

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

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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Guest Editorial

The Crown of Life

Who Wears This Crown?

Part 3 of 3

James 1:1-3, 12 states: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

In the previous article we established the truth that this "crown of life" is not something for some future supposed time, but a reality we can enjoy right when one is tried. We saw that this crown is life—crowned, victorious living. In this article we want to identify who wears this crown.

The thought of a crown in James 1:12 is to evoke an image to our minds. When he spoke of the crown of life, he said, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life." Who wears this crown? Those who are reigning and who have authority and power wear this crown. God's people are reigning. Romans 5:17 says, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness [it is a crown of righteousness, because you receive the gift of righteous-

ness] shall reign in life [how?] by one, Jesus Christ."

Those who literally wear crowns are reigning kings, or monarchs, those who have power and authority. Why are God's people reigning? Because we are kings. Revelation 1:6 talks about our being made kings because we are reigning. It says, "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father."

Revelation 5:10 states, "And has made [this is present tense] us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." We are kings. That is the reason the Bible denotes Christ as the King of kings, because we all are kings, and we are reigning in this life by Jesus Christ, the King of kings. He has given us the gift of righteousness. If you live right, in the end you will be rewarded with the crown of righteousness. As saints, we are kings, and we are reigning.

How do we maintain our reign? We do it the same way any king does. We must bring down opposition, or bring down all adversity, by being victorious in trials. How did a king protect his domain in ancient times? Job 15:24 says, "... as a king ready to the battle." One maintained his rule, or his reign, by doing battle and coming forth victoriously.

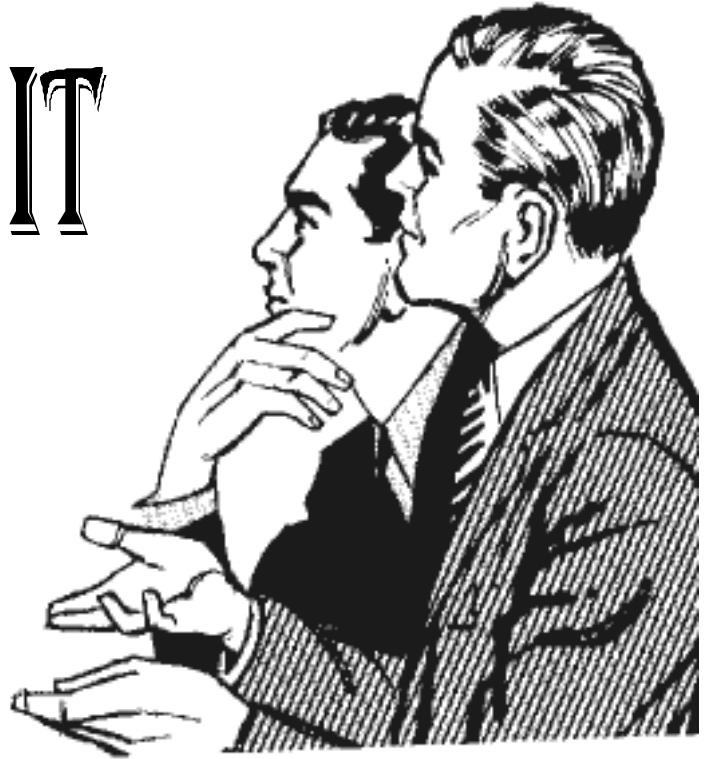
Who else wears a crown other than royalty? First Corinthians 9:24-25 tells us: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." What is the lesson here? Those who run in athletic contests are running to gain a crown. When they secure victory, that is when they obtain the crown.

The victor in a contest is one

[continued on page 25]

Proverbs 23:23 Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

TRUTH—BUY IT AND SELL IT NOT



Brother Roger L. Decker

The Truth Will Make You Free

Truth is what governs and guides the heart. It is by the power of Truth that is known and believed that we are delivered from and kept free from sin. In our Scripture text the wise man was saying that you must be willing to part with anything to acquire the Truth and to keep it. You need to acquire all the knowledge of Truth that you can. You ought to buy the Truth at any cost and refuse to sell it for any price. Once you acquire it, let there be no consideration of turning from it.

Merchants will always be around. In other words, false prophets will try to get you to sell the Truth. Those merchants, or false prophets, will offer you something that appears to be a better way.

They will offer you many shortcuts for what they call the truth at a cheaper price. They will try to make you believe that certain things do not matter as they once did and that God is not concerned with things as He once was. On the contrary, Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Man does not really know the Truth until it has set him free. Truth and freedom go hand in hand; they are inseparable. Again, the wise man said in our Scripture text, "Buy the truth, and sell it not."

Dear one, if you sell the Truth, you will sell your soul. Read the words of Jesus as He spoke in Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" We read in Mark 8:36-

37: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Some people run around and say, "I know the Truth. You don't have to tell me." It takes more than *knowing* the Truth, *hearing* the Truth, and *reading* the Truth. Also, it takes more than attending a church where Truth is preached. What does it take? It takes having a love for the Truth.

Paul, writing to the church at Thessalonika, said in 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 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, [What is a strong delusion? It is a delusion that God puts on you, and one cannot get a stronger delusion than that.] that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

God Is Truth

Can you see why the wise man said to "Buy the truth, and sell it not"? I say again, if you sell the Truth, you will sell your soul with it. Truth is not something that you can just take or leave. Truth brings accountability. It brings the thoughts of God about your condition, and along with that comes the outstretched hand of God so that you can be delivered.

Let me help you if you are harassed by the devil. When God speaks to you, He speaks to you in Truth. If the enemy of your soul is harassing you, you will not know what is troubling you; that is not God. God would not beat you down and badger your mind. God is a Father, and just as a godly father does with his child, God tells you the truth to help you in your soul.

Many times I have worked with people who say, "I don't know what I have done. I might have done this or that." God deals in Truth. If you have come to Jesus Christ and asked for salvation and repented of your sins, those sins are no longer charged against you. They are gone, and God will not bring them up, because they are not there anymore. The enemy will come around and say to you, "Did God really forgive you?" If you repented according to God's Word, God forgave you, and He will not harass you and say, "Did you do this or that?" God speaks in absolutes. If you are guilty of something, God will tell you what you are guilty of; then He will

tell you what you need to do to remove the guilt.

Truth brings commitment. To buy the Truth, one must pay the full price. One must give what Truth requires. That is the reason people can be saved in Babylon if they walk in all that Truth requires of them at that time. As they receive more Truth and knowledge and instruction, they must walk in it. One must be willing to part with anything to acquire the Truth.

To buy the Truth, one must pay the full price; there are no discounts or sale days. There is no easy payment plan where you can pay 10 percent down and pay the rest later. You must give all for what knowledge you have received at that time. When you buy the Truth, you keep gaining more and more. Do not sell it for any price. What the Word tells you to do, you must do.

Give What Truth Requires

What does the Truth require of you? How can you know when you have found the Truth? How can you really recognize the Truth? In John, Chapter 8, you can read that Jesus was in a discussion. Verses 31-32 read: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

What will Truth make you free from? Verses 33-36 read: "They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

The Jews' answer to Jesus was that they were never in bondage to any man. That statement was totally false. All you have to do is read their history and you will find

that Israel was often in bondage. They were in servitude to the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Persians, the Macedonians, and the Romans, just to mention a few. However, Jesus was not talking about the bondage of man, but He was talking about being in bondage to sin. Jesus brought them right back to the main subject of bondage. Again, verse 34 reads, "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." The Jews tried to digress in verse 33 by saying that they were never in bondage to any man, so Jesus said: "I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (verses 34-36).

When you come face to face with the Truth, if you will obey it, you will find that freedom goes with it. You cannot be in the Truth and remain in sin. In other words, if you are in sin, Truth is not in you. Again, the wise man said in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding." You may ask, "What does it mean to buy the Truth?" It simply means do that which Truth requires of you. If you buy a car, what do you have to do? You must pay what is required to purchase the car. Likewise, when you buy the Truth, you have to give what Truth requires.

Truth will produce fruit in the lives of those who love it. Those in Truth will live right, and you will be able to work with them. They will not grumble and complain about this and that all the time. Some people are continually in the middle of controversy.

How Does One Sell the Truth?

We want to look at some of the many ways that people sell the Truth. Some sell the Truth for works of the flesh, for a moment of

pleasure. In the Old Testament you can read the story of Jacob and Esau. Perhaps you know that story well. Esau was a hunter in the fields, and Jacob dwelled at home and lived a more quiet, peaceful life. Their father Isaac was more like Esau. He liked to live a wild, adventurous life in the outdoors.

In those days a birthright was given to the firstborn male child, and that child was Esau. The birthright consisted of many special privileges, and part of that privilege was receiving a double portion of the estate, or whatever there was to inherit. For example, if a man had two sons, the estate would have been divided into three parts, and the firstborn son would have received a double portion. If a man had three sons, the estate would have been divided into four parts, with the firstborn receiving two portions. Also, it has been said that legal continuation of the family lines went along with the privileges of the birthright.

If you read the story of Jacob and Esau, you will find that their father Isaac loved Esau, but their mother Rebekah loved Jacob. When Isaac became old, his eyes grew dim, and the time came when Isaac felt that he might not live much longer. Rebekah overheard a conversation between Isaac and Esau, telling Esau to fetch some venison so he could bless him before he died. Since Rebekah favored Jacob, she sent Jacob to get two small goats. She was going to trick Isaac and have Jacob take the meat in to his father before Esau returned. Also, she instructed Jacob to take the hair from one of the goats and put it on his hands and his neck so that when he went before Isaac, he would feel like Esau. Then she gave Jacob one of Esau's garments to wear so that he would smell like Esau.

Jacob succeeded in deceiving his father, and Isaac gave Jacob the blessing of the birthright. He received the double portion that belonged to Esau. Prior to all of that,

we can read that Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob for something to eat. Genesis 25:27-34 reads: "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom.

"And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright." The Bible says in Hebrews 12:15-16: "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright."

Selling the Truth for a Moment of Pleasure

Buy the Truth and sell it not. The writer of Hebrews said that Esau was considered to be a profane person. The word *profane* means that he was godless and considered wicked. Esau gave in to the desires of the flesh and sold his birthright. He traded eternity for a moment of pleasure, just as some people do around the house of God yet today. Esau thought that he was at the point of dying, so the birthright meant nothing to him at that time. He thought, "What good is the birthright if I starve to death?" The birthright could not help feed him right then.

First Peter 4:1-2 states:

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." Esau sold his inheritance for a bowl of lentils. After the pleasure was over, he realized what he had done. Hebrews 12:17 says, "For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Esau wanted the inheritance back, but along with the inheritance came living right. Esau was not seeking that, but how he sought that inheritance! He sold his inheritance for a moment of pleasure.

How many people have sold their inheritance for a moment of pleasure? Just a moment of the flesh having its way can cost you heavily. Many dating couples have done that which is forbidden, that which should not be even thought about before marriage. If people would wait for marriage, God has a beautiful plan, and it is a plan that you can enter into without condemnation. Dear one, you need to think before you give in to the flesh. You should ask yourself, "Is it really worth it?" Before you partake of sinful vices, think about it.

If a young man gets out of line, the young lady should slap his face. Young lady, you have a right to do that. He does not have a right to that which is off limits. If he refuses to stop, you should yell for help. For a moment of pleasure, many people sell their godly inheritance.

Today couples talk about how they love each other and would do anything for each other. Speaking of love, the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13:5, "Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." Love does not behave itself unseemly. What does the word *unseemly* mean? Well, we

could easily say, "Doth not behave itself disgracefully, or with improper conduct." Charity is respectful; that is true love. It is much better to go before the preacher without condemnation.

When a couple gives in to the flesh, I would much sooner think that it is lust rather than love. Our nation has been led down a road that is a million miles from the Truth. Many people are doing things that are against the principles in the Word of God, yet they feel that they are still pure. Friend, you need to rightly divide the Word of Truth. Fornication comes out of the heart before the act is ever carried out.

The words of Jesus clarify this in Mark 7:20-23: "And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men [He was talking about the center of your affections], proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." Fornication gets into the heart before the act is ever committed. A moment of giving in to a fleshly desire can cost you your godly inheritance.

If you mess around with drinking alcohol, you could become an alcoholic. An alcoholic does not start out drinking a case of beer or a fifth of whiskey in one night. He gradually tempers the body to accept the alcohol; then he gets to the place where he cannot overcome the habit without the power of God.

In a moment of giving in to the flesh, you could become an alcoholic. The same happens to those who become addicted to tobacco or drugs. If you mess around with cigarettes, you could get lung cancer. Smoking is a habit that causes everything about you to stink: your clothes, your car, your house, and your breath. Buy the Truth, and sell it not.

"Ye Have Sold Yourselves for Nought"

Some people refuse to listen, and then after they become bound, they say, "Pray for me so that I can break this habit." If that is your situation, God will give you the power, but you have to do some things. People want God to take the cigarettes out of their pockets, but He is not going to do that. He did not put them in your pocket. You must take them out of your pocket. He will give you the power, but you have to drive out the habit. Some people say, "Well, I will buy a pack and just taper off." Friend, that will only last for a couple of days.

When it comes to drugs, some people think, "I just want to try one to see what it is like." The next thing they know, it is costing them. Many men and women have swerved off the highway because they were on drugs and faced God in eternity. Others have gone home and murdered the wife and their children and did not even know why and ended up behind bars. You do not know what will happen if you turn against God. You need to buy the Truth and sell it not. Often people who sell the Truth are surprised how far down they go.

Have you ever noticed that one sin leads to another? Many people lie to cover up their wrongdoings. They lie, and then they tell another lie to cover up the first lie. The Bible plainly states in Revelation 21:8, ". . . all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

First Kings 21:25-26 reads: ". . . there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel." The Scripture says that he sold himself to work wickedness; he sold himself to work

for the devil.

How wicked was Ahab? First Kings 16:33 says, "And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." Isaiah 52:3 reads, "For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money." In other words, they had become captives, or prisoners, without any price being paid for them.

You need to buy the Truth, and do not sell it for any price or any person. If you do, that will take your soul to a lost eternity. Truth ought to come before family and friends. Many people have more friendship than fellowship today. Truth comes before that which is dearest and closest to you. We all have ones in our lives who are very dear and close to us, but Truth must come before them. Why is that? Your friend, your loved one, your spouse cannot deliver you from sin; only the Truth can set you free.

You ought to be willing to pay all to get the Truth, and never let it go. You will not be sorry. You may say, "Well, there are some things I want to do. There are some things that I am not ready to give up." Dear one, there is going to be a time when you must give up everything, and you will go into eternity. Whether you are ready to go or not, you are going. When that time comes, you do not want to be found clinging to that which God has told you to get rid of.

Buy the Truth, and sell it not. Get understanding, knowledge, and instruction with it. It will guide you and keep you. You can know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free. You do not have to live a moment longer in sin. You can say yes to God and no to the devil. Won't you buy the Truth and sell it not?

(Cassette C-5042E)

2 Corinthians 6:1 We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)

3 Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;

6 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,

7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true.



GOD'S SPECIALIZED DAY OF AND FOR SALVATION

Brother Esau Brooks

Our Obligation to God

In our Scripture text the great Apostle Paul was addressing the people of that time, but his message reaches down to our day. He began by beseeching them as workers together with God not to receive the grace of God in vain. It is so easy for that to happen. At any moment we could easily go before the judgment

bar of God. That is the reason Paul admonished the church in Hebrews 2:1 to give the more earnest heed to the things that they had heard, lest at any time they should let them slip. Saint, you need to give earnest heed. Regrettably many people are giving heed to other things. It is difficult to get our generation to realize how important it is to serve God. First Timothy 4:8 tells us that

"godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

Paul stated in verse 2 of our Scripture text, "(For he saith [speaking of God], I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salva-

tion.)" The great Apostle was striving to awaken people regarding their obligation to God. We all have an obligation to God, and our obligation is to be saved. It is a privilege to be saved, but it is also an obligation. Someone may say, "I don't see why you call it an obligation. I thought it was just left to our fancy." No doubt, that is the way many people regard it and deal with it, but we were made to serve the Lord, not ourselves or sin or the world. The Bible says that we all like sheep have gone astray. We all have gone our own way. Therefore, it is an obligation for each of us to fulfill the purpose for which God brought us into this life, because we did not make ourselves; God made us. In the language of our Scripture text, God is calling upon us to realize that His grace, as great and powerful as it is, can be given and received in vain.

Too many times people get so wrapped up in other matters and other obligations that they fail to see the importance of the fact that they can receive the grace of God in vain; in other words, they can receive it to no advantage or to no profit. How many messages from God have you enjoyed in your brief lifetime? How many of those messages have been put to good use? No doubt, many wonderful and glorious opportunities have been laid across your pathway, yet to little or no advantage. Therefore, you need to be urged not to receive the grace of God in vain. The Apostle Paul wanted the church to know that this can be avoided.

The majority of our generation feels that they will always have another chance to be saved and that salvation will always be there, so why should they be worried? They ask, "Why should I be overly excited about attending to this matter now?" According to the rendering of verse 2, we have a very limited time to take advantage of God's offer of salvation. The church at Corinth had but a limited time, and today our generation has a limited time to

avail themselves of the grace of God and to let the salvation of God avail on their behalf. The limited time spoken of in our Scripture text is called a day. Verse 2 reads, "(I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)"

Satan is succeeding greatly in getting people to ignore this warning and attend to matters of far less importance. They think that salvation will always be there, but all the provisions of God's salvation are to be received and enjoyed today. There is no promise of tomorrow. For anyone to ignore this is to die lost and to be destroyed by God. I urge you to take heed and repent, or after a lifetime of going to church, you will end up lost.

The Misery of Sin

Our Scripture text has three points of interest that are worthy of our greatest attention. First, the experience suggested is of salvation: "Now is the day of salvation." Second, the time specified for it is *now*, not when it will be more convenient for you. Third, the attention demanded of us is to get interested right now. You should not put it off another hour. We all are eternity-bound souls, and none of us knows how soon we will be called from this life. Friend, time demands that you stop in your busy career of sin and wickedness to give attention to what God has to say.

Let us look at the first point, which is salvation. It is a subject of tremendous importance because of what the subject implies. The term *salvation* implies deliverance from misery and danger: the misery of sin and the danger of being lost eternally. The misery of sin and the possibility of being lost forever, which is man's state without God, is both miserable and dangerous. Why? Because sin makes men rebels and outlaws and places them under the sentence of eternal damnation.

In addition to this, man is wretched. A life of sin is a life of wretchedness. We all can attest to that. There is no joy in serving the devil, and there is no true pleasure in a life of sin.

No matter how much you try, there is no real lasting pleasure in sin. Ask the fellow who is on drugs. As soon as he gets through with one fix, he needs another one. He feels that if he could only get a fix, he would be all right. So he gets it, and it lasts for a little while, but soon he is reaching out, groaning and yearning for another fix. Likewise, the drunkard feels so good while he has the bottle to his mouth, but as soon as he becomes sober, he desires more.

Another sinful habit is smoking. It took many years of research for doctors to prove that smoking is bad for people's health. I knew when I got saved that smoking was bad for me. Thank God, I was never hooked on tobacco. I used to admire it and think it was wonderful to puff on a cigarette and let smoke pour out of every hole in one's head. A friend of mine wanted me to try it, so I did, but thank God, I did not like it. He said, "Go on; you'll get over that."

I said, "I don't want to get over that." Look at the trouble people have trying to stay away from cigarettes, even though they know how damaging they are to the body.

A Life of Wretchedness

The life of sin is a life of wretchedness. Therefore, God is offering you a way out. You may ask, "Will salvation straighten me out?" Yes, it will, and it will keep you straightened out. Many people are attracted to sin because it has a degree of admiration, but nothing about a sinner's life is to be admired. Look at the finished product. Consider what sin does to a man when it is finished. Look at the gambler, the smoker, the drunkard, and others. Consider their end. It is not a pleasant one.

Sin causes a man to rebel against God and the things of God. It places him under the sentence of death and damnation, and it makes him wretched, poor, and destitute. Sin will take every good thing from you. It will take your good name, your good character, your good life, and your good future. Sin has nothing to be admired. God is extending to you a chance to be free from sin. Sin can get such a hold on your life that no matter how hard you try, you cannot break the power of it. It takes One greater than you.

In the early years of my ministry, a young man came to the altar of prayer and was gloriously saved, but life was hard, so he decided to come to America to find work to make a livelihood. You know, I have always heard people say, "Well, we have to look out for a livelihood." I always ask, "Which one?" People talk as if they have only one livelihood, but we have another one. Life does not end at the grave. The body is buried, but the soul lives on.

In Hebrews 9:27 the writer stated, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Death does not end it all. Many people say, "I have nothing to worry about, for when I die, that is the end." Friend, that is only the beginning. We are living in this life but a short time. Sooner or later, we will leave this world for eternal life in Heaven or hell.

John 3:16 reads, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish." No one wants to perish. Many people talk about going to Heaven no matter how sinful they are living. Some join a church or shake a preacher's hand or get their name on a church book and think they have done enough; then they mistakenly think all that they need to look forward to is Heaven. The Bible says you must be born again. John 3:3 states, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Also, Luke 13:3 tells

us, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Therefore, man's condition without Christ is one of extreme wretchedness and peril.

Salvation Brings Deliverance

Salvation is provided to bring about deliverance and pardon from the misery of sin. There is a pardon for all your crimes, not from the governor of the state, but from Almighty God in Heaven through Jesus Christ our Lord. God is announcing to you that He holds a pardon for your sins, and this is all the product of His divine love through our Redeemer's death on the Cross. The old rugged Cross is what provides victory over sin. Salvation is also the working of God's Holy Spirit upon one's soul. It is perfect in nature, present in application, and revealed and offered to you now. The effects of its application are available now. You can be a changed person today. No matter how wretched you are, how mean you are, or how low you have sunk in the ways of sin, you can be transformed; but bear in mind that this deliverance must be received *now*. You may ask, "Well, can I go back and bid farewell to my friends?" You do not have one minute to spare.

One thing that I like about salvation is that it is universal in its extent. Salvation takes care of you, not only while you are in church but also while you are on the job, on the streets, and among your friends. This is what you need, sinner, so that you might not perish. It is free in its communication. You can be saved in exchange for your sins.

No doubt, you have things in your life that you hate and that you would like to get rid of. God is ready to communicate salvation to you freely in exchange for your sins. If you confess your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive you and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. If you want to get rid of hatred, this is the answer. If you

want to get rid of the alcohol or the drug habit, this is your answer. You do not have to get another needle if you let God save you today.

Young person, you can go back to school tomorrow a changed person. When the fellows come around and offer you a fix, you can look them in the face and say, "I have already been taken care of. Why don't you try what I have?" Whosoever will can be delivered. Not one soul on the face of the earth needs to continue in sin and perish.

"Now Is the Accepted Time"

Again, our Scripture lesson reads in verse 2, "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured [rescued] thee: behold, now is the accepted time." This is the time that you have been waiting for in your life. Do you remember the many nights that you were unable to sleep because you were weeping over your miserable condition? Do you remember the many times you have regretted that you were even born because of your condition? This is the time you have been waiting for. God has had it for you all through your life, but you have been turning your back on Him and ignoring Him. You have been disregarding His call, but now He is ready to communicate with you.

There is a time specified for your receiving this great salvation. What is that time? It is called today. It is not necessarily the twenty-four hour period that we know as a day, but this present time in your life is regarded as your day. This is your day to be free from heroine. This is your day to be free from marijuana. Young person, you do not have to be a slave to that any more. This is your day for deliverance. All you have to do is rise to the opportunity and meet God on His terms, and then you can be saved. He is ready to give deliverance to all who ask. Many people can testify that God has given deliverance to them.

Dear one, why go on and perish?

Why choose to be lost and to live in misery? You can be saved now. The announcement is that the blessings of salvation are for immediate acceptance. All things are now ready. Won't you accept it? The time between your birth and your death is the only time that is allotted to you to be saved. Sometimes it does not even last that long. Many people are very much alive, yet without hope. King Saul of the Old Testament was very much alive, but because of his disobedience, he had no hope of salvation. Judas was in good health, but he had no hope of repentance.

You can resist God's salvation too long. You need to be careful. God did not design His salvation to be rejected or postponed by man at his fancy. You may do it, but that is not what God is expecting. Man must attend to this opportunity right away. If he defers it until tomorrow, he is guilty of neglect, and he is adding one more sin to the list of all the others he has. Today the offer of salvation is extended to you. You may think that it does not matter as long as you have good intentions of being saved someday, but your condition is serious. Every day you spend in a life of sin is causing your sin to become more aggravating to God. God is angry with the sinner every day. It is urgent that you seek God. That is the reason the Hebrew writer said in Hebrews 3:7-8: "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts)."

Harden Not Your Heart

Another reason that this matter needs to be attended to right away is that life is so uncertain, and to delay your acceptance is to run the risk of eternal damnation. You need deliverance now. You need to get rid of sin now. You need to get rid of the tobacco habit and the gambling. You need to get rid of the drinking habit. You need to get rid of the drug habit now. The good news is that you can, right now. Acts 17:30 says, "And the times of

this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." If you refuse, you can seal your doom. What is the attention that God demands? It is the attention of urgency. You need to get down to business now.

You may say, "I would like to be saved, but I have a few things to fix up." That is what salvation will do for you. You may say, "But I had a quarrel with someone and said some mean things that I would like to get out of the way." If you get saved, you will be in better shape to get those things out of the way with God's help. He wants you to come as you are. You need to come as the songwriter penned: "Just as I am, without one plea, But that thy blood was shed for me, And that thou bid'st me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come." This must be claimed now, not tomorrow or some other time. The way you will stand before God on Judgment Day is determined by what you do today. If you put it off now, you will find yourself putting it off all the time. You need to give yourself to God and let Him claim your consideration. If you do, thank God, you will have no regrets. Friend, I want you to see how free life really is and how certain death is. This call *could* be your last. Therefore, time demands that you become diligent in pursuing this work of God's divine grace and surrender your all to the Lord.

Some people are afraid to commit themselves to the Lord because they have been wrongly informed. They think it will kill all their joy and waste their lives. No, it will not. Salvation is not a waste of time. I

and tell you that. I was saved in my early teens, and God has kept me saved right on through. Some might call me an old man now. Salvation has upheld me all down through the years. I did not have to play one bingo game or go to one football game to find joy, happiness, and pleasure. What did I do? I served God. That was more than enough, and I would do it all again. I do not regret one mile that I have traveled for the Lord.

I was saved before I got married and had children. I have grandchildren now, and I am still saved. You cannot tell me that salvation does not work. I know it works! My children do not know anything about seeing a drunken, cursing father. No, and I do not intend for my grandchildren to see such things either. I have lived a clean life, and it all happened through the salvation that I was privileged to accept in my youth. Did I waste my life? No, not at all. Salvation has helped me to take care of myself. Many people my age are walking around and groaning and hardly able to make it. I can still walk uprightly, and I get around fine.

Salvation saves you not only from sin but also from all that is wrong. What I am endeavoring to tell you is that salvation will do you good in *every* area of your life. May I beseech you, do not receive the grace of God in vain. *Now* is the accepted time; today is the day of salvation. The Holy Ghost is saying, "If you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart." May God bless you.

(Cassette C-3680E)

*Never mind what the others do,
On to the goal keep pressing;
They cannot run the race for you,
On to the goal keep pressing.
Whether they run or turn aside,
Whether in sin they still abide,
Fixing thine eyes on Him who died,
On the goal keep pressing.*



"O Thou That Hearest Prayer"



Here is a true account of how God heard prayer and performed a miracle!

During World War II, General Motors, Truck and Coach Manufacturing Division, located in Pontiac, Michigan, had converted their assembly lines so as to make defense materials for the war efforts. Thousands of workers were hired to assist in accomplishing this task. In order to accommodate these new employees and their families, temporary housing was needed immediately.

The U.S. Government acquired a large tract of land next to the plant and built mobile homes and multiple family dwellings. Hundreds of men, women, and children were moved from all over the country into these temporary quarters. Of course, being unacquainted with the area, and thus living outside the city, most of these families did not attend church.

God loved these needy souls and determined to evangelize this project. A certain man, a member of the Church of God, worked in the Cost Accounting Department of the factory office. The Holy Spirit had led His servant to fast each Wednesday noon hour and walk out to a woods nearby. There he prayed and asked the Lord, "What will You have me to do in Your service?" The Holy Spirit clearly spoke and said, "Go over into the government project and start Sunday school and preaching services."

That weekend the man walked for several hours up and down the streets of the housing project. He also covered many blocks in the nearby area. Naturally, he looked for a store front that could be utilized for worship. Finding none, he extended his search to see if perhaps an empty garage could be found. The search was hopeless. Nothing suitable was available. The next Wednesday, back to the place of prayer and fasting, this perplexed believer went and told the Lord about the results of his search.

Again, the Spirit of God clearly spoke, "Go, as I have told you and do that which I have commanded you to do." There was only one answer, "Yes, Lord, I will." Reader, remember that the God we serve is still able to perform miracles if we will but obey Him in childlike faith. Saturday morning came, and it was time to obey His command even though from a human standpoint it seemed impossible.

MIRACLE NO. 1: Going over to the project, the believer found the housing office and walked in. Several

office girls were standing around smoking their cigarettes and engaging in light conversation with a man who appeared to be the manager. After being introduced, the manager ushered the inquirer into his office and shut the door. "What can I do for you," he asked? The moment for obedience had arrived. The Holy Spirit gave the words, and the follower of Christ blurted out, "Sir, I am a Christian, and each Wednesday I leave my desk at noon and go to a nearby woods to pray. The Lord has led me to start Sunday school and preaching services in this housing project. I have no knowledge as to how arrangements can be made to do this, but here I am." The manager put out his cigarette and began to weep. He spoke: "I know what you are talking about. I am not saved, but my mother is a saint, a woman of prayer. Come with me, and I will show you why God sent you here today." Walking down a long hallway, the two came to the far end of the building. The manager opened a door and there was a complete chapel, equipped with more than one hundred folding chairs, a lectern, and a kitchen complete with a refrigerator, gas stove for cooking, counters, and all kinds of dishes. Praise the Lord! What a Mighty God we serve! The manager then asked, "I have only one question. What denomination are you with?" The answer, quickly given, was, "None, I was born spiritually into the Church of God, which has its headquarters in Heaven."

"Good," replied the manager, "because if you represented a denomination and I let you use this chapel, all of the other groups would be after me to let them share its use. So, go ahead! Here are keys. We will furnish free all utilities, janitorial services, and maintenance. All of this is yours to use as you feel led until the war ends." Needless to say, the believer's heart was full and running over with praises to the God who hears prayers and gives miracles.

MIRACLE NO. 2: There were other needs to be supplied. They needed a mimeograph machine. A local church had bought a new one. So, they sold their used one with a large supply of stencils, reams of bond paper, etc., for only \$25.00. They also needed a public address system. A sinner who operated a roller skating rink was going blind. He closed his pavilion and gladly sold his complete public address equipment at a real bargain. All this equipment never failed but worked perfectly all through

the war until the project closed.

MIRACLE NO. 3: Remember, the believer being used by the Lord had no minister's license, no theological education, and no following among the public; he was just an ordinary Christian. The Sunday for the first services arrived. Oh, how good God is to us who have no merit of our own! Sunday school had sixty-five in attendance, and thirty-nine adults were in the preaching service. As time went by, the work grew until many times the chapel was full. Service after service, the Holy Spirit came in power and many precious souls found Christ as their Savior. Space will not permit the telling of all the Lord did in answer to prayer.

MIRACLE NO. 4: The winter was extremely cold with more than the usual amount of snow. It was the practice of the believer to arrive at the chapel three hours or more before services early Sunday morning to light the heating stoves so the room would be warm enough for the people to be comfortable. However, this time the believer forgot to bring any matches. Now what to do? The situation was a bit desperate. The Holy Spirit whispered "Ask, and it shall

be given you." So, a quick prayer was sent heavenward; "Lord, please send some matches."

Minutes went by. About the time it would take someone to drive two or three miles. Then, up drove a car and Brother Bigger got out and came to the chapel door. He had never been to service there before. Greetings were exchanged, and he said, in a half apologetic manner, "I know it is too early for services, but I just felt I should come over now."

"Brother Bigger, do you have any matches with you?" He did, and the Lord had just answered a childlike prayer. In closing, please know that God is concerned about the so-called little things.

P.S. Only one thing was missing throughout all these months of worship services. There were never any musical instruments used in these services. Folks just sang and praised the Lord. Looking back, the instruments were never really missed. Much more important was the presence and help of the blessed Holy Spirit.

Selected

I Shed My Blood for His Sake

A little girl only eight years old, while on her way to do an errand for her parents, was attracted by the singing of a Gospel meeting in the open air. She stopped to listen to the singing and to see what was going on. She listened with such earnestness that one of the Christian workers slipped over to her side and told her of the wonderful love of Jesus. She had never heard much about Jesus before, and what she learned that evening was very thrilling to her. She longed to know more and to have this wonderful Jesus for her very own friend. Upon returning home, her father asked what had detained her. She told him, and he beat her cruelly and forbade her to go to any such meeting again.

About two weeks later, she was sent on another errand, but she was so taken up with what she had previously heard of Jesus that she forgot all about her errand. She saw the same gentleman again, and he told her more of the Savior's love for her and how she could open the door of her heart and let Jesus come into her heart (Revelation 3:20). Right there on the street, she bowed her head and asked Jesus to come into her heart.

Upon her return home, she told her father

where she had been and that she had failed to do the errand for him, but that she had opened the door of her heart and asked Jesus to come in and that she had brought Jesus home with her. He was enraged! He threw her to the floor, beat her, and kicked her until soon the little girl was broken and bleeding. She never recovered from this brutal treatment.

Just before she breathed her last, she called to her mother and said, "Mama, I have been praying to Jesus to save you and father." Then, as she pointed to her little dress, she said, "Mother, cut me a bit of the bloodstained piece of my dress."

The mother, wondering, did as she requested. "Now," said the dying child, "Christ shed His blood for my sake, and I am going to take this to Jesus to show Him that I shed my blood for His sake."

Thus, she died, holding firmly the piece of her dress stained with her own blood.

At this testimony of their little daughter, both the father and the mother broke down in tears and repentance and received the Lord Jesus into their hearts.

Selected

2005 Camp Meeting Dates

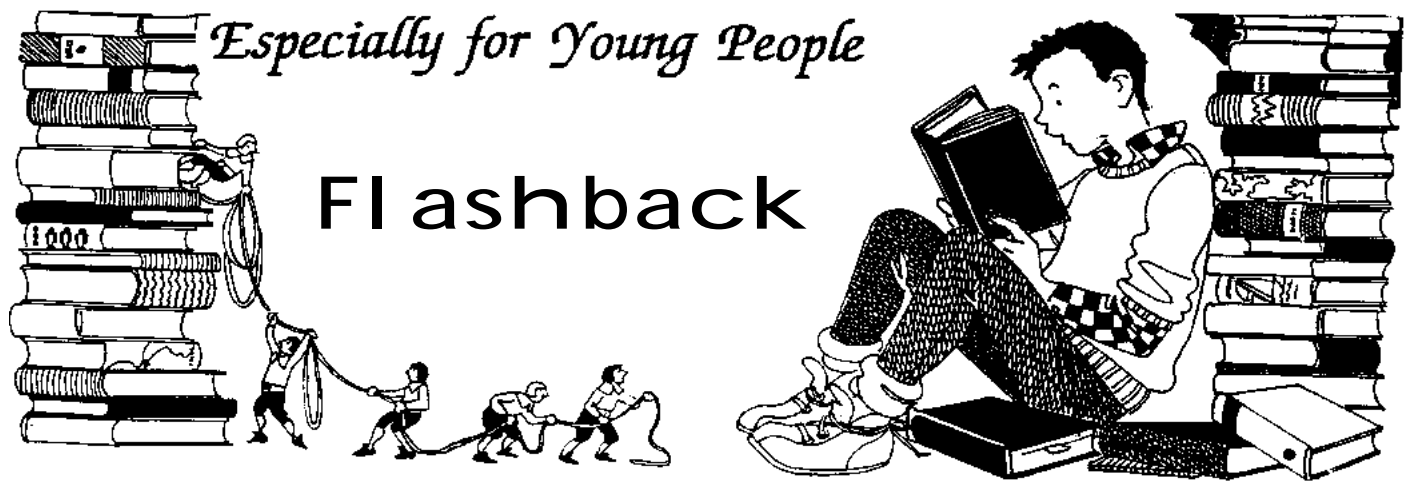
June 19-26

August 7-14

December 26-30

We hope you will plan your vacation time so that you can join us in these old-fashioned camp meetings. Also, we hope to see you in our Winter meeting, December 27-30, 2004.





His shoulder-length brown hair had been neatly cut, and his long, curled mustache had been shaved. The poncho had been exchanged for a new brown-and-yellow checked shirt, and he had poked his long, bare feet into shoes. Outwardly everything had changed. Only the wild look in his brown eyes and the uncertain movements of his hands revealed that there was still turmoil within.

George had come to the rehabilitation center for drug addicts two weeks before, though he had never intended to come. Three weeks prior to that, he would have laughed at the idea, but that was before his last weird trip on drugs, before he had come to the end of himself, and before God had suddenly moved in his life in answer to his mother's prayers.

He vividly remembered the experience. It had been six o'clock in the morning, and he had been walking home through the mist of early light. George had thought he had gone too far this time. He had taken too much, and he had the distinct impression that he was about three feet tall and that his head was the size of a greatly puffed up balloon. His memory of the night before was of a dull maze of flickering psychedelic lights and music. He had taken a terrifying mixture of drugs that ended with Methedrine. He had intended it to be the trip to end all trips.

Then as George walked home in

that pale light of early dawn, God came to him in His drawing power, His infinite love, and His wonderful presence. George cried out from the depths of his frustrated soul, "O God, save me!"

Wonderfully, strangely, the paralyzing fear subsided, his mind began to clear, and he went home to face a dirty, unkempt bum in his bedroom mirror.

The climb had been definitely uphill from that morning on. George went to the center for further help, though his encounter with Christ had already changed his mental attitude and his life. Old habits and desires, as well as old friends, fell away, and he was surely a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Then, ever so slowly, he began to experience queer physical sensations. He tried to explain them to his mother and father. "I have such weird feelings in my mind that I can't seem to grasp or understand," he said. "They're very frightening to me."

From that point on, things rapidly became worse. One morning George spoke in the chapel hour, and his mother came to hear his testimony. He felt far away, completely disoriented. The newfound joy of his salvation was gone. Yet Scripture flowed easily from his tongue as he stood to minister to the small congregation. Then his face began to draw queerly. His eyes bulged with a wild, haunted stare.

"I've discovered that I'm a super

being," he burst out suddenly, the words coming almost staccato. "There's no need for me to eat anymore nor to drink. I don't even have to sleep, because I've become a super being. God has called me and made me a special messenger in the last days."

He saw the appalled look on his mother's face, the fear that came into her eyes. Could she not understand the truth of what he was saying? Did she not understand that God had given him a special call and a special ministry? Did she not see?

For days after that, George refused both food and water. At first the counselors thought he was fasting. Then they decided the flu virus that was going the rounds was making him act in so peculiar a manner. But at last the weird, twisted facts came into clear focus, and they knew George was having a flashback, a desperately serious one. They began praying earnestly for George, former hippie and drug user.

Had his mind been permanently damaged? No one could say. His mother consulted doctors, counselors, and psychiatrists. No one could give her the answer she longed to hear. The drugs apparently had taken their deadly toll on George's mind.

George's mother fasted and prayed, pleading with God to restore her son's mind. Surely after the Lord had so wonderfully met George and brought him to salvation, He would not allow the young man's mind to

be permanently damaged. The Christian workers began to notice a distinct change in George. At first he had been so radiantly happy. Now his eyes were dull, and his lips unsmiling. He looked like a zombie!

Sudden, erratic changes dominated him. Flinging himself out of the chapel, he would rush headlong upstairs, strip off his clothing, and lie down to stare into a world he declared was filled with demons, where he even claimed that he saw the devil. No one could console him or bring him to his right mind. He was living again in a world of hallucinations.

Since his body was without feeling, George could never be certain whether his bath water was icy cold or scalding hot. Many times such fear and frustration gripped him over the simple matter of bathing that he shunned the shower completely.

Sights and sounds were terribly confused. Music came out of nowhere, its raucous notes bouncing against his eardrums, bounding and rebounding and refusing to be silenced. People appeared in mysterious fashion behind his back and hideous apparitions haunted him both day and night. Picnic tables appeared before him spread with food and surrounded by laughing young people. Everything was real, incredibly real, yet, paradoxically, nothing was real.

He longed for death, yet he was terrified to die. Having had a touch from God and knowing the salvation that comes from the Lord Jesus Christ, George could not turn back. He knew this in his lucid moments, yet there was no controlling the terrible, nightmarish world in which he lived.

His memory slipped. Morning after morning, he asked the counselor, "Who am I? What is my name?" Minutes later he would forget and have to ask again, yet salvation had reached him. George had encountered the Son of God, but where was God now when he needed Him so desperately? How long

could this monstrous thing continue to torment him? How much would God allow him to go through? Was there an end to the nightmare? If God did not undertake, George's mind was gone forever.

The first flash of hope came on a Sunday morning after church. George lingered behind, staring vacantly over the sea of empty seats to the pulpit. His body was rigid and tense, his face without expression, his spirit without hope. His dark eyes were bleak and filled with despair.

One of the chapel speakers sensed George's need and came to sit beside him in the nearly empty church. Their relationship had been good, and George turned to her with a vague smile.

"I sense that you feel Satan is trying to take your mind," she said slowly.

"That's true! I have blank spots in my mind, and I can't remember certain things that I've just experienced. It's very frightening to me."

"Jesus loves you, George, and He is going to heal you. I know it!"

He brightened perceptibly as the chapel speaker and his own pastor prayed earnestly for him, for his mind. Just knowing that God cared and really knew his condition produced new hope. That afternoon his

mother came to visit him, and he told her about those who saw his need and were praying for him. Together they clung to the promise of Philippians 1:6, which states, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

It was truly in God's hands now and under His divine control. He would do what He said He would.

Though there were still deep struggles and trials for George, he had the faith to believe God. Little by little, the hallucinations ceased and the mental fog fell away. Little by little, the light of God's love and His reality grew within George's soul again.

After a time, he began ministering in various pulpits, giving his testimony wherever there was opportunity.

Today, after many terrifying flashbacks, George is living a normal, healthy life. God is using him to warn teenagers of the dangers of drugs. He is leading them to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, the addict's only hope. George hopes to have many years of fruitful service.

Selected

Just to Think

A rich man was down at the river front waiting the departure of an ocean liner. He was joined by an acquaintance, who said to him, "You seem to be much pleased about something."

"Yes," said the man, "I do feel unusually good today. Do you see that vessel? I have \$10,000.00 worth of equipment on it for a hospital in China, and I came down to see the vessel safely off."

"Well, that is interesting, and I am glad you made that gift," said the friend. "But, you know, I also have a gift on that ship. My only daughter is on that vessel, going to China to give her life as a missionary."

The wealthy man looked emotionally into the eyes of his friend and exclaimed, "My dear brother, I feel as though I have given nothing as I think of what this sacrifice means to you."

Selected

Hosea 10:12 Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

13 Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.

Instructions to Be Saved



Brother David Watson

"Whatsoever a Man Soweth, That Shall He Also Reap"

To be saved, first you need to recognize the condition that you are in. You are spiritually dead, which leaves you blind and deaf spiritually. The devil does not want you to see the condition you are really in or where you are heading. Any person who truly sees what the devil has planned for him or her wants out of that mess.

Sometimes people do not realize that the deeds they are performing will mark them and cause the mark of sin to follow them to the grave. Many people have repented and gotten right with God and wished

they could have changed the circumstances that living in sin had created. They had scars that followed them to their graves. Some people have committed murder, and although they might have been forgiven, they would have given anything to have changed their circumstances. Others have sown all kinds of corrupt seed while they were living in sin, and although they repented, those seeds sprouted and came up. Regrettably, they had to reap the things they had sown even after they had gotten right with God.

You see, if I were to sow a field in oats and then change my mind and say, "I really do not want oats," I could not do anything about it

because I had already sown oats. The same principle is true when a person sows seed in sin but afterward repents. Galatians 6:7 tells us, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Friend, if you sow to the flesh, of the flesh you are going to reap. Even after you get saved, you will reap that which you have sown.

In the Old Testament you can read that David reaped from the seeds that he had sown. Although David cried out to God and repented and testified that God had forgiven him for the murder and the adultery that he had committed, he still had to reap. It came home to him in his

own family.

In the New Testament you can read that the Apostle Paul suffered because of the things he had done in the past. Dear one, you may find that the sins that you committed in the past will tempt you after you get saved. The devil does not tempt you with what you have no knowledge of. He tempts you with what you used to like to do.

If you are lost, you are blind spiritually, and you need to break up the fallow ground. Living in sin is foolishness, and if you sow in foolish things, you are going to reap the same. You need to turn to God and give your life to Him.

Being Justified by Faith

To be saved, you must put your faith and trust in God. In Romans, Chapter 5, Paul said that salvation is full and free, and he told what it takes to have peace with God. He said in verse 1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." He was saying that a person must believe in God. If I were to ask you the questions, "Do you believe there is a God? Do you believe in Jesus? Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?" no doubt, you would reply, "Yes, I do." However, it makes a difference when it comes to personal faith. You may believe there is a God, but that belief cannot save you. What makes the difference is when you have a personal faith and a personal relationship with God through faith; that is how it works.

Abraham believed there was a God. When God called Abraham and said, "Get out from among your kindred," Abraham took Him by faith. It was a personal experience with Abraham. Likewise, salvation has to be a personal relationship between God and you. Salvation is not something that your parents can hand down to you. They might be good parents, but salvation is something that is attainable only from God. You must put in for it to God, and you must have faith in what you

are asking for. If you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He came to save you from sin, you will break up your fallow ground, repent, and believe in God; then salvation will become personal to you.

In Romans 10:9 Paul said, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." This is not a head religion; it is a heart religion. There is a big difference between the two. You could be schooled to be a Christian. You could be schooled to do many things. You might have traditions and customs and a religious form on the outside, but when God saves you, He goes down to the heart. He removes what is in the heart and puts in everything that is just and right that comes from Heaven.

There will be something there that has never been in the heart where the things of the world have been. Before God moves in, He packs the devil's suitcase and moves out everything that belongs to sin, and then He moves in. When God moves in, love, peace, joy, and righteousness move in. The world cannot give you these things; only God can. He will let you know that you are saved from *all* sin. Old-time, heartfelt salvation is something that covers you from the top of your head to the soles of your feet. No one has to tell you that you are saved; you will know that you are. Sinner friend, God can rescue you from every sin that has hold of you.

How Can You Become a New Creature in Christ Jesus?

To be saved, you must repent. Repentance takes some work. I call it "the sweat box of repentance." Jesus taught that one must repent and turn things over to Him. John said in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." You cannot allow one sin to remain in the corner of

your heart; every sin must go. David said in Psalm 66:18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Proverbs 28:13 states, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." You must turn your back on the sinful things that you have been doing and stop living foolishly. You must change fountains, so to speak, and become a new creature in Jesus Christ. You have to put off everything that belongs to the old man. When you truly repent, God will live within your heart and you will be a new man. It will not be hard for the world to see a difference in you.

I remember when God first spoke to me. I was staying with my aunt. Her husband was going out of town, so she wanted me to stay with her at night because she was fearful to stay there alone. While I was staying there, the drawing power of the Holy Spirit got hold of my soul and fear took hold of me. One night I was in such a fix that she took me home. The next morning, I was still trembling in fear, and I could not explain it. They took me to a doctor, and he examined me. From what I know now, I suppose he never found anything wrong with me physically. He gave me one bottle filled with a green-colored liquid and another bottle filled with a red-colored liquid.

What the doctor gave me did not soothe the problem; it never did a thing for me. I can tell you what did help me. I went down to an old brush arbor meeting that night. I could hardly wait until the preacher got through preaching. My hands were trembling and my knees were knocking, but when I went to the altar to pray, it did not take long until I knew that everything was settled and all was right between God and me. He moved into my heart. The thing that had been troubling me was old-time conviction of the heart. I needed God to save me, and that is what He did for me. Friend, God can do for you what a doctor cannot do.

When I was first saved, I wondered, "What will I do about my friends with whom I have been running?" I did not have to wonder too long. God worked out all of that. When I began to talk to them about Jesus, if they were not interested in going to church, they would say, "I'll see you later," and down the road they went. It was not as hard as the devil wanted me to think it would be. The devil will put all kinds of lies before you and say, "You cannot get that worked out" and "You cannot settle this." He is an old split-hoofed liar. Why would you listen to a liar? The devil has never told the truth, and he never will. You need to put him behind you and turn to God. He wants to save you.

John the Baptist said to repent. Did you know that when you repent, Jesus will meet you? Jesus said in John 6:37, "And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Isaiah 1:18 says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson [He will wash them], they shall be as wool."

Would you appreciate a good, clean, wholesome, new suit from Jesus Christ, washed in His precious blood? He can remove every spot of sin and every stain from your heart. Then you can turn around and look at the world and say, "I am different than I was yesterday. I am a new man today." No matter what someone might have had against you, you will no longer be the same. You become a new person in Jesus Christ. That is the good thing about being saved.

You can read in Acts, Chapter 9, that before the Apostle Paul was saved, God knocked him down with a light. When he heard a voice, he knew that the Lord was talking to him. When he got up, he was blind; but three days later, God sent Ananias to pray for him, and God removed the scales from his eyes. In Acts, Chapters 24 and 26, you can read that Paul stood before a governor and told him about what the

Lord had done for him. Festus said to Paul in Acts 26:24, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." When you get saved, some people cannot really understand what has happened to you. You do not want this or that anymore, and you no longer want to go to the same places. You have found a new fountain, you have a new family, and you have received a new Spirit. You are no longer lost; you have been found. You have been washed, and you now have a new suit. Thank God, it will shine so the world can see it.

I thank God for old-time salvation. Salvation makes a difference. When David of old repented, he said in Psalm 40:2, "He [the Lord] brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." From that, I want to tell you that you can know who you are, what you are doing, and where you are heading.

If you are living in sin, you are lost and you do not really know where you are going. You cannot really see hell or understand the destruction that is ahead. You cannot see that the world will be consumed by fire. In hell people are weeping and screaming and begging for another opportunity to get right with God, but they will never have it. When David of old repented, from that day forward, he knew who he was.

Power to Live the Christian Life

If you get saved, you will know who you are and you will know your direction. You can be established in the Lord instead of being tossed back and forth with sin and the things of the world. Friend, your sins can be taken away, and then God will write your name in the Lamb's Book of Life. You can be cleansed by the precious blood of the Son of God and be established in your Christian experience. The Lord can give you a hope in your soul and something to sing about.

I want you to consider David and how God established him. He wrote many psalms, and he just sang and sang. Did you know that God can make you a happy person? Too many people think of all the troubles that have them bogged down. Friend, there is something worth living for. When I was just a boy, I said, "There is not a thing in this world worth living for," but when God saved me, He gave me a hope. I knew that I had been lied to and that the devil had defeated me. Thanks be to God, He revealed to me that salvation is the best thing this side of Heaven. I have a little Heaven right in my soul because I am living right in this present world.

If you are a sinner, God will work with you. We read in Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." You may say, "You cannot live that kind of life in this world." Well, I want to tell you that God hung the sun, the moon, and the stars in place. He is still the same God. He created this world. I am just a hunk of clay, and He is the potter. God can mold me into whatever He wants me to be, and He can give me the power to live the Christian life.

To say that you have to sin is a lie of the devil. You do not have to sin. Just because someone else is acting ugly does not mean that you have to do the same. I am talking about the ugliness of sin. Sin is just as ugly as it can be. You can look at many young people and see what the devil is doing to them. I wish they could really see what is going on in their lives. I wish they would not choose to live that way. They could be such good young people if they would get saved and straightened out. How wonderful that would be!

Some of the most pleasing sights that I have ever seen are when young people give up sin and live good, clean, wholesome lives. I

thank God for young men and women who have been born again and have the Holy Spirit in their lives, who have sold out to live for God and are ready to make Heaven their home. You can have that experience too, friend. If you are not saved, you can be.

Buried With Christ in Baptism

After the fallow ground has been broken up and you have repented of your sins, confessed them, and forsaken them, then you must be baptized and follow the Lord. Baptism is a good thing, otherwise Jesus would not have commanded us to do it. John did it, and so did Jesus and the disciples, and it is required of us as well. Paul wrote in Colossians 2:11, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." When one gets saved, he quits living after the flesh and lives according to the will of God.

Verse 12 states, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Christ was crucified on Mount Calvary. Nails were hammered into His hands and His feet, and He wore a crown of thorns upon His head. A soldier pierced His side with a sword. He died on the Cross for your sins and my sins. They placed Him in a tomb, and in three days He was resurrected.

An angel of the Lord rolled away the stone, not so that He could get out, but so that the world could look in and see that we have a resurrected Savior. Thank God! He came forth from the tomb, and two angels witnessed it. When you get saved, the first baptism that you experience is a spiritual baptism. First Corinthians 12:13 says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized. . . ." This is speaking of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It brings you into the Kingdom of God as a child of God. Water baptism shows others that you have buried the old man and that you have been

resurrected to a new life in Jesus Christ, to walk in true holiness in this world so that the world will know that you have been with Jesus. I thank God for water baptism.

Some people say that water baptism is to put you in the church. Others say it is to wash away your sins. You could be baptized in the seven oceans, but that would never take away your sins or put you in the church. When Jesus was baptized, the church had not yet been built. Jesus told Peter in Matthew 16:18, ". . . upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." John the Baptist was not advocating using baptism as a door to the church. When John baptized people, they took his preaching by faith, looking toward the Cross. Since Jesus has already gone to the Cross, we have more to act on than what John the Baptist was preaching.

"Walk in Newness of Life"

When Jesus died on the Cross, He shed His blood. Then, on the Day of Pentecost, the message was preached and the Holy Ghost was poured out on souls. After Christ's Resurrection, He told His disciples in Matthew 28:18-19: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This goes further than John the Baptist's baptism. We go under the Trinity in the baptism. I thank God for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

In Romans, Chapter 6, the Apostles had been dealing with people about Abraham, and they were having a time getting things straightened out. Verse 4 states, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death [water baptism does not put you into His death; it takes the Spirit of God to put you into His death]: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Spiritual baptism

occurs when the Spirit places you into the body of Christ; then you begin a new life with Jesus Christ.

When you meet Jesus, you give up the world and begin to get better acquainted with Him. I have preached for quite a few years, but every time I open God's Word and read it, it is still new! I am still eating good, spiritual food. It is good for the soul, and every day I am getting better acquainted with the Son of God. I may preach one place this week and in a week or so I may preach somewhere else, but each time it is a new experience. There is always new fellowship and a new experience in Jesus Christ. Every day that I awaken, thank God, there is something new and something refreshing about the Lord. This is not a dull life. It is the best thing this side of Heaven. I wish everyone could learn this and would get out of the sin business. Many people think that a new life is getting a new house, a new car, or a better job. They have missed it by a million miles. The good life is in Jesus Christ. I can be happy even if I have only ten cents in my pocket, because I know I am saved!

Romans 6:5 states, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." When Jesus came out of the tomb in the Resurrection, He was a new person. On the Resurrection morning, when Mary went to the tomb of Jesus, she thought she was talking to the gardener. She said in John 20:15, "Tell me where thou hast laid him." When Jesus said "Mary," she knew Him.

Whenever you get saved and begin this new life with Jesus Christ, you will know His voice. John 10:4-5 reads: "For they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow." When you enter into this new life, you will not talk the way you used to talk, you will not walk the way you used to walk, and you will not sing the same songs you used to sing. You will have a new song, praise God! A fountain has been

opened in the house of God, and you can drink from a new fountain in Jesus Christ. You have found new life and a new hope in the Son of God. You have been planted with Him.

Romans 6:6 states, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Perhaps you played a guitar while you were living in sin, and that guitar just played whatever tune you played on it. When you get saved, the body is not in control. The Man on the inside is in control. You may say, "I would be a Christian if I knew I could live it." Paul said in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Count the Cost

Many people look at holiness as if it is a denomination. It is not a denomination, and you cannot join it. You cannot run fast enough to get in it that way. Holiness is living right from the inside and bringing the outside under the control of Jesus Christ. You talk like a Christian, live like a Christian, and look like a Christian. Romans 6:22-23 says: ". . . being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end [is] everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Would you rather have something that ends with death and eternal torments, with no hope and no eternal life? Anyone who has ever been taught about hell surely does not want to go there.

If you are lost, when you lay down on your bed, do you have a fear that you might not wake up again? The bed is too short and the covers are too narrow for the unrighteous. Judgment is laid to the line, and water is overflowing your hiding place. Sinner friend, you cannot rest because you are lost. There is a hell, and you know that if you die,

that is where you will go. No one wants to go to hell. You could get into circumstances in this life and maybe find people who will have mercy and forgive you and get you out of the mess you are in; but if you go to hell, you will never get out. No mercy will be sent to hell; it is eternal death. On the other hand, there is a Heaven, and it is eternal. Jesus is eternal. Whatever Heaven has, it will be the best.

Friend, if you are lost, you need to count the cost. Jesus taught in Luke 14:28-29: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him." You do not want anyone to mock you. When you go down to an altar of prayer to die out to this world, you must die out completely. You need to count the cost with the attitude, "Here is where I am going to start with the Lord, and here is where I am going to learn more about Jesus and my eternal home. I intend to live and see what the end of the Christian life is."

I know one thing for myself: I want to see who is awaiting me at the top of the hill in Heaven. I want to see Jesus. He has done more for me than anyone else.

If you are lost, won't you give up the life of sin and turn to Jesus? He loves you, and He wants to save you. You may be receiving your last call, your last opportunity. You do not know who you will meet on the highway. You do not know what is going to happen. I recently learned that a man I was acquainted with took his own life. His children went home and found him dead. That man went to a long, lost eternity. I am sure that if he could, he would give the world to change his mind right now, but he cannot. He is there, and he is there forever.

Friend, you need to fix it with God while you can. I know some people who have said they want to fix it like the thief on the cross. They

want to get right as he did, at the last moment. What they do not understand is that many people have gone out of this world and could not even think because they went out too fast. They were killed in an accident in a moment of time. They did not have a chance to pray when they came face to face with death. Friend, you may be turning Him away for the last time. This could be your last opportunity. When the Spirit is knocking at your heart's door, it is good wisdom to take advantage of what you are honored with. If God is knocking at your heart's door, what an honor it is to open that door and say, "Jesus, thank You for calling on me. I want to be saved, and I want to go to Heaven."

(Cassette C-5170E)

Too Busy

*Too busy now, the cares of life are pressing;
Upon eternal things I cannot stop and think.
I'd like to go to church and have a soul's
refreshing,
But I'm too busy now, beneath a thousand
cares I sink.*

*Too busy now, I won't have time this
morning,
To breathe in solitude a silent prayer;
Some other time I'll worship my Redeemer,
When I am not so burdened down with care.*

*Too busy now to read the Word most
precious,
Even tho' it points the way to realms of
light;
Too busy now, to think of God or Heaven,
The cares of life captivate from morn 'til
night.*

*I wonder—if when life's short day is ended,
And the blissful morn of eternity I see;
Will the Christ who through long years
I've discarded,
Find time to open Heaven's gate for me?*

Selected

Proverbs 28:26 He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

Are You Where You Need to Be With the Lord?



Brother Irwin Seshier

The Way to Live a Successful Life

Throughout our lives on this earth, we often gauge our successes by what occurs in our lives. From birth to death, many things cross our paths. Similar things and unusual things happen to all of us. Sometimes we encounter serious situations, and other times comical things happen to us. Many individuals have said, "I could write a book about the things that have happened to me." If you were to write such a book, where in that book would you fit in the Lord? Would you fit Him in at the beginning of the book, in the middle, or squeeze Him in at the very end?

Friend, if you are going to be successful in this life, you must put

the Lord first in your life. The Lord will not take second or third place. Proverbs 28:26 says, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered." Are you battling an up-and-down experience? Too many people constantly battle that type of experience. Friend, this is not the kind of experience that the Lord wants you to have. He wants you to live a victorious life.

The devil will knock you around at times, but that is not the time to give up on God. If you are a child of God, you will face opposition, trials, and persecution. However, if you stay true to God, one of these days, it will be worth it all to gain the riches of Glory. What a day that will be when you see your Sav-

ior! Then you will forget about all the things that have happened to you. You will forget about all the ridicule that you had to face. You will forget about all those who scorned you in your walk with God. You will say, "It was worth it all to be His child." That will be the most glorious day! Friend, that is the reason you need to give up all in your life to follow Him.

Too many people want to hold onto things today. They want the Lord, yet they want to hold on to wrong attitudes and bitterness in their hearts. Others want the Lord, but they want a little worldliness. Friend, that will not work. When the Lord comes in, the wrong attitudes, the bitterness, and the worldliness must go. That is the way it must be.

Too many people hold on to things, and they wonder why they do not prosper spiritually. If you are to have true success in your Christian experience, those things cannot remain in your heart.

I have not met anyone who told me that he did not want to be successful. The Lord has shown us the way to live successful, productive lives, and it is found right in the Bible. Dear one, the Lord wants you to have a victorious life. It is part of His plan for you to have victory in Jesus. You need to realize that your strength is in the Lord. When you need strength for a battle, He will supply it. When you need Him to undergird you, He will be there to help you. However, you must not fail to follow the remedy. You have to remember that you are nothing without Him. Are you where you need to be with the Lord? Do you treat others with respect, kindness, and love?

Wait on the Lord

Psalm 25:4-5 reads: "Show me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day." One reason that many people do not have success is that they fail to wait upon the Lord. We live in a fast age, and we have fast food service. Many times people want to transfer that idea over to their worship: they want to get in and out quickly. When it comes to worshipping God, they need to realize Who is in charge. We are not dictated by the clock on the wall. The Spirit of God must direct us. Many people fail to realize that to truly worship God, He must be in control. Often people want to worship Him in their own way, yet they want God to bless them and to be right there for them in times of need. They try to tell God what to do. Friend, that will not work.

Psalm 25:6 states, "Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have

been ever of old." A true child of God ought to treat everyone with love, respect, and kindness; that should be automatic. Some people struggle with that, but that should not be. You should not say, "I love you, brother," and then fail to acknowledge him on the street. How you treat others is important. A true saint of God will not refer to his or her parent as "the old man" or "the old woman." I know what would have happened to me had I said that just once to either of my parents.

Ephesians 5:25 reads, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Husband, when you were dating your wife-to-be, I doubt that while you were dating her that you referred to her as your "old lady." No doubt, you thought that everything about her was just right, and you could not flatter her enough. When you married her, you forsook everyone else. She was your sweet, little bride. Likewise, when you forsook the sinful things of this old world, Someone much better came into your life.

Your love was just for One, Jesus Christ. You had no more love for the world and the things of the world. Your love and consecration were for Jesus Christ. You did your very best to please Him, and you should continue to do that. Sometimes what happens today is that people's love for the Truth cools. Saint of God, to be where the Lord wants you to be, your love for the Lord and the things of the Lord must be fervent. If you cool off spiritually, you will begin to accept just about anything "churchy." You may say, "Oh, they look almost like the Church of God." There is only one Church of God.

If you are where you ought to be with the Lord, you will accept the Truth and live it. You should not accept anything but the Truth. I say, "Let the church be the church, and let the people rejoice, for we have settled the question and made our choice." The reason some people

have problems is that they have not settled the question. Do you have it settled? The Lord has made it really easy for you, because in reality, you do not have a choice when it comes to choosing a church. The choice was made for all of us in the Word of God. Since God put it in His Word, we can know exactly the right one to go to. I like it that way.

I thank the Lord for the Truth and for the true Church of God. We need to uphold the Truth. I do not want to accept anything that merely looks similar or sounds similar to the Truth. Friend, this is too important. Your decision is an eternal decision. Too many people attend certain churches because their friends or relatives go there, but that is not what the Bible says to do.

Being Obedient

Saint of God, it is not the time to relax and coast along in your Christian experience. There are plenty of things to do in the work of God. Have you prayed and asked the Lord to show you what you can do or are you the type to let others do it? You should not say, "They have done it for years; let them do it." Some day those people might not be there to do what you want them to do, and the Lord might tell you to do it. Too many people want to let the pastor do it all. Do you have any idea what a pastor's workload is like? A pastor has an awesome responsibility.

Many people do not want to be told what to do. As a teacher, I see it in the schools. Many children do not want to be told what to do. Often when the police pick up children on the street, they do not have any respect for the police officers. You should respect those who are in positions of authority. Church of God people should be the most submissive people. Many people do not want to be told how to live, where to go, or what to wear. We need to remember that we have to answer to God, not to our neighbors or our relatives.

As a child of God, you should want to please God with your whole heart. How can you do that? One way is to show respect to a man of God. The Lord directs the pastor concerning what to do and how to handle certain situations. You may say, "Well, I wouldn't do it that way." You may not, but you are not the pastor. Everything that goes on in a congregation should always go through the pastor, no matter what it is. The laity should not assume anything. You should not think that the pastor will not care and then do what you want. You should ask the pastor first, or are you afraid of what his answer might be before you ask? If you are afraid of the answer before you even ask, perhaps you should not ask.

Saint of God, you need to guard your every move. You need to watch your desires and your motives. The enemy of souls is trying to destroy you. He wants to creep in and divide God's people. The Bible says that division is sin. What are you doing to help the cause of God? Are you building up or tearing down the Church of God? When the message is being preached, you may think, "Well, that's his idea." At your place of employment, do you do anything you want to do? You would not go to work and say, "I think I will paint the walls with polka dots," and then do it. You would be reprimanded for that because you did not ask. Likewise, in a congregation you should ask first. Saint, you were placed in the body to serve the Lord and to obey Him.

Ephesians 1:3-5 reads: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of

his will."

Dear one, are you where you need to be with the Lord when it comes to obeying God's Word? I love the Truth, and every child of God should love the Truth. It is the Truth that breaks the bondage of sin. We are living in such a sinful age. Terrible, vile sins are taking place, and wickedness is on every hand. Nevertheless, the Truth can still save men's and women's souls. You may be the vilest sinner, but the Lord can reveal the Truth to you and clean you up.

The Truth can keep you happy in your soul. It reminds you of where you came from and protects you. The Truth can undergird you and help you to live a victorious life through Christ. The Truth lets you see what spiritual Babylon really is. It will open your eyes to the deceptions of the enemy. The devil is working to deceive every one of us. Too many are boasting of their own strength and of how they walk this Christian pathway. Is that what the Lord expects of your life? Do you think He is pleased when you do things your way?

Beware of Seducing Spirits

Child of God, your allegiance to God and to the things of God must be exact. You must follow God's concise plan to be His child. Have you given up all to follow Jesus? Too many people say, "I have given up all but . . ." One day you will be judged by God Almighty, and you must answer to Him for your deeds. Are your motives right? This is serious. You need to ask yourself, "Why did I go that direction? Why did I answer that person as I did?" You may not look at things that way, but there is a motive behind what you do. The Truth will judge you one of these days. When you look at it in that light, it is serious. Has your vision of the things of God been impaired or blocked by your words or actions? Sometimes self is your own worst enemy. If you would get self out of the way, you might get

more accomplished.

Proverbs 29:18 tells us, "But he that keepeth the law, happy is he." People would not make certain moves in their lives if their love for God and for the Truth had not cooled off. Backing away from the Truth is very dangerous. Why? Once you have tasted of the goodness of God, you know what you need to do. To know what is right and fail to do it is where the enemy wants you.

First Timothy 4:1-2 states: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." What a terrible situation it would be to have your conscience seared and to go against the goodness of God!

Often when one gets in that condition, there is no hope. That is terrible to go against the very help that one needs to get his soul right with God. Are you as zealous for the Lord and the things of the Lord today as you were when you were first saved? Do you remember how good you felt knowing that your life was cleaned up and that you did not have to go back to sinful things?

Do you still get excited when the Spirit of the Lord so wonderfully moves? Can you honestly say that you are thrilled and excited to be known as a child of God? As the message is going forth, can you say, "Forget about the time. I am enjoying the preaching so much that I would not mind if he were to preach for another hour?" Or have you no time for God? One day you will be in Heaven or hell for eternity.

Move Closer to the Lord

Sin is a destroyer. There is a penalty for those who dabble in the pleasures of sin. Romans 6:23 states, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Are you willing to move closer to the Lord?

Do you want to do more for God? Saint, you cannot do too much when it comes to the things of God. What you are going to do for God, you need to do now. Time is running out, and eternity is near. In our world we have much violence, corruption, and sin. There is not a day that goes by that you do not read in the newspaper how the homosexual movement is getting stronger.

God is being crowded out of the work places. In many places you cannot have anything relating to God. He is being crowded out of the schools and the court rooms. People are crowding Him out of our coun-

try more every day. They do not have time for the Lord. They are too busy going here and there. Hardly anyone will take the time to go to a funeral home anymore to comfort the bereaved. A few years back, I heard about a drive-thru funeral home. The funeral director props up the body of the deceased at a window, and people just drive by and look. They do not have time to stop and speak a few words of comfort to the family. That is sad, isn't it? However, they will have to take time to die.

If Jesus carries, nothing can stop death from coming. Death is sure, and it is coming to each of us.

Hebrews 9:27 says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Where will you be after you pass from this earthly life? All your plans, all your wishes, and all that you had hoped to accomplish will be over. Only what you have accomplished for the Lord will remain. Only that which is anchored in Jesus Christ will stand. Friend, you need to be established in the things that will last for eternity. Are you where you need to be with the Lord? If not, you need to ask the Lord to help you.

(Cassette C-5209M)

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."

Proverbs 1:7-9

Radio Log



LOCATION	STATION	DAY	TIME
Wellston, Ohio	WAJB-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.
Little Rock, Arkansas	KAAY-AM 1090	Saturday	9:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m.
Newark, Ohio	WCLT-AM 1430	Sunday	7:15 a.m.-8:00 a.m.
Anderson, Indiana	WQME-FM 98.7	Sunday	8:00 a.m.-8:30 a.m.

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

[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]

who wears a crown. In our lesson James was trying to get the saints to take courage. Child of God, do not get discouraged with your trials. They are instruments of blessing to make you spiritually prosperous. They exercise you to spiritual victory. Without a battle there would be no victory. Without opposition there could not be a reign. Why? There would be nothing to reign over. There must be opposition; there must be something subject to you in order for you to reign.

There is only one place that God ordained for Satan to be. Romans 16:20 says, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan [where?] under your feet." God desires that you have Satan under your feet, not whispering in your ear or crawling on your back.

Luke 10:19 tells us, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." When Luke wrote about serpents and scorpions, he was not talking about the creepy-crawly type that crawls around on the ground. He was speaking of the type that crawls around in congregations. Jesus said to the Pharisees in Matthew 23:33, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers. . . ." Why did He say that? He said it because of their subtle, crafty, deceptive nature.

Ezekiel talked about scorpions. He wrote in Ezekiel 2:6, "And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house." He was talking about spirits and the powers of the enemy in Luke 10:19, not literal things.

God wants these things under your feet. These things do not just come down and get under your feet. There is a part that you must play, and it is a trial to get the things of the enemy down under your feet where they belong. First Corinthians 15:57 says, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through . . . Christ."

You cannot earn the victory. However, if you will do your part to stand true and steady through the trial, God will empower you to bring it down and tread on it. Again, Luke 10:19 says, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Your source of power is Jesus Christ; it is only through Him that you can reign in this life. You do not reign because of your understanding, your knowledge, your wisdom, your longevity, or because you may know the Truth. We reign in life by One, and that is Jesus Christ.

What is the crown that James 1:12 speaks of? It is the crown of life, or victorious living. Life is a power; it is a power over death. The works of the enemy and the works of this world are the works of death. The power of life is the power over all the powers of death. Jesus said in John 10:10, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Lamentations 5:16 teaches this by the converse. It reads, "The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned!" Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death." Ezekiel 18:4 reads, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." James 1:15 states, ". . . sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

In Revelation 2:10 Jesus,

speaking to the Smyrnan congregation, said, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried [it is evident to see that He was speaking of the suffering of trials]; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Remember, we are dealing in figurative expressions. This is a symbolic Book. If this were literal, why would you need a crown of life after you were dead? There would be little benefit to that. He was not talking about a literal crown or literal death, but rather He was admonishing the people to be faithful in the face of suffering trials, to die out to self, to die out to the suffering, and to be faithful so they could have crowned, victorious lives, right in the face of their suffering.

Christ wants the world to see people who have victory and glory, those who have crowned, victorious living and who reign in the face of opposition, adversity, trial, hurt, hardship, and suffering. Child of God, He wants you to be a light to the world. You must let that crowned life radiate to show the world that you are reigning in life by Jesus Christ. This is the tenor of the entirety of the Scriptures.

Second Corinthians 2:14 says, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." Dear one, you do not have to accept anything less than triumph. The blessing of trial is found in the words of John in 1 John 4:4, which states, ". . . greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." We have a greater, more superior power in us through the personality of the Holy Spirit than all the men and devils amalgamated together. It is a greater power.

In the face of all adversity, Christ can give you the victory. You can reign in life and have crowned living. You can live victoriously and have everything contrary under your feet, subject to the power of Christ in your life. Regardless of what obstacle or trial you may face, you do not need to lose your position. You can continue to reign and put all things under your feet and have a crowned life.

You need to realize that you do not have to succumb to anything. You can reign over it, and then you will see what James saw, that you are blessed. You never need to accept anything less than absolute victory. Isn't that a blessed thought?

Now I want you to notice another thought in James 1:12. How can you maintain your reign? How can you keep this crowned life out where men can see the difference in your life? Again, verse 12 reads, "Blessed is

the man that endureth [that is in the continual and present tense] temptation. What is the lesson? In essence, he was telling us, "Blessed is the man who endures and keeps right on enduring."

To continually reign, you have to face opposition and obstacles with victory. You must endure, or persevere, to maintain that crown. Why is this essential? First, it is the only way to maintain personal victory. Second, manifesting this crowned, victorious life serves as an evangelistic force to the world and shows that you do not need to be in servitude to sin and the world.

This crowned life, or crowned living, shows the world that one does not have to be a slave to passions. Friend, you do not have to be bound by self, but rather you can live above the level of mere human existence. As verse 12 of our Scripture text says, you can "receive the crown of life." You can live a blessed,

victorious life. The trials give you an opportunity to show your victory to the world. Each trial is one more opportunity for Jesus to let the royal glitter shine in the midst of a sin-benighted world.

I trust that you will take courage. As one ancient author said, "These are the times that try men's souls." It is in times of trial that one receives the crown. It is in those hours that God wants His people to glisten and shine and show the world there is a better way. It is not something for the realm of eternity, but thank God, the crown of life is something we can enjoy now. We can have absolute victory in the face of self, sin, sectism, and Satan. As Brother B. E. Warren penned in his song entitled *Victory, "Hallelujah! What a thought! Jesus full salvation brought. Victory! Victory!"*

Brother Earl R. Borders

Should I Force My Children to Go to Sunday School?

Shall I make my child go to Sunday school or church? Yes! And with no further discussion about the matter. Startled? Why?

How do you answer Junior when he comes to breakfast on Monday morning and announces to you that he is not going to school anymore? You know Junior goes.

How do you answer when Junior comes in very much besmudged and says, "I'm not going to take a bath." Junior bathes, doesn't he?

Why all this timidity, then, in the realm of his spiritual guidance and growth? Are you going to let him wait and decide what church he will go to when he is old enough? Quit your kidding! You did not wait until you were old enough! You do not wait until he is old enough to decide whether he wants to go to school or not, to start his education. You do not wait until he is old enough to decide whether he wishes to be clean or dirty, do

you? Do you wait until he is old enough to decide if he wants to take his medicine when he is sick? Do you?

What shall we say when Junior announces he does not like to go to Sunday school and church? That is an easy one to answer. Just be consistent. Tell him, "Junior, in our house we all go to Sunday school and church, and that includes you." Your firmness and example will furnish a bridge over which youthful rebellion may travel into rich and satisfying experiences in personal religious living.

The parents of America can strike a telling blow against the forces that contribute to our juvenile delinquency, if our mothers and fathers will take their children to Sunday school and church regularly.

J. Edgar Hoover

REASONS FOR CHURCH GOING

Some go to church to take a walk;
Some go to church to laugh and talk;
Some go there to meet a friend;
Some go there their time to spend;
Some go there to meet a lover;

Some go there a fault to cover;
Some go there for speculation;
Some go there for observation;
Some go there to doze and nod;
The wise go there to worship God.

Announcements

MEDINA, OH
Oct. 11-17

REVIVAL: The Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH
Evangelist: Bro. Roger L. Decker, Newark, Ohio 43055
Service times: Mon.-Sat. 7:00 p.m. & Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor C. H. Dickerson, 215 Montview Dr., Medina, OH 44256
Telephone: (216) 725-6853 or (216) 725-5993

DETROIT, MI
Nov. 22-26

REVIVAL: Bible Standard Church of God, 14601 Gratiot Ave., Detroit, MI 48205
Evangelist: Brother Earl R. Borders, Heath, Ohio 43056
Service times: 7:00 p.m. nightly
For more information contact: Pastor Samuel Oree, 18822 Buffalo St, Detroit, MI 48214
Telephone: (313) 892-3483 or (313) 891-5210

New Pastor in Summersville, West Virginia

Brother Earl R. Borders has felt the call of God to become the pastor of the Church of God on Armstrong Road in Summersville, West Virginia. At this time, he will continue to reside at his current location in Heath, Ohio, and travel to Summersville on the weekends and for revivals. The regular services times are as follows: Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 a.m., and Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 p.m. For additional information, you may contact Brother Earl R. Borders at 740-788-8763.

New Work Begins in Michigan



Brother Cheney has felt the burden to begin a new work in Niles, and he has also felt the call of God to pastor that work. If you live within driving distance of this area, you are welcome to take your Bible along and worship the Lord with them.

Niles Church of God

1305 Fort Street • Niles, Michigan 49120
Telephone: 269-687-1045

Service times:

Sunday Morning 10:30 a.m.

Sunday Evening 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Prayer & Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Burt Cheney, Sr.