdom have the kingdom in them, and God has the rule over their lives.

It is with that thought in mind, no doubt, that Jesus said that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence." If you are in the kingdom and the kingdom is in you, then you need to be ready for what is to follow. Serving God is not a wishy-washy affair. It is not the spineless spiritual condition being demonstrated many times before us. To serve God, you must come to

grips with Satan. As a Christian, you are to look forward to the bliss of Heaven and also to the battle to stay in the kingdom. That is the reason the kingdom is suffering today.

Now, getting saved will cost you nothing, but staying saved will cost you. That is the reason I have exhorted young people not to be concerned about getting married. I say, "Your chief concern should be staying married after you get married." There is nothing to getting married. You can call any preacher, and he will read the marriage vows to you and say you are married. However, as the newness wears off, you come to understand that there is more to marriage than what you thought. Instead of thinking it is a condition that you can just jump out of because it does not suit your way, you must battle to stay married.

So it is with getting saved. It is one thing to get saved, but it is another thing to stay saved. If everyone who once had gotten gloriously saved had kept that experience, Heaven only knows what this world would have been like today. In our world many people profess but do not possess. That is where the battleground is. The kingdom suffers violence. Violent attacks are being aimed at the kingdom.

The church has entered this picture as well. What the church is, the kingdom is, and what the kingdom is, the church is. Someone may ask, "Why the two terms?" Each term is designating a specific part: the church is the fellowship; the kingdom is the rule. There is no fellowship without the rule. What is making it difficult for many Christians to stay together is that men have dethroned God from their lives. If God were truly reigning in people's lives, they would not be doing the many things that they are doing.

Sinner friend, there is more to serving God than just going to church occasionally. There is an experience and a reality in serving God. It is not a mere shadow or a mere belief, but it is a reality. That is

the reason Jesus told the people in Luke, Chapter 17, "You cannot say, Lo here or to there. The kingdom is within you." Once it is working within you, it is going to work out in your life.

### **How the Natural Man Reacts to the Kingdom**

Let us look at this peculiar reaction that Jesus was introducing for consideration when He said "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence." This is how the natural man reacts to the kingdom experience. We read in Luke 19:12-14: "He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us."

This is the popular notion occupying the minds of many churchgoers today: "This man will not reign over me. No one is going to tell me how to walk, how to talk, and how to dress." Friend, if you get in the kingdom and the kingdom gets in you, you must listen to the message telling you how to walk, how to talk, and how to dress. Every individual, when presented with the message of the experience of the kingdom, reacts with this kind of disposition. Friend, if you are unsaved, it is due to your decision when the Holy Spirit made His demand on you, telling you what you must give up. You simply decided, "I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to change my way of life. I am not going to let religion cramp my style."

Today many people take off in their own direction and talk about the things of God, but in reality they know very little about the things of God. Men today are still fighting against the establishing of God's rule in their lives. That is the reason James stated in James 4:4, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye

not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." If any man walks hand in hand with the world, he is an enemy of God. I know this message is not preached much today, but just because you are not hearing it does not mean that God has changed His mind. The message still stands. To be a friend of this world is to be an enemy of God.

Acts 17:5-6 reads: "But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." What a testimony!

Today it is a little different. The world is turning people who claim to be the church upside down, but it does not have to be that way. If you read the second part of our Scripture text, it shows there is a hope: "the violent take it by force." In the days of the Apostle Paul and the other Apostles, they preached this Gospel everywhere they went, and they had either a revival or a riot. The people were never the same afterward; everyone was affected.

### **The Secret of Reigning**

Although what we are seeing today is a little different, as far as the Bible is concerned, it is still the same. The kingdom is still suffering violence. That is the reason Paul wrote to Timothy, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him . . ." (2 Timothy 2:12). The secret of reigning is standing the suffering. You see, back in those days, the vision those people had of the church was of a fighting army for God; and she is still! You may not see much of it where you live, but the church is

still fighting against wrongdoing.

No compromise has been brought between God and the devil. There is no peaceful coexistence between the two. If you are for Jesus, then you are against the devil. In so many words, Jesus said, "If you are not gathering with Me, you are scattering. If you are not with Me, you are against Me." Sinner friend, that is just the way it is. Do not settle for church joining, handshaking, make-believe religions. It is no wonder that Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:7).

All the fight seems to have gone out of the church until all we have left now are complaints about what folks are doing and what they are saying. I remember the time when the enemy would fight (because they have ever fought against the church), but instead of the church running into a corner and complaining, she would come out fighting. We can read of this in the Book of Acts when the disciples were arrested and put in prison. While the jailers were discussing what to do with them and what time to have them executed, to their surprise, the Apostles were down in the square preaching the same Gospel that those people were fighting. Today where has that spirit gone? When it comes to religious circles, where has that spirit gone? People need to wake up to the realization that a battle is going on. When people get saved, they are enlisting in the service of the Lord. That was what Jesus meant when He said "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence." The things that people are trying to heap against the church and God's people would not be going on so easily if God were more in control. You would be seeing a little more reaction than what you are seeing.

According to Jesus, to enter the kingdom one must become violent, spiritually speaking, of course, and take it by force. This is what Jesus was saying regarding the kingdom.



In other words, the kingdom is meant to be taken; do not just wait for it to be given to you. The devil is in control of this world; he is the god of this world, and he is reigning over many lives. Anyone who will dare to be delivered from that condition must come to grips with it. Many must fight it out on their knees. Others must stand up and fight with a determination not to give in.

Saint, you cannot expect to have everything given to you. All you have to do is read Chapter 2 of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, and you will soon have a vision of what serving God is all about. Souls need to be rescued and delivered; but their deliverance depends on how well we, as saints, fight to get them loose from the control and the grips of Satan. If we are going to stay in the kingdom, we must be violent; we have to take it by force. I am sure when we speak of force that most people only think of natural force. However, that was not what Jesus was talking about. He was speaking of the force of determination. The kingdom is suffering violence, but the violent take it by the force of determination. They are going to win. They are going to have the victory, no matter what the consequences or the cost might be. Then, there is the force of love. The church's love for God will match any opposition Satan heaps upon them. Their determination and love and devotion will take them beyond all the opposition that Satan can cause. When we become violent with these qualities, it is then, and only then, that we hold our position in the Kingdom of God.

### **How to Survive Spiritually**

Today many people who think they are in the kingdom have not even seen it. Many who talk about the kingdom merely talk about what they have heard about the kingdom. It is time for each individual to experience in himself or herself the reality of this reign that will

put one beyond the control of sin, Satan, and the world.

The reason we are confronted with such opposition today is that men and women are determinedly setting their minds that Christ will not reign over them. That is what salvation is—the reign of Christ in one's life and over one's life. It is more than merely professing to be a Christian. It is an absolute, positive experience that one gains through living for God.

Friend, I ask you, has the kingdom come to you? If it has come to you, have you entered the kingdom? Again, to enter the kingdom is more than merely saying so or professing so. It is experiencing in your heart the work that will bring the change. There is a great need in the lives of men and women for something supernatural, not in the sense in which the world talks about it, but in the divine sense of getting God to move.

I am troubled about what I see taking place on our earth today. Most people seem to be at ease, contented, and relaxed. It is as if they are saying, "Things have never been better than they are now." Meanwhile, the devil is running off with our young people and everyone else with whom he gets a chance to do so. It is time for some reaction of the type that Jesus was talking about.

When Christ came to establish His Kingdom, His teachings, and His doctrines, the religion He brought was the most hated of all the religions of that day. Yet, the followers of Jesus did not crawl into a corner and complain about their lot; they took their lot and improved upon it. Many supposed Christians are going through life complaining about their lot, but thank God, there are those who are possessing their lot and going on and improving their lot. That is what a Christian must do, and that is what the Christian will do. That is what God is demanding and expecting of us all. These are serious and dangerous times, and if our children and our

grandchildren are to survive spiritually, it depends on how much we put into this thing. Sinner, if you are going to get deliverance from sin, from the world, and from the corruption of the world, it depends on how much you are willing to put into this matter. Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Let everything fall in place as you go along.

Second Corinthians 6:2 tells us, "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." In Hebrews 3:7-8 we read: ". . . the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." Sadly, back then when some heard, they were provoked rather than profited from their hearing. Friend, the choice is yours. Are you going to take the kingdom by force from the devil and the world or are you going to give in to the devil and the world and be governed and controlled by them? Which will it be?

You can read in Mark 8:36-37 that Jesus asked the questions many years ago: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Your soul is the most valuable part of you. It is worth more than everything in this world. The value God puts on a soul can be found in John 3:16, which says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jesus stands ready to help you and deliver you; only He can deliver you. He is your only hope. You may accept or reject Him; but if you reject Him, you will pay the penalty for doing so. If you accept Him, you will enjoy the blessings and the privileges that God is extending to you. God bless you.

*(Cassette C-4147E)*

Ephesians 5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with

the Spirit.

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Psalm 71:1 In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

2 Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

3 Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.

4 Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

5 For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth.

# The Place of Greatest Conflict



## Brother Bernard Wilson

### Keeping Your Mind Stayed on Christ

We read in Isaiah 26:3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,

whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." When the devil can get your attention, he has gained a position to do great harm to your soul. God created you as an

intellectual being, not as a dumb animal. However, the worst thing that you can do is use your intelligence in the wrong way. The devil is sowing seeds to try to stop the

work of God. If all those who say they are the people of God would bring themselves into submission to the Spirit of God, we would see more spiritual progress in the congregations of the Church of God.

The greatest place of conflict is not trouble in a congregation or the apostate who tries to draw away people or the government that has become corrupt. Our greatest conflict lies in bringing our thinking in line with what God wants us to think. Child of God, the battle is not your husband, your wife, your children, your pastor, or a brother or sister in Christ. The real conflict, the place where the battle is being fought, is in the mind. Every time trouble starts, the devil will begin to work on your mind to try to confuse or distract you. Some things may go wrong on the job, and you may go to church with those problems on your mind. You need to bring yourself to a place of controlling that. The mind is the very soul of man. Your soul is not in your fingertips, but it is in your mind. God created intelligence within you, but if you do not use it as God intends, you will be spiritually dead and lost in eternity. You can sever a hand and not injure the mind; the body will go on. However, the center of your existence is in your thinking power, and that is where the devil is trying to confuse and deceive and bring you into bondage.

The church is free, and the devil does not like that. He will work on the young, the middle-aged, and the elderly to try to stop them from moving forward for God. The enemy of souls tries to get people's minds going this way and that way until their spirituality is gone and they have no real strength left, yet they continue with a profession. Saint, you need to awaken to what the devil is trying to do, lest he brings your spiritual progress to a halt.

Every one of us is subject to attacks by the enemy of souls. Satan is after your soul, and he will get it if you do not use your mind. You may

ask, "How do you use your mind?" You use your mind by reading and studying the Bible, by hearing the Word of God, and by applying it to your life. The physical heart is what pumps the blood, but the center of your intelligence is where your thinking power is. It is a serious thing to play around with intellectual power. Society today tells you that they have to think for you. That is a dangerous condition. When an awful occurrence happens, authorities set up counseling sessions and bring in people who will say, "This is the way you ought to look at this situation, and this is the way you ought to think." Saint, that ought not to be your counsel! We do not have psychiatrists and psychologists to tell us what to do in the Church of God. We have the mind of Christ to tell us what to do, to bring comfort, to cause the heart to settle down and become an implement in the hand of God when sorrow is all around. In times of death, God puts His hand over the bereaved and calms that one down. Society will tell you, "Don't think for yourself. We will tell you how to think." No, that is not God's plan

### **"Fearfully and Wonderfully Made"**

We read in Psalm 139:13, "For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb." Don't you think God ought to know all about you since He did that? That was before anyone else was involved. Verse 14 states, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." Oh, that your soul would become acquainted with and accustomed to these truths of God, to know them well. Too many are living below the standard of what God intends for them. Today people's standards are variable, but God's standard has never changed. The Psalmist said that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. In other words, only God can make a

human being.

You need to forget cloning and Darwin's theory that the world is teaching in the public schools. Christian youths need to be encouraged to use their minds in the things of God. The adult generation of the church needs to be encouraged to use their minds to deepen down in the things of God, to get hold of the truths of God in a greater way. You need the mind of Christ. Isaiah told us that God's ways are far above our ways, and His thoughts are far above our thoughts. If we will get where God wants us to sit, under the spout of blessings from His throne, we will see something greater happen in the Church of the Living God.

Let us look briefly at how science looks at the brain. The brain of a normal adult human being weighs approximately four pounds, but it may weigh as little as two pounds. The spinal cord weighs only a few ounces, and the peripheral nerves and the ganglia a few more. This totals roughly 1 ½ to 3 percent of a 160-pound body. The muscles, the bones, and the skin weigh far more. You may say, "What does this have to do with it?" Well, the hand does not sin. Sin is committed by the true you—the soul—the intellect that knows what you are doing. Paul said in Romans to present your body a living sacrifice, acceptable to God.

The brain is often represented as a device to integrate the body and achieve the body's requirements. For example, it gives the orders and tells the hand to do that which is righteous or unrighteous. It is all handled through the intellect. If you let the devil work on you through discouragement or if you get involved in ungodly things going on around you, you will throw yourself into confusion and into a distrust with God. Soon you will be in a position where you are oppressed and do not know which way to go.

The gray matter inside your head is only part of what God has made. You are fearfully and won-

derfully made. If you look at a picture or a diagram of the brain, it merely looks like a gray mass. However, if you study the works of the brain, you will learn that it is made up of an electrical field that puts out very sensitive instructions via electrical impulses. God created the brain to operate the human system.

The brain is the man, and its health is essential for normal living. Its disorders are surely the most profound of human miseries, and its destruction annihilates the body, however intact it is. If your brain were to be destroyed, you would die. The brain contains more than one hundred billion cells, and it is only a two- to four-pound organ, which is a small percentage of the entire body. The cell population of the body is thousands of times more numerous than the human population of the earth. All transactions of life are transmitted in and through the brain. You need to let your mind be drawn into the things of God and hear only what God wants you to hear.

### **"Gird Up the Loins of Your Mind"**

Everyone has a calling, whether it is praying, singing, preaching, teaching, or visiting. In that call you will have all you can handle in listening to God, through communication in your mind with the very throne of God, to know what you need to do. You do not have time to meddle with other things. The mind misused is a terrible waste. Your mind is a blessing and a great gift from God, so you need to use it to the glory of God as He wants you to.

Paul said that we are living in a seducing time, a time when many would leave the faith and go after other ways of living. However, Paul told the Church of God in Ephesians 6:14, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness." First Peter 1:13 states, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your

mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." In these two verses there is enough to keep you busy.

Child of God, the first place battles start is in the mind. There is not a child of God anywhere who has not had some problems in his or her experience, yet some religious people say, "I am perfect, and I have always been perfect. I don't need anything." They need to own the fact that we all have battles. One man wanted me to listen to a tape about his pastor. He said that he was sitting in his living room and saw an apparition go past his window. He was convinced that the Lord had visited him that day. I told him, "That is nothing more than religious garbage." No man is laying his eyes on the Lord. The only way you are going to see Christ today is to see Him as He is. In so many words, Paul said, "I see him no more after the flesh, but after the way I have been taught in the Word of God and through the Spirit of God."

The Word manifested to the intellectual being brings the child of God into submission to Christ. The saints of God are fitly framed and knit together to do a great work in the Kingdom of God. Second Corinthians 7:6 says, "Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus." How does one become cast down? One way is through feeling sorry for oneself. We read in 2 Corinthians 4:7-8: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed." Friend, have you ever felt discouraged? God can show you an avenue of getting out of that condition. How? By your having the mind of Christ and by knowing how God looks at it. God looks at discouragement as an adversary to the soul.

When the enemy of souls tempted Jesus, He said, in so many

words, "I am not living by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." That is how Jesus caused Satan to leave. Saint, your mind is under attack. You are an earthen vessel, and you feel pain when someone hurts you or says something offensive. If you become hung up on that kind of condition, it will halt your forward progress for God, and you will begin to regress. The mercy of God says, "Wake up!" If you take the warning, then you will start moving forward. You will say, "Why am I letting this happen?" You will see the need to bring that condition under control and quit feeling sorry for yourself.

### **Be Girded About With Truth**

Second Corinthians 4:8-9 tells us: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." God is a merciful God, and He will supply your every need. He will not cast you off; He wants you to rise to your feet and mobilize for the Holy Ghost so the Word can go forth in your local community. God wants His people to be a blessing and a lighthouse for the Truth so that souls might be saved.

The mind is the seat of your affections, so don't you think you ought to guard it more? Your affections can be drawn away. I have never seen a day when there was so much going on. Our whole society is geared toward drawing your affections away. You may say, "Oh, it is the same old spirit." Well, that might be, but it is multiplying, and it has a greater hold on people than in the past. For one thing, when I went to school, if someone did wrong, that person got a paddling over it, but that is not the way it is today. Devils of diversity, spirits of do-nothing, and spirits of paganism are loose today. In some countries parents are unable to spank their children for disobedience, and in

those same countries very lewd things are taking place.

Again, the mind is the seat of your affections. It is the center of your thoughts. You are a complex individual. We live in the midst of a time when we need to draw our minds in and bring them into subjection. Luke 12:35 says, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning." You need to be girded about with Truth so that you can show forth the light of God and win souls. Friend, I want you to see that the enemy is after your mind. You need to have an understanding of the times. Many people do not want to see what is going on. They want to live in their own little cubicles. When God sends the message for you and you surround yourself with a wall, saying, "Well, this is the way I think, and I am not going to change," your soul is in great danger. A true pastor will wear himself out trying to get your soul straightened out. He will work and labor and groan in misery at night because it is a miserable thing to see a soul lost, not really concerned about his situation. People in that condition have closed their minds to their true condition. The Old Testament tells us that they have turned their ears away from hearing.

I remember one brother saying, "A flock of birds may fly over your head, but you don't have to let them make a nest in your hair." In other words, though many things are going on that can ensnare your soul, you do not have to get involved in them. Should someone try to whisper something in your ear about someone, you should say, "I don't want to hear that."

Child of God, every once in a while the devil will bring up things that you did before you were saved. He will say, "Do you remember what you did? Do you remember what you got into?" The mind can be likened to a city with thoughts running through the streets. However, you do not have to leave those thoughts in your mind. You need to kick them out if they do not belong.

Some people try to provoke wrong thoughts in others. Friend, you should not do that. If you do, you need to back up and make it right. Whether you are a preacher, a singer, or whatever, if you do not have a clear mind with God, you need to do something about it. If God is digging around something in your life, you need to see that He wants you to grow in a greater way.

The conflict or the battle today is that people are not girding their minds as they should with Truth. God's people need to spend time meditating on the Word of God. I am speaking of weighing yourself in the light of God. You need to ask, "Lord, am I measured up in this?" and "What needs to be done about that?" The Psalmist meditated upon his bed, and many times he was stirred. Why? God talked to him. He had a close relationship with God.

### **Having the Mind of Christ**

Thoughts primarily come from three sources: God's Spirit, man's spirit, and the devil's spirit. The challenge is to match the mind of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 2:16 Paul wrote, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." You need to let Him instruct and guide you. Sympathy will lead you into depression, and if you continue in that condition, it will steal your experience with God. Your salvation is in Christ Jesus living in you. By having the Spirit of God within, you are in direct contact with God. You can have a closeness with Him and learn what He wants. He will encourage you and give you strength.

When Jesus was asked, "Who then can be saved?" He said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:27). Although it is impossible with man, with God it is possible, so you need to trust in Him. The conflict is over believing God. Human thinking will try to prevail. The will of God is to have

God direct your mind. The mind is the seat of your affections, God gives you Truth to know good from evil, and He gives you an understanding when the devil comes as a minister of light. You will get in trouble listening to talk against pastors and other saints. Any time a voice accuses the pastor without foundation, it is coming from the devil; it is not coming from God. When the devil starts to work on your mind, he will say, "That brother is no good at all. He does not do this or that." That is when you need to tell the devil, "Get away from me. I don't want anything to do with you." God's people need the mind of God.

Child of God, no doubt you have great conflicts. It is not an easy ride into Glory. You might have battles in your mind, failures, and afflictions; but God can help you with all of that. One of the greatest battles you can go through is when you are suffering a physical affliction. When you are down on your back, the devil just keeps prodding and punching. If you can get hold of God, you will receive help.

Once I had a painful condition in my back, and it froze me up until I could not even move my fingers. I was getting ready to preach one Sunday morning, and as I got my feet on the edge of the bed, I was in agony. I had been that way for days. I said, "Lord, if it is my time to go, just take me on; but if it isn't, I want to know what Your will is, because You gave me a message to preach." God spoke to me and said, "See that doorknob in front of you? Reach out and take hold of it." I could not move my fingers because the pain was so severe. Nevertheless, I said, "Yes, Lord." I grabbed the doorknob and came out of the bed shouting and praising God. As I was rejoicing, the pain jabbed, and the devil said, "I will put you down." I said, "No, you won't, devil. I am going to have the victory, by the grace of God." I prayed and held on to God until the enemy of souls was rebuked. God healed me, and I

preached the Word of God that day. While I was shouting, I started to sing the song, "Our God Is True," and the devil moved on. God will never prove untrue to you. He will speak to you in the time of trouble and trial, in the time of sickness, in the time of heartache, and in the time of death. He will come to your aid, and He will work right through adverse conditions. I thank God for His goodness and for what He has done!

You may ask, "Why is the conflict so great?" Hebrews 8:10 tells you, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, with the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Right after I got saved, we were in a nine-week revival. (Today preachers can hardly hold people for an hour on Sunday.) Those weeks I got so tired, and one night I said, "Lord, I don't have any more strength." I would go home from work, eat a sandwich, get a few minutes rest, and then I was ready to go. I had a yearning for God's Word in my soul.

Some people block the Word of God from their minds because they feel that they have more important things to do, such as buying houses and land and cars. Those things are not illegal or perverted, but they can hinder you when it comes to serving God. In the days of Noah, they were eating, drinking, and marrying. There is nothing wrong with getting married as long as it is in the Lord. However, when those things come before God and attending the worship services, the problem begins.

### **Draw Closer to God**

Young person, you can be a bright light where you are, whether it is in school or on the job. You can be a great light and have greater security if you will lend your mind to God. Hebrews 10:35 instructs you, "Cast not away therefore your

confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." Due to conditions existing today, you must fortify your mind. One big problem for the youth is having confidence in themselves. When I was younger, they used to send young people to dance school to build up their self esteem. What a way to destroy a young person! Friend, if you are going to dances and proms, you are in trouble. There is much immorality going on at those dances. Young person, you need to draw in your mind. You were not made for corruption; you were made for the glory of God. You were not created to sell yourself to the flesh; that will destroy your life.

Many young people today are insecure. They think, "Well, if I don't make moves soon, I will never find anyone to marry." Some young people do not want to start working at minimum wage. They say, "Oh, that's not enough money for me." Friend, you think too highly of yourself if you have that kind of attitude. You ought to be thankful to have something to start with. There is an old saying, "You cannot make a silk purse from a sow's ear." In other words, you cannot make yourself something that you are not. If you have not had any work experience, you need to fall in line with what you can do.

Today some young couples think they must have a \$100,000 home and three cars in the garage before they feel they are not deprived. Then if something happens and one causes trouble and commits a crime, the attorneys say, "Well, he did it because he did not have this or that when he was young." That is just an excuse. When young people do wrong, it is because they are listening to the devil. It is not because they are hyperactive or because they need to be on medication. Things have gotten to the place where many parents do not have enough stability to hold a stiff hand with their children, so they give them drugs to control them. That is not the mind of Christ. That should

not be around the Church of God.

Some parents say, "Well, I have a child that I can't control." Instead of looking to God for help, they go to a psychologist or read a book to find out what to do. The Bible instructs you to train up a child in the ways of the Lord, and he will never depart from it. That training will never get out of his thinking. Now, I did not say that he would not go out in sin, but that training will not get away from him. The Bible speaks of having a willing mind. That means that people are willing to labor, willing to uphold the hands of the man of God, and willing to help when there is a place to fill.

Paul wrote about a people whose minds were blinded. Saint, if you become spiritually blind, you can be led to believe a lie and be damned. Second Thessalonians 2:11-12 states: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." You need to love Truth and have your mind girded with Truth. To do that, you need a great deal of help from God, because you still have humanity.

God created each of us as individuals to receive Truth, understanding, and correction. If you are in trouble, under trials, pressed down, or afflicted, you need to take it to the Lord in prayer. Right in the midst of all your problems, the devil will say, "Why don't you forget God; go away from the way of God. I will give you something better." Friend, he is a liar.

Child of God, let your mind be drawn in closer to God, in the strength of God and in the Truth of God's Word. If you have had problems, you need to take them to the Lord. If you have a stressful condition in your mind, seek the face of God. If problems and burdens are heavy, if your body hurts, draw closer to God. He will instruct you, help you, and strengthen you.

*(Cassette C-4022A)*

[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2] Revelation 13:1 to the succeeding scene. Revelation 12:3 shows the first major opposing force: the great red dragon, which was Rome in its pagan form. It tells how the dragon was cast down and how the enemy changed his tactics.

In Revelation 13:1 we see the beast coming up out of the sea, which was papal Rome. After the first beast was defeated, Revelation 13:11 says, another beast came up out of the earth; this was in chronological succession. Therefore, chronologically, Protestantism succeeded papalism.

The woman clothed with the sun came on the scene in A.D. 33. Revelation 12:11 says "they overcame him." This was when the dragon was cast down and Rome was divided and declined, in A.D. 270. The enemy started working through apostasy to produce another beast that, according to Revelation 13:1, rose from the sea, which occurred in A.D. 530, when they regarded Boniface as the first universal Pope.

After that, they arose and laid a deadly wound to the beast through the sixteenth century reformation in A.D. 1530. This occurred when Martin Luther came out preaching Romans 1:17: "The just shall live by faith." When they failed to stay true to Truth and walk in the light, they turned and became an image to the beast; hence, another beast, another earthly system, came up, known as Protestantism.

Revelation 13:11 tells us that this beast had attributes "like a lamb." Where else do we read of something that appears like a lamb, or sheep like? In Jesus' teachings in Matthew 7:15, Jesus said, "Beware of false prophets [the same thing that Protestantism was called in Revelation 16:13], which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." This system looks Christian, but its nature is as a wolf, or a beast.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:20, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Revelation 13:14 lets

us know that Protestantism made an image to the beast. Its fruits were to raise up other human organizations with human heads. Revelation 9:7, speaking of the system of Protestantism, states, "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, [They want to appear that they have Christ and that they have power, but the crowns are only *like* gold; they are not gold. They were an imitation, a deception.] and their faces were as the faces of men." Men head this system. The Bible says they built an image (an image is something almost identical). In other words, they built a human organization with human heads and human teachings very similar to the first beast, papalism.

This Protestant beast has a very deceptive appearance. It looks Christian, but Revelation 13:11 says "it spake as a dragon." How did the dragon speak? In the days of paganism, they had a building known as the Pantheon, and people could come from wherever to do their commerce in Rome. They were losing much trade because people had to get back to worship their gods, so they built a Pantheon. Over the door they had the inscription, "to Jupiter and all the gods." People could go in and worship the gods of their choice.

The cry of the dragon, or paganism, was for people to choose the gods of their choice. How does Protestantism speak like a dragon? They tell people to choose the church of their choice. This beast speaks like the dragon. That was not God's voice, but the dragon's. Sad to say, people would be better off not going to those places than to sip from Babylon's wine and be deceived.

Again, the word *Magog* also means "Gog's region." How is Protestantism Gog's region? Revelation 13:14 says they made "an image to the beast." In other words, they modeled Rome in human operation and organization. This prophetic picture in Revelation 20:7-8 and

Revelation 16:12-14 has its fulfillment, not just, in the Gospel Day, but the prophetic timeframe of this is actually the seventh seal period of time. How do we know this? It occurred under the sixth vial, and the sixth vial was not poured out until the seventh seal.

We are not just looking at Protestantism at her inception, but rather these prophetic texts deal with her operation in this seventh seal period of time. The first three vials (in Revelation, Chapter 16) were poured out during the sixth seal. How do we know the last four vials were poured out in the seventh seal? They poured out the fourth one on the sun, or what represented the church, the Anderson movement; that commenced the seventh seal. They poured the fourth through the seventh vial out in the seventh seal. They poured the first three vials out in the sixth seal, and the last four (which includes the sixth, where we see the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet spoken of) were poured out in the seventh seal. In this prophetic picture, Protestantism again became Gog's region, or papalism's domain.

We see that in Revelation, Chapter 17, a picture of the eighth beast. In Revelation 17:3 we see all the beasts coming together and being amalgamated. Revelation 17:3 reads, "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast." This woman was at the helm, in control of this beast. She represents Roman Catholicism, because verse 5 says that she is "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." *Earth* refers to the Protestant systems. She is the mother of the Protestant systems; therefore, she is Roman Catholicism. Revelation 17:11 says, "And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven." This beast is an amalgamation of all the previous systems, and it is the last foe to be faced, because it says, ". . . and goeth into perdition." Af-

ter this there is no more, it reveals into eternity.

In God's eyes, Protestantism is the same as papalism. In reality, neither are Christian systems: neither system originated by God nor represents God. Both have the same destiny. Revelation 19:20 states, "And the beast [papalism] was taken, and with him the false prophet [Protestantism] that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image."

In the phrase "them that worshipped his image" we have something different. We have already dealt with the false prophet (Protestantism), but here is a group of people separate from Protestantism, yet in their worship they worship his image. What is this? This is a group of people who made an image to the image. They are not Protestant in name and they are not Protestant in their claim; however, they are Protestant in their practice, in their operation, and in their spirit. They claim to be Church of God but lack the biblical attributes of the church. They are not Protestant in name; they would not associate with it as a system, but in their worship they worshiped his image. They made an image to the image; their operation and their conduct are as sectarian as that of the image, though their name is "Church of God." What is the fate of them all? The Bible says, they would be "cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Revelation 19:20).

The clarion call of our day is "Come out of her, my people" (Revelation 18:4) Why? Because Babylon, whether it is papalism, Protestantism, or some so-called Church of God, they are destined for hell. Everyone that stays in Babylon will suffer that fate as well. That is the reason the Prophet Jeremiah, when he caught a

glimpse of it, said in Jeremiah 51:6, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul." Babylon is Babylon, no matter what name is put on it. It becomes Babylon because of its practice and its spirit, not because of its claims. Never-dying souls of people in Babylon are at stake. Someone may ask, "Do you believe there are honest hearts in Babylon?" Certainly. That is the reason the call is, "Come out of her, my people." The Bible would not have that message if some of God's people were not there. The call is to come out because if you stay in it, you will become a partaker of her plagues, and your spirit will change and you will end up like her.

Ezekiel 38:2 speaks of "the land of Magog," but the Septuagint understood Magog as a people. Ezekiel 38:2 says, "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog." Here the implication in the English is that Magog was a land, but it was a people. Ezekiel 39:6 makes it clear: "And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the LORD." Here it calls Magog a people; it refers to them as "them" and "they."

According to Revelation 16:13, we are catching a prophecy of something that is to happen in this seventh seal period of time. It is a picture of a land or a people ruled by Gog. This lets us know that in this end time that Protestantism will ultimately go back to its mother and be ruled by papalism. The words *Gog* and *Magog*, when used together, picture composite Babylon.

Ezekiel 39:4 says, "Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel [and they have: they have attacked the people of God since their inception], thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be de-

voured."

Ezekiel 39:4 says, "I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort." Where do we see something like that? We read in Revelation 18:2, "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." When John mentioned every unclean and hateful bird, that is what Gog and Magog together represent; it is Babylon.

Now let us dispel some commonly held false doctrines concerning this text. The Prophet wrote in Ezekiel 38:2-3: "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, Thus with the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." Ezekiel mentioned in verse 3, "the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." Dispensationalists like to take this text and go to other versions that say as the Intralinear Hebrew-English does, "Gog, the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal." They say that Rosh is Russia, Meshech is Moscow, and Tubal is Tubolsk in Siberia. Truth tells us that this is not so, and Bible scholars bear this out as well.

The *Word Bible Handbook* says this: "Firm identification of Gog and Magog with Russia cannot be made on etymological grounds." According to Webster's Dictionary, the word *etymological* means "the origin and development of a word, where a word originally came from." The *Illustrated Bible Dictionary* says, "The popular identification of Rosh with Russia, Meshech with Moscow, and Tubal with Tubolsk in Siberia has nothing to commend it from the standpoint of hermeneutics." The word *hermeneutics* means "sound Bible teaching."



*The New Bible Commentary Revised* says, "Their equation with Moscow and Tubolak with Russia is unsupportable." Another scholar gave us good insight. One noted writer lays to rest the thought of a literal nation and gives us insight into what is taking place in this prophecy when he penned these words: "In this prophecy there is little distinction of one nation. It is a gathering together of the enemies of Jehovah to make their last effort and to be overthrown. The seer passes to the final struggle between good and evil." That well speaks of what is portrayed in these prophetic texts.

The word *Rosh* appears only once in the Bible, and that is in Genesis 46:21 when it said he was the son of Benjamin. The word literally means "captain, chief, principal, or ruler." The King James Version has it in Ezekiel 38:3 as "chief prince." It has nothing to do with Russia.

What is this that Ezekiel 38:2-3 talks about as "Meshech" and "Tubal"? Again, verse 3 says, "Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." We need to understand what Meshech and Tubal are, because this is the domain of Gog; in other words, this is what Gog rules.

The word *Meshech* in the Hebrew appears eight times in the Old Testament. The word means "a sowing, a possession, a drawing out to draw someone anywhere." That is a vivid picture of Roman Catholicism. The seeds for Catholicism were sown when the apostates of the morning time did as Paul said in Acts 20:30, "draw away after them." Those deceived souls, as 2 Peter 2:2 described, were ones who "follow their pernicious ways." After the seed was sown, they were drawn away and the papacy had them in their possession; then they became a possession. Again, the word *Meshech* means, "a sowing, a possession,

and a drawing." We can see Roman Catholicism portrayed in Meshech.

What about Tubal? Again, this is the domain that papalism will have in the seventh seal. The word *Tubal* appears eight times in the Old Testament. It means to "return, flowing forth, multiplication, or diffusion of race or tumult." It is a picture of Protestantism. They came out initially, but turned and built an image. They will return to the very thing they were protesting against. This definitely pictures denominationalism, because it also means "multiplication."

The *Oxford Encyclopedia of World Christianity*, published in 1982, claims that "there are more than twenty-eight thousand recognizable denominations of Christ." No doubt, there are many more today. They are multiplying, but yet they will return.

The word *Tubal* also means "tumult." Webster's Dictionary says a tumult is "confusion." What an apt description for Protestantism; it is confusion. False religion is in a tumult. It is full of confusion and unrest. Ultimately Tubal, which is Protestantism, will return to Meshech, and Gog (papalism) will rule. It will be one amalgamated, consolidated system, to make as one scholar said, "their last effort," a final struggle between good and evil.

I trust that you can see by the Bible what Gog and Magog represent. Gog is papalism, and Magog is Protestantism. When they are spoken of together, they represent composite Babylon, and they are opposing forces to Truth that the Scripture says "God is against." If God is against it, we should not be for it or sympathetic to it, but we should have a revelation of Truth so that we can understand these systems and realize that spirits produced these systems.

Revelation 16:14 says these spirits are gone out to "the whole world." They are no longer just

working within those systems or confined to those systems. They are working among the saints of God to draw us away. Unless we keep abreast of Truth and keep walking in the light, we can be drawn away as others have been. Thank God, if the eyes of our understanding have been enlightened by God's eternal Word and we walk in that light as He shows it to us, we can be insulated from every move of the enemy. I trust that you will endeavor to walk in the light so that you can have beautiful fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3).

Brother Earl R. Borders

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### ***The Master Potter***

*"Is life really worth the living?"  
Sometimes we are tempted to say.  
But God is the Master Potter,  
And we are only the clay.*

*Perhaps it all seems hopeless,  
Yet we must fit into His plan.  
So let's be yielding and supple  
To every touch of His hand.*

*We cannot see in the future,  
The part we are destined to play;  
Would the pattern be ugly and broken,  
If we should be taken away?*

*So, let us trust in the Potter,  
He knows much better than we,  
How precious each tiny atom,  
To the finished product will be.*

*Though the trials of life encompass  
Seem more than we can bear,  
Perhaps we're now in the furnace,  
To test the strength of the ware.*

*But when the firing is over,  
And the finished object we see,  
We'll know that the Master Potter  
Understands far better than we.*

*Selected*