

"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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Spring 2005 Camp Meeting Report

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

Ephesians 1:3

"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Ephesians 2:6

Heavenly Places

Another beautiful camp meeting has come and gone, but the effects of the wonderful time and good fellowship we enjoyed together continues to linger. It truly was a time of feasting on the good things that God has so graciously afforded us. A spirit of love and unity flowed from heart to heart that made the fellowship of the saints so rich. There were those who remarked about how the love of God prevailed over the campground.

The first service of the spring camp meeting began Sunday morning as Brother Roger Decker opened with prayer and welcomed everyone to God's Acres. For the next eight days the people of God feasted on the Word of God and sat together in heavenly places as various ministers brought forth challenging messages. The statement was made, "This was the best meeting yet." Some wonder why this is always said after every camp meeting. First of all, it is true! Moreover, this is the way it is supposed to be. The things of God get better and better as time goes on. His presence becomes richer and dearer as we draw closer and closer to Him. The Apostle Paul told young Timothy, "... evil men and seducers shall wax worse

and worse . . ." (2 Timothy 3:13). As the world turns more and more toward the downward way, the church is climbing to higher heights. Therefore, the things of God are becoming greater, growing sweeter, getting better, and more precious as we approach the end of time. This is all part of progressive salvation.

As we sat in heavenly places, our hearts were encouraged to see the Lord moving so miraculously. Souls that were loaded down with the weight of sin humbled themselves before God and in just a few moments of time had their burdens lifted. It is always a delight to see the needy raised from the depths of despair to the heights of peace, happiness, and joy. It is always a glorious sight to see precious hearts translated from the power of darkness to the kingdom of God's dear Son. Truly it is as one brother stated: "It's like getting saved all over again."

The beautiful singing by the choir was a great inspiration, as well as the many specials and the congregational songs. There is no greater place to be than where the presence of God is free to have His right of way. The success of this camp meeting is attributed to fasting and the many prayers and

[continued on page 26]

Ezekiel 11:1 Moreover the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the LORD'S house, which looketh eastward: and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men; among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.

2 Then said he unto me, Son of man, these are the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city:

3 Which say, It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh.

Ezekiel 12:22 Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?

27 Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off.

28 Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord GOD.

The Procrastinator



Brother Roger L. Decker

Wicked Counsel

As we look at this text of Scripture, especially Chapter 11, we find that a very dangerous saying was being spread in the land of Israel. The proverb being told around the nation of Israel was that the days go by, yet every vision and every prophecy comes to nothing and things remain as they are. In other words, the people were saying there would not be any future judgment. Verse 3 states, "Which say, It is not near; let us build houses: [As if to say, 'Let us go on with our lives and not be concerned with these visions.'] this city is the caldron, and we be the

flesh."

There were men in that city who had devised mischief and who gave wicked counsel by telling the Israelites to pay no attention to the vision. Those wicked men proclaimed, "Time will go on. Let us build houses and go on with everyday life. Things are not going to change." The same wicked spirit that worked in the days of the Israelites works yet today, telling people: "You have plenty of time. Don't worry about the Second Coming of Christ. People have been saying that Jesus was going to come for years." Even the Apostle Paul said that in his first letter to the Thessalonians. He said he was

expecting Jesus to return at any time; then in the second letter he had to clarify that the man of sin had to be revealed first. Throughout the church age, men have been saying that Jesus was going to come back.

In 2 Peter 3:3-4 you can read what Peter said: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." This spirit is still alive, and it is working a terrible condition of procrastination on sinners, and even on the people of God.

A Deceptive Spirit

I want to speak to the procrastinator, the one who keeps putting off getting the needs of his soul met, the one who says within himself, "Tomorrow's sun is going to rise. Things will go on as before. There is no need to make haste concerning salvation. I have plenty of time." Dear one, that spirit is dangerous. It is deceiving individuals into thinking that the Word of God does not mean what it says. That deceptive spirit causes one to think, "The days just keep rolling by and nothing happens. I have plenty of time. I am a young person, and I am in good health." It may look as if you are getting along fine and that you have plenty of time, but all you have to do is read the obituary columns and you will find that people of all ages die and go into eternity every day. Naturally, you find that more elderly people pass away, but on that page of obituaries, you can also read of young individuals who, no doubt, thought they had plenty of time. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says this: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

In Ezekiel 11:2 we read that Israel had been listening to evil counselors. Today it seems that people will lend their ears to evil counselors before they will lend their ears to the Word of God. It is not an easy job for a man who is called of God to get up and tell people of chastisement and judgment to come; nevertheless, it is the duty of every faithful messenger of God. Often the message and the message bearer are treated with contempt.

Second Chronicles 36:14-16 states: "Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he

had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy."

God said the people mocked, despised, and misused the messengers of God. They despised His words, and they rebelled against all means of deliverance "till there was no remedy," so there was no healing. People know they do not have salvation, yet they procrastinate. They put it off and put it off. When a person gets in that condition, there is no remedy.

You want to watch out for the counselor who gives you advice that leaves your soul at ease and justifies you when you are wrong. Peter said there were ones who scoffed at the promise of Christ's coming, saying "Where is the promise of his coming?" Today people say, "Things are not any different now than they were in the past. Things go along day by day, and there is no change." Friend, with that attitude comes a carelessness that will send your soul to a lost eternity.

God Has All Power

Jesus said He would come again. Paul said that Jesus would come again. Where is the God of judgment? Some think it must be that the fathers looked in vain for His coming. They feel that nature continues as usual. This spirit is a terrible spirit to deal with.

Do you remember how this nation was shook up after 9-11? People were turning to God, supposedly. Where are those same people today? Then Asia suffered a tremendous earthquake and the tidal wave hit many nations and killed more than 150,000 people. It was such a horrible tragedy; yet as time goes on, people fail to turn to God.

Someone may say, "Do you believe that God is in these things?" Things do not happen unnoticed

by God. He is God, and He knows all things. God will use catastrophe to turn people to Him, to awaken them in their souls. Sad to say, that alertness does not last long.

What gets hold of people? Unbelief. Most people will acknowledge God as their Creator. They will acknowledge the fact that He called into action the forces that are working in the universe. However, now that He leaves all those forces to govern and because God does not interfere in the affairs of man, people feel that we go on subject to nature and the things that befall us. They feel that God is not concerned. Friend, the teaching of the Word of God is opposed to that type of thinking.

Jesus said in John 5:17, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Paul said in Acts 17:28, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." God sustains this universe day by day and hour by hour. Without His support this world would collapse, and the order of society would fall. The laws of nature have no life or power within themselves. They are an expression of His divine will. God set up the forces of nature and put them in motion. God controls all the powers of nature. He can either change those laws at any time or suspend their operation at His command.

We read in Mark 4:35-41: "And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great

calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

I repeat, God can suspend the operation of the laws of nature at His Word. God set up the works of nature, and He is a God of uniformity. The scoffers cry was, "Everything is as it was," but that was not entirely true. The Flood was the divine judgment of God. It was by God's Word that the Heavens and the earth were made, and by God's Word that they are maintained. Second Peter 3:6-7 says: "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

God is not a God of days, months, or years. He inhabits eternity; He is an eternal God. The time that we each are allotted is for us, you and me. We have only so much time to make a choice in life: whether or not to serve God. Every one of our lives is on God's great calendar when it comes to the time of death.

A Great Peril

There is great peril in procrastination. Friend, your soul is precious, and you need to let the Lord save you. The people in Ezekiel's day so stirred God that He said this proverb was going to cease. Faith will make the distant near, but unbelief will put the near at a distance. One has said, and it is a good saying, "Unbelief looks in the wrong end of a telescope." A man once said, "Where Satan cannot persuade men to look upon the judgment to come, it is doubtful and uncertain, yet he gains his point by persuading them to look at it as a thing at a distance so that it loses its force."

To a true messenger of God,

eternity is always near. The most important thing about you is your soul. To procrastinate is a great peril. As long as things go well and ones prosper, vain proverbs will continue. However, when real trouble comes, then the Word of God becomes a reality to the soul. The Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. As long as things are going well, most people feel that they have no need of serving God, but how quickly things can change. It does not take weeks or months or years for things to change. Circumstances can change instantly, and you will find that smooth sailing can turn into rough seas.

The procrastinator does not plan to be lost. He feels that someday, somewhere, sometime he will make his peace with God. Dear one, hell is full of people who thought the same thing. This message is serious. You need to be concerned about your eternal soul. You only go through this life one time. What you do with it is going to determine where you spend eternity.

Putting off your salvation is the same as telling God that you love something else much more than you love Him. It is sending a message to God: "I don't have time for You right now, God." The Bible says in Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Many in the Word of God put off their souls' welfare until it was too late. The people in Noah's day were busy living from day to day, but they ran out of time and the door to the ark was shut. Those who were close to the ark perished as well as those who were miles away.

When Jesus comes again, those who are close to the kingdom are going to be just as lost as the heathen. Luke 17:26-27 says: "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe

entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." In Noah's day the people ate, drank, married wives, and were given in marriage. Nothing was wrong with any one of those things. What does that tell you? They were living their everyday lives without concern for eternity or the message that Noah preached to them. Nevertheless, the prophecy came to pass. The Flood happened just as God said it would happen.

What Will You Do With Jesus?

Many people failed to heed the teaching of Jesus concerning the literal destruction of Jerusalem. Luke 21:20-22 tells us: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." You can read in Josephus about the literal destruction of Jerusalem. Those who heeded the words of Jesus Christ were spared, just as Jesus said they would be.

In the Bible you can also read that Felix procrastinated. The Apostle Paul personally invited Felix to receive salvation. We read in Acts 24:25: "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." That is the response of many people yet today. They say, "When I am ready, I will let you know." Dear one, if you ever get saved, you must get saved when God calls you, not just whenever you find it convenient.

The Lord could be asking you to go to someone and ask for forgiveness. It could be that you owe money and have not paid your debt. It could be that the Lord has shown you that you must make restitution,

yet you have failed to do so. Friend, do not let time run out, because in eternity it will be too late.

I have one more excerpt that I want to deal with concerning Mr. Dwight L. Moody. No doubt, you have heard of the great Chicago fire. It nearly destroyed the entire city of Chicago on October 8, 1871. Mr. Moody stated that he made one of his greatest mistakes as an evangelist at that time. He was preaching a revival, and he addressed one of the largest crowds of his career. His message was about the Lord's trial and was based on Pilate's question to the people, found in Matthew 27:22: "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" As Mr. Moody brought the message to a close, he said this: "I wish you would seriously consider this subject, for next Sunday we will speak about the Cross, and at that time I will inquire, 'What will you do with Jesus?'"

Mr. R. S. Sankey, who was a very close friend of Mr. Moody's, then sang the closing hymn, which included the lines: "*Today the Saviour calls, for refuge fly, The storm of justice falls, and death is nigh.*" The hymn was never finished, for as Sankey was singing, the rush and roar of fire engines was heard on the street outside. That was the night of the great Chicago fire, which almost destroyed the whole city. Before the next day, Chicago lay in ashes. "I have never since dared," said Mr. Moody, "to give an audience a week to think about their salvation."

Today Is the Day of Salvation

Dear one, please, do not wait until Satan has scarred your life. Do not wait until Satan has nearly destroyed every ounce of decency you have in your life. Do not wait until literal scars, physical scars, mental scars, or any other scars come upon you that you might have to bear for the rest of your life. Jesus Christ can save and deliver you from them. You need to come to Jesus Christ while you can. Do not

put off your salvation a moment longer. Do not wait until you are upside down in a wrecked vehicle somewhere to call on God. Do not wait until something drastic happens to call upon His name. You need to call upon Him when there are words of exhortation to draw your soul to Him.

Jesus Christ can save you. It makes no difference what you have done or how deep in sin you have gone, Jesus Christ can save you. He can deliver you, make you a new person, and erase your past sins. He can clean up the conscience if you will turn to Him before it is too late. To put off repentance is dangerous, especially when your next step could be eternity.

The Lord will help you. He knows what you have done. He knows about all the sins in your life. God will be a real Father to you, and He will help you. When I came to Jesus Christ, I could not remember every sin that I had ever committed, although some things stood out in my memory. When I came to Jesus Christ, I gave them all to Him at one time—those that I could remember and those that I could not remember. Jesus Christ washed me, made me clean, sanctified me, and set me apart from the sins of my past.

When describing what happens in salvation, I like to illustrate it this way. You are probably familiar with the chalkboards in the schools, especially in the earlier years of school. I went to a country school, and we had a large chalkboard at the front of the classroom. At the end of the day, the teacher asked for volunteers to clean the chalkboard and the erasers. When you come to

Jesus Christ, it is as if a chalkboard is full of all your sins, and when you repent, God takes His big eraser and cleans up the whole chalkboard; then you are free to go and sin no more.

You may say, "I can't live right. I can't do it." You cannot do it on your own, but you can with the power of God. The same God that saves you will go with you, keep you, guide you, direct you, be your Comforter, and help you. Do not procrastinate any longer.

I read a couple of excerpts from D. L. Moody's testimony of things that were sad. No doubt, if he had it to do over again the night in that revival, he would not have postponed the invitation for the people to come to Christ.

Dear one, do not put your soul's salvation off a moment longer. You do not know a thing about what is going to happen tomorrow; you only know about today. Today is the day of salvation. When you hear His voice, that is the time to turn to Him. Do not let the devil talk you out of it. The devil will tell you, "I know you want to get saved, but just put it off another day." Friend, remember, if you put off salvation, a hardening process will continually take place.

If the voice of God is talking to you and drawing you, you need to heed His voice; follow His Spirit. God's Spirit will bring you to an altar of prayer. If you will confess your sins and forsake them, you will become a new creature and walk in newness of life. Then you can serve Him all the days of your life in holiness and righteousness.

(Cassette C-5356M)

God has promised forgiveness to your repentance today, but not a tomorrow, so do not procrastinate.

Matthew 27:39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and

elders, said,

42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

44 The thieves also, which were

crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Enduring Our Cross



Brother C. H. Dickerson

Forsaking All for the Cause of Christ

We want to focus on Hebrews 12:2 as a text of Scripture. The Cross represents a place of much agony and difficulty and a place of suffering and death. How hard it is to crucify the flesh! The Cross of Christ was a place of untold suffering. Sometimes I have tried to imagine a little of Christ's suffering on the Cross, but my mind cannot comprehend it. If you should happen to stick yourself with a pin, you would holler ouch and do everything you could to soothe it. It is hard to imagine what it would have been like to have spikes driven through your hands and your feet and to feel the

jolt of being dropped down into a hole on a cross, and then to hang there for several hours and finally come to an end. It is difficult to truly realize how hard it was.

Christ's death and resurrection are key to our salvation, without which we could not be saved. I say that because the results of your carrying a cross will determine where you spend eternity, and the salvation of others depends upon you.

Romans 10:13-15 reads: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they

hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

God has called His ministry to preach the Gospel of peace and to bring good tidings of great news. Verses 13-14 tells us that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" If you do not believe God or believe in God, then you cannot call upon Him in prayer. Whoever comes to God must believe that He is, if that person is to receive salvation. Jesus said in John, talking about the Word, that these things

were written so that you might believe. The Word is revealed to babes in Christ.

Again, Paul said in Romans 10:14, "... how shall they hear without a preacher?" In Acts, Chapter 8, you can read of the Ethiopian eunuch who was out in the desert, sitting in his chariot, reading the Word of God. God moved upon Philip and sent him out where the eunuch was. Philip ran to him and asked if he understood what he was reading. In Acts 8:31 you can read that the eunuch said, "How can I, except some man should guide me?"

If you are not careful, you will become a little independent and feel that you can get along well enough by yourself. I want you to realize that God's people will never understand what the church is unless someone tells them. People will never know what it is to be saved unless someone shows them and tells them.

Our Scripture text in Matthew lets us see that it was Christ's last and most difficult temptation. It was not easy for Him. The life of a saint is not easy either. The Apostle Paul did not find an easy way. He wrote about being beaten five times, stoned, and shipwrecked, and he went through many other dangers. Millions of other people were martyred, burned at the stake, and put to death by other means. Peter and other disciples were beaten, put in prison, and killed, except for John.

The only way God can use you is when you are willing to forsake everything for the cause of Christ. If you are unwilling, then God will not use you. However, if you do forsake everything for the cause of Christ, Jesus said you will receive persecution. Persecution can be potentially disastrous toward failure, because most of us want the things that are good.

Steadfast Love and Devotion for God

In the days of Job, when Job was going through severe trials and his

wife told him to "Curse God, and die" (Job 2:9), Job said in verse 10, "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" God has a plan for each of us just as He did for Christ. The Scripture lets us know that Christ could have come down from the Cross. Jesus taught in John 10:17-18: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

In Matthew 26:53 Jesus said that He could pray to the Father, and He would give Him more than twelve legions of angels. *Smith's Dictionary* states that a legion is six thousand. God could have dispatched an entire army of angels if Jesus had wanted to save Himself from all that He went through. In Matthew, Chapter 26, you can read that His humanity cried out just as ours does. He let us know that He came to manifest Himself so that we might be saved from the life of sin. Yet, when it came right down to doing it, He cried out to the Father.

In the same chapter you can read that Jesus took His disciples to a place called Gethsemane and asked them to watch and pray with Him, but when He went back, He found them asleep. In verse 40 He said, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" Then Jesus asked them to do it again, and when He returned, He found them asleep a second time. Finally, He prayed through and got the victory. The Scripture lets us know that He told His disciples to sleep on, because the hour was at hand when He was to be betrayed.

I want you to see that the very thing that kept the Lord on the Cross was His steadfast love and devotion for God. Likewise, the very thing that keeps the child of God working for God today is love. We are going to suffer persecution when we serve God, but He has something

in store for us that will be far more valuable than what we endure here.

The devil is doing his best to try to discourage God's people. Down through the years, he has discouraged many people and caused them to give up. Many people were once on fire for God, but today they have backslidden. Why? Because when the persecutions came, they gave up and went back into sin.

We all like to see divine healing and want God to work out problems, but too many times people give up and do not endure the trials and go back into sin. If you will fulfill the mission that God has for you, a crown will be awaiting you. It will be worth it all when you look upon the face of Christ.

Christ Fulfilled His Mission

Christ's principal mission on earth was to die for the world's sins. John wrote in 1 John 2:1-2: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation [or atoning sacrifice] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

John wrote in 1 John 4:9-10: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Then, in verse 14 he said, "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."

When John said that "we have seen and do testify," he meant that we can testify with our mouths, but what makes an impression on the world is when we testify that God has changed us and made something of us. Saint, you have a cross to endure. If you will endure that cross, you will see things happen as God wants them to happen. Had Christ come down from the Cross,

He would have been disobedient to the Father and His mission would not have been carried out; then the very thing that happened in the Garden of Eden would have to be repeated again and again, and we would be defeated.

The only reason that the saints of God can enjoy fellowship, the Spirit of God, and the Word of God is that Christ fulfilled His mission and died on the Cross of Calvary. We would not know what it is to be saved from the life of sin had He not fulfilled His mission.

Adam and Eve were tempted and overcome by three things: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Jesus went through the same temptations and came out victoriously. Now you have a choice concerning whether or not you want to endure your cross. However, if you fail to go through, it carries a penalty.

John wrote in 1 John 2:15-16: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." We go through the same temptations that Jesus went through, and He proved that we can be victorious, because He went through them. Jesus let us know that we need to watch, lest we fall into temptation. Because Christ went through the same temptations with victory, we can be victorious through the Spirit of God.

"Not Redeemed With Corruptible Things"

I want you to consider what Christ did, and I want you to understand that the power was there for self-corruption. Christ's betrayal to His purpose would have defeated Him by sin, and then He could not have become a sin offering for mankind.

Peter talked about this sin offering in 1 Peter 1:18-20: "For-

asmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

Before the very foundation of the world, God looked down through time and saw what man was going to do, so He perfected a plan of salvation. The day when the fulness of time came, that plan was implemented by Christ's coming and dying upon the Cross of Calvary. God had one thing in mind, and that was to give us the power to live above sin. By going through this, Christ opened the way so that we could be forgiven and live above sin. We do not have to sin, and God does not want us to sin. Therefore, He gave us power so that we do not have to sin.

All these things came about because Christ died upon the Cross of Calvary. Had He not died there, we would not have this power. We would still be under bondage if the blood of animals could have redeemed the sins that people had committed, but God was not satisfied with that. He wanted us to be in the same condition that man was when He created him: spotless and without sin. That is the reason He gave Christ to die upon the Cross of Calvary.

Had Christ succumbed to that last satanic temptation, God's plan would have failed. He let us know that all the world, from the time man was created to the end of time, hinged on one thing, and that was the Cross. In other words, before Christ's crucifixion, people looked ahead to the Cross, and today we look back to the Cross to be forgiven.

What Is Our Mission?

Christ had a mission, but the Scripture lets us know that He did

not have to do it. He looked beyond the Cross. Our text of Scripture in Hebrews 12:2 states, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy. . . ."

It is equally important that we carry out our mission. God saved us for a purpose, and He gave each of us a mission. He saved us because He had a work for us to do. We do not have to do it. No one forces us to do it, but we ought to please God. To do so, we must do what He wants us to do and be what He wants us to be, and then we will have a payday coming. Since we have a payday coming, we should gladly do what God wants us to do, because we can see the joy beyond the cross, or beyond what we are going through. We can see God working and blessing.

The question is often asked, "What is our mission?" Our mission is important, just as important as Christ's mission was. We are here in His stead, to take His place. When Christ was here on earth, He said that He would send us to do greater works. We must reach out in a greater way, not that we can do a greater thing than He did, but we can reach more people because we are in more places.

The Bible tells us exactly what our mission is. The Prophet Isaiah said in Isaiah 42:5-7: "Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."

Child of God, this is the reason God has called you. He said He would hold your hand, give you power, keep you, and give you a covenant. Then He wants you to go out and be a witness to others.

Many people are blind when it comes to the things of God. They think that because they go to church and have signed a membership card, have their names on a church book, and a pastor has his approval on them, that is all that is necessary. People need to have their eyes open to the knowledge that Jesus came to save them *from* their sins, not *in* their sins. He came to set them free from this old world so that they could be free to serve God. He came to open the eyes of the blind and to bring the prisoners out of the prison of sin and bondage.

God wants the saints of God to have such a good, godly spirit that others can feel the Spirit of God. People should not see an old spirit of hatred that would belittle or tear down others, but they should see such a godly spirit that they will want to be saved. That is the reason God has called His people. Our mission is to get them out of sin and out of Babylon, where man is the head instead of Christ. That is not the Church of God. God is the Head of His church. He wants us to live such a life that we can open people's eyes so that they can see something better than man-made religion and man-made salvation. They can see something that will set them free.

Beguiled Through Satan's Subtlety

Friend, before you can be saved, you must have your eyes opened. We have never lived in such perilous times as we are living in today. Many people are trying drugs, alcohol, and other ungodly vices. God has sent His saints out into the world to let people know that Christ is the answer to their problems. He wants them to know that they can have happiness, joy, peace, and pleasure in serving God. Many people today are saved, but they are in man-made organizations where men are running things. God wants people out of the prison of sin, and He also wants them brought out of the cloudy and dark places of false

religion.

Today we are seeing signs of the times. We are seeing earthquakes, floods, and other disasters, but most people are not concerned about it. I believe from the depths of my heart that God is doing everything He can to awaken people and to let them know He is displeased with them. He is trying His best to awaken people preceding the Second Coming of Christ. In Acts, Chapter 20, Paul was so troubled that he said that after his departing grievous wolves would enter in, not sparing the flock. He said he ceased not to warn them night and day with tears.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11:3, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." He said he had laid the foundation and that there is no other foundation, only Christ, or only God's eternal Truth.

Paul wrote in verse 4, "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." In other words, Paul said that he feared, lest after he had laid the foundation of God's eternal Truth, that some would listen to one who had compromised and let down and they would be deceived and walk away from Truth.

We are living in a time when we need to fear these things. Why? Because God has one Truth, and it is the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation. People have compromised, and they will do anything to draw others to them. They will do anything to build up something for themselves instead of building up the Church of God. Paul said he was fearful that after people had gotten saved and had known the Truth that they would depart from the Truth and fall for false doctrine and a spirit that was not God's Spirit.

Looking Beyond Our Cross

I want you to see that had Christ failed His mission or had He not done it, then He would have lost the joy that was set before Him in rescuing this lost and dying world. Again, Hebrews 12:2 reads, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross." Our minds are too small to even comprehend the suffering that Jesus endured on the Cross.

Before the foundation of the world, the Scripture tells us that God had this plan. The plan was when the fullness of time was come, God was going to send His Son into this lost and dying world to put the plan of salvation in motion so that it would reach down and lift a man out of sin and turn his life around and set him free. The old devil was right there and pointed out to Christ how much He was going to suffer. In Matthew 26:39 Jesus said, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

God just raised the window blind, so to speak, and let Jesus look beyond what He was going to suffer on the Cross of Calvary and see ministers saved and preaching God's eternal Truth. He saw people saved, living above sin, and He saw the joy. For the joy to see these things come to pass and to see the devil defeated, He endured the Cross and despised the shame; He looked beyond that.

Child of God, I want you to see that we are going to go through some persecutions, trials, and hard places. The devil is going to be right there to tell you, "You should not have to do these things," to try to discourage you. However, God wants you to look beyond those things and lead souls to Christ. God has something in mind for you, and you need to look beyond the things that are happening today to see how your life can reach out to others by the power of God so they can find an experience with God. May God help us.

As Jesus looked beyond the

Cross and the suffering, He saw people living free from sin and praising God for the Truth and thanking God for working out problems. Thank God, He saw that when they came to the deathbed experience, God would take them by the hand and take them across the old river Jordan. Jesus did not like the Cross, but He said for the joy that was set before Him, He endured it.

Christian friend, God has a mission for you. He saved you for a purpose. He saved you to live a holy life before others and to help open their eyes to the Truth so they will see there is something better. The world is miserable today. People are committing suicide on every side.

Through Christ's dying on the Cross of Calvary, God has picked people up out of the life of sin and made saints out of them—not just religious people, but saints. He has them all over the world. Why? To show others something better than the things of this old world and something greater than the nominal religion that so many people have today. God has an experience that will change you completely. Therefore, Jesus said, "I will drink that cup."

Because Jesus died on the Cross of Calvary and was resurrected, that is the reason we can rejoice and that is the reason God's people are unified. Had Christ not died on the Cross of Calvary, our freedom to live holy lives would have been lost. We would have nothing more than what they had before the Cross. We could not control ourselves and live above sin, and after we sinned, we regretted it. Before Jesus came, the people had to kill a sacrifice and offer it to God; however, that was not good enough, because that could not remove the sin. Jesus died on the Cross of Calvary to wash away our sins.

Although death on a cross was a place of belittlement and a place where the worst of sinners died, Jesus was a righteous man. They placed Him between two thieves. Jesus went through extreme agony

simply because He looked down and wanted to help you and me. He wanted to give us something better than this old sin-cursed world had to offer. When God gives you something, it is for your benefit and for the benefit of others. If you will live as God wants you to live, you will influence others to turn to Christ in this lost and dying world; then, my friend, when the roll is called up yonder, you will reap a benefit from it.

There would have been no assurance of victory had Christ been defeated through the suffering for mankind. Today people are defeated due to such little things. I am not talking about sinners, but I am talking about people who once served God. It does not take much to cause people to be defeated today. They do not want to suffer for the things of God. They want everything good.

Look Diligently

Hebrews 12:15 says, "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." The spirit of bitterness is from the devil. If a spirit of bitterness gets hold of you, it will influence many people, not one person. It spreads out to somebody else's influence, and on it goes. That is what Paul was warning of when he said, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God." You must be very careful that you do not fail of the grace of God. God has enough grace to take you through anything that He allows to come upon you.

As Jesus went out in the Garden of Gethsemane, He took His disciples and said, "You wait here," and He went a little farther. He went further than He has ever asked anyone else to go. He has never asked you to go as far as He went. He paid the supreme price, and He made the supreme decision in the most trying times of His career that He would suffer and die on the Cross. Why? He looked beyond it and saw some-

thing greater than that old Cross.

My friend, you need to look diligently, and be very careful that you do not fail of the grace of God. God will give you the grace to take you through every situation. Why? So that a root of bitterness will not spring up and many will not become defiled.

Hebrews 12:16-17 tells us: "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 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."

How many today would serve God if it were not for the cigarettes? They let a little old cigarette defeat them. Others let one drink or some drugs defeat them. For some, they let romance with the world or a date with someone defeat them. On and on the list goes, but they are little things. Esau sold his birthright for one morsel of meat. What did he have in mind? All he could see was how hungry he was right then. He thought he was going to die, so he gave up. In essence, he told Jacob, "Here, you can have the birthright. I am going to die anyway. Just give me a morsel of meat."

I say again, God has given each of us a mission, Christian friend. You are going to have trials, tribulations, and hard places, but you have to look beyond those things. Look diligently, lest you fail of the grace of God. When people fail, a root of bitterness springs up that troubles them, and not only them but many people will become defiled because of it.

Having the Same Love, and Being of One Accord

Jesus is the perfect example of loyalty and deep love to the Father. By divine demonstration, Jesus proved His love not only to the Father but also to us. In other words, by not coming down from the Cross of pain and humiliation, He saved

others but not Himself.

In Philippians 2:1-4 Paul said: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

The thing that makes God happy is our having this same love and by being unified. God puts His Spirit in me and in you, and when we both have the Spirit of God, we are going to be unified. We might have disagreements, but we are going to be unified. When those who claim to be God's people are not unified, something is wrong. Someone does not have the Spirit of God. This is His joy to look down and see people who have unity and who can go to a camp meeting and worship God, enjoy the things of God, and enjoy being together.

Christ committed Himself to God and so loved us that we should unreservedly love and commit ourselves to Him. Paul wrote to the Corinthian people in 2 Corinthians 5:14-15: "For the love of Christ constraineth [compels] us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

Throughout the Word of God, it shows us that when people have had the thought of living for themselves or for what they wanted, it brought nothing but disaster. Consider Samson. He got to the place where he lived for himself. He saw a woman named Delilah and said, "Get her for me, because she pleases me well." She brought him down to destruction. King Solomon was another one that God had used in a great way, but when he got to the

place where he was living for himself, he got in trouble. God used David in a great way, but when he got to the place where he lived for himself, he also got in trouble. When Peter started living for himself, it got him in trouble. When Demas, Judas, and others started living for themselves, it got them in trouble. These are just a few examples in the Word of God.

My friend, if you start living for yourself, it will get you in trouble. Jesus died on the Cross of Calvary so that we might live, not for ourselves, but for Him. You ought to do what God wants you to do and do it how God wants you to. If you do that, then much will be accomplished. Again, if you live for yourself and please yourself, it will lead you to disaster, because you cannot please God and yourself.

When Christ committed Himself to God, He did not live for Himself. He said, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me," but then He said, "Not My will, but Thine be done." If you live for yourself, it will cause trouble and disaster, and souls will be lost. We also are on a cross in our union with Christ; in other words, we are being crucified with Him. We must remember that Satan continually urges us to come down from the cross. The devil will say to a pastor, "You don't have to take that. Why don't you quit?" That is the same temptation that Christ had.

Endure to the End

Many people give up when they get into testing times, or cross bearing. However, Jesus said, in essence, "Except you bear your cross, you cannot be My disciple." This cross bearing is a place to die. Not a day goes by that we do not have to die to ourselves, to our will, to our flesh, and to our wants. If we do not do it, we are heading for trouble. The devil will be right there every time God moves upon us and gives us a cross to carry. The devil is always trying to discourage and defeat us.

Jesus said in Luke 14:27, "And

whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." He said in Matthew 10:22, ". . . he that endureth to the end shall be saved." In Revelation 2:10 Jesus said to the angel of the Smyrna church age, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days [or one thousand years]: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

In Hebrews 13:13 we are urged, "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." Go forth from the ceremonial forms; go forth from sin and self. Jesus said that if you suffer with Him, you will also be glorified with Him.

Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:11-12: "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." Christian friend, God saved you to do a work, not just to take you to Heaven. When you know what God's eternal Truth is and know what God wants you to do, if you do not do it, yet you just go on until you get down on your deathbed, and then you want to call the preacher to pray a prayer to get you into Heaven, I do not think God answers that kind of prayer too often. We have a work to do.

You will receive a reward if you will give wholehearted service to the Lord. Are you putting your whole heart into the mission that God has placed on you? Christ gave all He had, and He expects you to give all you have in your mission. God called you for a purpose. This is not a time to relax; it is a time to pray. Friend, you need to make sure that you are fulfilling your mission. Unless you do what God would have you to do, you are not going to have a payday coming. It is true literally, and the same is true spiritually. Are you fulfilling your mission?

(Cassette C-5072M)



My Personal Testimony

My name is Patty Gatten, and I am a child of God. I love the Lord and really enjoy my experience of salvation. I have a strong church family in the Church of God at God's Acres in Newark, Ohio. I finally have my life in order and have a hope, but it was not always like this.

I was born on May 16, 1945. My two brothers, my sister, and I were raised Catholic. We grew up in the country on a small farm, and we were required to work hard. My brothers and sister mostly did the outdoor chores, but because I had been born with a troublesome skin condition that worsened when I was outdoors, I became responsible for most of the indoor work. Before I was very old, much of the responsibility around the home fell on me.

As I was growing up, I was subjected to sexual abuse from my father. Only God knew what the abuse was doing to me. I know now that God was there with me and protected me on many occasions. My mother drank beer all the time, and she even bought me a drink to celebrate my eighteenth birthday. It seemed like drinking helped drown out the misery of all the things my father was putting me through. This is also why I was married at the age of nineteen.

After twelve years of marriage and three sons, my husband and I

were divorced due to his abuse to me. Because of the terrible situation I had to live with while growing up and the mental abuse I received from my husband, I began to break down mentally and emotionally. About halfway through our marriage, I started seeing a psychiatrist.

At this time I was in such a bad condition emotionally that I visibly shook and could not always talk straight. In this state I was unable to work and make a living for myself and my sons. Times became so hard that I had a complete mental breakdown. At this time I felt my boys would be better off with their father.

I attempted suicide several times, and I ended up in the psychiatric ward in the hospital. Even there I could find no refuge from the onslaught. My father visited me and threatened me if I ever told on him. I was losing heart when it came to telling on him. At this point, I just gave up all hope. This resulted in very serious attempts to take my own life.

I remember once when I was in the hospital after I had attempted suicide, I thought I was in hell. It was truly a bad time for me. In the midst of my despair I found that when I drank alcohol, I did not shake and could talk without difficulty. As a result, I became an alcoholic, but my dependency on alcohol made a bad matter worse. Later, I

married two more times, but both times my husbands were abusive. If it had not been for God intervening for me, I would not be alive today.

One night I took an overdose of pills. I do not know why, but thank God, my sister found me in my apartment unconscious and called the emergency squad. It was a miracle that I pulled through because the pills had been in my system too long for them to pump my stomach.

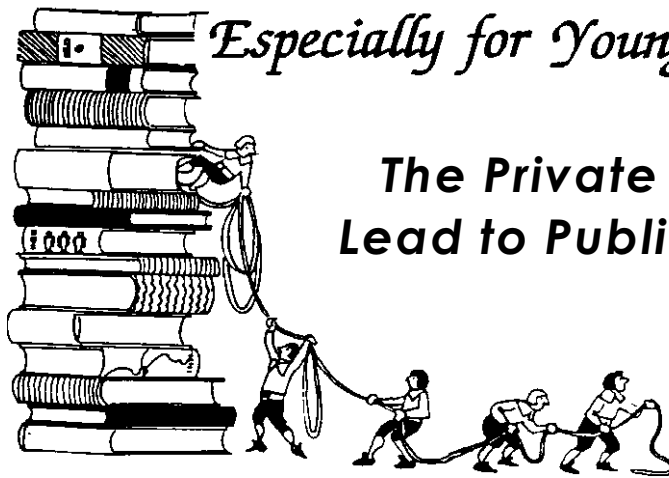
My third husband was of Pentecostal background, and I longed for spiritual reality. I felt a deep desire to go to church with him and get my life straightened out. My hopes were dashed when I found out that once again I had married an abusive husband.

On August 2, 2002, I was in a terrible automobile accident. Earlier that day I had been to the dentist, and he gave me some pain pills. I then had a few drinks of alcohol. I thought I was okay and was on my way to my niece's children's birthday party. All of a sudden, the tire on my car had a blowout, and I lost control of the car and hit some trees. Thank God, I did not hit another car! I cannot remember hitting the tree, but I do remember pleading with God not to let me die.

At the hospital I learned that I had broken my back (in the same place it had been broken some time

[continued on page 15]

Especially for Young People



The Private Bars Lead to Public Bars



Donald Crane, tall, handsome, and twenty, refused the cocktail offered him by his beautiful young hostess. Mockingly, she said:

"You wouldn't spoil my party, would you, Donald dear, by refusing to drink with me?"

"I'm afraid I would, Louise."

"I thought you loved me," she pouted.

"I do, too much to drink with you or any other woman."

"But, Donald, I'm not asking you to get drunk. I only want you to be sociable and modern." By now, several guests had joined Louise in her urging.

"I think he's an old meanie not to help initiate your lovely new bar," giggled a small, unsteady blond.

The evening wore on. There were more drinks before the late supper in the lovely dining room where, again, glasses clinked merrily. One young fellow rose unsteadily from his chair, raised his glass, and mumbled:

"Ladies an' gentlemen, I give you our hostess an' her private bar. Let's drink (hic, hic) to all bars, public an' private!"

He sat down amid cheers and a roar of laughter. Only the boy whose glass remained untouched was quiet and unsmiling.

Donald Crane, a newcomer in the city, had met Louise Dyer two months before and had fallen in love at once. Later, finding out how different their views were about drinking, he was very unhappy and

undecided what to do about their friendship. Turning to him now, the girl asked seriously:

"Donald, dear, why are you so opposed to liquor? You must have a reason. Won't you tell me?"

"Yes," chorused the others loudly, "tell us, Mr. Teetotaler!"

"Remember you asked for it, so I'll tell you why I refuse to be modern, as you say, why I refuse to help swell 'Uncle Sam's' revenue by risking my health and my happiness with alcoholic drinks."

"Hear, hear! This should be good, as good as a sermon."

"Be quiet, everybody," urged Louise sternly.

Donald went on: "A year ago my mother was having our house remodeled. I begged her to have a private bar installed. She refused. I insisted, urging her that since 'Uncle Sam' didn't care if she should. After much argument she said: 'Donald, you and I are going on a trip, and when we return, if you still want your bar, I will say no more.' Two days later, on my nineteenth birthday, we boarded a train for a distant city. Arriving at our destination, I asked with much curiosity, 'Where to now?'"

"'For a drive,' said my mother. A few minutes later the cab we had taken drove up before a large building. Reading the sign, I asked, angrily:

"'Why are we stopping here?'"

"'To see a friend.'"

"'I'm sure I have no friend in this

place,' I said.

"We entered the building, and after Mother gave her name, we followed an attendant down a long hallway and stopped before a cell. Behind the bars was a man who cried out:

"'Catherine, my dear, what does this mean?'"

"Mother spoke tremulously: 'I've brought our son to see you, dear. Son, this is your father!'"

As the boy paused in his story, a murmur of horror ran around the table. Flushing, he resumed: "I tried to speak, but no words came. My knees refused to support me, and I sank trembling on a bench. My father, whom I had thought dead, was an inmate of the state penitentiary! This, then, accounted for my mother's mysterious trips from home.

"'Why did you bring him here, Catherine?'"

"'It seemed the time to let him know, dear. I wanted him to hear from your own lips what put you here, behind these bars.'"

"'Accusingly, I turned to Mother. 'You've always led us to believe he was dead!'"

"'My father replied for her. 'It was my wish. For I am dead, worse than dead, to the world, and to you.' He brushed his hand across his eyes and began wearily, 'It was drink that broke up our home, my boy. When you were but a baby of four, I committed the crime that brought me here and broke your mother's heart.

I had built a private bar in our basement.'

"A private bar!' I exclaimed and looked to my mother, silently begging her forgiveness.

"I had thought it smart,' my father continued, 'to entertain my friends with liquor. The fact that it is legal does not make it any safer or more decent. One night while you and your mother were away, I had a party. I got drunk, quarreled with my best friend, and killed him with a whisky bottle from my own bar!'

"With trembling voice, I asked, 'How long must you stay here, Father?'

"Sobbing in utter hopelessness, he replied: 'For as long as I will live! Because I became so desperate and tried to escape on two occasions, I am denied all privileges and must remain alone in this cell. Because of

my private bar at home, I must stay forever behind these public bars.'

"Oh, I wish I had never known!' I sobbed.

Mother spoke softly: "I would have continued to spare you, Donald, had I dared, but I was afraid, for myself and for you. You were so insistent, and I could not bear another bar in my home, another bar crushing my heart, taking from me the happiness you bring.'

"Holding her close in my arms, I promised: 'Nor will you have to stand it. From now on, no alcohol will pass my lips, so help me God!'

"My story is finished. I know it sounds melodramatic, my friends. I've told it only in the hope that you might understand why I am sure only sorrow can come from drink.

"Perhaps you no longer will care for my companionship since you

know I am the son of a man behind the bars for life, but of one thing I am justly proud: I am also the son of the finest mother in all the world. For her, as for myself, I am through with drinking forever!"

There were tears in Louise's eyes as she put a trembling hand on Donald's shoulder and faced her guests.

"I thank God for the courage Donald has displayed. I am proud and happy to call myself his friend. I hope you will join me in deciding on a new venture—life without liquor and regrets. My bar comes out tomorrow!"

One by one, the glasses were set down until every guest had accepted the challenge.

Selected

[Personal Testimony—contin. from page 13] before), and I also had a broken foot and ankle. The doctor told my sister that he had never seen such a bad foot. He had to put wires and screws in my foot to put it back together. Then my foot was put in an open cast with a rod holding it in place with nails going from the rod into my leg in three different places. I spent several days in intensive care on a respirator. I remember very little of this, but I do remember the hallucinations I had when I was taken out of intensive care. I did not know what was real and what was not.

Later I was transferred to a nursing home for therapy. I had to wear a back brace, but my back was not healing. I was in and out of the hospital with pneumonia, and due to my incisions not being cleaned properly, I developed staph infection.

I did not realize how bad my back was at that time, and I wanted to get out of the nursing home and go home. I did go home, but it only lasted a week. I kept falling and grew weaker and weaker. I could hardly walk or stand, and I got to the place where I could not even sit up. That is when I

had to go to another nursing home. I was ordered to have complete bed rest. I could not sit up in bed or have my bed raised. I was like that for a year, living in a nursing home.

I had attended church with my sister several times in years past. One day while in the nursing home, Brother and Sister Ronald Cummings came to visit me. Sister Cummings told me that God loved me and wanted to save me. To her surprise, I was ready to give my heart to the Lord. I knew I needed help and wanted to live right. They prayed with me, and I was saved. Then Sister Karen Wilks also started visiting me. She and Sister Cummings both helped me to grow spiritually. They had Bible study sessions with me, and the choir from the Church of God came monthly on Sunday afternoons to hold services. It was just wonderful! God was so good to me.

After spending a year on my back, I began to sit up in bed. I eventually got to the place where I could walk with the help of a walker. I wanted to go home. Unfortunately, before I left the nursing home, I started smoking again. The devil was

really giving me a hard time. I know I hurt God and disappointed the saints and my sons, but God did not give up on me, and neither did the saints. They continually prayed for me.

In January 2004 I learned that the staph infection had spread into my blood stream and into my bones. I was in a very serious condition, and the doctor called and told me to get to the hospital right away. Before I left for the hospital, Sister Cummings and Sister Wilks visited me. They were concerned about my spiritual condition, and thank God, I prayed through again.

Soon after being admitted into the hospital, I began to have seizures and went into a coma. I had contracted spinal meningitis from the staph infection and had to have surgery. One group of doctors operated on my back, and another group of doctors operated on my lungs, which were full of the staph infection. Thank God, I pulled through! It was truly a miracle.

While at the nursing home, I started losing blood, and I had to be

[continued on page 19]

James 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

YOUR WILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW THE LORD



Brother Irwin Seshier

Is Your Heart in the Right Condition?

Today so many people are asked to give of themselves or to give to a certain cause. There is nothing wrong with giving to a worthy cause, but you cannot use that as a substitute for giving your life to God. You may say, "You don't realize how much I have done." Has it outweighed what you have done for Jesus Christ? Saint of God, what you do for the Lord is what will stand one of these days, not how much money you have given to charity, how much time you have given to the Red Cross, or how much blood

you have donated to the blood bank. Those are good causes, but most important is how much have you done for the Lord?

This old world is going to pass away one of these days, and everything in it will burn up with fervent heat. What about your service to the Lord's work? To be willing to follow the Lord, your heart has to be in the right condition. Is your heart in the right condition to follow God? You may give material things to many charitable organizations, but how do you stand spiritually in the eyes of God?

Second Corinthians 8:12 reads, "For if there be first a willing mind,

it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." A man's heart needs to be in tune with what the Spirit of God directs him to do. Too many people do what their friends want them to do. Serving the Lord is not based upon friendship or who you know or who knows you. Do you know Jesus Christ? How are you going to get anywhere with the Lord if you follow what your friends want you to do?

It is a sad situation to see ones out in sectarian worship trying to follow the will of God without real salvation. It grieves my heart when I see ones back away from Truth.

You may say, "That will never happen to me." It could happen to anyone. No one is immune to compromise. If you start to let down and do things against God and what He wants you to do, you could end up in the same condition. I love the complete Word of God when it is preached, because when the Word is preached in its fullness, nothing is omitted. You will get in trouble with God if you omit any part of the Word.

"Lead Me in a Plain Path"

In 1 Timothy 2:9 we read, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest [not modern] apparel [some people take the Word of God and omit what they do not like, such as the word 'modest'], with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." I have never seen such a time as today when men and women do not care how they look when they go out in public. It is a shame! I am amazed at what people wear in public. The Lord has not changed His mind about the dress standard. You might have, but He has not.

Many people like the old-fashioned way when it comes to the foods they eat. They do not complain when someone fixes some good, old-fashioned chicken and noodles. They love that. They love it when someone gets out an old ice cream maker and makes old-fashioned vanilla ice cream. How about the aroma and the taste of home-baked bread? A lot of people would get really upset if you were to tell them, "We are going to do away with old-fashioned cooking."

When it comes to worshipping God, I like the old-fashioned way, don't you? I like it when the Lord comes down in the services and blesses us and shows us exactly what we need to do to draw closer to Him. I like it that way, don't you? What is wrong with the plain, simple truths of the Gospel? The Gospel will show you exactly what you

were doing wrong and what you need to do to make things right.

You had better get back to the good, old-fashioned Gospel instead of modernistic ideas. One song says, "I don't want to change it or rearrange it, I love it just like it is." Too many people want to change it before they even try it. Someone may say, "Well, it does not fit my style." Have you tried it?

Psalm 27:11 reads, "Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." People need to get back to the plain path. When you truly become a child of God, you are completely won over by the Lord. You want to do what the Lord wants you to do, and you are directed by the Holy Spirit. You are not your own man or your own woman anymore. You should want to do what God wants you to do. You should want to have God lead you where you need to go, what to say, and how to act.

Be Not Ignorant of Satan's Devices

You do not need any supplements, options, or add-ons when you have Jesus Christ. Too many people want other options. What is wrong with just having Jesus Christ? He will take care of everything. He is all you need. I thank the Lord that when I got saved, other desires for this old world went away. I had no desire to partake of things that I once did, because Jesus Christ was all I needed. Sinner friend, Jesus Christ will take care of all your needs.

What causes one to feel dissatisfied? What makes one think he needs Jesus Christ and something else? That person becomes lean in his soul. If you are lean in your soul, you are seeking something else to take up that void in your life. When the Lord goes out, you will seek things that will fill the space left behind. The enemy knows this so well, and he will use things so you can feel a little religious. That is where soup suppers, bake sales,

auctions, raffles, and car washes come in, but they keep a religious tag on them. I thank the Lord that the true Church of God does not need all those add-ons.

People need to have more willingness to truly follow the Lord. You should not be just a hearer of the Word, but a doer also.

Saint of God, do not be an open prey to the enemy. The enemy is trying to defeat you, and he will use anything at his disposal to get the job done. Sad to say, he is working overtime, and he is getting things done in too many cases. He is out to devour each and every one of us spiritually. He is trying to take your peace and joy.

It is time to put your foot down and say, "I have had enough." It is time to focus on the Lord and to have a greater willingness to follow Him no matter what the enemy has to offer you. If your family or others give up, you need to be determined that you are still going to follow the Lord. The enemy wants to break your spiritual will. He wants you to become so discouraged that you think no one cares. Satan wants you to throw up your hands and say, "What's the use?" When he comes to you that way, that ought to give you more determination to follow God, because God does not come to you with such thoughts; that is the enemy.

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 2:11, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." You should not let the enemy get an advantage on you. If you become lean spiritually, then the enemy has an advantage. The word *advantage* means "anything favorable to success, to gain or benefit; superiority." That covers a great deal in our lives.

The enemy has an advantage if you do not pray to ask God to get unkind thoughts out of your mind. What about those negative comments that you made about the pastor? If you entertain unkind thoughts, you can have unkind actions and unkind words; it builds

and builds.

The enemy will not just back away and say, "Okay, I am finished with you." No, he continues to work on you because he wants to destroy you. It does not have to be something huge to take you down. The devil works in a subtle, cunning way. He will try to get you to make a little wrong move here and to say an unkind word there. It does not have to be big things to take you down.

Is Your Love for the Truth Fervent?

The devil is not going to lead you by the nose and sit you down on a bar stool in a bar. He is getting his work done with your failure to follow the Lord wholeheartedly. Your love for the Truth is not fervent enough. Your love for God and the things of God must be fervent. If your love is fervent, your willingness to follow God is so much easier. You will want to do what God wants you to do.

Too many people want to pull back. One is not fit for the Kingdom of God if he resists God instead of doing what God wants him to do. If a person continues to hold back, God will not use him in His kingdom. You cannot be a true follower of God if you are not completely consecrated to do His will.

Has your love for the Truth cooled off? Truth is always right. Do not think that you can change Truth; that is not going to happen. If allowed, Truth will point things out in your life that you need to measure to. You will not come back with the attitude, "Oh, do I have to?" No, you do not have to, but you will want to. You should not have the attitude, "Well, that is what he preaches; therefore, I had better go ahead and measure up." If you are a child of God, you will want to measure to the Truth. You will want to do all you can to please God. The only thing that is going to get you to Heaven is to know and follow the Truth. There is more to serving the

Lord than just going to church. You must be born again.

Your willingness to follow the Lord has to be strong. You must be committed to following God all the way. You need to be ready to face opposition. You are going to face people who are not going to agree with you, but that is not a time to give up on God. You need to stay in the battle and be a fighter. You should be willing to follow Him no matter what comes against you.

Today children face things in school that they did not have to face in the past. Evil is growing by leaps and bounds. Homosexuality and lesbianism are more on display now than last year. The schools are not immune to that problem. You may say, "Well, that does not affect me. Let them do what they want as long as they don't bother me." The enemy wants us to keep quiet about that. This is what is wrong with society today. Where did it start? The silence began right behind the sacred desk.

Many people say, "Well, it is a lifestyle." Friend, that is not what the Bible says. According to the Bible, it is sin. So many people say, "You dare not tell that to them. You might offend them." It ought to stir you. Homosexuals and lesbians are crying out more and more for their "rights."

News about terrorism is always in the media. Soon we will probably have terrorism drills along with the tornado, earthquake, and fire drills. The words "In God we trust" are always being battled in the courtrooms. People are trying to take away the Pledge of Allegiance. Only God knows where all of this will stop.

Let God Be in Control

As children of God, we need to let God be in control. No matter what the world is doing, you can tune that out and follow God. If you let your minds dwell on these things, they can bring you down spiritually.

Romans 8:1-6 states: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit [that is where you can get help; you need the Spirit of God working with you in every area of your life]. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Which way do you think God wants you to go? Do you want to go after the things of this old world and the fleshly things of this world? Or do you want to go after the things of the Spirit? That is your choice. Are you going after fleshly things that are going to cause spiritual death or are you going after spiritual things that are going to give you eternal life? When a true child of God looks at it that way, the things of this old world become more and more dim and spiritual things become brighter every day.

If you cool off in your experience with God, the things of this old world start to look more attractive. The Word of God tells us what will happen to this old world one of these days. What you are going to do for Jesus Christ is what you need to do right now if you have a willingness to follow the Lord. How is your willingness to follow Him? You might be put to the test one of these days. Do you have a willingness to do what God expects you to do? Is it heartfelt determination?

Sinner friend, it is time for your will to be broken. There is nothing out in this old world worth losing your soul for. It is a terrible place to

live without God in your life. It is time for you to commit your life to the Lord. The devil uses many things in this old world to try to get your attention, but one of these days it is all going to pass away.

Living a Victorious Life

There is joy, peace, and contentment in going the way that God has mapped out for us. The very thing that the world is seeking is right in the Word of God. Men can draw up all kinds of peace treaties, but the true peace and happiness is found only in serving God. The world's leaders do not want to turn to the Word of God to get ideas when it comes to drawing up peace treaties, because their hearts are not right. They need to get their hearts right first.

I love the Church of God, because the Holy Spirit is in charge, not man. I love the Church of God because I know who the Godhead is. The church has been through the fire, and she is coming out victoriously. What the church has gone through in the Bible is the very example that you and I can follow. You do not have to be backed into a corner and defeated. You can live a victorious life! You must be willing to follow God. If you have no will, you have no desire.

No doubt, you have read of stories about concentration camps during the war. What is the ultimate goal of trying to get a prisoner to break and tell the enemy everything they want him to tell? They break down his will. If they break a person's will, that person will tell them anything they want him to.

How is your willingness to follow the Lord? Jesus Christ was willing to go through horrendous suffering to purchase your salvation and my salvation. He was a willing sacrifice. Won't you willingly give your life to Him? Where do you stand with God? By following Him here on this earth, you can be with Him throughout the ceaseless age of eternity.

Sinner friend, if you will give your heart and life to Him today, it will be the best decision that you could ever make on this side of eternity. Christian friend, if you are not where you need to be, you can have the willing desire to move closer to Him. If you have a need in your soul, won't you seek Him earnestly?

(Cassette C-5270M)

[Personal Testimony—contin. from page 15] given several blood transfusions. The doctor who was treating me at the nursing home decided to take away all my pain medication at once. I thought I was going to lose my mind. My nerves got so bad that I could not think straight. I somehow walked to a store from the nursing home and bought some cigarettes. I felt so bad. My sister stopped by to see me after she got off work and found me in a terrible condition!

Sister Cummings and Sister Wilks came and prayed with me. My sister took me to the hospital. My blood pressure was very high, and I felt like I was going to have a complete breakdown. I was admitted to the hospital and later was able to go home, but I was still struggling spiritually. I could not stop smoking.

Once again I had a relapse. I was taken to the hospital where it was found that I was dehydrated and in complete kidney failure. While there, I had a light heart attack. All through this, God was right there with me. He was very merciful and spared my life once again. I was not ready to meet God.

While I was there in the intensive

care unit, Sister Cummings came to visit me. I was so glad that she came because I wanted to get back to God. She prayed with me, and I got the victory once again. Soon afterward, I went home. However, physically I was not doing as well as I thought. A few days later, I was taken to the hospital with heart failure. Then I had a bone marrow biopsy and was told that my bone marrow had been destroyed by the antibiotic I had been on. Not only had the antibiotic destroyed my bone marrow, but it had also destroyed the nerves in my feet and legs. I could no longer feel my feet. All I felt was pain. Through all of this, I was in constant pain. The doctor told me my staph infection was gone (praise God!), but the damage had been done.

Some of the things I still battle with are my blood disorder, kidney failure from time to time, a rare liver condition, congestive heart failure, osteoporosis, high and low blood pressure, and worst of all problems with my feet and legs. I am in constant pain, yet I cannot feel my feet. Because of this, I fell and fractured my leg. My femur bone broke and split all the way down to my knee. It took two days to stabilize my condition

before I could have surgery. Thankfully, God once again came to my rescue and spared my life and helped the doctors to put my leg together again.

I am now recuperating in a nursing home. I hope to go home soon. My desire is to serve God with all my heart. I want to help others, and I pray that no one will have to go through what I have gone through. God has spared my life many times, and He was with me through the hard times in my childhood and throughout my life.

My advice to others is never to mess with sin. It will take you further than you want to go, cost you more than you want to pay, and keep you longer than you want to stay. Even if you get saved, you will have to reap from all the wrong things you have done. I know God is helping me to cope with the physical condition I have! Praise God, I am now saved and have that peace in my heart, knowing that no matter what, God will be with me.

May God bless all who read this testimony. Truly God is still in the miracle-making business.

Patty Gatten

Joshua 17:12 Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

13 Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out. [God had told them to drive them all out, because He saw the wickedness of those people in Canaan land, but they put the Canaanites to tribute and failed to utterly drive them out.]

14 And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people, forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me

hitherto?

15 And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.

16 And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, both they who are of Bethshean and her towns, and they who are of the valley of Jezreel.

17 And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, even to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou art a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot only:

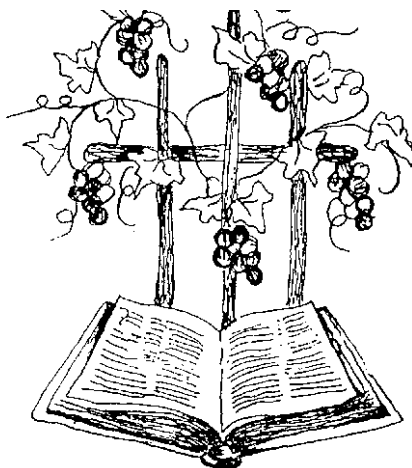
18 But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.

Joshua 18:1 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them.

2 And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance.

3 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?

Living to Your Capability



Brother Calvin Foster

God's Plan for His People

You should never get to the place where you allow yourself to become immune to the Gospel, so that it has no effect on you. God wants you to keep your heart tender so that His Word can move you. You must keep your heart open before God.

John 3:16-21 states: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his

only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

"And this is the condemnation,

that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." One who does evil hates the light and will not come to it, but he who obeys the Truth

comes to the light.

Most Bible students know about the account of how the children of Israel were in Egypt under Pharaoh's bondage and of how God sent Moses into Egypt to bring them out. As Moses brought them out of Egypt, he brought them to a certain place. Later Moses died, and Joshua, the son of Nun, stepped into Moses' position. Joshua, Chapters 11 through 17, tell of the many battles that the individual tribes had to fight against the remaining Canaanites and how, once they reached the promised land, which was Canaan land, the land was to be divided among the twelve tribes.

God's plan was for His people to drive out the Canaanites and possess the land. In our Scripture text the people went to Joshua and asked in verse 14, "Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people, forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto?" In verse 15 Joshua answered, "If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee."

Spirituality does not come as a gift. Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you something. You should not be as the people in our Scripture text and sit around and say, "God, why have You not given me the grace and the power and the ability to do as others do?" Joshua told these people to get up and do something. If you want to be spiritual or if you want to be more spiritual, you must get up and make room for more of God in your life.

He That Loses His Life Shall Find it

Luke 9:23-25 states: "And he [Jesus] said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake,

the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" Jesus said first you have to deny yourself. You must be willing to go through something to become spiritual for God. You have to put your heart into it to be what God would have you to be.

You must have on the whole armor of God, live for Him, and be willing to suffer and go through something for God. In Matthew 10:34-39 Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

When you get saved, you find life; you find what you were missing by not serving God. I thank God that I have never regretted the day I gave my life to God. I found my life; I found what I was looking for. I found the peace and the joy and the happiness that I was trying to find out in the world. I found it all in Jesus Christ, but in order for me to find it, I had to give up my life. That is what Jesus meant when He said, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

Jesus was letting us know that He did not come to send peace on earth, but a sword. Serving God often brings a separation. You must be willing to do what God tells you to do. If your spouse does not go, then you should still be determined to serve the Lord. You must have it settled that way. Jesus said He came to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law

against her mother-in-law. He said that a man's foes shall be they of his own household. Those who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, so do not be surprised if those of your own household come against you.

Are You Living Beneath Your Privileges?

In verse 18 of our Scripture text, Joshua told the people, "But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong." In other words, he was saying to them, "Listen, do not sit around complaining and crying. Go and cut down the wood and make something happen for God and for yourselves. Do not sit around looking at others and doing nothing. Make something happen."

Spiritually speaking, there is plenty of unoccupied land for you to enjoy. If you would get involved in the work of God, you would find new opportunities. We are living in the greatest day of opportunity for God in which man has ever lived. There are doors that God wants to open to His people. Christian friend, you have the ability to pray and read and study the Bible more. You need to be willing to make yourself get busy for God. You can find something to do for God. You should not sit around and look at others. You can witness to other people about Christ. You should not be ashamed of the Gospel or of Christ. Jesus said if you are ashamed of Him, He will be ashamed of you.

Joshua told the people to go and cut down the wood before them. The words of Jesus were quoted in Acts 20:35, which states, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Many people only think about receiving. Their attitude is, "Give me, give me, give me. I want God to bless *me, me, me.*" They are not thinking of others; they only think about

themselves. Again, Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Child of God, you should not be living beneath your privileges. God wants you to live up to your capability. I remember one man I talked to about salvation. I asked him, "Do you believe?" He did not really believe that anyone could live holy. I asked him the question, "Do you believe that you could live any better?"

He said, "No, I don't believe I could live any better than I am living now." That is the failure of many religious people today. In many religious circles the preachers and the teachers of the Bible are telling people, "You can't live any better. You can't live free from sin. You can't obey God." Therefore, people do not even try.

You are not going to be judged according to what some man has told you, so you had better get your nose in God's Word. Jesus said to search the Scriptures, because in them you think you have eternal life. You are not going to get into Heaven on what some man has told you. You have to look into the Word of God for yourself and line up with God's eternal Word.

You should always strive to be better and to do better. Thank God, you can live better for God. You can gird up the loins of your mind. In Romans 5:1 the writer said, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." That is a wonderful Scripture! Glory be to God! You may ask, "Do you mean to tell me that all the sins I have ever committed, all the wrongs that I have ever done are gone, and now I stand justified before God, by faith through our Lord Jesus Christ?" If you have been born again, all your sins have been forgiven.

They That Are Christ's Have Crucified the Flesh

If you are not saved, God can forgive all your sins, everything that

you have ever done wrong, and you can have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Verses 2-5 state: "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

The Scripture says that "hope maketh not ashamed." Why? Because of the love of God. I thank God for His love that has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. We used to be hateful and hard to get along with. We did not care about God or others, but thank God, He put His love in our hearts. Now we love everybody. Praise God! That is wonderful! God can change a man's life. I thank God for that.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 5:16, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." When you start fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, then you know, God knows, and the devil knows that you are walking in the flesh and that you have quit walking in the Spirit.

He wrote in verses 17-26: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love,

joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

We are in this race to win, are we not, saint? We are on the winning side, and we want to win. Thank God, we do not want to run the race and lose. No child of God wants to lose out with God. In 1 Corinthians 9:26-27 Paul said: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

I am running, but not with uncertainty. I am not just beating the air, as a fellow who is shadow-boxing. Paul said, "I keep under my body." All the flesh wants to do is play around with sinful things and do things that are wrong, but you have to bring your body into subjection. Your number one enemy is yourself, the fellow that you look at in the mirror.

Unbelief and the flesh will take you to hell. If you do not bring your body into subjection and obey God, you are going to end up in hell. You do not want to just beat the air, lest you should be a castaway. I want the Word of God to save me just as well as it does others. The Word of God is as a two-edged sword. The same Word of God that I preach, I have to live.

"Give Me This Mountain"

In our Scripture lesson the people were afraid. Surely there were strong giants out there. Let us be like Caleb. God wants you to have the same attitude that Caleb had. Oh, yes, he saw the giants. As you face things today, it may appear that God is not going to win the battle, but He always wins. By

the grace of God, you can win the spiritual battle that you are in.

In Joshua 14:10-12 Caleb's words read: "And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old [keep in mind that Caleb was eighty-five years old]. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said."

I want you to look at this in a spiritual sense. You should not sit around and say, "I have been in the way for forty years." Yes, but have you been obeying God? Look at this lesson in a spiritual way. In essence, Caleb could say, "Yes, I am as strong this day as I was in the day that God saved me, thank God. As my strength was then, even so is my strength now for war, both to go out and to come in. I am eighty-five years old, and I might have been around for a long time, but serving God is still fresh to me. It is still exciting and joyous to live for God, and it is still a blessing to me."

Again, Caleb said, "Now therefore give me this mountain." He said that the cities were great and fenced, but if the Lord was with him, then he could drive them out.

Expand Your Capabilities

Regardless of what befalls you, saint, you need to stay with God all the way. You might not have milk in the refrigerator or fuel in the automobile, but stay with Jesus. I like Caleb's words. Joshua told the people not to sit around and complain.

Saint of God, you need to arise and work for God. You must read the Bible more. Many people have a lot of ideas that they think are scriptural, but those things are not even in the Bible. You need to get man-made doctrines and your own opinions out of your mind. Preaching the Word of God without the Bible is worthless preaching.

Man-made ideas about salvation cannot save you. Salvation is free, but you have to get saved God's way. You cannot join His church; you must be born into her. People are joining false churches, shaking the preacher's hand, being confirmed, and submitting themselves to man-made creeds, but those things are all in vain. You need to move those things out of the way, get busy for God, and live up to your capabilities. There is only one way to be saved, not two ways. In John 14:6 Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Let us expand our capabilities in God.

Child of God, you should be sweeter as you get older. You should not get grumpy as you get older. You should get sweeter in Jesus as the days go by. If you have malice in your heart, you ought to cut that old malice tree down. You may inquire, "What is malice?" Malice is a deep-seated grudge that delights in causing others to suffer. Friend, you can live free from that.

If you are truly a child of God, you will not backbite and talk behind another person's back. Some individuals smile in a person's face and say, "Hello, Brother. I love you," but as soon as that person turns his back, the individual says something bad about him or tells tales about him. Do not do that.

People can remember offences and carry grudges for a long time, yet they cannot even tell you what Genesis 1:1 says. Many times it is not the other person who was wrong; the blame lies with themselves. When you see someone, do you go another way? Why do you go the other way? You should speak

to them. You know you have bad feelings when you see someone out in public and you will not even speak to that person or give that one a nod or a smile. May God help you with that.

"Be Not Overcome of Evil"

You need to cut down the wood of criticizing and fault finding. Do you often criticize, find fault, and pick at stuff? If you sit around and do that, you are not spiritual and your prayer life is weak. A person who talks to God a lot will not have time to sit around and be picky and criticize all the time. You need to learn to talk to God and pray and get behind the work of God. You ought to pray and think about souls that need to be saved. People need God in this day. You need to ask, "What can I do to help out and to help others find Christ before it is everlastingly too late?"

Dear one, you must get rid of wrong attitudes. What do you mean, you got out on the wrong side of the bed? Who said there was a right side and a wrong side of the bed to get out of? You are letting the devil use you. You may say that you woke up in a bad mood and that you have not had your coffee yet, but you had better not let the devil use you.

Romans 12:17-21 says: "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

The Bible says if your enemy hungers, feed him, and if he thirsts, give him drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. God said vengeance belongs to Him. You should not be overcome of evil,

but overcome evil with good. A nasty attitude is wrong, no matter who you are. Do you avoid anyone at church or at work? Do you avoid your pastor? That attitude is wrong.

God wants you to grow spiritually and to live right. Too many people think they cannot live right. On the contrary, people can live right. Friend, God has made a way through Jesus Christ that we can live the Gospel message. It is not I who lives, but it is Christ who lives in me. I cannot live for God and live free from sin without Christ. I am not telling you that you can obey God without Christ. You need Christ, and you need His strength. The power to live right is wrapped up in Christ. If you were to go out and try to live holy without Christ, you might end up with your mind messed up. You need Christ to live this Gospel. Thank God, it is not merely a religion, but it is real. The Holy Spirit is real, and the power of God is real. The power of God upholds us and helps us to obey God.

You may say, "I don't want to get saved yet because I don't think I can make it." Do not worry about that. If you humble yourself at an altar of prayer and truly give up to God, He will save you. God will uphold you and keep you. You can possess the land and be all that God wants you to be; however, you have to get up and do something. You have to get up and go cut down the wood, so to speak.

Controlling Your Tongue

Some individuals have a problem with a loose tongue. James 1:26 says, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." You have to be careful of having a loose tongue. By the help of God, do not become immune to the Gospel. Perhaps you know the Gospel well. You have heard it for years, so you feel that you understand it. You should not get set in a position where the Gospel cannot move you.

This Scripture is still for you to live by every day. If you do not bridle your tongue, you are deceiving your own heart, and your religion is vain. To say that your religion is vain means that it is worthless, or no good, because you do not control your tongue.

As a child of God, you should not be a gossip. Some people love to hear a big, juicy piece of gossip. They love to hear about others. What is gossip? It is idle talk, especially about the affairs of others. You need to beware. You cannot possess the land that God wants you to possess and live as God wants you to live if you get caught up in a circle of gossip. You cannot grow in Christ if you get caught up in gossip. You should mind your own business, study to be quiet, and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." People have their ears and their nose and their tongue in things they have no business being involved in, and it is draining them spiritually, because they are not focusing on Christ, the Word of God, and the business at hand. The business at hand is the souls who need to be saved. People need to hear the Gospel to hear about Christ. God is not calling you to be a bench warmer. You must find something to do for Christ.

Young men and young women out in the world need to hear your testimony and the Scripture that God has given you. You need to get involved in the work of God and support it. Let God cultivate the gift that is in you.

People are losing their souls because they want to get involved in things that do not pertain to them, and they cannot focus on the Word of God. When people get saved, they ought to be able to go to a church where the people are spiritual, Bible-reading people, teaching others how to live for God and how to learn discipline.

How to Become a Good Soldier for God

People need to be taught how to become good soldiers for God. They need to know how to grow and learn how to walk with God, and they need to attend the services. Saint, when you do not see your brother or sister in church, you ought to be concerned. You should not be selfish and only think about yourself. You ought to think about the souls of others who are needy. If you do not obey Truth, you will not make it to Heaven. You must obey the Truth.

You should not be envious or jealous of others. What are you doing sitting around being envious? You had better move that out of your life. When God blesses someone else with a new automobile or a new home, you ought to be able to say, "Thank God, God is blessing you. I'm glad that He has blessed you with a new automobile." Do not be jealous of people. God will bless you too. When I see people getting blessed, I just wait on my turn. If God is blessing others, sooner or later, He is going to bless me too. God is no respecter of persons.

Saint, you should not have an unforgiving spirit. You cannot live to your capability with an unforgiving spirit. In Matthew 6:14-15 Jesus said: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

If you will not forgive others, God cannot forgive you. You will tie God's hands. You should not hold someone and be unforgiving, regardless of what he or she has done to you. Jesus said to forgive. You must have forgiveness. Some people might tell falsehoods against you and treat you wrong, but you still must forgive them to please God. He wants you to let it go. Old Uncle Cucumber might have done you wrong and owe you money, but you need to let it go and forgive him. If

you cannot forgive, God cannot forgive you. You want to live to the capacity that God has given you.

God Has Made Provision for You

In verse 15 of our Scripture text, Joshua told the children of Israel, "And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country, and cut down for thyself. . . ."

Some people always know what is going on when it comes to eating and drinking, but where are they when the prayer meeting is going on? Where are they when someone is in the hospital and needs to be visited? It does people good when they are in the hospital and someone visits them. Friend, you might be sick one day, and you would appreciate someone coming to visit you. You reap what you sow. It all boils down to this simple teaching: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Do not sit around and complain and say, "Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit?" You need to live to your capability. When God has made the provision, you have to go up and take it. You have to make something happen for God.

If you play around with the devil, you need to remember that he is playing for keeps. If you are going to serve God, you need to give it all you have. You must put your whole heart into serving Him so that you can be victorious, and then you can help someone else to be saved.

If you are not saved, you are living beneath your privileges. You do not know what you are missing! You will never regret giving your life to God. The Judgment is ahead, my friend. Oh, life seems so good now. You are enjoying the blessings of life. We are so blessed in the United States to have all the freedoms and the blessings that we enjoy, yet people tend to take it for granted. They feel that they do not need God and that they do not need to be saved. Friend, if that is your attitude, the day is going to come when

you will wish that you were saved. You will say, "Oh, why didn't I get saved?" Please, my dear friend, do not wait until it is too late. You need to give your life to God before it is everlastingly too late.

First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Peter wrote in 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

The scoffers may say, "Oh, nothing is happening yet. God is not coming back. Everything is going on just as it always has. What these preachers are preaching is not coming to pass." The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness." God is God, and His Word will not return to Him void. His Word is not going to fall to the ground, but He is long-suffering. God is waiting for you to get saved, because He is not willing that any should perish.

God is holding back the Judgment Day because He wants you to get saved. He does not want you to die and go to hell. He is holding back, waiting on you, yet you are being hardhearted and stubborn.

I thank God for the day that godly sorrow hit my heart. When I became sorry for my sins, it brought down the tears. If you will tell God, "I am sorry. O God, forgive me for my sins," He will not turn you away, my dear friend. However, God will not make you come to Him. He will not make you take the land and cut down the wood. God wants to see a desire and zeal in your heart. You need to learn to stir yourself in the Lord. You may think that because you are in church, you are going to float right into Heaven, but that is not going to happen.

What Are You Waiting On?

In Matthew, Chapter 25, you can read the parable of the ten virgins

that Jesus told. Five of them were wise and five were foolish. The five who were foolish said, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out" (verse 8). The wise answered, "Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you" (verse 9). Every man must have his own oil. You have to have your own experience with God, your own backbone, and your own light. You have to keep yourself stirred and encourage yourself in the Lord.

Many times when it is time to go to church, your flesh will not feel like going. Oh, how good the bed feels on Sunday morning! You will not want to get out of bed and go out in the rain or the snow, yet something deep down inside your soul is crying out, "It is time to go to the house of God." The flesh says, "Doesn't the bed feel good? Stay in the bed and put the pillow over your head," but the soul is saying, "It is time to go and hear the Word of God." Therefore, you have to push yourself to get out of the bed.

You push yourself out Monday morning when it comes time to go to work, don't you? I can remember many times when I went to work with a headache, but the devil will say on Sunday morning, "You've got a headache. Don't go to church." Many times when you get up on Monday and go to work with that headache, once you get going and get to work, that headache leaves. It will happen at church that way too.

Friend, you should not play church. One day you must give an account of what God has revealed to you. Do not become immune to the Gospel. Do not become hardhearted. Sinner man, sinner woman, I fear for you if you are hardhearted. What are you waiting on? Why won't you get saved? You know you need to be saved. Why are you holding back on God as you are, when God has such blessings in store for you?

(Cassette C-5192E)

Spring 2005 Camp Meeting Tape List

TAPE NO.	DATE	MESSAGE TITLE	MINISTER	COST
C-5421M	6-19-05	The Power of a Godly Example	Bro. E. David Stegmeier	2.50
C-5422E		Our Daily Walk	Bro. Roger L. Decker	2.50
C-5423M	6-20-05	Building a House for God	Bro. C. H. Dickerson	2.50
C-5424E		Make a Battlement	Bro. Roger L. Decker	2.50
C-5425M	6-21-05	The Vision That the World Needs	Bro. Allen Polston	2.50
C-5426E		Our Hearts Must Be Fixed	Bro. Roger L. Decker	2.50
C-5427M	6-22-05	To Stir Up Your Pure Minds	Bro. Charles Ferguson	2.50
C-5428E		Eternity	Bro. E. David Stegmeier	2.50
C-5429M	6-23-05	Mastering Our Midnight	Bro. Adam Wolf	2.50
C-5430M	6-24-05	The Vision of the Church of God	Bro. David Watson	2.50
C-5431E		Satan is Real	Bro. Calvin Foster	2.50
C-5432M	6-25-05	The Church That Jesus Built	Bro. Patrick Brower	2.50
C-5433M	6-26-05	Personal Testimony	Bro. Chris Wakefield	2.50
C-5434E		Lest I Forget (Divine Healing)	Bro. E. David Stegmeier	2.50

Music Recordings . . . Please Specify Cassette or CD

MD-229	2005	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #1		3.50
MD-230	2005	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #2		3.50
MD-231	2005	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #3		3.50
MD-232	2005	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #4		3.50
MD-233	2005	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #5		3.50
MD-234	2005	Spring Camp Meeting Choir Songs		3.50
		Children's Song Service		3.50

Tapes may be ordered by writing The Gospel Trumpeter, Tape Ministry, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, Ohio 43055, or by calling (740) 987-5905, Brother and Sister Roger Allen. If no answer, call (740) 345-1312, the Print Shop. Make check or money order in U.S. funds payable to The Gospel Trumpeter.

[Camp Meeting Report continued from pg. 2]
 supplications made to God prior to the start of the meeting. Without Him being the Mighty One in the midst, there would be no blessing and no good accomplished for the kingdom. We truly thank God for His presence and direction in the services.

The Spring Camp Meeting is now history. May God help each of us to take diligent heed to the things which we have heard and learned and apply them to our daily lives. In so doing, we each will be a better Christian and a more effective witness for Christ. It is so essential for us to have these times of refreshing

and to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The Word of God is sent to help us grow and mature in our Christian lives. It is time now to look forward to August and prepare for another camp meeting. If at all possible, please plan to come and help us as we praise the Lord.

Don't miss these . . .

UPCOMING MEETINGS

NEWARK, OH

August 7-14

FALL CAMP MEETING: The Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055

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

Two Services Daily: 10:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m. Meals are reasonable priced. (Meals for full-time evangelists and full-time pastors (with spouses) are half priced. Lodging is free-will offering basis. Come and worship the Lord with us! Holy Ghost preaching, inspirational singing, children's services, and divine healing. Call Bro. or Sis. Bush anytime for reservations at 740-345-1213.

For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker, 83 Decrow Ave., Newark, OH 43055. Telephone: 740-345-2543

CANBY, OR

August 22-28

CAMP MEETING: The Church of God, 522 NW 2nd Ave., Canby, OR 97013

The first service begins Monday at 7:00 p.m.

Two Services Daily: 10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m. Meals are reasonable priced.

We welcome everyone! Please make reservations in advance, if possible.

For further information and to make reservations contact: Pastor E. David Stegmeier, 103 Main St., Canby OR 97013

Telephone: 513323-0485

MEDINA, OH

September 5

LABOR-DAY MEETING: Medina Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH 44256

Service times: 10:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m. Meal will be provided by the local congregation.

For further information contact: Pastor C. H. Dickerson, 215 Montview Dr., Medina, OH 44256.

Telephone 216-725-6853 or 216-725-5993

SUMMERSVILLE, WV

September 14-18

REVIVAL: The Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd., Summersville, WV 26651

Evangelist: Brother E. David Stegmeier, Canby, Oregon

Service times: Wed. -Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. and Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders

Telephone: 304-872-4047

MINERVA, OH

Sept. 26-Oct. 2

REVIVAL: Mt. Zion Church of God, Minerva, OH

Evangelist: Brother Roger L. Decker, Newark, Ohio

Service times: Mon.-Sat. 7:00 p.m.; Sunday School 9:30 a.m.,

Morning Worship 10:30 a.m. & Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Sister Hafley

Telephone: 330-868-6831

SUMMERSVILLE, WV

November 20-27

REVIVAL: The Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd., Summersville, WV 26651

Preaching nightly from the Book of Revelation

Service times: Mon. -Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 6:00 p.m. and Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders

Telephone: 304-872-4047