

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

Annual Financial Report

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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)

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

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Website: www.godsacres.org

Vol. 33 May 2003 No. 5

In Mark 16:15 Jesus uttered those words which have become commonly known as the great commission. In this verse He declared, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Here we have one of the most familiar yet daunting commands of the entire New Testament. We are instructed to "Go ye into all the world." We here at *The Gospel Trumpeter* have been striving to fulfill this commission through the printed page for over thirty-three years. Needless to say, it is a physical impossibility for each of us to literally "Go . . . into all the world." Neither is it possible for us to personally reach "every creature." However, what is not possible for each of us to do individually, we can do collectively. This is the reason Christ likened the church to a body and the Apostle Paul said, "For the body is not one member, but many" (1 Corinthians 12:14). The Apostle let us know in the same chapter that all the members "are necessary" (1 Corinthians 12:22) to the successful operation of the body of Christ. So it is with this venture that we call *The Gospel Trumpeter*. The Psalmist said in Psalm 68:11, "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it." Only eternity will reveal the many dedicated workers and extensive hours of labor expended to place this periodical in your hands and on the website each month. Here at the Newark congregation there is a host of unsung heroes that make this monthly journal possible. From the brethren who study, pray, and labor to obtain the needed messages or articles, to the transcriber who types them, to the editor who makes them acceptable copy, to the proofreaders, to the printers, and on through to collation, labeling, and mailing, it is indeed a "great . . . company" that publishes this magazine.

We are deeply gratified that this holiness publication issues thousands of copies each month and goes into almost every state in these United States and into many foreign countries as well. We are indeed attempting through this medium to fulfill the command of our Lord. You might have often pondered how you could better meet the terms of the great commission our Lord left us. It may never be possible for you to visit a foreign field, perhaps you may not even cross this continent of ours, but there is a way that you can participate in filling the Lord's commission, and that is by your financial support. As you can see from the figures below, this ministry is not self-supporting. Though you may never be able to go around the world, your donation to this cause can. If you would like to be a part of this worldwide ministry, I invite you to send your gift to: *The Gospel Trumpeter*, 675 North Cedar Street, Newark, Ohio 43055.

I might also mention that you can now view *The Gospel Trumpeter* on line. We encourage you to share this information with others so that this glorious Gospel of Christ can be spread in an even greater manner. We trust that *The Gospel Trumpeter* will continue to be a blessing to you and an instrument that you can utilize as an evangelistic tool. All of us here earnestly covet your prayers as we continue to carry forth this work for our Lord and His kingdom.

Statement of Condition for 12 months ending January 31, 2002

	Income	Expenses
Supplies		\$ 29,094.63
Utilities		4,323.90
Labor/Payroll Taxes		23,638.06
Donations/Offerings	\$10,135.26	
Equipment Purchased		740.48
Postage		48,600.00
Maintenance & Repairs		<u>3,624.00</u>
Subtotals	\$10,135.26	\$110,021.07

Balance paid out of the general fund of the
Church of God congregation at Newark, OH \$99,885.81

Revelation 10:1 And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,

3 And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and

write them not.

5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

6 And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said,

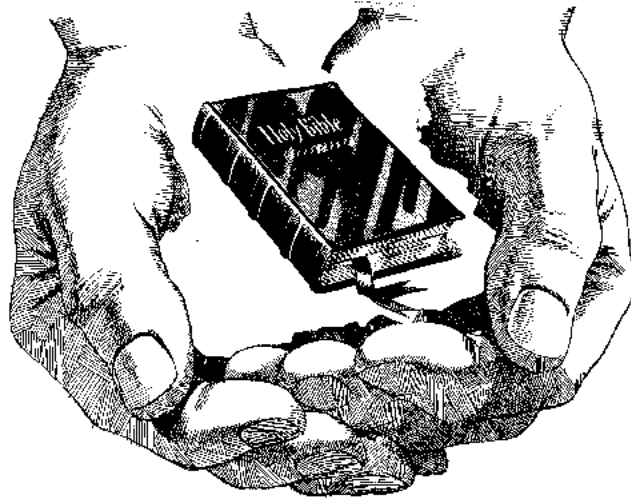
Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

11 And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

The Little Book



Brother Roger L. Decker

Witnesses to the Truth

As we look into this chapter, it is needful that you understand that the Revelation was written in symbolic language. Revelation 1:1 says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto

his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John."

I want to focus on verses 8-9 of our Scripture text, which read: "And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go

and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy

mouth sweet as honey."

Verse 1 of the Scripture text says, "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven. . . ." It stands to reason that since this was another angel, then there were some angels ahead of that. What were the angels before this angel? They were the six trumpet angels of Chapters 8 and 9. The angel in this verse is the seventh trumpet angel who is bridging the gap between the apostasy of the sixth seal and the restoration in the seventh seal.

The Bible says he is clothed with a cloud. What cloud is this speaking of? Hebrews 12:1 clearly tells us, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." To what did these witnesses witness? They witnessed to the Truth, the sounding forth of the trumpet. God still has witnesses today who witness to the Truth, and it brings forth light and understanding right in this evening time.

This angel had a rainbow upon his head. (Each of God's ministers has a rainbow upon his head—it is in his mind and in his heart. Also, he preached the new covenant. Every one of God's called ministers preach the new covenant.) He preached the doctrines and the promises of the new covenant. Of what is the rainbow symbolic? Genesis 9:13 reads, "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." The rainbow is symbolic of the new covenant. God's seventh-seal ministry preach the new covenant. When God renewed His covenant with Noah, He set a bow in the cloud as a token of His covenant.

Attributes of Christ

Look at the feet of this ministry in verse 1 of our Scripture text: ". . . and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." What do the sun and the fire represent? I

am thankful that we do not have to go outside the Word of God to find the answer. These words are covered right in the Word of God. Matthew 17:1-2 reads: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."

Revelation 1:15-16 states: "And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." The fire and the sun are symbolic attributes of Jesus Christ, and they represent a ministry that came from the presence of God.

In the Old Testament we find in Exodus 34:29, "And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him." Spending time with Jesus Christ will put the glow of the Holy Spirit in your countenance. You can tell when people have been spending time with Jesus Christ. They are not so easily offended or so quick to give up when they have the glow of the presence of God in their lives.

The little Book that the angel had in his hand was open. This Book was closed during the Dark Ages, and it only gave a little light through the dark and cloudy day. However, time moved on, and with it came light. Time and light move together, and the message of the new covenant was again being presented to the people.

The Earth and the Sea

As we read in this tenth chapter, the ministry not only had an open Book but also had their feet on the earth and the sea. One foot was on

the earth and one foot was on the sea. What was in the sea? The Bible is very plain. Isaiah 57:20 says, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." We find in this verse that the wicked are like the troubled sea. What came up out of the sea? Revelation 13:1 tells us, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." That beast was Roman Catholicism, and it came out of the minds of wicked men, those who were apostates. I repeat, Isaiah stated that "the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." These are not waters that you would want to drink; they are not living waters. They cast up mire and dirt and pollute whosoever drinks of them.

The Scripture text tells us that one foot was on the sea, but what about the earth where the angel had his left foot? Revelation 13:11 reads, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." The dragon is the one that mothered the beast that came up out of the sea, which is Roman Catholicism; Roman Catholicism mothered the beast that came up out of the earth, which is Protestantism; and they all go back to pagan Rome.

Verse 3 of our Scripture text tells us that the angel "cried with a loud voice." What did he cry? Verses 5-6 state: "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer."

He was not talking about the end of time or the Judgment Day. When he said there should be time no longer, he was telling us that time

would be no longer where he had his feet on the sea and on the earth. In other words, God was going to call His people out of all earthly religion, for the voice of God would no longer be heard in her. God is not working down in Babylon any longer. The voice of the Bridegroom is no longer heard down in Babylon, the musicians are not there, and the gifts and the callings of God are no longer there. God is not working through Roman Catholicism, and He is not working through Protestantism any longer.

You may say, "There are good people in those religions." Yes, there are. That is the reason God is calling them out. He is not calling out the bad; He is calling out the good. Those who are good hear His voice and follow the Lamb wheresoever He goes. There are no more dark and cloudy days or days of darkness. The darkness is passed away.

Earthly Religion

Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." If you are in false religion, you are wasting time, because time is no more for false religion. This message has brought many out of false religion, and it is the message that will keep us out. People are so ecumenical today, and they think there is good everywhere. Well, they need to study Roman Catholicism and read of all the people they killed and sent on into Glory. At one time, people had to be Catholic or die. Then you need to read about all the Protestant wars. The weapons of God's warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty through God.

Our Scripture text tells us that the angel cried with a loud voice. God began to call His people out of all earthly religion, for time is no more when the voice of God will be heard in her. God is not working in Babylon. Let us read Revelation 18:21-24: "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus

with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

"And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman [or no special gifts], of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

Again, our Scripture text tells us in verse 3, "And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices." We all know what literal *thunder* is, and we know that thunder follows lightning; it does not come before the lightning. You see a flash of light, and after so many seconds, because light travels faster than sound, you hear the thunder. Lightning will light up a whole room, and then you can get ready for the thunder, because it follows the lightning.

The ministry had an understanding of the Gospel dispensation for all seven periods of time, and it was bringing the Truth out in the open for all to hear and see. All seven thunders uttered their voices. This ministry got a glimpse of every period of time. Those seven thunders followed the light. They had light and understanding, and it was accompanied by a great cloud of witnesses who were willing to stand for the Truth.

Today there is a real shortage of people who will stand up and be counted for the Truth. Oh, they will stand for other things. Some stand up for their rights, and others stand up for this or that, but they are unwilling to stand for the Truth. Why? One reason is that it is "bitter," and

people do not like the bitterness. They love the sweetness that Babylon puts out. Babylon just preaches, "Jesus loves everybody." They preach smooth things, but they do not get into His doctrine. Friend, you cannot separate Christ from the doctrine.

"It Shall Make Thy Belly Bitter"

Let us consider this "little book" that was open. We read in verses 8-9 of our Scripture text: "And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey." The angel told John to "eat it up." It tastes sweet as honey in the honeycomb, but it makes your belly bitter. When the angel told John to take it and eat it, he was telling him to obey the Truth taught in the little Book. It will bring sweetness to the soul; however, it will also bring bitterness from persecution and opposition.

Verse 11 of our Scripture text says, "And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." Ahead of that, the angel said to take the Book and eat it up. According to history, this is what happened: John was rescued from the Isle of Patmos. He was the only Apostle of the twelve to die a natural death. Was it sweet to his mouth and bitter to his belly? Well, John had to return from Patmos and preach to many people, but he preached in a time of apostasy. There is no rougher time to preach than when there is a falling away. That is the reason saints are not in the aisles shouting much today; it is the effect of an apostasy. When John had to preach, the Word of God was sweet to his mouth but bitter to his belly.

Read what Paul had to say about it in 1 Timothy 4:1-7: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly [or clearly], that in the latter times some shall depart [another word for depart is *abandon*] from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

"For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. But refuse profane [heathenish] and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness."

Seducing spirits and doctrines of devils are extremely difficult to preach against. It is a time of bitterness today to stand for the Truth. When people depart from the faith, it brings bitter persecution. When you do not go along with your friends and your family, it is a bitter time. It was once sweet to their mouths just as it is to yours. They even said, "Thank God for the Truth!" However, it is standing for Truth that is the difference. Oh, how people love sweetness!

The Bible Standard

So many have fallen in the time of division because they did not live close enough to God to withstand the persecution. Therefore, they cannot take it when friends and family continually work on them. First Corinthians 1:10 says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the

same mind and in the same judgment." Division always works within first, just as sickness works inside the body first. For example, before a person breaks out with chickenpox, he gets a fever; something is working on the inside before the outward signs become visible. Similarly, division works within before it works without.

To divide over a disagreement with one another is not a division that God sanctions anywhere in the Word of God. The Bible instructs us to strive together for unity. There may be actions or things that I teach or preach that you disagree with, but that does not give you the right to run off down the road somewhere, any more than it gives me the right to quit because of some things that you do. Unity starts with God. There is no unity without God, and there is no unity without being born again. Division always begins within.

The angel told John to take the Book and eat it, and that is what the Lord wants each of us to do. We are to eat all of its ingredients, all of its doctrines, all of its judgments, and all of its standards. That includes putting on modest apparel, even if it brings persecution. You should not just hear it preached and say it is a mouth-watering message. You must also put it on. Just hearing it does not bring persecution; however, living what is preached does.

The Bible standard is to wear modest apparel. The sisters letting their hair grow long is still in the Bible. Forgiving one another is still in the Bible. You should eat it up and let it become a part of you. While you put on some things, you must take off other things, such as adornment. You do not need earrings, nose rings, finger rings, or toe rings. Also, you need to get rid of the lipstick. Where should you put it? You can put it in the trash can, because you do not need it. God colored your lips for you when you were born, and that is all the color you need.

The sisters should put off men's apparel and dress as a female ought to dress. If you were to travel to foreign countries, you might not be able to read whatever it says on the restroom doors, but you could understand the symbols of a man in trousers and a woman with a skirt. People have it all messed up here in the United States. People are so confused concerning the way a woman should look. Can you picture the first woman looking as some women do today? I am not talking so much about the dress as I am the hair. Can you imagine Eve looking like Adam? You see, it is sweet when you just preach Jesus, but the bitterness comes when you get into the doctrines and the standards of the church.

Understanding the Mysteries of God

The little Book had something in it. It had in it the mystery of God. Babylon does not understand the mystery of God because the little Book is not open to Babylon. What is the mystery of God? There are many mysteries spoken of in the Word of God, but I want you to read about one of them. Ephesians 5:22-32 states: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord [that Scripture would not be sweet to the mouth for those who are in the feminist movement]. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that

loveth his wife loveth himself.

"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

That mystery was opened. The church is brought to the forefront again when Paul said, "I speak concerning Christ and the church." He said it is a great mystery. To most religions in the world, it is a mystery how men and women can live holy. It has been a mystery throughout the ages of time. A *mystery* is something that is shut up; there is silence on it. Now, however, the silence is broken and it is no longer a mystery.

The Lord is still gathering all those who are sick of false religion, sick of dead church memberships, and sick of dead Church of God religion into one body, the church, which is still a mystery to those who do not know the Truth or to those who fail to walk in it. The church is still a mystery to many people. They do not understand the one church.

Just how many bodies did Jesus have when He was here in the natural body? I do not believe that He was some freak with two heads, and I do not believe that He had two bodies. Who is His body now? It is the church. Is that not what the Word of God says? How many bodies does He put His head on? Is it not yet one? That which is true in the physical is true in the spiritual. That is still a mystery to many people; nevertheless, Christ has only one church.

Holiness and Unity

Ephesians 5:27 says, "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." God has revealed the one

church to those who want to know the Truth. To those who do not want to know the Truth, they are going to run out the door to find a religion that is comfortable, one where they can wear whatever they want to wear, do whatever they want to do, and be entertained by whatever means they want to be entertained. God's people still love the Truth. It is still a mystery to those who do not love it.

In that "little book" the mystery of God is revealed; it is no longer a mystery. It was a mystery through the Dark Ages and throughout the dark and cloudy day, but in the evening time it shall be light. God is still calling His people out of dead, formal, dried-up religion and calling them back to Mount Zion, the Church of the Living God. The Bible says there is only one body, one Spirit, one Lord, and one baptism. How can people sit in false religion after hearing the message of Truth? Those who join Babylon after sitting under the message of Truth have had their eyes put out, and they are blind spiritually. Something worse than losing your physical eyesight is losing your spiritual eyesight. Some people who used to amen the Truth have joined hands with the Methodists, the Nazarenes, and the Presbyterians. The light has gone out in their lives, and Jesus said, "How great is that darkness!" There is no darkness like the darkness of the soul.

Zechariah 14:7 states that "at evening time it shall be light." In approximately A.D. 1880 God got hold of some reformers. In false religion there were good people, but they could not die out to sin. Now in the evening time, people are dead to sin, and they have been called back to holiness and unity. God's people are one body, one church. The church came down from God out of Heaven. She is the New Jerusalem, and she is made up of new Jews. They are under the new covenant, they are new creatures, they have a new Sacrifice, and they live a new way. Everything

about the church is new.

The angel said to take the little Book and eat it. It tastes sweet, but watch out when you swallow and digest it. Next, it will be bitter to your belly. God still has a holy church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. The message of holiness has held first place in my heart since I got saved. Why? I was a sinning Methodist. I am not throwing off on people, but against false methods of worship and false religion. False religion is still causing more souls to go to hell than all the honky-tonks and the breweries.

"Let No Man Deceive You"

Someone may say, "Our church teaches the Bible the same way that the Church of God does." Then why is it not called the Church of God? Why do you not fellowship with us at the Church of God? It is because they do not teach all things the same way. The reason for the different names is that they have different teachings. When you hear a different name, such as Roman Catholicism, what do you think of? The Pope and the so-called priests. When you think of the Baptists, what thought goes through your mind? Their doctrine of "once in grace, always in grace." When you think of the Church of Christ, what do you think about? They take communion every Sunday. What do you think about when you think of the Church of God? Well, if it is the true Church of God, you think about the "little book," from Genesis to Revelation.

The angel told John to take it and eat it up, because he was going to have to prophesy again. Only this time when he went back, it was going to be worse than when he left. That was when he wrote First, Second, and Third John. They had gotten away from holiness. Holiness is always laid aside when people go into apostasy. When John came off the Isle of Patmos, the people had gotten away from holiness.

If you read 1 John, you will find that John wrote with simplicity. I want you to read a few verses of 1 John, Chapter 3, but remember that an apostasy was in effect, just as we are in an evening-time apostasy. People are running around proclaiming holiness, but they are a far cry from living holy. John wrote in verses 5-8: "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him [Who? The same One he was talking about in verse 5, Jesus Christ. To abide in Him simply means to dwell in Him. What does one do?] sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

"Little children, let no man deceive you [because John was preaching in a very deceptive age]: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; [No doubt John thought it was going to be difficult to get a message through to the people in an apostasy, but what did he do? He told them this was that which they had heard from the beginning. He took them right back to the beginning and taught them again.] for the devil sinneth from the beginning [he was speaking of back in the garden]. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested [or made known], that he might destroy the works of the devil." What are the works of the devil? Sin. All Babylon wants to preach is, "Oh, what a Savior!" and that He is; but He is also a destroyer of sin.

God's Church Is Holy

John went on to write in verses 9-10: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." In other words, John was saying that the children of God do not sin, but the children of the devil do sin; one is holy, and the other is unholy. What

separates the Church of God from nominal religion? Holiness. People want their own way. They want Jesus, but they want Him on their own terms. They want Jesus, but they want just a little sin too. Friend, it was sin that put Him on the Cross.

You may say, "I don't believe that you should say a thing about false religion, because there are good people there." Then all I have to say is this: You should have told that to Jesus, because He did not leave them alone. He spoke more judgment against the scribes and the Pharisees than any others. Did Jesus not understand the way people think today? How could He possibly say, "Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites"? Why did He not say, "Stay the way you are. You have some good people. Just make it the best way you can"? Jesus did not say that because false religion is damning the souls of men and women.

John wrote in verse 10, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

The Apostle Paul stated in 2 Corinthians 6:14-15: "... for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial?" What communion do we have with sinners? God has a church, and it is a holy church, a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

God has revealed the one church to those who want the Truth. It is still a mystery to some. If you are sympathetic with Babylon, then you will not see the message on the one church. It will continue to remain a mystery to you. When Paul was talking about the relationship between the husband and the wife, he was talking about the church. Why? The husband and the wife become as one, and they go to the same home and dwell together. Likewise, the church becomes one; the members are married to Jesus Christ. The headquarters of the Church of God is where the Head is, and that is in Heaven.

I want to say this about taking the little Book and eating it all: it takes a real man or a real woman to take the bitterness that goes with the sweetness. If you live for God and you are close to God, bitterness is going to come your way. Nevertheless, you need to obey God's Word to the fullest. God has an abundance of blessings for you, and all He asks is that you obey Him.

(Cassette C-4663E)

TAKE THE TIME TO ASK

A well-known businessman bought a large insurance policy on himself. It was so large that the newspapers published the story. One of the man's friends, an insurance agent, asked why he did not buy the policy from him. The businessman replied, "You never asked me."

Could it be that some of our neighbors would attend church on Sunday if we just asked them? People are just waiting to be asked. Make sure you take the time to ask.

Isaiah 66:1 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?

2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

3 He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he

that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

4 I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

5 Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and

they shall be ashamed.

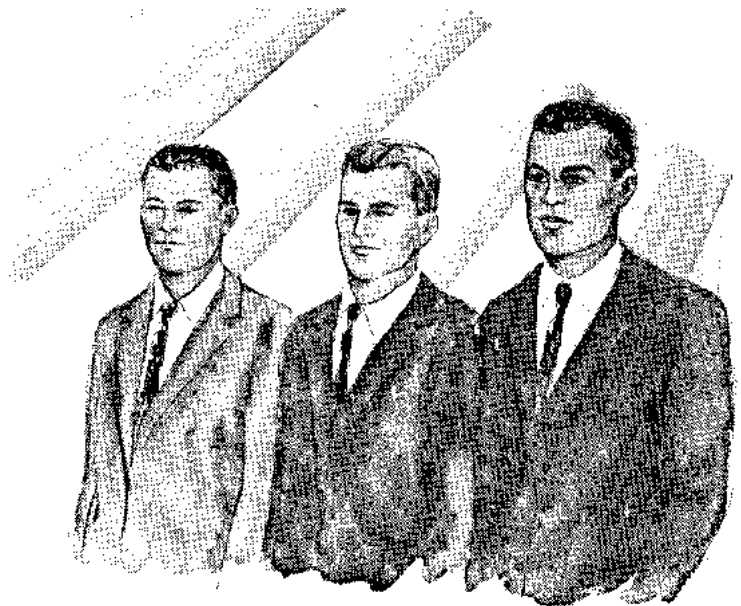
6 A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompense to his enemies.

7 Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

“Let the Lord Be Glorified”

Part 2 of 2



Brother Allen Polston

Receiving Not the Love of the Truth

Our Scripture text lets us know that the Lord is seeking those who are poor and of a contrite spirit and who tremble at His Word, because it is through this kind of person that He can accomplish His purpose. One who does not possess these graces will bring glory to himself instead of to God. That is a direct contradiction to the reason we are here. We are not here to glorify, praise, or exalt self. When people tried to make Jesus a king upon this earth, He departed from their midst.

In the Church of God we preach

and declare a standard of holiness because the Lord has seen fit to warn us when the flesh is trying to take us in the wrong direction. The Scripture tells us that the heart is desperately wicked and deceitful. If you are not careful, your human body will get you entangled in things and start you on the road to self-exaltation. The man of God needs to preach the standard and the doctrines. These things are necessary to keep God's people on the right track. We have the Word of God so that we know what God expects of us, to keep ourselves in line and to warn us of things that will take us in the wrong direction.

Too many people are looking to

bring glory to themselves. They might verbally offer thanksgiving and gratitude to God, but something different is in their hearts. The Bible makes it plain that while people have a long list of accomplishments that they may thank the Lord for, that does not always mean that they are where they need to be spiritually. In Matthew 7:22 Jesus said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" Nevertheless, verse 23 tells us that God will say, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." No doubt, those peo-

ple were saying, "Glory to God!" yet they were not bringing glory to Him.

In Matthew 15:8 Jesus said, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." It is always good for the Word of God to be sounded, because it can help us to make sure that these things do not come to pass. Since God saved me, I have heard many messages preached concerning things that I was not guilty of, yet I thank God for those messages because they help me to make sure that those things never happen. The best way is never to become involved in those kinds of things.

Some people have gotten into a condition where they believe they are carrying out the will of God, but they are doing the opposite. They are not bringing glory to God at all. Those people are under a deception, or a delusion. Paul wrote in 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 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."

Those people received not the love of the Truth, and because of that, they ended up being deceived. The Bible says they rejected God because they had not the love of the Truth. Therefore, God allowed them to come under a delusion, so that they might be damned. Being deceived is a fearful thing. To be deceived is to think you are doing right when you are doing wrong. If you become deceived, you will think everything is fine when it is not.

Steps That Lead to Deception

The devil may work on someone who is very conscientious and accuse that person, but that is not what this condition is. A deceptive condition, or a delusion, is not something that slips up on you or occurs overnight.

There are some steps that lead to deception. You do not awaken one morning in good standing with God and by the end of the day become deceived. That is not the way this condition works. A process takes place when deception works on a person. No one would honestly say, "I want to be deceived." I do not think anyone is foolish enough to say that. Also, none of us likes to be misled.

Deception is the result of not following what you know is right and what you know you should do. When God pricks your heart and makes you feel uncomfortable about a move that you are getting ready to make or a decision that you are facing, and you ignore that warning, that is a step toward deception. When God, through His love and faithfulness, makes you feel uncomfortable about something and tugs on your conscience, yet you go ahead and do it anyway, that process leads to deception. One who becomes deceived first had to allow something to work in his life that he knew God was against. At first, that person goes along with something that is out of order. He knows in his heart that he needs to do something about his condition, yet he just brushes it off and refuses to let God work. That path leads to deception. Many people have journeyed down that path.

There is a verse of Scripture that ought to bring the saints of God consolation. At the same time, it brings torment to every individual who ends up deceived. In Luke 8:16-17 Jesus said: "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be known and come abroad." Jesus was letting you know in this verse of Scripture that anytime you begin to take part in that which is wrong, God will be faithful to show you. Somewhere along the line, He will reveal it to you and let you see that what you are involved in or

what you have done is not right.

The candle and the light represent the Word of God revealing to people what is right and what is wrong. Friend, you should not slip around and do something wrong and think that God will not catch you. If you do something wrong, God will immediately begin to show you the wrong. Sometimes you might be quick to say something hurtful, and almost immediately you will realize, "That was not the best way to say that. I shouldn't have said it quite that way." That is your conscience speaking, which God uses to check you. If God does not check you right then when you have committed a wrong, it will not be long until, through His faithfulness, He will show you what was wrong.

The road to deception is a road that you take when you knowingly turn away from what God has revealed to you. He may reveal the wrong to you when you are reading the Bible or listening to the preaching of the Word of God in a church service. There is nothing secret, and nothing is hidden that God will not bring to light. He will reveal the Truth so that you can see.

God Is Faithful

God is not one who just sits up there waiting to club you over the head when you do wrong, and He did not create you to send you to hell. He loves you, and He is faithful to your soul. He will be faithful to you when you need to repent and forsake something. Repentance is not merely going to an altar and saying a few words. There is more to it than that. If God has pointed out something wrong in your life, then you need to repent of it, turn from it, and do not allow it to be a part of you anymore.

If you have sin or wrong in your life, God will reveal it to you. God's light is not hidden, but it has been put up on a candlestick (the church) so that people can see that light. If any wrong is in your life, the light will reveal it.

Many truths are in our Scripture text, but I trust that you can see the large-scale picture there. In verse 5 God spoke to those who trembled at His Word. I hope you are one who trembles at His Word. When you think of God's Word and what is contained therein, it should cause you to fear and to be careful that you obey it and keep it as He has given it.

Many people would just as soon trample the Word under their feet as they would read it, but God wants you to be very careful of how you live throughout each day. You should be very concerned about what you do, where you go, and what you say. All facets of your life should be according to God's Word.

The life of one in spiritual Babylon mostly consists of putting in a little time Sunday morning and maybe Sunday night. Many churches have canceled their Sunday evening services. According to those in Babylon, as long as you put in your time and have your name in a membership book, that is all that matters. However, the Church of God does not live that way. We tremble at the Word of God. We want to live right twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. We want to be sure that we live according to God's will and obey the Word that He has made known to us.

When Jesus was speaking to those who trembled at His Word, it was because He wanted to encourage them and boost their confidence. The devil tries to take away our confidence in God, but God is looking after His own. Saint, God wants to encourage and strengthen you through our Scripture lesson. God's people need encouragement. Being with the people of God, having fellowship, and hearing the Truth preached is encouraging. It strengthens us. When you see other people determined to stand for the Truth as God has told you to do, that is encouraging.

The Voice of the Lord

The Word of God is another avenue of encouragement. Isaiah 66:6

says, "A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompense to his enemies." Here we find that a process was taking place. The Prophet mentioned, "A voice of noise from the city," and then he made it a little plainer when he mentioned "a voice from the temple." Next, he brought it closer than that by mentioning "a voice of the LORD." This is the way God worked, and He is still working the same way yet today.

Child of God, along life's way when God wants to encourage you, strengthen you, correct you, or take you deeper in the things of God, He first begins to get your attention. This "voice of noise from the city" is something that God uses to attract a person's attention, and then he begins to wonder, "What is that?" So he becomes interested and serious. Then the Lord brings it a little closer. The noise is not only in the city but also in the temple, and it further draws the interest of the honest heart. Therefore, he begins to seek. Next, the Lord brings it a little closer, and the person recognizes that it is the "voice of the LORD." Sometimes God has worked with me this way. Sometimes God may get your attention through circumstances that take place, and then He will draw you into a place where He can commune with you, perhaps in a way that He has not talked to you previously. He does this because He wants to bring you understanding concerning something.

In the latter part of Isaiah 66:6, the Prophet let us know it was the "voice of the LORD that rendereth recompense to his enemies." What a blessed truth to learn and to understand, that God renders recompense to His enemies. You do not have to worry or fret that someone will get what is coming to him. God has everything under control. He takes care of all things. Nothing escapes His eye. If you have been wronged, God has a record of it.

I am so glad that God holds true and accurate records of where each individual stands, and He knows

what kind of spirit each person has. He knows exactly what is working and what is going on. If someone has treated you the wrong way, you do not have to allow bitterness or envy to work in your heart. God knows about all those things, and He knows how to take care of it. You can leave it with God and have wonderful peace flowing down from the Father. I thank God that I do not have to worry when people say something against me, because I know that God knows all about it. He is taking everything into consideration, and He will take care of it.

The only thing God asks of you is that you treat people right and that you treat them with love. You should not show others a bad attitude or a bad spirit. Jesus said if you have an enemy who hungers, you should feed him. If your enemy is thirsty, you should give him something to drink. This is the only part that you should do concerning people who have wronged you. If people walk on you and trample you, so to speak, all you need to do is continue to do your best to live right and display the wonderful beauty and love and grace of Jesus Christ. You need to continue to do what God has called you to do, and that is to be holy.

Learn to Travail and Take Your Burdens to God

When God gets your attention, He wants to draw you closer and deal with your heart. When I was an unsaved young person and God dealt with me, my heart would thump and my chest nearly felt as if it were going to come apart. God made plain to me what I needed to do. Unfortunately, I rejected God for a long time, but I thank God that He continued to work in that manner, and in time He got my attention. God allowed me to go through quite a bit to get me to see my condition. I honestly feel that had I rejected God the night He saved me, I would have ended up in a very despairing condition.

God wants you to be encouraged and strengthened through His voice.

We can read of this truth in different places in the Scriptures. One good example is the story of the prodigal son. When he began his journey down the wrong road, he was convinced that he was going to have a good time, but you cannot do wrong and get by. It was not very long until he had spent everything he had. That is when God began to bring his thoughts back to his father's house. He began to think, "How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and plenty, and here I am!" God was visiting him, and He began to get his attention. Soon the prodigal son decided that he was going to go back to his father's house. The Bible tells us that it was not very long until he arose from that condition.

Child of God, people might have wronged you, but God knows all about it. If they are honest hearted, God is dealing with them and is bringing things to their minds, just as He did with the prodigal son. I want to encourage you to hold on, child of God, because joy comes in the morning. You need to continue to live for God, glorify Him, and bring honor to Him. He knows all about every situation. Nothing is outside His knowledge, and He will take care of everything in due time.

In verses 7-8 of our Scripture lesson, God was bringing His people to a place of travail. Why? So that they might weep, pray, fast, and move closer to Him. Child of God, He wants you to learn to rely on Him in a greater way. You need to be more burdened and to travail more before God. He wants you to learn to travail and to take your needs and burdens to Him. If you will do that, He will answer prayer. God is not going to answer half-hearted prayers. When you have become deeply burdened, when you have really been brought to a place of supplication, when you really pour out your heart to God, He will move.

We must have a burden to see souls won and to see the work of God go forward. Sometimes God has to put us through the fiery furnace of trials so that we will get a

greater burden. Sometimes when people wrong us, God will use that circumstance to bring us to that place.

Seeking God With Your Whole Heart

We read in Jeremiah 29:13, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Friend, that is when you will find God. That is when you will find Him for the salvation of your loved ones, friends, and neighbors. Sometimes God allows things to happen so that you might dismiss other affections that are trying to move in and search for God with all your heart. Hard places, trials, and tribulations will bring you to your knees. However, God does not want you to be brought to your knees and then forget all about it. He wants you to learn that you were brought to your knees so that you would seek Him in a greater way and see results. He wants you to continue to carry a heartfelt burden.

In the day in which we are living, most of our needs are readily supplied. Most of us do not have difficulty obtaining food and shelter, so we can easily become relaxed in our efforts for God. He does not want it to be that way. If we become relaxed in our efforts for God, we will come under a lukewarm spirit. God wants each of us to be on fire for Him and to be burdened and concerned about the work of God. A man of God has a full-time job admonishing people to be burdened about the regular worship services, the revivals, the camp meetings, and reaching souls. The very focus of our every day lives should be to win souls and to bring people into the glorious Kingdom of God, the Church of the Living God.

Saint, God wants you to carry a burden, not only during camp meetings and revivals, but also when they are over. God does not want your burden for souls to be temporary, but He wants you to continually keep that burden before Him so that greater things can be accomplished

and the work of God can go forward in a greater way. He wants you to learn that carrying a heavy burden brings you to a place of praying, visiting, inviting, and working to see souls saved.

In our Scripture lesson God was going to take that bad situation and turn it around for good. Romans 8:28 states, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." God can take a bad situation and work it for good so that it might cause us to be a better people than we were before. People getting saved is a result of prayer. People do not get saved without prayer being offered to God. That is the reason we must not let down on doing these things.

God wants each of us to hold that place of carrying a burden and having a concern for others. He wants us to continue to walk in the old paths. Every child of God ought to be very concerned about the work of God and the salvation of souls. Too many people have gotten off-track and have become more interested in how much money they are going to make. Our greatest concern ought to be what we are doing for God.

"He Shall Appear to Your Joy"

Verse 5 of our Scripture text states, "Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." How can God "appear to your joy"? God can appear to your joy by bringing in those whom you want to see saved. He can appear to your joy through divine healing. Also, He can appear to your joy by opening your understanding in ways that you had not known before.

All it takes is for God to breathe on you a little, and you can have deeper understanding and more liberty in the truths of His Word. God will appear to your joy when you have gone through a hard place

and it has brought you to a place of carrying a greater burden. For example, you should pray for your pastor every day, not just once a week. Instead of occasionally asking someone to come to church, you could make a list of those with whom you work or those to whom you could visit, call, or send tracts. You need to be brought to a place of greater concern for souls. When that takes place, God will appear to your joy. Also, He can give the man of God greater understanding and greater counsel for you that will make your life better and your experience with God sweeter.

Again, verse 5 says, "He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." How shall they be ashamed? In this verse of Scripture, the word *ashamed* means "confused, unsure, not knowing what to do, and regretful of what one has done." Those who have done wrong, especially to God's people, end up in a confused state. They are not really sure of what they have done, and they are not regretful of the moves they have made. The Word of God is true. What God says is exactly how things are going to turn out. His

Word is more up to date than the local newspaper. It will happen just this way because the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. No one can change God's Word. He has pronounced it this way, and that is how it is going to be.

You may ask, "What about people who have been carried away with those who hate the brethren? What about those who are truly honest, yet they became mixed up in something like that?" When things begin to become confusing, one who is really honest will realize that confusion is not of God. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "God is not the author of confusion" (1 Corinthians 14:33). When someone realizes that what he is involved in has become confusing, he becomes ashamed. If he is honest hearted, he will seek God in a greater way, saying, "Lord, I am confused, and I know that confusion is not of You." Then, God will say, "Go back and make it right. Go back and take care of that situation, get it straightened out, and march on with the saints of God." If he will do that, he will have more joy. That is the reason Isaiah said God "shall appear to your

joy, and they shall be ashamed."

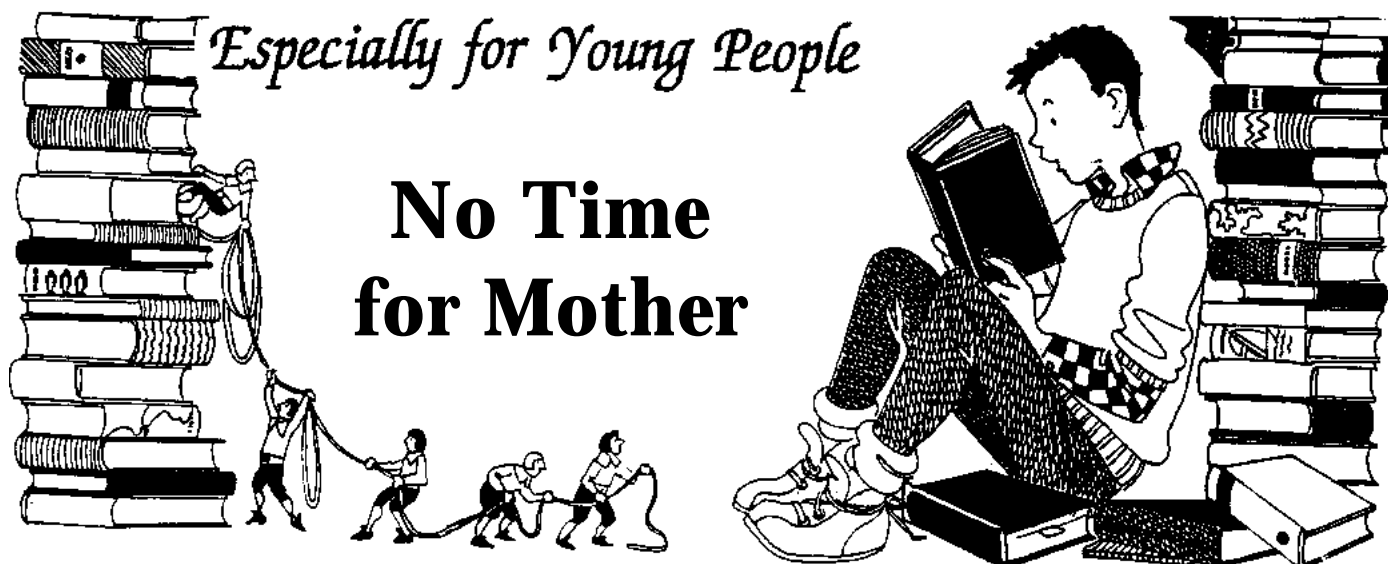
Child of God, you are going to have times of hardship. If you are determined to live for God, even if you made the wrong move initially, God will bring you through. This does not mean that you will not suffer, but God will bring you through it, and you will be better for everything that you have been through. You will bring glory to God by staying faithful and obedient. Brother, sister, you need to press the battle on. Do not get discouraged, give up, and turn back. You need to hold on and keep pressing, because God has made it plain that He will appear to your joy. God has promised that if you will continue to be obedient and willing, you will eat the good of the land. He will make up for any losses and any suffering that you have had to go through. God will take care of you if you will bring glory to Him and do His will. God's church will advance despite the difficulties. Again, I want to encourage you to press the battle on. God bless you.

(Cassette C-4570E)

Radio Log

LOCATION	STATION	DAY	TIME
Wellston, Ohio	WJJB-FM 92.5	Thursday	8:05 a.m.-8:35 a.m.
North Little Rock, Arkansas	KMTL-AM 760	Saturday	2:00 p.m.-2:30 p.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!



"Say, Jerry, could you help me with the dishes before you go outside? I've been baking all day, and I still have the lunch dishes to do, besides all these pans."

"Aw, Mom! I was going to play softball over at Nelson's field with the other guys before it gets dark. Do I *have* to?"

"It won't take long if we get at them right away, and you'll still have lots of time to play."

"Honestly, havin' to do dishes after goin' to school all day! I don't see why I have to work all the time," Jerry grumbled.

"All right, Jerry," Mother said softly, "Go ahead and play. I wouldn't want you to help me if you feel like that."

Jerry grabbed his cap and glove and left the house. He was glad he had gotten out of doing dishes. Yet, why did his mother have to put things that way? It didn't make him feel very good. Jerry hurried along the road to the field just past the cemetery. Already he could hear the other boys yelling and laughing.

As he hurried past the cemetery, he suddenly stopped short. There, standing beside a grave, close to the road, was Mr. Wilkins, his Sunday school teacher. Mr. Wilkins looked up and saw Jerry standing beside him. "Hi, Jerry," he said quietly.

"Hello, Mr. Wilkins," Jerry looked at him and wondered whose grave this was, and why Mr. Wilkins was so quiet.

"How old are you, Jerry?" asked Mr. Wilkins.

"Twelve."

"Twelve, eh?" Mr. Wilkins was thinking. Then he said, "You know, Jerry, this is my mother's grave, and I was twelve when she died." Jerry thought of his mother. He did not know what he would do if she died. He did not even like to think about it.

"You must have felt terrible when your mom died," Jerry broke the silence.

"Yes, I did—very much." Mr. Wilkins looked at Jerry. "Do you want me to tell you something?"

"Sure."

"Well, I remember the first time I stood by her grave. I knew Mother had gone to be with Jesus. I was saved too. But when I saw them put my mother's body into this grave, I couldn't help but think of all the times I had talked back to her and grumbled when she asked me to help her with some work. Mother was sick for only three days before she died. Then she was gone, and I could do nothing about it. So, you see, the time to do things for your mother is when she is alive and can appreciate them."

Mr. Wilkins stopped talking and for a moment neither of them spoke. Finally, Jerry broke the silence. "Well, good-bye, Mr. Wilkins."

Jerry turned back toward home. Somehow he did not feel like playing ball now. As soon as he got back to the house, he hollered, "Hey, Mom, I decided not to play ball. Want me to help with those dishes now?"

There was no answer. Suddenly fear gripped his heart. Suppose something had already happened to Mom! He

rushed upstairs. His mother was not there. Then, through the window he saw her coming back from the trash barrels with the garbage can he had not emptied that morning. Jerry was both relieved and ashamed.

Quickly he went to the kitchen, and when his mother came in, she found him piling dirty dishes into the sink.

"Jerry, I thought you had gone!"

"Naw, I decided not to go. Just thought I'd help with these dishes instead."

Not only did he help with the dishes, but he swept the floor and set the table for supper.

That night Jerry's mother was puzzled over the change in Jerry. He had been saved for a few months, but he had not been acting like a Christian around the home. She had been praying that he would realize that being a Christian meant being kind and helpful. It seemed that now her prayer had been answered.

Jerry was ready for bed early that night. He came to the kitchen for his evening snack and flopped down on a chair.

"How do you feel tonight, Mom?"

"I feel fine, Jerry. Why do you ask that?"

"Oh, I just wanted to know," answered Jerry.

Jerry kept his secret, but he promised the Lord that he would never forget what Mr. Wilkins had told him that day.

Selected

Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and

carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

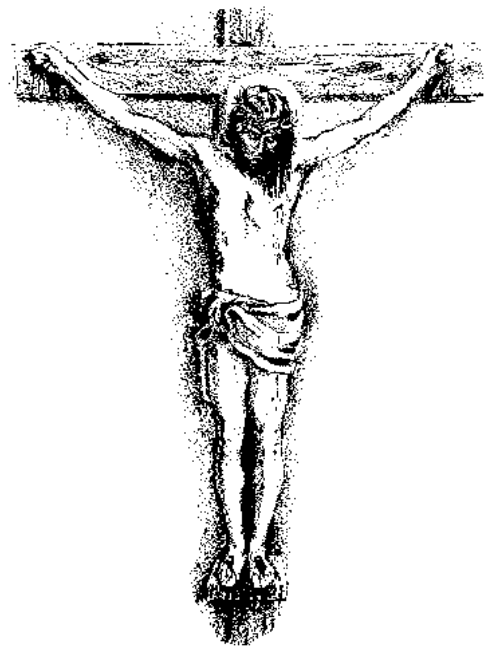
7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he

is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ



Brother David Watson

God's Remedy for Mankind

The Prophet Isaiah prophesied concerning Jesus Christ. As he prophesied, he asked in verse 1 of our Scripture text, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" In Chapter 52 Isaiah had been talking about what Jesus would do and making a declaration of Jesus concerning the people who were in great darkness in that day. When he got to Chapter 53, he began in detail to lay out some things that Jesus would have to suffer. Also, He gave the people foresight concerning why Jesus would have to suffer. He let us know that it was for the sins of the whole world that He

was going to suffer—for all the sins from Adam to Christ's Second Coming. Christ offered Himself to God as an offering that pleased the Father so that souls could stand in God's presence justified, as if they had never committed sin.

In John 3:16 Jesus said, "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 Christ is God's gift to this world, a gift from Heaven, His only Son. According to Isaiah, this is the One about which he was speaking. The things that Isaiah prophesied of were being embraced as time went on through other prophets of God, that

Jesus was coming to be crucified for the whole world, so that those who desired to be saved could be. Jesus said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me" (John 7:37). I am glad that gift from Heaven came so that I could walk right in, through the veil of His flesh, and talk with God the Father about my sins.

Acts 17:30 tells us that God commands all men everywhere to repent. You see, it was not just one person's sins, but the sins of the whole world that Jesus came for. He did not just come for a handful of Jews, and He did not come in secret concerning what He was to do. He came so that the whole world could know that He is the Son of God and

that He is God's remedy for mankind to save them from their sins.

Romans 3:19 says, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Jesus came for the whole world, and so the whole world is going to come before Jesus Christ. There is no other way for a person to go to Heaven except the way that Jesus came to bring for mankind.

Jesus said in John 10:1 that if a man climbs up another way, he is the same as a thief and a robber. No ceremony is going to get you through. There is no other remedy besides the one that God sent for us, and that is through His Son Jesus Christ. That remedy is old-time repentance from sin. God demands every person not only to confess but also to repent and forsake his sins. To truly repent, one must have godly sorrow. Then there is a work done within the soul that overwhelms the soul and lets the soul feel the guilt and the burden of sin and brings him before Jesus Christ so that he will lay down every sin and get rid of it through repentance.

Pilate's Judgment Hall

The Book of Matthew, Chapter 27, gives a description of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Verse 23 reads, "And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified." Jesus was brought in before the governor, and as He stood there, those who had accusations laid out against Him came before the governor. The governor soon found there was no guile in the mouth of the Son of God.

The Bible tells us in Ephesians 5:2 that Jesus "hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." You see, the governor was right in asking the question, "What evil hath he done?" I believe that every redeemed child of God, through the experience of being

washed in the blood that was shed upon the Cross of Calvary and through the experience of His love and having tasted that gift, can stand for Him and ask as the governor did on that day, "What evil hath He done?" There was not a trace of sin in the Son of God. When He went before His Father and came here to be crucified, He was without sin.

The governor asked the question, "Why, what evil hath he done?" Matthew 27:24 states, "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." Pilate knew there was no guile and no bitterness in the Son of God. As the crowd stood around Him, they asked that a murderer be set free and that a just man be crucified.

I am glad that Jesus was a man without sin so that He could deliver my soul from sin. On the other hand, I am sorry that Pilate felt that he could deliver himself from the blood of an innocent Man by washing his hands before the people. There is not enough water in the seven seas to wash away sin. One must be born again; he must have the blood applied to his soul by faith. Thank God, when the blood is applied, it will remove every spot from the soul and set that person free in Jesus Christ.

Pilate needed to understand that water could not have removed his guilt. His conscience was the same, and his spirit was the same. Any person who tries to go to Heaven without the blood of Jesus Christ and without the Spirit of God in his soul cannot make it. That person's spirit is still overwhelmed with sin, and there is a guilt in the soul that still needs to have deliverance. When Jesus comes into your soul, that is a really rich experience. Thank God, you can then stand up and say, "I know my sins are gone. They're under the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God." You can know that through a crucified Savior.

After Pilate washed his hands before the people, Matthew 27:25 tells us, "Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children." What a terrible thing to say that they were willing to take the charge of spilling innocent blood! Oh, what a clamor they had fall upon them! Verses 26-28 continue: "Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe."

You may ask the questions: "Where were all the people whom He had healed? Where were His disciples?" They all scattered and left Him. He was led as a sheep before the shearers. He was in Pilate's judgment hall with a whole group of people around Him who hated Him, people who were deceived and whose hearts were corrupt. As they gathered around Him, they said, "He is a king! Let's put a robe on Him, because a king wears a robe."

God's Gift From Heaven

Jesus wore a robe of shame so that you and I could wear a robe of righteousness. This salvation makes us pure, clean, and white. We read in Revelation 19:7-8: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." The bride of Christ adorns herself in fine linen, and the linen is clean and white; it is the righteousness of God.

Jesus wore a robe of shame and mockery. Friend, He did it for my sins and your sins, so that we could walk in this world clean and white and holy. Hallelujah! Friend, you cannot wait until you get to Heaven to put on a robe of righteousness. You must put it on right here in this

world. Then, thank God, you can walk pure and white with Jesus Christ.

I am amazed sometimes when I hear people sing that they are going to stop outside the city and change clothes. I am glad that I changed clothes when I put off the old man and put on the new. I am glad that when I changed clothes, I entered the city of God. Thank God, I entered that city that old Abraham was looking for, whose Builder and Maker is Jesus Christ.

You may ask, "Preacher, what city was that?" It is the New Jerusalem that John saw coming down from God out of Heaven. You can read of it in Revelation, Chapter 21. It is the heavenly Jerusalem that the saints of God came to in Hebrews 12:22. It is the new city that one of the seven angels showed John in Revelation 21:10 when he was carried away in the spirit to the top of the mountain where the church was established, the great Church of the Living God. She is clean and white, and she has been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. I thank God for the blood and for Jesus Christ.

Matthew 27:29-30 reads: "And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head." Can you picture Him in your mind? This is your Savior and my Savior, the One about whom Isaiah prophesied. He was God's gift from Heaven, because He loved human beings. Jesus is the offspring of God, seeing how pitiful man was in a house of obscurity, in darkness, without hope, without God, and without peace. God gave His best when He gave His only Son.

The soldiers stripped Jesus and put a scarlet robe on Him, and then they made a crown of thorns and put it on His head. As they put it on His head, the thorns went down between His scalp and skin, and the blood

came dripping down His face. Then they put a reed in His hand and bowed before Him and mocked Him saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" With unbelief and bitterness in their hearts, they mistreated the One who was there to save them, rescue them, and give them hope. They mocked Him and spit on Him. But why? He wore a crown of thorns and fixed it with the Father so that we could wear a crown of righteousness and the honor of salvation. We should give Him the glory and the honor that is due Him.

The anointing of the Father was upon His Son. There is no better feeling than to have the Holy Ghost touch your soul and quicken your body and raise you up. If you are ashamed, He will take away all the shame. If you are afraid, He will take away the fear. If you are trembling, He will give you strength and hope in your soul. The anointing of God will help you to stand and know that you are in touch with power from on high. Those are the things that were taking place in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Christ Gave Himself Willingly

Matthew 27:31 reads, "And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him." They had beaten Him, smitten Him, and said, "Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?" They were not satisfied with this, but they had another place to take Him. They led Him to Calvary's hill, and there He was to be crucified for the sins of the whole world. As they led Him away, they persuaded a man to carry His Cross.

Jesus has given us a right to carry a cross. Do you know what that cross symbolizes? It symbolizes a crucifixion between you and the world. I am glad that the "old man" has been crucified and that a new man is living inside. The cross goes further than that. Ephesians 2:16 tells us, "And that he might reconcile both

unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

By the Cross, thank God, Jesus brought people together under one Shepherd. He brought those who were without the commonwealth of Israel and strangers, without citizenship, to the household of faith. Whoever will take up his cross and deny himself can have citizenship with the household of faith, the saints of God. Dear one, you can be well known with the Father and His family right here in this present world. You can enjoy the heritage of God. Some people look upon the Christian life as being a dull life. On the contrary, it is the best life to live.

In Matthew 27:38 we read, "Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left." Again, you can see the details of what Isaiah wrote of in his prophecy concerning the Son of God. You see, it was no secret. Isaiah stood before Israel and prophesied concerning Jesus Christ more than six hundred years beforehand.

Some people in the religious world today tell people that God is going to secretly rapture the church. Brother, sister, He does not have to rapture secretly what belongs to Him. The church belongs to Him! God had fixed it with Jesus, and Jesus fixed it with God so that in His death He was paying for more than just sin. He was giving Himself for the church as well as for a lost world.

Christ Won Our Victory On the Cross

Matthew 27:39-40 continues: "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." People looked on the natural side, but this house was in obscurity and great darkness. In John 2:19 Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The people thought He was talking about the literal temple.

After Jesus had already gone back

to Heaven, Stephen preached that the Most High did not dwell in a literal tabernacle. Acts 7:49 states, "Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord." You see, they misunderstood and miscalculated, just as the world does today. Today some people run to the Wailing Wall and poke notes in the wall, hoping that God will come down and read their notes. God does not have to come down to read people's notes. He knows the number of hairs on our heads. Not even a little sparrow can fall to the ground without God knowing that it has fallen.

Brother, sister, God reads the heart. He knows what is in an individual's heart and mind. He did not come to build a literal building. He came to set up a spiritual kingdom, to build up the church, and to forgive men so that they might praise Him and live with Him, not just for a thousand years, but forever.

As Jesus was on the Cross of Calvary and people were mocking and asking Him why He did not come down, I am glad that they did not provoke Him to come down. Had He come down from the Cross, we would still be lost. I thank God that He stayed on the Cross. It was my sins and your sins and the sins of the whole world that held Him there. He saw more than just a handful of people walking around the Cross, wagging their heads and mocking Him and trying to provoke Him to come down off the Cross. Thank God, He out stepped the devil and gods of the world to the Cross of Calvary.

On the Cross of Calvary, thank God, Jesus won my victory and your victory. Because of Jesus and what He did on the Cross two thousand years ago, I can stand holy, pure, and clean in my soul before the Son of God and say, "I love You, Jesus, for what You did for me to save me and for taking my sins upon that Cross so that I could live and be holy." I thank God for salvation that is full and free.

Every time I think about Jesus and what He did for little old me, a hunk

of dirt, I thank God that He reached way down for me when I was in the miry clay of sin. Like David of old, I was in a pit, but He reached down, picked me up, set my feet on the Solid Rock, put a new song in my heart, and established my goings. No wonder David sang the Book of Psalms! He had something that put joy in his soul and caused him to sing. Praise God! Oh, what a Savior!

Jesus Tasted the Bitter So That We Could Taste the Sweet

Matthew 27:41-42 reads: "Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." They were looking for a literal kingdom, but Jesus did not come to be the king of literal Israel. He is the King of spiritual Israel. Romans 2:28-29 states: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly . . . But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly." If you are a Jew outwardly and God saves you, then you are a Jew inwardly and outwardly. If you are a Gentile and the Lord saves you, then you become a part of spiritual Israel on the inside and you walk with the spiritual King of Israel on the outside. Praise God!

I thank God that I am saved. The world does not know Him, and they do not know me, but I am a child of the King; I reign as a king. You may ask, "What are you reigning over?" I am reigning over sin and the devil. In the Kingdom of God we are children of the High King. Praise the Lord!

Matthew 27:43 continues, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God." Jesus is the Son of God. I believe in the Trinity. Do you? I believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. There was none before Him, and there was none after Him. He was not created; He has always been God. The Son is equal with the Father. He was in eternity. God said in Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man." Jesus goes back as far as

time goes back. You cannot have God without Jesus, and you cannot have Jesus without God.

You may ask, "What is the Holy Ghost?" He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. He was sent here from the Father, and He bosoms within the soul of every child of God. Wherever I go, I have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the presence of the Father and of the Son. The Bible lets us know that the Holy Ghost makes intercession for us and gives us utterance so that we can pray according to the will of God. When Christ died upon the Cross of Calvary, God provided a way so that the Spirit of the Father and the Son could live in our bosoms.

Going back to Matthew, Chapter 27, we read in verses 44-45: "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour." The time that verse was speaking of was from nine o'clock until twelve o'clock noon. They knew the sun was supposed to be shining, but at that time the sun had gone down, and there was darkness for three hours. As Jesus was dying before the Father, He was in total darkness for you and me so that we could live in light. Jesus Christ is that light. He is the light of the whole world so you and I could be brought out of darkness and into the marvelous light of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 27:46-48 reads: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink." Jesus tasted the bitter so that you and I could taste the sweet. Friend, have you tasted that the Lord is gracious? I tasted the world and found that the world was bitter to my soul; but when I tasted of Jesus, God

sweetened my soul.

John 19:30 tells us that when Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, "It is finished," and then He bowed His head and gave up the Ghost. Isaiah said He was bruised for our iniquities. Serving God is more than just going to an altar of prayer and confessing and accepting Jesus Christ. You have to crucify the "old man" if you are going to live for Jesus Christ.

An Empty Tomb

Luke, Chapter 23, lets us know they hurried and took Jesus down from the Cross and laid Him in a tomb because of the preparation day, and the Sabbath day was coming. John 19:31 says the Sabbath day was a high day; therefore, Jesus was to be in the tomb, and there was to be no vile work on that day. Mary and some other women looked at how He was laid and returned home to prepare spices. In Matthew 27:63-64 we read that the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead." Pilate told them, in essence, "You have it; go your way."

Jesus said in John 11:9, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" We do not serve the day; we serve the Creator of days. Some people still hold to an old sabbath. The Sabbath was a day of rest. Jesus is our sabbath. He is the One who gives us rest. I do not have to wait until Sunday to rest my soul. Friend, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, will rest your soul if you will turn to Him.

Jesus was to be in the tomb for three days and three nights. Matthew 28:1-4 states: "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel

of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." The angel did not roll away the stone so that Jesus could get out. He rolled away the stone so the unbelievers would know that He had risen. It was not man that rolled away the stone, but it was an angel from Heaven to whom God had given power. God had given His Son life. When the angel rolled away the stone, he just sat down on the stone. So when people came and looked in the tomb, Jesus was not there; He was gone.

John, Chapter 20, tells us that it was yet dark when they came to the tomb. Verses 1-2 read: "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." You see, it was dark, and Jesus was not there. They made more than one trip to the tomb. The sun was shining when they went that time, according to Mark, Chapter 16, and He was not there.

A Risen Savior

In John, Chapter 20, when they looked into the tomb, Mary was there. She loved Jesus. She was grieved in her soul, and when Jesus spoke to her, she thought she was talking to the gardener, and she said, in essence, "What have you done with Jesus?" Then when Jesus said, "Mary," she knew He was Jesus.

When Jesus spoke to me, I knew who He was. Hallelujah! I knew His voice was the voice of the Shepherd. The Bible says that His sheep hear His voice, and a stranger they will not follow. Thank God, Jesus spoke peace to my soul. I am not serving a dead Savior; He is living. It is good

for God to send down a shower once in a while. He speaks from Heaven and blesses our souls.

In closing, I want to say that the tomb is empty. Romans, Chapter 6, tells us that we are buried with Him by baptism. When we are buried with Him, we are planted with Him. As He was risen, we are raised. I was dead in trespasses and sins, and I had no hope. I was in despair, but thank God, when He spoke to my soul, He raised me out of despair and corruption. Thank God, I have hope, because as He lives, I can live.

After Jesus spent forty days here, according to Acts, Chapter 1, He was saying His last words to His disciples, and then He was taken up. As He was ascending out of sight, the Father sent two angels, and they said, in so many words, "Men, why do you stand gazing into Heaven? This same Jesus that you see going away will come again." Do you know where we are and where we will be when He comes? On the mountaintop. The church is not in the valley; she is on the mountain. What is she waiting for? She is waiting for her King. Praise God, He is coming again! He has not forgotten you, church. He is coming, just as sure as you are living. Hold onto Him and live for Him. He is sitting at the right hand of the throne of the Father, making intercession for the lost.

Friend, if you are lost, nothing greater under the sun is more important than for you to give your soul to Jesus. You need to get right with Him. Consider what Jesus went through just for you: the nails in His hands, the crown of thorns, and when He died, a soldier ran a spear in His side. Blood and water ran from His side so that you could be born of the Living Water and could have glorious peace with Jesus Christ. He did that, friend, for you and for me. He was bruised for our iniquities. Now He lives with the Father and sits on the right hand of the throne of God so that you and I can live.

(Cassette C-4809E)

God's Gift Through Christ



Brother C. H. Dickerson

The Gift of Eternal Life

There are two things that the Apostle Paul wrote about that we want to look at in our Scripture text. First, there are wages paid to every person who serves sin. Second, for the people who are willing to serve God, He gives them a gift as a reward. We want to consider the gift first. When someone gives you a gift, often it is at your disposal to do what you want to do with it. Sometimes a gift is appreciated, and other times a gift is laid aside and one wonders what he is going to do with it. I want you to realize that God has given us a gift. This gift is the gift of eternal life. If you fail to use that gift for its intended purpose, it will be to your own damnation.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:28, "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." He said in verse 31, "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." Paul let you know that every benefit you have is strictly a gift from God, and your lack of showing appreciation is the reason for the lack of more gifts being bestowed. The more you appreciate what God does for you, the more God will do for you.

Parent, you know that if you do something for a child and he appreciates it, you feel that you would like to do something more for him. On the other hand, when you do something

for a child and he does not appreciate it, then you are a little reluctant toward doing things for him. This is exactly how God is. If you are saved, you are God's child. When God does something for you, everything you have, every benefit you receive, and even your health is from God. He has given you whatever talent you have. When you appreciate those things and thank God for what He has done for you, then He will do more for you. Should you fail to appreciate those things and fail to praise God for what He does for you, then the gifts that He gives to you will be less and less. What you do not use, you lose. He does not owe any of us anything.

We are what we are by choice. We are living in an age when every time

people come short, they always want to blame it on their childhood. They say that something happened in their childhood that caused their problem. Nevertheless, the way they are is exactly what they chose to be. It is not because they were mistreated as a child or because they grew up in a certain environment.

If you are a saint of God, it is because God chose you and you answered that call. If you do not want to serve God, then He will not force you to serve Him. If you are living in sin or if you have cooled off in your Christian experience, that is your choice. If you are not as spiritual as you ought to be, it is because you did not put forth the effort. He has set things before you, and it is entirely up to you to make the right choices.

Jesus told the people of Israel in Joshua 24:15, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." The Lord lets you know that you are what you are because of the choices you have made. You cannot blame it on anyone else or blame God and say, "Well, that person is more capable. He is more spiritual." People can make all the excuses they want to for their shortcomings in this life, but those excuses will not hold up when they stand on the other side. There is no excuse for falling short in the things of God.

The first gift that God gave us was His dear Son for our salvation. Sometimes a person may really want something, but when he gets it, it is not long until he becomes tired of it. Sometimes a toy for a child is shelved. However, I want you to realize that the gift that God gives us never grows old and it never wears out. It is always helpful. We need to have everlasting thanksgiving for what God has done for us.

Child of God, when God reached down under the power of conviction, and you answered that call, He saved

your soul. He gave you the gift of eternal life. If you are serving God, you already have eternal life, and you need to praise God from the depths of your heart for eternal life, because it will take you to Heaven. When the people who do not serve God draw their last breath, they are going to go into eternity to a place of torments. You need to praise God for this great plan of salvation, because it can save your soul and keep you every day.

"Their Foolish Heart Was Darkened"

The world is full of sin on every side. The schools are full of sin, the workplaces are full of sin, and the streets are full of sin. Today many people hardly wear enough clothes to cover their bodies. They may tempt you, but God's grace can keep you. You can turn your eyes and get your mind on the things that amount to something. You can have the victory over those things.

The only reason we, as saints of God, have victory is that God gives us the grace to live for Him. It is not because of ourselves. We need to have everlasting thanksgiving and thankful attitudes for what God has done for us. We are warned repeatedly of the danger and the results of losing our appreciation of God's gift. Many people have lost their appreciation. At one time they were truly saved, but their praise and their joy began to dry up. Because of that, they lost their appreciation and their thankfulness for that gift; then when that happens, they also lose the gift. Many people have nothing more than a profession.

Paul wrote about one danger in Romans 1:21. He said, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." If you lose your appreciation for what God has done for you, the next step is that your heart becomes darkened. In other words, you will not see things as clearly as you

once did. Little by little, things will slip away from you. In another place God told us that because people closed their eyes, God closed their ears and their minds. Why? Because people close their own eyes; God does not close them.

Again, in Romans 1:21 Paul said, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." They did not live as they should have and they did not appreciate and praise God as they should have. Because of that, their foolish hearts were darkened, yet they went on professing. He wrote in verse 22, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." They professed that they were wise people, but they became fools. Paul said in verse 24, "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves."

In verses 26 and 28-29 he said: "For this cause God gave them up into vile affections [the Greek says 'passions of dishonor']: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind [or a mind void of judgment], to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness. . . ."

When people's hearts become filled with worldly things, there is no room for anything else. On the other hand, when people's hearts become filled with the things of God, there is no room for any worldliness. When God gives you the special gift of salvation, it is dangerous not to praise and glorify Him. Also, it is dangerous not to live so that the world can see Christ in your heart and life. Friend, if you get to that place, your heart will become darkened. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3:2, "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthank-

ful, unholy." All these things happen to people when they lose their appreciation for what God has given them.

God Supplies Every Need

This great plan of salvation cost Christ such tremendous suffering that our minds cannot even comprehend it all, yet He endured it to give us the gift of eternal life. It is a gift that never dulls, never gets old, never gets to the place where we cannot use it, and we never outgrow it. God wants to stir your mind concerning the gift that He has given you. You should not get tired of it, but you ought to use it and praise God for it. You need to glorify God through your life. This, and this alone, is the reason Christ suffered, died, and was resurrected.

John 3:16 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." In John 4:10 Jesus spoke to the woman at the well and said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Jesus went on to say that whoever drinks of this water will never thirst again. This Living Water is always fresh; it never gets stagnant. When you get up each morning, the day is not the same as the day before. It is a new day. God blesses each day in a different way. I thank God for these things.

Friend, when you meet God's conditions and He saves your soul, He will put His Spirit within you. He will give you Living Water so that you will never again thirst for this old world. All you will want is more and more of God. When people begin to thirst for the world and look back on the world, it is a dead give away that something has happened in their Christian experience. The true saints of God go to the house of God because the only thing they desire is more and more of God. The world has lost its value and pleasure for them. One is not concerned about the

pleasures of this old world anymore when he has God.

In 2 Corinthians 9:10 and 12 Paul said: "Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness. . . . For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God." Paul was simply telling us that when God gives us that seed, or that salvation, it is abundant. Also, when we give God thanks for what He did, He opens up the storehouse and continues to pour out many more blessings, because we appreciate what God has done for us.

Christian friend, if there was ever a time when you ought to appreciate God for picking you up out of a life of sin and turning your life around, it is in the day and age in which we are living, because we are living in a dangerous age. There has never been a more dangerous time to live a life of sin. It used to be that you could walk about any place you wanted to, but today in many places you had better get home ahead of the dark because it is not safe. You need to praise God from the depths of your heart that He has saved your soul. He has given you something wonderful, and He keeps adding to it. Salvation is a special gift from God. It is the only thing that can pick you up, turn your life around, and give you new desires. The Christian no longer desires the things of this old world.

When God saves a person, He breaks the cigarette habit. If you were bound by that habit and God has delivered you from it, that is something you ought to praise God for. Saint, God took you off the broad way and placed you on the narrow way. That is another blessing that you ought to praise God for. When you get sick, if you call the doctor's office, the receptionist may tell you, "He does not have room for you in his schedule for another twenty-five to thirty days." However, if you get on the "royal telephone" and call upon God, He can move upon you

right away. You need to praise God for that benefit. God is still on the throne. You need to praise Him from the depths of your heart for His goodness to you. You should never forget what God has done for you.

The Grace of God

In Ephesians 2:8 Paul told us, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." The Prophet Isaiah told us to come to the waters and buy wine and milk without money and without price. He was simply saying that there is not enough money in this whole world to buy it, because it is a gift of God. You cannot buy it with money, yet it is going to cost you everything you have and everything you ever will have. Nevertheless, one songwriter said, "It will be worth it all when we see Jesus." God will never ask you to do anything that is not right, and He will supply your needs. He will give you everything you need.

It is by the grace of God that you are saved through faith. You did not earn it. When you reached the age of accountability, there is only one reason that you became a sinner, and that was because it was by your choice. You did not do something to merit this salvation, but it is a gift from God. Therefore, you need to thank God and appreciate it, and you need to appreciate the church ministry. When I talk about the church ministry, I am speaking from this standpoint: there is more to the church ministry than the men who stand behind the sacred desk. That is only one facet of the church ministry. Yes, you need to appreciate true men of God, but you also need to appreciate others who minister to your needs.

Friend, sometimes you will walk into the house of worship feeling a little cast down, and someone may get up and sing a song that is uplifting to you. You need to praise God for that. Sometimes maybe you just need a little smile, and someone may smile at you. You need to appre-

ciate that kind of ministry that God has sent to help you, uplift you, and encourage your heart. Perhaps someone may give a testimony that encourages you. All these things are part of the church ministry, and you need to praise God and be thankful for these things and appreciate them from the depths of your heart. There are some people who can give you a smile that will encourage your heart. You should never lose your appreciation for that.

John the Baptist, in so many words, said, "I am not the One you have been looking for, but I am leading you to Him." Today God fills the offices of the local assembly for one reason, and that is to help and to bring encouragement to other people. When God puts someone in a position, He does not do it for one's own benefit, but He does it to encourage and help the body of Christ and to prosper the work of God.

Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:7-8: "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." God has made it clear that every office in the church is filled by God. He gives the gifts, and He also gives people grace according to the gifts that God has given them.

"Be No More Children, Tossed To and Fro"

Paul stated in Ephesians 4:9-14: "(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That

we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro. . . ."

I want you to realize that God has called people and given them gifts. He did it for the perfecting of the saints and for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, so that we will not be tossed to and fro as children. Sometimes when children are playing, one minute they are having a good time, and then a child will come up, whisper something in another child's ear, and that one will leave and take a stand against the one whom the whispering was about and start playing with another.

God calls prophets and pastors and teachers, and they preach the Gospel for the perfecting of the saints of God. When you find out what the Truth is, you need to stand with the Truth. Then you should not be tossed to and fro as children. You are going to find the people of God where the Truth is and where the Spirit of God is; then you need to stand there. The remainder of verse 14 states, ". . . and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

God has a plan of salvation that will save your soul and keep you day by day. He also wants you to get settled in His eternal Truth, so that He knows where you stand and everyone else will know where you stand. He does not want you to be tossed about by every wind of doctrine that comes along. He wants you to get your feet dug in and to stand there.

Sometimes in the Army when we were going forward and had the enemy on the run, we got in a place, dug a hole, and got in that foxhole. There was a battle going on, and someone was going to lose the battle. We dug in so that we could stand, and that is exactly what God wants us to do. Sometimes you can tell the devil, "Scat!" and he goes, but most of the time he will put up a fight. God wants you to dig in so that you will not be moved by the sleight of men or cunning craftiness or the winds of

doctrine. There are many winds of doctrine, and some of them may sound good. Therefore, God wants you to get dug in so that you know what the Truth is and so that you stand for the Truth, and even die for the Truth, if necessary.

Grace Empowers Men for Service

God has called some to preach the Gospel, some to sing the Gospel, some to testify of the Gospel, and some to give a Gospel smile. How can all of this come about? By the gift that God gave to man. I want you to realize that the work of God is not a self-sustained work. Also, you did not earn the plan of salvation or inherit it because your mother or your father had this plan of salvation. God gave it to you.

Paul addressed the Roman people in Romans 10:13-15, saying: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel." Paul let us know that whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. God has moved in such a way that every man, every woman, every boy, and every girl can know how to call upon the name of the Lord.

God has called people and sent them out in this lost and dying world to preach the Gospel, to live the Gospel, and to sing the Gospel so that people might receive light concerning this great plan of salvation that can pick them up out of the life of sin. He gives you grace so that you can stay true to Him. We each need to thank God for the grace that God has given us, because there is no way that we could last one day if it were not for the grace of God.

What is grace? It is a divine influence acting in man to make him pure and morally strong. We go through

many trials, many temptations, and many problems that can use up the grace of God very quickly. Nevertheless, God gives us all we need so that we can stand true to Him.

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 3:10, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder. . . ." Paul was saying that it is only by the grace of God that he knew what to do and knew how to do it. It also took the grace of God for him to lay the foundation and for another to build thereon.

If it were not for the grace of God, there would not be many foundations laid, because people would be doing whatever is easiest to do. It is not the easiest thing to lay a foundation. Also, it is not easy to preach Christ to people who do not want to hear it. It is not always easy to live for Christ when you are out amongst the world. Paul let us know that the only reason he did it and the only reason he could do it was because of the grace of God.

Paul also said the grace of God made him a wise masterbuilder. We each need to be wise masterbuilders to build our experiences by the grace of God. It takes God's grace to build an experience that will last. The Scriptures let us know that the devil has sent many people to defeat us, to get us to the place where we cannot go forward for God. The devil wants us to be tossed around and to give up.

God's Grace Is Sufficient

Paul said this foundation of God stands sure, and he let us know that it takes the grace of God to do that. In 1 Corinthians 3:11 Paul said, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." He let us know that he could not have done it any other way than by the grace of God. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:10, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain."

Saint, God has sent you and me in these last days of time to lay the

foundation: God's eternal Truth. That is what our mission is. If you are faithful to preach the Truth and live the Truth and show people the Truth, then when your work is all done and you meet the experience of death, your reward will be eternal life, or making Heaven your home. However, if you fail to do what God wants you to do, you will have to pay the wages of sin.

God has given you and me the plan of salvation and the grace to live for Him. Saint, you need to have the same testimony that Paul did so that He does not bestow His grace upon you in vain, because you are doing what God has called you to do. Although not everyone can sing or preach, God has given every one who is saved a gift, and He gives us the grace to see that fulfilled. God wants us to fulfill the mission that He has given us so that His grace is not bestowed on us in vain; in other words, so that we use it to the glory of God. We cannot do that by having confidence in our flesh.

You must realize that if you are going to be what God wants you to be, the weaker you feel, the more you have to rely upon God. You have to put something into serving God. You cannot just sit back and let God do it all, because He will not do it. However, when you do your best to put something into this, then God will give you the power. God wants you to go through and be made strong through your weakness. Jesus told Paul when he was going through a hard place, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Then Paul said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

God's grace is sufficient in anything that He sends you out to do. You do not have to ask God, "Why me?" when someone else can pray better, preach better, sing better, play an instrument better, and so on. God's grace is sufficient. God has a reason for what He does. Through Paul's weakness, Christ was made

strong. Paul said he would gladly bear the infirmities so Christ could be strong. In other words, the Lord is simply telling us that He wants the flesh out of the way so that whatever you do, you do not do it to praise yourself or man but to lift up Christ, to let Christ be praised.

Be Strong in the Lord

Christ is our source of power. Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:1-5: "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully."

Paul admonished Timothy to be strong in the Lord. God has placed us in His army, and there is a battle going on. A war is being fought; therefore, Paul said not to get entangled with the affairs of this life, but to go out and fight the battle and win, for a crown is awaiting those who will live for God and do what He wants them to do. The battle must be fought according to the lawful way that God would have it.

Christ let us know that He is our source of power, and it was by grace that He brought salvation. Titus wrote in Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men [He gave each of us that opportunity], Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Titus also wrote in Titus 3:7, "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

Again, Paul wrote in our Scripture text, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life

through Jesus Christ our Lord." God gives everyone who will serve Him a gift. However, you can also be assured that if you do not serve Him, a payday is also coming: Paul said that the wages of sin is death. Anytime you have a wage coming to you, you earn it. In other words, living in sin is a harmful work to you, and you will receive wages for it.

God has a gift for everyone who will serve Him, and that is eternal life. When you get saved, it goes right on through until the day He declares that time is to be no more, either for that individual or collectively, and then that one will go on to receive his reward. The wages for the sinner come for refusing to serve God. I want you to realize, first of all, that God's grace is poured out on the righteous; but His wrath is poured out on the rebellious, right in this life. David said in Psalm 68:18, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them."

Making the Truth Inoperative

Paul stated in Romans 1:18, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." If you are going to see the righteousness of God, it has to be dealt with as it should. If you do not do that, you are going to make the grace of God, or the righteousness of God, inoperative and people will not want it.

God has set examples to live righteous lives so that people will long for salvation. They do long for salvation when it is lived. People may not turn to it, but they know where their help comes from. Often people in the world do not want this salvation, but when they get sick, they call for a preacher to come to the hospital and pray for them. Why? They know where they can get help.

Again, Paul said, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."

Those who refuse to serve God are not going to get by. The wages of sin is death. The wrath of God is revealed not only in this life but also in the life to come. Never in my life have I seen so many things happening in this world as we are seeing today. We are seeing earthquakes, floods, and other catastrophic events that have killed thousands of people.

God is trying to awaken people to the conditions that this old world is in. He is giving them ample opportunity to turn from all unrighteousness. When people keep rebelling, God has a gift for them also, and that is His wrath. He is pouring out His wrath upon this old world today because people know the Truth, but they are making the Truth inoperative. People who are serving sin and bringing a reproach upon the church are going to have the wrath of God poured out upon them.

Paul said in Romans 2:3-6: "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds [every man is going to receive the reward that is due him]."

Tribulation and Anguish

Paul went on to write in Romans 2:7-9: "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious [always ready to argue, disregard, and disobey the things of God], and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."

Notice that it got deeper than the skin when he said, "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man." He was speaking of a condition where a pain relieving medication will not help. Whenever people do wrong, they will have tribulation and anguish upon their souls.

Many people today are treasuring up wrath against themselves simply because they *know* what God wants them to do, but they will not do it. They have sat under the preached Word of God, and God has shown them that they are guilty. The Spirit of conviction has gotten hold of their hearts, yet they shrug it off lightly. Tribulation and anguish are going to come upon every soul that does this.

What about those who obey God? Romans 2:10-11 tells us: "But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God."

Friend, it does not make any difference who you are or what you have done or what you are going to do in the future, "The wages of sin is death." Tribulation and anguish will be upon every soul of man that does evil. As a final reward, those who do evil will end up in a lost eternity. On the other hand, those who do right will receive the gift of eternal life, and it starts right here in this life. There is happiness, joy, peace, and blessed assurance in serving God.

Saint, when you are going through sickness or a trial or a disaster of some kind, you can always say, "God, I am your child." God knows that, and as a result He will come to your rescue. Many times He has worked out things that seemed impossible to work out, yet He worked them out simply because the children of God have been faithful.

Friend, when the Truth of God goes forth and you know what you ought to do, but you do not do it, you can expect one thing, and that is tribulation and anguish upon your soul—not necessarily upon your body, but upon your soul. Many people today are miserable because they are not serving God. I have

never seen so many people backslide as I have today. When people do not do what God wants them to do, they often commit suicide or turn to drugs or alcohol. They are so miserable, but the reason is not due to the way they were raised or the environment they were raised in. They are miserable because God spoke to them and they said no to Him. Some have turned God down time after time. As a result, God has made them miserable to the degree that they are trying to find something. Therefore, they turn to drugs and alcohol and even commit suicide because they have disobeyed God. That is exactly what Paul said was going to happen.

Friend, your body can get tired and you can become depressed, and you might go to a drugstore and buy medicine of some kind to soothe you; however, when it gets into your soul, no medicine will ever touch it. The only thing that can heal your soul is the Spirit of God.

People are turning God down, day by day. Oh, they may take on a form of religion, yet they are turning down God's eternal Truth. As a result, we are seeing a nation that is miserable and seeing the suicide rate climb. I read in the newspaper some time ago about a woman in her thirties who had two or three children in the car and ran into a truck head on to commit suicide because she was miserable. She and the children were killed. Another man who was a doctor took a gun and killed himself and his two children because he was having financial trouble.

What Is the Answer to Today's Problems?

God is the answer to all your problems. When people are cast down, the old devil comes along and says, "Hey, take drugs" or "Kill yourself and get it over with." Friend, if you will just run to the Church of the Living God where the Truth is preached and give your heart to God, He will save your soul; then situations will look much different. You may be feeling pressed down, but

God has the answer for your problem. He will save your soul, give you joy, lift you up, and make you a new creature if you will do what He tells you to do.

Friend, there are two wages here. God pays wages to the people who serve Him, and He also pays wages to the people who turn Him down. If you turn Him down, you do not necessarily have to turn Him down completely, you may just turn down a portion of the Truth. You do not have to say, "I am not going to go to church anymore." When you turn down a portion of Truth, you are going to get worse.

God is the answer to America's problems, and He is the answer to the world's problems. God is the answer for all people. Today many public schools have gotten so bad that they have guards to control the students and to keep them from killing one another. God is still the answer for the problems today, if people will just turn to Him and sell out to Him.

Friend, eternal life starts right here. Salvation is not some kind of myth; it is real.

I heard a man say one time (and certainly his life proved the falsity of his statement), "I just happened to realize that I am a saved person." My friend, you do not get saved that way. You do not just happen to wake up one day and realize that you are a saved person. If you get saved, you must repent and turn yourself over to God completely and let Him use you as He sees fit. You must confess your sins and quit the sin business and let God change your life completely; then He will make you a brand-new creature. If you will do that, the world will look different, life will look different, and you will be different. You will have different desires. Furthermore, you will see the beauty in people; you will not have hatred for people. You will live for God and do what He tells you to do. May God help you.

(Cassette C-4667M)

It Takes a Mother

*It takes a mother's love to make a house a home,
A place to be remembered, no matter where we roam.
It takes a mother's patience to bring a child up right
And her courage and her cheerfulness to make a dark day bright.*

*It takes a mother's kindness to forgive us when we err,
To sympathize in trouble and bow her head in prayer.
It takes a mother's wisdom to recognize our needs
And give us reassurance by her loving words and deeds.*

*It takes a mother's endless faith, her confidence and trust,
To guide us through the pitfalls of selfishness and lust.
And that is why in all this world there can never be another
Who will fulfill God's purposes as completely as a mother.*

Author Unknown


ANNOUNCEMENTS

KENSETT, AR
May 23-25

REVIVAL: The Kensett Church of God, 409 S. E. Second Street, Kensett, Arkansas
Service times: Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 6:00 p.m.; Sun. 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor Calvin L. Foster
Telephone: (Home) 501-742-3961 or (Church) 501-281-5072

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Two Services Daily
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The first service begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday.

Holy Ghost Preaching - Inspirational Singing
Children's Services - Divine Healing

Come and worship the Lord with us!