

"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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Vol. 36 May 2006 No. 5

Guest Editorial

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

Romans 12:4-5

"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."

1 Corinthians 12:18

FINDING OUR PLACE IN THE BODY

In the beginning God created a perfect man. David said in Psalm 139:14, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." The human body is beautifully made up of many members perfectly joined together to make it a complete unit. Not all the members are the same. Many are different, with each operating in a separate manner. Some members can be visibly seen, such as the head, the face, the eyes, and the hands; yet they are within the same body. Then there are many unseen organs in the body, such as the lungs, the heart, and the liver. The seen and the unseen are designed to perform their special works in the body. Each member is vitally important as they work together in harmony with one another, making the body whole and complete.

The individual members of the body cannot function independently of the rest of the body. Should one part of the body become injured, the entire body suffers its pain and works to help relieve the hurt. No part can ever be considered unnecessary, unwanted, or unneeded. If any one part fails to function properly or if it is missing, the body cannot work to its fullest capacity as God designed it to do. God has

magnificently configured the physical body of man.

Likewise, the Lord has very miraculously designed a spiritual body. The spiritual body that God so wonderfully orchestrated is known as the body of Christ, the Church of God. It is divinely made up of all who have been truly born again. Men and women who have forsaken the life of sin and ungodliness and have chosen to wholly and completely follow the Lord as He leads and directs their lives.

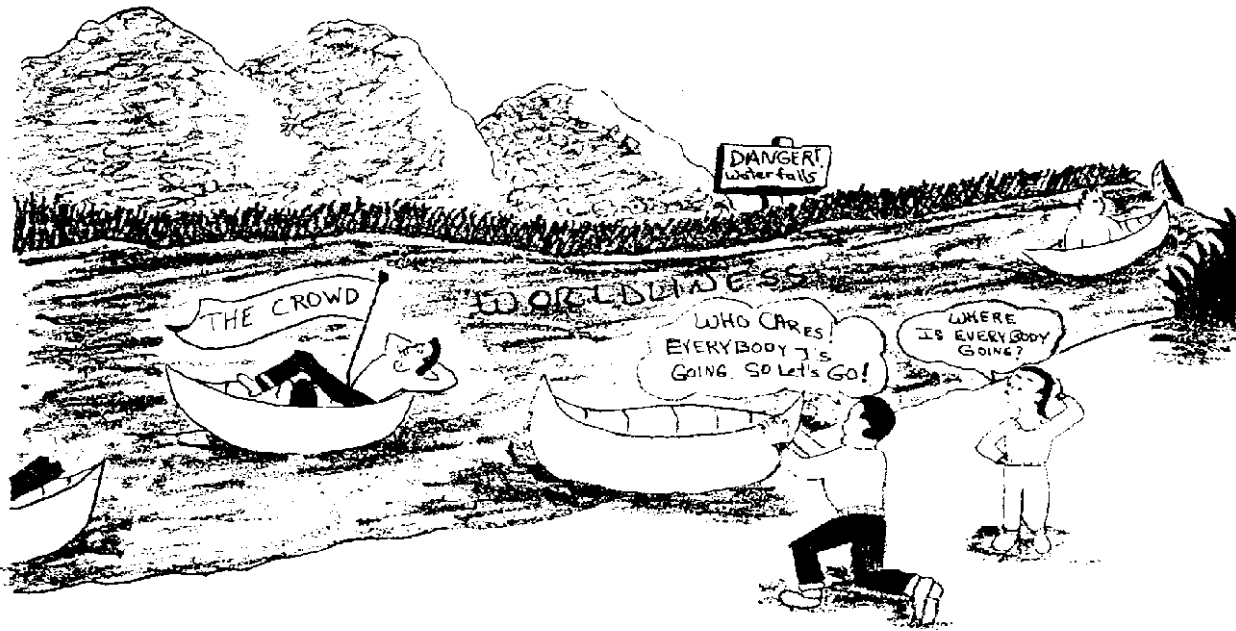
All that God creates is beautiful and perfect. As one looks at the physical anatomy of man, he can see many characteristics that are similar to that of the spiritual body. For example, the body has only one head, which is Christ. Every member that comprises the spiritual body is extremely important. No individual member of the body of Christ is useless or considered unprofitable. Each member operates and is dependent on the others, laboring together in unity and harmony so the lost world can visibly see the living body of Christ. Paul informed us in 1 Corinthians 12:16 that the ear could not say, "Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body." Dear one, we each have a place in the body and a work to do for the Lord. Let us not allow the enemy of souls to hinder us from doing our part. If

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Proverbs 13:15 Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard.

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

The Way That Seemeth Right



Brother Roger L. Decker

Are You Choosing the Popular Way?

In both verses of our Scripture text you can gain at least this much knowledge: sin does not pay. You may excuse it, pamper it, and fool around with it; but according to the Scriptures and according to experience, sin does not pay. The way of Christianity is not a popular way. It was never intended to be popular, but it is still the best way.

In our Scripture reading we find that the Proverb writer let us know that sin is a hard way, and he also said there is a way that seems right to a man. He said the way of transgressors is hard. The word *hard* in that verse comes from a Hebrew word that means "mighty" or "rough." The way of transgressors is mighty and rough, and it is also

strong.

It has been said that sinners go through more pain and difficulty to get their souls damned than the righteous go through while bearing their crosses to be saved. This statement is so true. Many work hard, put in long hours, and go through pain and suffering, yet they are going to end up in a lost eternity. The sad part is, it is so unnecessary. The sinner has suffering here in this life, and he will not get away from suffering when he goes into a lost eternity. It will be multiplied millions of times over. The sinner is not excused from suffering until he lays his sins at the Cross of Jesus Christ.

You will notice in Proverbs 13:15 that the writer said "the way of transgressors is hard." Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the

strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Jesus said that many would go the broad way. All sinners have to go the same way, and that is the way of much difficulty. Sinners feel they have such great liberty, but that is not according to the Scriptures.

The Bible says "the way of transgressors is hard," and they are going the way that seems right. It is a difficult way, a way of destruction, a way of turmoil, a way of confusion, and a way that will get one into much trouble. There are just two ways mentioned by Jesus: the broad way and the narrow way. We want to consider the difficult way. If you

are unsaved, that is your choice. God is a gentleman, and He will respect your decision. You are a free, moral agent; therefore, you do not have to choose to serve God. However, along with that decision comes responsibility. You have to be willing to take the consequences. If you choose not to serve Jesus Christ, you are choosing to go the hard way. It will not be a bed of roses. It will not be all fun and glamor and good times. It is a difficult way, and it is a popular way; but the end thereof are the ways of destruction and death.

God's Law of Sowing and Reaping

The Bible lets us know that we are sowing either to the flesh or to the Spirit. The Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 6:7-8: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." According to the Scriptures, we are sowers and reapers. The seed that you sow while you are living in sin is what you will reap. You cannot expect to reap spiritual things when you have been sowing to the flesh.

Often when people come to God, they do not stay with God long enough to sow good seed in the ground. Friend, you have to change your sowing. When you come to Jesus Christ, that changes your sowing, and then you need to abide in Him and sow good seed. After you come to God, you are going to have problems, because you have changed kingdoms, and the devil does not like that. When you change kingdoms, do not think that the devil will give up on you. Instead he will turn up the heat. If you will obey God and do what is right, He will give you grace, strength, and power you did not have before, and then you can say no to the devil and yes to God. However, you must put forth effort. You do not just get saved and go home and sit in a

recliner and just let the grace of God sweep you into Heaven. You will have to work as never before, because the devil is going to tempt you with the weakness that you had in sin.

Today people get offended so easily. They come to Christ and get saved, and then the slightest little thing offends them. Dear one, you have to get much deeper than that, because someone is going to offend you in some way. You are not going to get your way on everything, and everything will not work out just as you want it.

When you get saved, God may not put your home back together, give you a new job, and put a new automobile in the garage for you. Living for God will cost you something. Too many people are whiners. If you live for Jesus Christ and stay in the narrow way long enough, you will begin to think, "Was I ever in sin?" We each had a backpack of burdens on our shoulders when we came to Jesus Christ, but He delivered us. The narrow way is still the best way.

When a farmer goes out and plows and gets ready to do some planting, he is not ignorant of what he puts into the ground. When he goes out at harvesttime, he reaps what he has sown. If he planted wheat, he will not say, "Oh, I was expecting corn." That would be ignorant. The same is true in living for God. That which you put in the ground is coming up. If you sow to the flesh, you will reap corruption. If you sow to the Spirit, you will reap life everlasting.

The Pleasures of Sin

The way that seems right sometimes is the way of least resistance. People do not like to be confronted about what they believe. They would rather take the way where there will be no persecution. Many people cannot handle that, so they go the way that seems to fit in with the crowd. I cannot find in the Word of God where the Christian

ever fit in with the world, but I do find that the world is enmity against God.

The way that almost everyone is taking is the way of popularity. However, the pleasures of sin are only for a season, but that is not so with serving God. In Hebrews 11:24 we read about Moses: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; [Look at all the wealth, the popularity, the pomp, and the splendor that Moses could have enjoyed, but he refused it. In today's society people would be saying that he had lost his mind. Nevertheless, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter and refused all that inheritance and power.] Choosing rather to suffer affliction [he chose to suffer affliction rather than to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; he turned down the best that the world had to offer at that time]; with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

The word *season* means "temporary." The pleasures of sin are temporary. When is there pleasure in sin? It is only when you are committing it, but not when you are reaping it. When you are committing sin, that is the sowing season. The affair that you think no one knows about may seem exciting until the reaping comes: the broken home and the broken family. For some, the stealing of money or merchandise is exciting. At first they may get away with it, but then the reaping comes. Some people lie and think they have gotten away with it. They think, "I fooled them! They actually believed me!" Some young people sneak behind their parents' backs and think it is exciting that they got away with it. They do things that they know their parents would disapprove of, and they think no one knows about those things. Oh, they are so wrong, because God always sees everything, and He has ways of making things known.

Sometimes parents might not even know anything about a certain

situation, but they get an impression or a feeling that something is not right, even though no one told them anything. Sometimes parents get the feeling that what their son or daughter is telling them is not the truth, so they pray about it. God has ways of bringing out the truth.

The Need of Maturity and Respectfulness

Young person, if you do things that you know your parents would object to, you need to remember that God would object to those things as well, and you are going to pay the price. Some young people need to mature quite a bit before they even think of dating. A young lady or a young man who sasses his or her mother has no business dating. That person is not mature enough.

Young person, if you cannot get along with your mother and father, you are certainly not going to get along well in a marriage relationship. The next thing you know, you will end up in a divorce court. Sassing your mother or your father displeases God. The Bible says to honor your mother and father; you should respect them. You might not always agree with their decisions, but they *are* your parents, and they have the rule over you.

Next to salvation, the decision you make concerning the one you are going to marry is the most important decision you will make in your life. It takes serious thought and prayer. Too many people do not even want to pray about it. God is concerned, and He cares.

When young people date, they need to be responsible. Young men need to keep their hands to themselves. If you are a young lady who allows a young man to have roving hands, then you do not have much respect for God, and you do not have much respect for your own body. Dear one, if you will stay true to the Lord, He will mature you. There is a great need for maturity. A man needs to be a gentleman, and the young lady needs to be a proper

young lady. A young couple should not become too familiar with one another and take things for granted. When you are not married, the other person is not your property.

In some homes there is quarreling, arguing, yelling, screaming, and meanness toward one another. Husband, wife, you should not say things to belittle or hurt your companion. You need to remember that your children will hear you, and you are teaching them the way of the transgressor. Such behaviors are often handed down through many generations.

Some things are hinderances to a struggling soul, such as false views, false creeds, false religion, false faith, and shallow repentance. The difficult way will cause you to become a self-deceiver and a self-destroyer. It is a way of carelessness and worldliness.

Along the way that seems right, God will use some things to make your way very difficult. One of those is your conscience. Some people have seared the conscience because they have overridden it, but the conscience will not keep silent. It is like a memory bank, and once in a while something will trigger that memory. It will speak distinctly in the midst of the loudest noises. You could be in a barroom with lots of noise around you. A band may be playing loud music and people may be dancing and carrying on, yet the conscience can still speak. It does not need to have silence to speak. You will be the only one who hears it, but it will get your attention.

To override your conscience, you have to override condemnation. Jesus lets us know why you are condemned. If God did not make you feel bad, think of how deep in sin you would be. That is God putting a check on you. You are supposed to feel bad. If you are saved and you slip and fall, God wants you to feel bad about it. That is how He helps you to get back where you ought to be.

Jesus tells us why there is condemnation in John 3:18-19: "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." What was Jesus saying? Light came through Jesus Christ, but men loved darkness rather than light. Why? Their deeds, or their actions, were evil.

Have you ever wondered why barrooms are dimly lit? They turn the lights down really low on the inside because evil deeds are taking place there, and men love darkness rather than light. Often those who commit wrong usually choose the night to carry out their evil deeds. If a man is unfaithful to his wife, when does he usually like to do it? A lot of evil deeds are committed during the night so they will not be detected so easily. Darkness represents ignorance and error. Light has come so that those who are in darkness can clearly see the way they ought to go.

What else makes the way of transgressors so difficult? They lack peace. In Isaiah 57:20-21 the Prophet said: "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." I am talking about the peace that you can have with God. There is no agreement, no unity, and no peace to the wicked. The transgressors do not share in peace; they have no part of it. The wicked are not at peace with God or their fellowman.

The only way you can be at peace with God is through Jesus Christ; there is no other way. If you turn from your wicked ways, then God will remove your transgressions, and they will never be remembered against you again. Isn't that wonderful? If you ask people to forgive you, some might have a tendency to hold something against you, even to the place of remembering it against you; but that is not so with God.

Peace That Passes Understanding

When you come to Jesus Christ and confess your transgressions, or your sins, God will neither use them against you nor remember them against you. He will remove them as far as the east is from the west. Isn't that wonderful? Where else could you get such forgiveness as that? God will wipe out every sin. That may be hard for you to fathom, but it is true. If you turn to God, every sin will be gone, as far as the east is from the west. If you can measure that, I will tell you right where my sins are, but you cannot measure that. That is how God deals with the sinner who repents. That is a provision that God has made for you and me. I have received that, and it is wonderful!

Do you have peace with God? What kind of peace is that? Well, at night when you lay your head down on the pillow, you can say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." You cannot have that kind of peace if you are still living in sin. Let me remind you that God does not have to deal with people through to their old age. If you look at the obituaries, you will see that people of all ages die and go into eternity: infants, children, young people, middle-aged people, and the elderly. When you lay down at night, if you have been living in sin, you cannot have peace. You cannot fall asleep in peace and say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

If you have made your covenant with God through Jesus Christ, you can pillow your head at night and if you wake up in the morning, it will be all right. If you do not wake up in the morning on this earth, you know that you will wake up in Glory. That is the peace of God.

The Bible says the peace of God passes all understanding. Some Bible scholars have a lot of understanding, yet they do not have peace. However, the person who does not know much about the Bible can come to Jesus Christ and repent and get peace that passes all understanding. The man with the peace of

God is miles ahead of the Bible scholar. Meeting Bible conditions will give you peace, but you must confess and forsake all your sins; then God will have mercy.

Turn From the Way of Destruction

There is another side of God. There is the wrath of God, the vengeance of God. It is only through the mercy of Christ if you are in sin that you have not felt that. One of these times, God may move on your situation, and you will find that the way of transgressors is not as easy as you thought it would be. The way that seems right will not go along as smoothly as you thought it would.

There is another reason why the way of transgressors is so difficult. The Holy Spirit makes it difficult. John 16:8 reads, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." To *reprove* means "to convince or to prove." The Holy Spirit will remind you of your wrong. Have you ever had the Spirit of God impress you that something is wrong? Sometimes you might not really have a Scripture that names out a certain thing, but the Holy Spirit will impress upon you that you should not do it. Oh, how faithful the Spirit of God is!

Another reason the way of the transgressors is hard is that God becomes your enemy. No one will ever be able to stand against God. God's way, or God's will, is going to be done. The transgressor has to face God's anger every day. Instead of having the peace of God, the sinner has to go to bed at night with an angry God. It is better to leave the difficult way and start on the way of holiness. On the way of holiness you will not have to put up with a gnawing conscience. You will not have to put up with the rebuke of the Holy Spirit. You can have peace, and God will be pleased with you.

I would much rather have God pleased with me than to have God angry with me. God has so many

ways to deal with your soul. He is God Almighty. Our Scripture text says in verse 15, "Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard." The way of transgressors is difficult, and the way that seems right is the way of destruction.

I brought the message to help those who are living in sin. Sinner friend, you need to come out of sin. Whatever your sin is, God already knows about it. You need to leave that way and come to Jesus Christ. When you come to Him, you must mean business; you must confess and forsake *every* sin. I am sure that you cannot remember every sin that you have ever committed. No one's mind can remember all of that, but God can. When you come to Jesus Christ, you must confess every sin, known and unknown, lay them all down at His feet, and take faith in the blood of Jesus Christ. There is power in the blood to save from sin.

Once you get cleaned up, God's Holy Spirit will make His abode in you; it is you in Christ and Christ in you, and that makes a great combination for living a holy life. You can go and sin no more. If you should happen to fall, God will be right there. You need to remember this: should you slip and fall, you need to get up quickly. You should not lay there while the devil piles more on you. Get up on your feet again, let God know you are sorry, and go on and live for Him.

Are you sick and tired of the way you have been living? You do not have any peace and joy, and you go to bed every night with an angry God. You wake up in the morning with an angry God, and you go about your duties of the day with an angry God. If you are in that condition, God wants to help you. First Peter 5:7 reads, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." God cares for you, friend. When you think no one else cares, God cares.

(Cassette C-5402M)

Coming Short on Spiritual Strength



Brother C. H. Dickerson

A Condition That Affects Many People Today

Revelation, Chapter 3, tells us that in the last days people will have the spirit of lukewarmness, where they are neither cold nor hot. Friend, we are living in that day, and because the spirit of lukewarmness has affected so many people, the full Truth is hard to find. At one time even the denominational churches had some fire in them and shouted and praised God in their services, but that is not so anymore. The world is in much trouble. On every side we see wars, and people in authority are perplexed about what to do and where to turn because of the troublesome conditions.

When your automobile needs fuel, you go to the fuel station. When your car needs repaired, you

take it to a mechanic. If you need medical attention, you go to a doctor or a hospital, and when you need spiritual help, you should be able to receive help at church. It is sad that times have changed, and churches where you can truly receive spiritual help are very few. Certainly God's church and His Truth have never changed.

We read in 2 Kings 19:3, "And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." In other words, He was saying there is only one Truth, one way, and one eternal life. Down through time men have tried to override God's plan and go their own way, but man's

way has never worked. In Genesis, Chapter 11, we read of a group of people who decided to build a city and a tower to make their own way, but they ended in total confusion.

God worked with Israel for many years, from Abraham to the closing of the Book of Malachi. Then God closed the books for four hundred years. Why? In Malachi 2:2 God said, "If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart."

God has a plan of salvation. He is the way, the Truth, and the life. He wants you to lay what He says to heart. In other words, He wants you to put your whole heart into serving

Him and heed the Truth. He told Israel of old that if they would not lay His Word to heart, He would curse their blessings. Hezekiah said in his day that it was a day of trouble, and he also said it was a day of rebuke and a day of blasphemy. Israel of old, which was a type of God's people today, had abandoned God, and there was no help for them as long as they wanted to turn their backs on God.

As I thought about the condition of the religious world today, I can remember a time when people who claimed that they had salvation lived clean lives, and they went to church regularly. Today, however, lukewarmness has crept in. The world is in trouble. People are looking for help, and they go to churches where they find nothing more than entertainment and man-made ideas and doctrines. Therefore, they turn to the beggarly elements of this old world in search of something that they so desperately need.

Even most preachers today have no power to live free from sin. How do we know they do not? Well, they stand in the pulpits and tell people that they cannot live above sin, and they are not living above sin. They preach what they believe and what they think. Nevertheless, the Word of God plainly tells us that Jesus came to save people *from* their sins. True men of God preach that you *can* live above sin and that you *must* live above sin if you are going to make Heaven your eternal home. God never intended for people to go to the house of God and waste their time and go out empty handed, but He meant for them to go forth strengthened and helped spiritually.

God Is Faithful to Guide His People

The Bible is a lamp to our feet; it is our spiritual food, our road map, and our shield. Each day we live, we are on a road that we have not traveled before. When my wife and I used to travel to various places, before the trip, we always went to

the AAA office and got a trip ticket that showed us what roads to travel and had all the detours plainly marked. It was helpful because we had never traveled those roads. As we journey on the road of life, God has provided a "road map" for us. Jesus traveled this road before us, from the beginning to the end. If there was ever a time when you needed to focus your attention on the Word of God, it is today. You ought to heed every word that true men of God preach, because they are warning you of the dangers that lay ahead. You need all the help you can get to make Heaven your home. Your only help is going to come from God, and He is working through His Word and His pastors. God calls pastors to preach the Word, because the world needs help.

Friend, if you intend to make Heaven your eternal home, you must obey God's Word. It takes the pure Word to save man. You cannot get saved unless you obey the Word. If there is any honesty in your heart, when the Word of God goes forth, God is going to speak to your soul and you will feel uncomfortable. You may not understand what it is, but you will feel something drawing you. If you will obey God, He will save your soul and lead you to more truth.

Down through time, many people have rebelled against God's plan, and when they have done so, God has allowed them to have what they wanted. Friend, God will permit you to have what you want if you want to hold on to your own way. In 1 Samuel 8:10-18 you can read of this very thing. When the Israelites came out of Egyptian bondage and saw how other nations were living, they thought it would be good if they had a king also, even though God wanted them to have a judge. However, they insisted on having a king. This greatly troubled the Prophet Samuel.

Finally, God spoke to Samuel one day and told him to quit worrying about it. He said if that was

what the people wanted, He would give it to them, but first He wanted Samuel to tell them what a king would require of them. He told them that a king would take their sons and daughters, and a tenth of their harvests and land and vineyards. Even after Samuel told the people these things, they still insisted on having a king. Therefore, God gave them a king, and it brought them nothing but disaster.

God is faithful. He wants to lead and guide His people. That is the reason He called a ministry and sent the Holy Spirit. Jesus said in John 16:13, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." He will live within you and guide you day by day.

Failing to Follow God's Plan

Speaking of the Israelites, David wrote in Psalm 106:15, "And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul." Saint, you are God's property. He bought you with a great price. Jesus Christ suffered and died on the Cross of Calvary. My mind cannot even comprehend the suffering that He endured as He died there. Why did He do it? He did it to save you from a devil's hell. He took your place on the Cross of Calvary and suffered all things so that you could be made free to serve Him and to make Heaven your home. God said He would put His Spirit within you.

God has a plan for each of us. However, God's plan for you can be foiled if you insist upon having your own way. In Acts, Chapter 26, you can read about Paul's testimony. At one time Paul was on the wrong road. He was a religious man, but he got off track. As he walked down the road to Damascus one day, he had papers in his hand to persecute the saints of God. Therefore, God struck him down and blinded him.

In Acts 26:15-18 we read: "Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. . . I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister

and a witness . . . Delivering thee from the people . . . unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. . . ."

What can open people's spiritual eyes? The thing that will open their eyes is something different. When they see people who claim to be religious living worldly lives, they do not even pay attention. On the other hand, God's people are different. They talk and act differently, and that will draw people's attention if they have any honesty in their hearts at all, and God will get a message to them. My friend, down in the recesses of their hearts it will find lodging, and they will never be the same. It will either make their hearts tender or cause them to harden their hearts.

The Book of Numbers, Chapters 22 and 23, tell of the Israelites who had been freed from Egyptian bondage, and there were so many of them that they filled the land. Balak, the king of Moab, was distressed and afraid, so he sent messengers loaded with rewards to a man named Balaam to ask for his help. The Israelites were so numerous that Balak thought they were going to take all the land and crowd out the other inhabitants; therefore, he wanted Balaam to come and put a curse on the Israelites.

Balaam told them to wait while he talked to the Lord about it. God told Balaam that the Israelites were His people and that they were blessed. Balaam went back to Balak's servants and said he had heard from God and God said to leave them alone, so he said he would not go with them. Balak sent more messengers and even greater riches, and again they told Balaam what the king wanted.

Balaam prayed again, and it stirred God, because He had already told Balaam no. Nevertheless, Balaam awoke the next morning and loaded up his mule and went. King Balak promised to exalt him and give him much treasure. If you read

the rest of the story, you will find that his disobedience to God eventually cost him his life.

Disobedience to God Brings Disaster

You can read in 1 Kings, Chapter 13, that God sent a man of God from Judah down to Bethel where the people were worshiping idols. He cried out against the evil and was going to destroy the altar. King Jeroboam put forth his hand to protect it and said, "Lay hold on him." So the Lord dried up his hand, and he could not pull it back to himself. The Prophet destroyed the altar as instructed by God. Then the king asked the man of God for help. The man of God called on God, and He restored the king's hand. The king said to the man of God, "Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward" (verse 7). In essence, the man of God said, "God told me, when I leave not to go back the same way I came and not to drink or eat anything in this place." The man of God started back another way, and after a while he sat down under an oak tree to rest.

An old prophet was told by his sons what had happened, so he asked which way the man of God went. His sons told him, so he took off after him. He found the man of God resting under an oak tree. He asked if he was the man of God who came from Judah, and the man answered that he was the one. The old prophet said that an angel spoke to him and told him to bring the man of God back to his house, but he lied to the man of God.

The man of God had done a great work for God, but he listened to the old prophet instead of obeying God. The point I want to make is that you need to beware of anyone who tells you something contrary to what God has already shown you. You had better flee that person. The man of God listened to that old false prophet instead of doing as God told him to do. He went back with the old false prophet and ate and

drank with him. As he journeyed down the road again, a lion came upon him and killed him. Word came back to the old prophet, and he said that it was the man of God who was disobedient to the Lord.

God called Isaiah to go and see Hezekiah who was sick. God told him to deliver one message. He did not say to pray for him. (I think sometimes we pray the wrong prayer. Sometimes we get so involved that we want to see people raised up, and we pray against God's will.) Isaiah told Hezekiah that he was going to die and to set his house in order. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and wept. You can read in 2 Kings 20:3 that he said, "I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore."

God told Isaiah to go back and tell Hezekiah that he was going to live. God said, "I will add unto thy days fifteen years." Also, God, through the Prophet Isaiah, said that in three days he would be able to go up to the temple. Hezekiah wanted a sign to show that he would be able to go to the temple in three days, so Isaiah inquired of the Lord and He said He could give a sign by turning the dial backward ten degrees. God healed him, set the time back, and added fifteen years to his life.

The king of Babylon heard that Hezekiah was sick, so he sent him letters and a present. Hezekiah invited the king of Babylon to his palace and showed him all the precious things: the gold and the silver and everything else of value. In due time a king of Babylon carried away all their treasures, and not one treasure was left.

Following Hezekiah's death, his son Manasseh reigned fifty-five years and did much evil in the sight of the Lord. He restored all the abominations of the heathen and rebuilt the high places to worship Baal, which his father had destroyed. He also built altars in the house of the Lord for idol worship.

Judah was the priesthood, and he even contaminated them. Because of their continual disobedience to God, the people were held in bondage for seventy years.

Today many are losing their spiritual treasures. They are losing their robes of righteousness and their robes of praise. Why? They are losing their treasures to Babylon. Ministers who once stood strong are back in Babylon. Why? They did not do what God said to do. They would not be in the condition they are in if they had followed God and had done what was right.

Some things are right and some things are wrong, and following something that is wrong can never make you right. If you try to dilute God's eternal Word, that will bring disaster to your soul. God's Word will set you free and provide a passport to Heaven if you obey it.

Repairing the Breaches

Two years after the death of Manassah, his grandson Josiah, who was only eight years old, became king, fulfilling a prophecy in 1 Kings 13:2. I cannot imagine an eight-year-old child capable of being a king. Can you? Nevertheless, the people followed him. He was strong and did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. He ordered the repair of the breaches in the Lord's house. As they were working on it, they found a book of the Law. When they read this book to Josiah, he rent his clothes and said in 2 Kings 22:13, "Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us."

Second Kings 23:3, 21-22 read: "And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart

and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant. . . . And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant. Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah."

That Passover was the greatest occasion those people had ever experienced. Why? They had turned their hearts back to God, but Josiah built up the breaches. The breaches need to be built up today. The pastor is the head, or the overseer, of a congregation, and you should listen to him if He is preaching the Truth and living it. The Truth will save you and set you free. Partial truths will not suffice; it takes all the Truth. Many religions have some truth. The woman sitting on a scarlet-colored beast in Revelation, Chapter 17, had some truth, but she also had in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of fornication.

Jesus, speaking to the seven churches in the Book of Revelation, told the church at Sardis their works were not perfect. The church at Philadelphia had God's approval, but when He spoke of the Laodicean church, the age in which we are living, He did not have one good thing to say about it. You may think there is no hope, but there is.

Acts 2:40 says to "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." We are living in an untoward generation. You must not allow it to work on you. How can you do that? You must get your eyes on the Lord and keep your eyes off the people. Neither your grandmother, your aunt, nor your parents can take you to Heaven. You can only get to Heaven by being led by the Spirit of God. When the Truth is preached, you need to live it. This is your only hope.

We are living in an age of great spiritual deterioration. At one time

when the Word of God was preached, it caused people to shout and rejoice, but today in many places where a man of God preaches the good, old, solid Gospel of Truth, people walk out or shake their fist or make faces at the preacher. That spirit is not of God; it is of the devil.

When people walk out on the Truth, they are displeasing God. I have seen brethren leave the church because that was the way the crowd went. Well, when it comes to spiritual matters, the crowd is always wrong. The Bible tells you that. Matthew 7:14 says that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Many who go with the crowd are sorry later, but that does not make the wrong right. If they are truly sorry, they will come out and take a stand. They should not try to slip in the back door. They need to get up and say, "I was wrong for leaving. I took the wrong stand, and I am sorry." That is when people will have confidence in you. God demands that people straighten out things when they are wrong.

Diluting God's Word With Men's Ideas

One big hindrance to people today is the many different versions of the Bible. The Apostle Peter said in 2 Peter 1:20 that "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." Holy men of God wrote as the Spirit gave them utterance. I am not opposed to using other versions as references, but you need to be careful of using them as your road map. The purpose of so many versions of the Bible is not to help men understand the Word of God better, but it is a work of the devil to destroy its power. There is no power in falseness.

Many periodicals have diluted God's Word with men's ideas. Some translators even have atheists sitting on their advisory boards. Jesus said in Matthew 11:25, "O Father, . . . thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed

them unto babes [in Christ]." The written Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit, is a road map for the church. The disciples sought God's face to direct them, and it worked. They cast out devils, healed the sick, and many souls were saved. When Peter stood up and preached on the Day of Pentecost, three thousand souls were saved, another time five hundred bowed, and another time three hundred were saved. The preaching of the Word of God will separate the wheat from the chaff. Honest-hearted souls out in Babylon will come out of her.

Acts 19:19-20 reads: "Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." After they burned all those evil things, God's Word grew. Judas sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver, which would amount to \$21.60 in our currency. Those people in Acts, Chapter 19, had fifty thousand pieces of silver, which would amount to \$9,800 in our currency today. They burned those books to preserve the Truth. Could it be that you need to do some housecleaning in your home? Jesus told Peter in Matthew 16:17, ". . . for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." They had received a divine revelation.

Satan, through his atheistic and heathenish followers, is doing everything he can to destroy the Word of God. He has been successful in getting prayer out of the schools and in having pictures of Christ removed from the walls, though they had hung there for years. Now people are trying to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance. In many places prayer is no longer permitted at governmental meetings. Prayer is our power line. Without prayer we have no power.

I have seen people walk away from the Truth who seemed to be so established in the Truth that you

would have thought nothing could ever move them. Proverbs 26:11 says, "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly." Whenever a person turns his back on the Truth, the people of God have no confidence in him until he comes and says, "I was wrong. I ask you to forgive me." Then he should be willing to sit down and prove himself.

Satan and his followers are working to get rid of prayer and everything that mentions God from public buildings. They are also trying to get the words "In God We Trust" removed from our currency. They had the Ten Commandments removed from a courthouse in Alabama. A judge there stood his ground until they removed him from office, but I thank God for him.

A Time to Repent

A few years ago everyone was concerned about what would happen when the computer clocks rolled around to the year 2000. They were afraid that everything might shut down. People were very concerned about temporal matters, but what about their starving souls?

God hates the spirit of sodomy so much that He destroyed two Old Testament cities (Sodom and Gomorrah) because of it. He told Lot's family to leave and not to look back, but Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt.

Today God hates sodomy as much as when He destroyed the two cities with thousands of people, yet many so-called churches accept this ungodly practice. Their headquarters order it, and their preachers (not God's preachers) and their members accept it. God condemns same sex marriage, but they accept it.

God's plan is for a man to marry a woman and bear children. It is impossible for two men to produce children or for two women to produce children. God still hates homosexuality, and He is doing all He can to stop this corruption. Saints of God need to cry out against

this devilish life style. People need to stand against it and come out of those places.

Today people are killing babies as if they were killing livestock. People are supporting it the way they supported Barabbas and crucified Christ. God brought Japan down during World War II. The Japanese attacked the United States and awoke a sleeping giant, and they were defeated. Germany was once a powerful nation, but God brought it down. Russia was also a powerful nation, but God brought it down. The United States is the most powerful nation in the world today, but God will bring her down unless the people repent.

They will not repent all at once, but individually. If you will repent, you may be able to lead someone else to repentance. If you have become careless, you need to repent. You need to show God that you are concerned about souls. You should pray that God will move upon the hearts of men and women and save their souls, bring them out of Babylon, and help them to take a stand for the Truth.

(Cassette C-5146E)

Forget and Remember

*Forget each kindness that you do
As soon as you have done it.
Forget the praise that falls on you
The moment you have won it;
Forget the slander that you hear
Before you can repeat it;
Forget each slight, each spite, each sneer,
Whenever you may meet it.
Remember praise by others won
And pass it on with pleasure;
Remember those who lend you aid
And be a grateful debtor;
Remember every promise made
And keep it to the letter.*

Selected

My Personal Testimony

My testimony begins with, "Whatever you do, do not quit God!" As a little girl, my exposure to teachings about Jesus were plentiful, because both my grandfather and my uncle were ministers. At about ten years of age, God dealt with my heart, saved me, and planted the desire within me to serve Him. Serving God meant that He was to reign supremely in my life without any sin. A clear and clean conscience was the only way for me to serve Him. When I did certain things, such as smoke cigarettes, I had feelings of guilt. When I discussed this with my pastor, he told me if it felt wrong, do not do it. Well, it definitely felt wrong, but giving in to sin was a daily deed, along with asking God's forgiveness before I went to bed. Complete and total failure followed in my life.

Many times I asked God for forgiveness, but I could not seem to hold an experience. In 1964, my sister-in-law and brother-in-law introduced me to the Church of God. God was so faithful to knock at my heart's door again and save me. He saved me to serve Him and to raise my children in the Church of God. He wanted me to teach them and train them in the way that He wanted them to live. As the world began to pull on me, I began to give in. Soon victory gave way to defeat as my desire for worldly pleasures grew. I gave little thought to what living in sin would do to my children or anyone watching my life. Sin looked glamorous to me. To me, being young meant dancing, drinking, and smoking. As a mother of two children, I chose to have fun rather than to raise them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Nine years later, then the mother of four children, my ex-sister-in-law introduced me to the Church of God

in Newark, Ohio. She and her husband kept asking me to go to church. Finally, after several weeks, I attended a service with them. What a service it was! My desire to serve God, coupled with deep sorrow for sin, caused me to bow at an altar of prayer and surrender my all to God. I began to raise my children in the Church of God, and all was well for about four years.

In 1977, I felt as though God had forsaken me. Much prayer went up for God to let me know He was still there. Looking back, I now realize that God wanted me to exercise faith and continue to serve Him, but the thought of being unable to feel God seemed unbearable to me, and my eyes began to drift toward the things of the world. My family was uprooted and moved to Texas where no true Church of God existed. By that time my children were growing up, but they were learning the things of the world instead of learning how to serve God and prepare for eternity. This all happened because I quit God.

From 1977 until January 1995, my life went from bad to worse, and then to deplorable. (The only good thing that happened to me during all those years is that I met the man to whom I am now married, and he is serving God with me.) God was so faithful to prick my conscience and remind me that He wanted to save me. Many times while driving to work and at other times God reminded me that He wanted me to come back home to Him, but I kept putting it off. One day I felt that God had left me, and He did not knock at my heart's door as He once did. Oh! the panic and sheer terror to think that the rest of my life was to be lived with hell awaiting me! Finally, God began to deal with me again. I had a desire to be saved, but

it always seemed to be inconvenient. In January 1995 God asked me, "Isn't it time for you to get saved?" If I had refused Him, it is my belief that He would not have extended His hand of mercy to me again. It was during this same time that my sister was shot to death. I could have been the one who is now in eternity without the Lord!

It was in early January that I made the trip to the Church of God in Newark, Ohio. When my husband and I entered the sanctuary and the choir started to sing, tears began to flow because the Spirit of God was so very real. The message still had that peculiar ring of truth. The saints of God had not changed, and the testimonies were still the same: praise to the Lord for all He has done. After we attended a couple more services, I bowed at an altar of prayer and God forgave all my sins and cleansed me to serve Him.

How my dear children have had to suffer due to my sins! The older two children were always so tender hearted and sensitive to God and the teachings of the Bible, but now one believes that being morally good is enough to get to Heaven. The other has not chosen to serve God, though she said she believes the Bible.

My youngest daughter chose to follow the Lord, thank God forever! She, too, could have chosen the wrong way, but she heeded the voice of God. She now serves God with her husband, and they are raising their children in the Truth. This Truth is to be bought at any price (whatever it cost) and not to be sold. It will show us how to prepare for eternity and how to train our children so that they might choose to go to Heaven too.

I often wonder where my children would be had I remained true to God. The memory of what my youngest son used to say when he was about one year of age haunts me to this day. He said, "Mommy, when me grows up, me going to be a preacher man!" Although he did not even remember the truth

about the one church, God has recently revealed it to him, and he is endeavoring to live for the Lord.

God forgave my sins (thanks be to God), but the scars still remain. Oh, the desire to live my life over for God and raise my precious children in the Church of God is ever present. The constant reminder that life can never be lived over gives me a small hint of what it would be like to be in hell and never be able to repent or to

make things right. This cross is heavy to bear and so very painful.

If you are contemplating quitting God, please, get on your knees and cry out to God until you have victory over the enemy who wants you to give up. He wants to damn your soul in hell as well as your children's souls. If the devil can get you to quit God, he knows that he has your soul and that the chances are, he will get your

children's souls also, because they will not learn the ways of God, but the ways of the world. They may not even remember where to find help. They could become confused with all the false religious teachings in the world. You, too, may become confused even though you once knew the Truth. Don't quit God! The price is too high to pay!

A. J. Spradlin

A Mother's Dream

Some time ago I had a strange dream. It seemed that some of my family and friends were gathered for a meeting. Suddenly, a huge crack appeared in the earth. From the crack came an army of people whose aim was to conquer us all. This they did quickly. Soon we were banded together in a small room. Later, the conquerors chose a few of us to go with them, and I was one of the chosen. As I walked, I remember seeing my small daughter going along happily with the opposition. I thought, "Already they are winning her over." I called out desperately, "Don't forget God," while she skipped on. I cried heartbroken, fearing for her future!

As I look back upon the dream, I again become fearful, realizing the great responsibility a mother, as well as a father, has for the little souls placed in our keeping. We have the privilege of molding them for the Master.

The conquerors in my dream do not necessarily represent a people. They could be the attractions of this world: all the desires or temptations that lead young people, as well as older people, away from God. It is in our hands, as parents, to lay a good foundation for our children to fall back upon. They will make mistakes, but knowing God as a personal Friend will make the difference in their eternity. This knowledge can be partially gained through church, yet those few hours of church time compared with six or seven school hours a day are not enough! The real Bible training must be supplied at home.

Throughout the Bible we read God's command

to impress His words upon our children. We read of several young men, such as Moses, Daniel, and the three Hebrew children who stood true to God because of their early training. As we look back over the past few days, it would benefit us to remember how much time we have spent in studying God's Word as a family.

I am the last one to recommend poking dry religion down a child's throat, especially during this age of entertainment. There are many interesting ways to teach and learn about God. Perhaps it will mean sacrificing some of our time to plan new methods, but this is our responsibility and privilege!

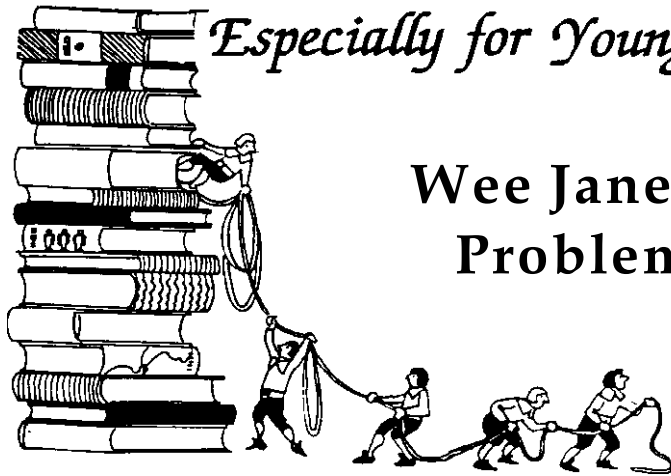
One might use home drawn pictures, Bible story books, puzzles, Bible maps, Bible games, family drama, singing, or just a well-told story. Enthusiasm is catching, and God's Word is filled with exciting truths.

As parents, our first step is to daily seek God's Spirit in our personal lives; secondly, we should see that our children are taught from God's Word daily. Then, hopefully, my dream will never come true for any one of us. Instead, we will see our children marching in this life, not the defeated, but the conquerors, the victors, the children of God.

Selected



Especially for Young People



Wee Janet's Problem



Everything small and helpless was once afraid of a certain ragged, barefooted little boy who had recently come to live in the country. His home was the old Perkins' house, in which no one had lived for years; at least no one but wildwood folks, like birds and squirrels. They did not stay long after the arrival of Pete and his family, because Pete threw stones even at the bluebirds.

Wee Janet was afraid of Pete. All the primer class children who attended the country school were afraid of the boy. He used to chase them and threaten to cut off their ears. Once he whispered across the aisle to Bessie Saunders that he would like to eat little girls, and she believed him.

The teacher said that Pete was a bad boy. There was never a school day when the child was not justly punished for something. It did seem as if no one ever said a kind word about Pete. Wee Janet thought that even his mother was discouraged, because he cruelly teased his own brothers and sisters until they were in tears half the time.

No one in the country knew where Pete and his family lived before they came to the Perkins' farm. In reply to that question Pete said, "None of yer business!" to the Sunday school superintendent.

Wee Janet was much troubled about Pete. "He'll be a dreadfully bad man," she said to her mother, "unless someone can make him into

a good little boy. The teacher says she can't do it—she's tried. She says it's a problem."

"I'll tell you what to do, little daughter," said Wee Janet's mother. "Try to think Pete is the lovely boy he might have been if he had been born in the Perkins' house and dear old Grandma Perkins was his own grandmother."

"But—but my thinker isn't strong enough," objected Wee Janet. "Besides, that wouldn't make Pete into a different kind of a boy."

"No," agreed Wee Janet's mother; "but if you could imagine Pete is lovely, you must treat him in a different way, and it might make him better."

The following day Wee Janet tried her best to do as her mother suggested. The day after she begged all the little girls in the primer class to treat Pete as if he were a good boy. At last Wee Janet and the primer class gave it up.

"He just gets worse and worse," Wee Janet told her mother. "He said he 'don't care for nuthin' nor nobody,'—that's just what he said."

"Well," replied Janet's mother, "there is one thing you can do, and that is, always be polite and kind to him. You must 'overcome evil with good.'"

Days passed. Every night when Wee Janet said her prayers, she remembered to pray for Pete. Each day she tried to be kind to him in every way known to a little girl

eight years old and extremely small for her age. He threw the flowers she gave him into the dusty road and danced on them. He accepted her gifts only to destroy them, every one, and then called her a "cry baby."

At last, the Sunday school superintendent learned that Pete had been born and had lived all his life in a tenement house in a great city. His father died in the state's prison. After learning that, it seemed to Wee Janet that there was almost no hope for Pete.

One Thursday morning the little girl's mother asked her to carry a pail of buttermilk to Aunt Nancy. "You needn't be afraid to go by the Perkins' house this morning," she said, "because your father was told that Pete went fishing today."

Wee Janet was half way to Aunt Nancy's when not far up the road she beheld Mr. Mason's red cow eating grass outside instead of inside the fence.

"Oh, the hooking cow!" exclaimed the child, almost dropping her pail of buttermilk.

At that moment the red cow lifted her head. It is possible she thought that Janet was a big clover blossom. Anyway, on came the cow lowing gently. Mr. Mason always said the cow was harmless.

Janet, too frightened to stir, screamed in terror. That scream brought a barefooted boy running over the fields. That boy was Pete.

"What's the matter, Wee Jan?" he called.

At that moment, Pete looked beautiful to Wee Janet. It seemed to her that she never saw a finer looking boy than Pete, the ragged child, when he picked up a stick and made the cow turn around and go the other way.

"Come on, Wee Jan," called Pete. "I won't let her hurt yez. I'll drive her back in her pasture and lock the gate. Yez see if I don't!"

After the cow was in her pasture, Pete insisted upon going to Aunt Nancy's with Wee Janet. "Yer might see a rattler," he explained, as if such a thing were probable.

"Now I'll take yer home," the boy observed when Wee Janet found him waiting at the gate. "Yer too

little to be out alone."

Janet's mother thanked Pete for taking care of her small daughter. Then she gave him a piece of gingerbread. After that she showed him Wee Janet's robin's nest and told him all about how the mother robin worked to build the nest and how long she sat upon the eggs before the little nestlings were hatched. Father Robin scolded the boy so vigorously Wee Janet was afraid Pete's feelings might be hurt. "You see," she explained, "he knows that you're a stranger. Now, Father Robin, don't make such a fuss. If Pete took care of me, he'd take care of your babies, too. Wouldn't you, Pete?"

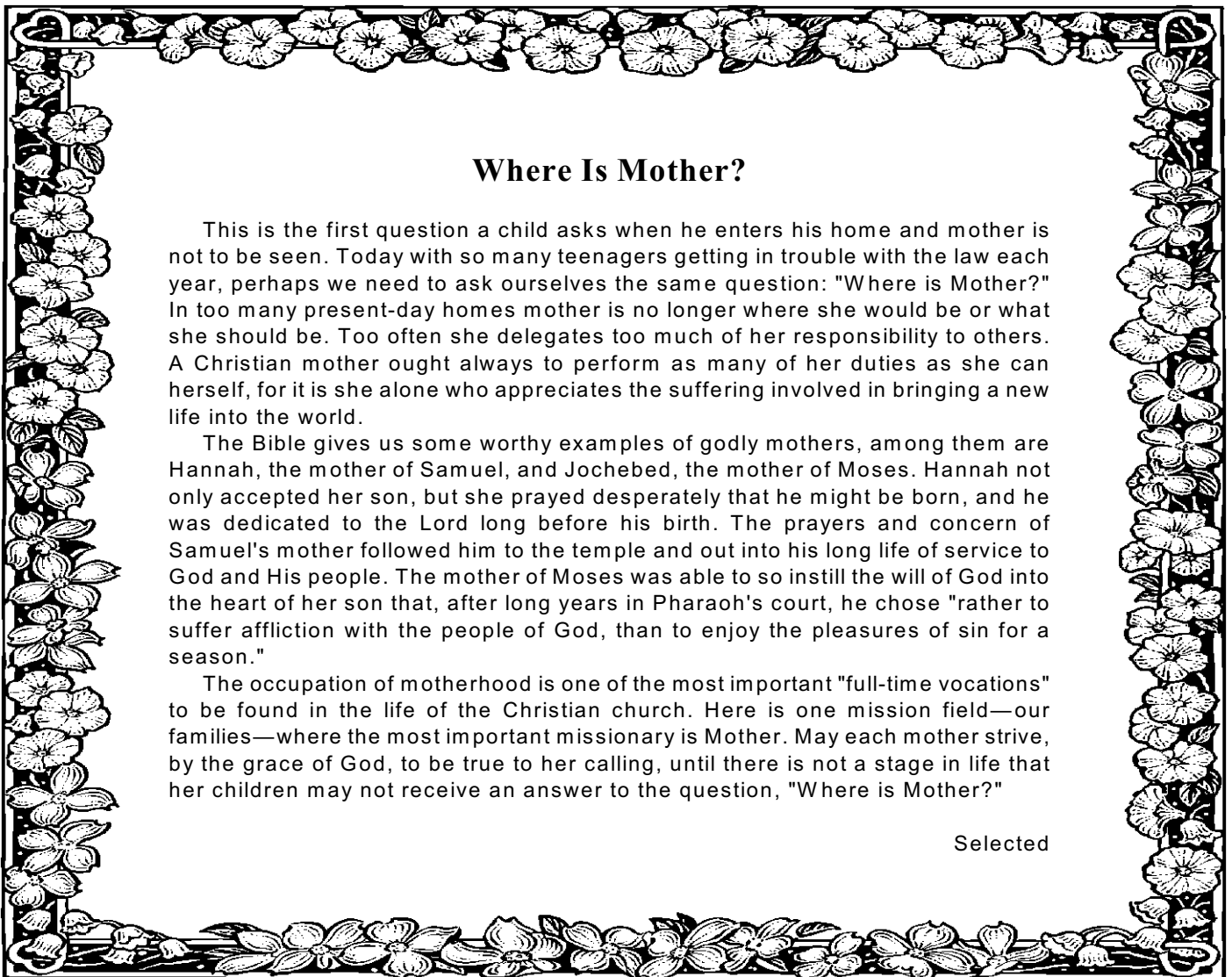
"Sure!" Pete replied with a broad grin.

From that hour there was a change in Pete. He told Wee Janet's mother that he never knew anything about birds before, whereupon he was invited to come every day to visit all of Wee Janet's birds' nests and to read her bird books.

Before the end of the year, even the little girls in the primer class forgot, or appeared to forget, that Pete was ever a bad boy. He is in high school now, in town, and his mother never looks discouraged when she speaks of her eldest son, Peter.

As for Wee Janet, to this day she sometimes wonders how it all came about.

Selected



Where Is Mother?

This is the first question a child asks when he enters his home and mother is not to be seen. Today with so many teenagers getting in trouble with the law each year, perhaps we need to ask ourselves the same question: "Where is Mother?" In too many present-day homes mother is no longer where she would be or what she should be. Too often she delegates too much of her responsibility to others. A Christian mother ought always to perform as many of her duties as she can herself, for it is she alone who appreciates the suffering involved in bringing a new life into the world.

The Bible gives us some worthy examples of godly mothers, among them are Hannah, the mother of Samuel, and Jochebed, the mother of Moses. Hannah not only accepted her son, but she prayed desperately that he might be born, and he was dedicated to the Lord long before his birth. The prayers and concern of Samuel's mother followed him to the temple and out into his long life of service to God and His people. The mother of Moses was able to so instill the will of God into the heart of her son that, after long years in Pharaoh's court, he chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

The occupation of motherhood is one of the most important "full-time vocations" to be found in the life of the Christian church. Here is one mission field—our families—where the most important missionary is Mother. May each mother strive, by the grace of God, to be true to her calling, until there is not a stage in life that her children may not receive an answer to the question, "Where is Mother?"

Selected

Philippians 3:1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might

trust in the flesh, I more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for

whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.

Self-Righteousness



Brother Calvin Foster

Counting All Things But Loss

The Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Philippi and exhorted them to beware of evil workers and to encourage them to worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus. He also warned them not to glory in the flesh or to think too highly of themselves. He said if any man had a right to glory in the flesh, it was he. He said, in so many

words, "I am a Jew, circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, and as touching the law, a Pharisee."

Paul knew he was of Jewish heritage through the tribe of Benjamin, and Benjamin was one of Jacob's favorite sons. He was saying that if any man thought he had a right to rejoice in his heritage, he had even more right to do so. He

lived the life of a Pharisee, one of the strictest religious sects of that day. He persecuted the church zealously and, according to the Law, was blameless.

Paul said in verses 7-8 of our Scripture text, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have

suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

Paul suffered the loss of his reputation and his position in leaving the Pharisee sect for Christ. He considered all of that but dung, or waste, so that he might win Christ and be found in Him, not having his own righteousness, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness of God. Friend, you may think that you are a righteous person, but self-righteousness will not get you into God's Heaven. If you are filled with self-righteousness, you cannot live a life pleasing to God; you need the righteousness of God. Self-righteousness is not good enough.

In Luke 16:13-15 Jesus said: "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon [or money]. And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." Men highly esteem self-righteousness, but that which men highly esteem is an abomination in the sight of God.

You may ask, "Isn't it a good thing to be righteous?" Yes, I thank God for every righteous individual, but self-righteousness will not put you in a right position before God. You must have the righteousness of God, and to have His righteousness, you need Jesus Christ in your life. You cannot go to Heaven on your own righteousness. You must have God's righteousness if you want to make Heaven your home.

God sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world to bring His righteousness to us. You may say, "I am a righteous person. I feed the poor and visit the sick." I thank God for all the volunteers in our communities, but to make Heaven your

home, you must have the righteousness of God through His Son Jesus Christ. Paul did not value his own righteousness, which was of the law. He counted all the things that he had done, all his education, and all his credentials but dung that he might win Christ and be found in Him.

Your Own Righteousness Is As Filthy Rags

In Isaiah, Chapter 64, the Prophet Isaiah explained what our own righteousness is like. He said in verse 6, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Without Christ one is as an unclean thing.

When one man went to Jesus and called Him "Good Master," Jesus said in Luke 18:19, "Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God." You are not righteous unless you have God in your life. He is your righteousness. Your own righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. He wants to see that you have His Son in your life, and He wants you to follow Him.

Filthy rags are likened to the rags the lepers used in Bible times. In those days when people had leprosy, they had sores erupting from their skin, and they would wipe the sores with rags and throw them along the roadside. The rags were called "filthy rags." That is what our own righteousness is like to God. He did not send His Son Jesus Christ for you to ignore His Son and the plan of salvation and then try to make your own way to Heaven. Trying to make your own way of righteousness will not work. You cannot get to Heaven with your own righteousness. You must submit yourself to the righteousness of God.

Self-righteous people are proud of their self-righteous deeds, yet if you witness to them and talk to

them about accepting Christ as their Savior, they will send you away to help the man in the gutter. They say, "I'm all right. You don't need to tell me about salvation. I'm doing well. I have a good job, a good home, good health, a little money in the bank, and I go to church." Friend, self-righteousness will not get you to Heaven.

In Romans 10:1-4 the Apostle Paul said: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Paul was concerned about the Jewish brethren. He knew they had zeal, but it was not according to knowledge. His heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was that they might be saved. They were going about to establish their own righteousness, not the righteousness of God.

Submitting to the Righteousness of God

Paul said not to be ignorant of God's righteousness and go about establishing your own righteousness. Your own righteousness is not good enough in the sight of God. You must have His righteousness. You need to submit to the righteousness of God through His Son Jesus Christ. Patting yourself on the back will not make you good. If you make Heaven your home, you must go through Jesus Christ.

Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." You may be a good person, but you can be a good person and yet miss Heaven. You cannot bypass Jesus Christ and get to Heaven. No one can go to Heaven unless he comes

through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

John 3:16-17 reads: "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."

The Prophet Jeremiah wrote in Jeremiah 13:23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." In other words, he was saying, "Can the black man change his skin color or can a leopard change his spots?" Without Jesus Christ in your heart, you are doing evil. Rejecting God's Son is evil. You cannot change your nature. You need God in your life to change you and to help you be what God wants you to be. You cannot make yourself righteous.

How can you receive God's righteousness? In Romans 1:16-17 the Apostle Paul said: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." You can only get God's righteousness by obeying the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

When you line up with the Gospel by reading it, hearing it preached, obeying it, and walking in the light of it, you will find the righteousness of God. He wants you to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, doing what Jesus did, and loving the things Jesus loves. You need to worship with the people of God, obey God, and spread the seeds of the Gospel. God requires you to turn from your wickedness and walk in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 1:3 says that "whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." When you obey God, whatever you do will prosper. As a child of God, if you help in the hospital, the Red Cross, or some place else in the

community, God will be with you. You will be walking in the light of the Gospel.

Put on the New Man

Self-righteous people boast in what they have done or in what they are doing. You should not boast in what you have done or in what you are doing. Those who are self-righteous put themselves up on a pedestal and look down on other people. They boast in their self-righteousness and make themselves a reputation. I repeat, your righteousness is not good enough. You cannot make it without the Gospel of Jesus Christ. You need Jesus Christ in your life.

In Philippians 2:5-7 the Apostle Paul said: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Christ did not make Himself of any reputation. He healed people and told them, "Don't tell anyone." He did not want any worldly reputation; He just wanted to do the work of the Father.

Jesus told the disciples that when they did their alms to do them in secret, and God would reward them openly. He said not to be as the hypocrites and sound a trumpet and stand on the street corners and pray long prayers to be seen of men. Some people want to sound a trumpet, so to speak, as if to say, "Look what I did. Look how much money I gave." Jesus said when you do that, you have your reward: you receive the praise of men. Self-righteous people love the praises of

men.

You should not get caught up in having a desire for the praises of men. You ought to give the praise to God. You may be a good moral person, but if you do not have Jesus Christ, you are not going to make it to Heaven. I thank God for people who can stop drinking, smoking, and doing things that are wrong on their own. Thank God, they had the ability and the strength to stop; nevertheless, one must have Jesus Christ to go to Heaven. Our own righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. Friend, you cannot ignore Jesus Christ and make it to Heaven.

Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." When a person is in Christ, he is a new creature. The righteousness of God is revealed through the Gospel. We must live by faith and walk by faith. Ephesians 4:24 says, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." The new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. I want you to understand the message so that you may attain God's righteousness.

First John 3:8 states, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." God can destroy the works of the devil in your life if you will yield to Him wholeheartedly.

(Cassette RC-138)

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels."

Proverbs 1:5

Revelation 15:1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

The Victory of the Church of God



Brother David Watson

Built on a Solid Foundation

Jesus taught His disciples the model prayer. He said in Matthew 6:9-11: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread." Second Peter 1:21 tells us, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The Church of God has victory. You may not see it in a large number

of people, but those who read about her in the Book of Revelation can see the victory of the Church of God. They have a revelation, or an understanding, that the Church of God is independent from human ways. We read in Revelation 12:1, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This woman is pure, and she is symbolic of the church. In this Scripture and in the vision that John received of the church, the moon is under her feet. The moon represents

the old covenant.

In Matthew, Chapters 5-7, Jesus preached the great Sermon on the Mount. In Exodus, Chapter 19, we read that God did not allow the people to go up to the mountain, but He set bounds about it. Jesus dwelled in the darkness under the old covenant, but in the new covenant Jesus said He was the light, and He came to be the light of life. In the new covenant Jesus taught His disciples in the prayer that the will of the Father must be done *in* earth, not on earth. In the old covenant it was done *on* earth. In

the new covenant we go much further.

Peter preached that the Scriptures came by the prophecies of old, and they were given by the Holy Ghost. In other words, the church is built on the Word of God, and it is independent, just as the Scriptures are. This sets God's people apart from all customs and traditions, and it breaks down every spirit of man and brings him from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. The child of God no longer walks in the flesh but in the Holy Ghost.

When Jesus gave John a picture of the woman standing on the moon, He was saying, "There was the old covenant, but here is the new." He laid it right down in the foundation of the Church of the Living God. To have victory, the church must stand on the teachings of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul knew this by the revelation of Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 2:20 Paul taught the young converts at Ephesus, "And [you] are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

If you think of Matthew, Chapters 5-7, and think of what Peter said and think of Revelation, Chapter 12, and lay it all together, you will see Jesus bringing the life of the Old Testament up to those fellows. In essence, Jesus told them, "I didn't come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it. I will lay it down in the foundation of the church with My Apostles." This is how the New Testament church is built. She will take a precept and a line in the old and a little in the new and will bring them together and put them where the church can stand. She stands holy, pure, and victorious in Jesus Christ because she is the glorious Church of the Living God. She has victory over the customs and the traditions of men. The power of the Holy Ghost has delivered her and bought her. He also feeds her, admonishes her, and cherishes her as Christ's bride.

Standing on the Sea of Glass

John said in Revelation 15:1 that this is great and marvelous! When God sent the message, He gave us something that surpasses our comprehension. Jesus told His disciples that He was going to leave them and go back to the Father in John, Chapter 14. He was preparing them and telling them that He would send another Comforter who would lead and guide them into all Truth (Chapters 15 and 16). The One who guides the church to victory is the Holy Ghost. Man is not her leader. The man of God is your leader as the Holy Ghost leads him. The Church of God is led, guided, and taught by the Holy Ghost. She comes with the message of Jesus Christ.

When John saw the church, he saw her standing on the sea of glass. James said in James 1:23-25: "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he . . . goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." God's people are standing on the sea of glass, and they have the victory. They do not read the Word to argue and fuss with others over it. Jesus said in Luke 10:26, "What is written in the law? how reads thou?" Is it the hand of custom or tradition? No, the church lives beyond that.

The image of the church is found in the precious Book, and the image in which God has created us is a new image in Jesus Christ. It is the holiness and righteousness of God and that which brings the revelation of Jesus Christ; in this, John said, is victory. God's church has the victory. The Word of God identifies the church. Solomon wrote in the Song of Solomon 6:9, speaking of the church, "She is the only one of her mother."

The Word of God will identify

the church because her spirit is free. The Word is free, and the church has the victory. Some people may say the church is dying, but they are wrong. People die, but the church is alive and well; she is not even sick. She is holy and without spot or wrinkle; she is without a blemish. Her Husband is still alive, and she is still on the march toward Heaven, thank God!

Victory Over the Beast

I want to show you that God's church has victory over the beast. The beast is a figurative expression. Both Jesus and John the Baptist used figurative language. Jesus called the Pharisees vipers, or serpents, in Matthew, Chapter 23. In Luke 13:32 he called Herod a fox. Then in John, Chapter 15, and Matthew, Chapter 7, He also used figurative language when speaking of trees. Isaiah spoke of trees as the plantings of God. The Bible uses many figurative expressions.

In Daniel, Chapter 7, you can read of four beasts coming up from the sea, each diverse from the others. Daniel received a message from an angel, and he was told that these four beasts represent four kings, or kingdoms. John said in 1 John 4:4, "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." Paul wrote in Romans 8:37 that "we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." If we allow God to have control in our lives, we have already won the battle. We have a conqueror who leads the church: Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Captain, the Husband of the church, and she has the victory. He is leading the church, and He is more than a conqueror; therefore, all who follow Him conquer with Him.

In Psalm 137 you can read about the children of Israel who were carried down to Babylon. Their captors made fun of them and asked them to sing the Lord's songs. However, the children of Israel hung their harps on the willows. They replied with a question in verse 4: "How shall we

sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?" The church is independent. She does not sing just any place. She only sings where it will glorify God and edify the body of Christ. Israel said in verses 5-6: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. . . ."

In 2 Chronicles, Chapter 36, we find that the people of Israel had mocked the church and rejected God, so they were taken into captivity. In captivity some would not accept the Babylonian names. The Babylonians changed Daniel's name. The name Daniel meant "judge," but they changed it to Belteshazzar, which meant "Venus," or "Bel," which is a false god. You see, when you go down to Babylon, she will change your name. Mystery Babylon, spoken of in the Book of Revelation, will force you to take her name instead of God's name.

God's church is altogether different. First of all, one is born into the kingdom. The Kingdom of God is joy, righteousness, and peace in the Holy Ghost. Some people have gotten saved but have not yet seen the church. That is the reason Revelation 18:4 says, "Come out of her, my people." Some people are in locations where they do not need to be. The Psalmist wrote in Psalm 87:4 of those who were born in different locations. He also mentioned in verse 5 those who were born in Zion. Zion is where the church dwells. We have a territory to gain when we are saved. When we get saved, God puts us in a place where we have freedom, liberty, and the Holy Spirit to bless us and a place where the Word of God is preached.

The Babylonians changed the names of the three Hebrew boys to the names of other gods, but God revealed who had the victory. Later, the Lord troubled the heart of the Babylonian king with a dream, but the soothsayers and the wise men of Babylon could not interpret it. However, they found a man who had the Spirit of God in him. Daniel was

brought before the king, and he interpreted the dream. He broke the power and the bondage, and he was given a high position.

When King Nebuchadnezzar had the three Hebrew children thrown into the fiery furnace, God took the heat out of the fire. He walked with those children, and they were victorious. The beastly power did not have the control that it thought it had. They had thrown others in that fiery furnace, and they perished, but God delivered the three Hebrew boys. Other men had been thrown into the den of lions and were killed, but Daniel was spared. The church has the victory over the beast. She has the Holy Ghost to lead, guide, and teach her all she needs to know.

The Rod of God

In Revelation, Chapter 12, we read of a woman clothed with the sun, which is symbolic of the church. The dragon came to devour her man child as soon as He was born. The man child is a type of the seed of the church. The man child was to rule the nations with a rod of iron. I want you to understand that Christ rules and lives within His people, and He handles the rod.

The rod is in Christ's hand, and it is symbolic of the Word of God. John wrote in Revelation 11:1, "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod. . . ." It was given to measure the church. When Moses was pouring out the plagues in Egypt, he had a rod in his hand. The rod is to measure the Church of the Living God. No man or woman can come into the church until he or she measures to the Word of God. Salvation begins with old-time conviction.

Isaiah 28:17 states, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." The Word of God, or the rod of God, makes the bed too short and the covers too narrow. It brings judgment on the souls of men

and women until they pray for victory and peace in their souls and the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

I know what it is to lie down and not be able to rest. I know what it is to be broken by the Word. Jesus said in Matthew 21:44, "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Nothing will affect your conscience like the Holy Ghost using the Word of God on you. You may argue with people, but you cannot argue with God. He has more wisdom than you will ever have.

What a fight came against the morning church! The Pharisees and the Sadducees did not know it, but they were being used of the devil. They were bound by their ceremonies, creeds, and rituals. The church is more than ceremonies and rituals and trying to build on the past. The church is built on Him who lives forever.

Jesus wounded the head of the dragon. Those who sat in His school were like Isaiah, in Isaiah 40:13, when he asked the question, "Who hath directed the spirit of the LORD, or being his counselor hath taught him?" Isaiah could not explain it, so he wrote in verse 12, "Who hath . . . weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" The Lord Jesus is greater than words. He is greater than all that you see. He is the Son of the Living God. Jesus Christ died on the Cross and was resurrected in the power of the Holy Ghost. He lives, and He will live forever.

Power From on High

As Jesus preached, many people were confounded. Some went their way and did not ask Him any more questions. In John 6:54 Jesus taught His disciples, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." If you are going to be victorious, you must follow Christ. In essence, Jesus told His disciples, "I am sending you to reap where

you have not sown."

We read in Luke 24:49 that Jesus sent the disciples to Jerusalem, telling them to tarry until they were endued with power from on high. You can read in Acts, Chapter 2, that after tarrying, the Holy Ghost came and "appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them" (verse 3). They were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke with other tongues, or languages. The multitude was confounded, because every man heard them speak in his own language wherein he was born.

Peter preached a message, and three thousand souls were saved. A few days later, five thousand more people were saved. They were working against paganism, or the dragon. A shaking of false powers took place. It is no wonder that men were amazed and disturbed. A few days later, Peter and John went up to the temple for prayer and found a lame man sitting by the way. Peter said to him in Acts 3:6, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." This man began to leap and rejoice and entered the temple with them.

The devil could not stand to see the work of God prosper, so the pagan power rose again. The priests and the scribes called Peter and John into question and threatened them, telling them to teach no more in the name of Jesus. They returned to their company and told them about the matter. They quoted David in Psalm 2:1 when they asked the question, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" The people witnessed divine healing right before their eyes. They saw the glory of God. All that the world could do was try to comfort and aid, but God gave healing power. Men arose and thanked God and rejoiced, and they had the victory.

While people were being healed, the pagans were raging. It is a sad thing when someone has an old carnal spirit and grumbles when

souls are being healed. People brought their sick and laid them on the streets, and when Peter's shadow passed over them, they were healed. The Church of God has victory. When the doctor cannot do anything, Jesus can.

In Revelation 13:1 John was standing on the sand of the sea and saw "a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." That is a terrible name! In verse 3 John said, "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast."

The Word of God, that which the Holy Ghost interprets to souls, was in the hearts of those men and women from the Day of Pentecost. They preached and taught, and souls were healed and saved. Consequently, they wounded the head of that power. The church was moving on. When the devil saw that his battle was going down, he moved to give his seat and authority and power to the beast. He wanted to change platforms because he was losing. Is that not the way the enemy works today? When he loses one place, he works somewhere else, but thank God, the church is victorious!

A Time of Spiritual Darkness

Notice in the Book of Daniel, Chapter 7, the ten horns did not have any crowns, but in Revelation, Chapter 12, we see that they have crowns. It was not until the eighth century that the beast appointed a pope. The Pope changed the way people worshiped and said, "This is the church." He usurped authority and introduced the image of worship, and he brought in creeds and idols. Some people began to fight against that false system of worship and say, "This is not the way," so the Pope said, "This has always been." That is what history says about him. In Hebrews 13:8 the Hebrew writer tells us what has always been: "Jesus

Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." That is the Word of God, and it is still the same.

Revelation, Chapter 17, and history tell us those who opposed the Pope and that false system of worship were considered enemies and were put to death. History says during that time they martyred approximately sixty million people. Verse 6 lets us know that Babylon was "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." If one is not a saint when he leaves this world, he is not going to be a saint after he dies. One must be a saint here in this world to be a saint in Heaven. The church is against this power. While they were shedding the blood of God's people, the saints were still marching forward and rejoicing in the power of God.

Historians have well documented the persecution of the saints of God in books, such as *Josephus, The Wars of the Jews, Wickersham's Church History, West and West, and Early Progress*. Many saints of God were tarred and feathered, tied to a stake, and burned to death. During that time the saints of God sang, "I am only wheat bread for the Master."

There was more power in dying than in living and trying to live in harmony with that beastly power. There was more victory in dying and going on to be with Jesus than in putting up with all the racket and the confusion of the world. The church is victorious! When she cannot live here, she can live in Heaven forever with Christ. Many saints of God are waiting for us at the top of the hill. I have a longing to see what is on the other side.

What did the beast do? Revelation 13:5, speaking of the beast, states, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." By calculating thirty days to a month and a day for a year, this equals 1260 years. Ezekiel 4:6 tells of a dark day. That

dark day began when Jerome translated the Bible into Latin in the fourth century, and it stayed in Latin for one thousand years. People hungered and thirsted for the Word of God. Their souls were longing for a drink from Heaven. They endured hardships that people do not have to endure in this day and time.

God got hold of some men (John Huss, John Wycliffe, and Martin Luther), and they translated the Bible back into the English language. Historians say that men who read the Bible testified that they did not know that they had been kept in such darkness and made so ignorant. That should teach us all a lesson. False religion will make merchandise of you and put you in spiritual darkness to keep you ignorant.

During this time, God still had a church, and the Holy Spirit was still working. He got hold of people, and those who were honest took a stand. Of course, there was trouble. Revelation 6:9-11 says: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

The Mark of the Beast

Another persecutor was rising against the church. (The devil does not allow God's people to have an easy way in the Kingdom of God.) Those people were not looking for an easy way. They were looking for power and the Holy Ghost to lead the church victoriously. Zechariah 14:7 tells us "at evening time it shall be light." I thank God for the light! Those people were encouraged by the prophets of old. They were in

the foundation of the church. The morning-time church read what God would do.

When the light came, in Revelation 13:11, we find that another beast came up out of the earth. Notice that his origin was from the earth. He had two horns, and he spoke as a dragon. In Ezekiel, Chapter 29, we find that the dragon Ezekiel prophesied against was Pharaoh; he was the king of bondage. The same was true of the religion that began to arise at the evening time. This beast caused men to be in bondage; it did not bring liberty or freedom.

The men who preached during this time proclaimed the Gospel for about twenty years, but then they reached back and made an image to the dragon, whose head had been wounded by the sword. They went back to the beast and began to reintroduce those ways to people. Satan was trying to bring the church under that sedition, but the true church had found a spark of light and was walking in that light. God had some people who were honest with Him.

Revelation 13:16-17 tells us that this beast caused the people to receive a mark in their right hand or in their forehead. This mark was the name of the beast or the number of his name. Whether great or small, rich or poor, the people received this mark. It is the same way today. Many people do not realize that to join a church is to receive the mark of the beast. The Scriptures teach against joining Babylon. In Isaiah 5:8 the Prophet Isaiah said, "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!" If others get over in a field away from where they pastor, that pastor would ask, "What are you doing over here? This is my field to work in." They joined them to their house, but not God's house.

Ezekiel 43:10 tells us, "Thou son of man, shew the house to the house. . . ." You cannot show a literal church building to another building.

Hebrews 3:6 lets us know what God's house is: "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." The saints of God are God's house. God's house is not a literal house composed of wood, brick, and mortar, but it is composed of God's people.

Standing on Mount Zion

In Revelation, Chapter 15, Jesus sent angels, and they preached the Truth. They gathered souls, and God put them back on Mount Zion. When God's people return to Mount Zion, they are standing with the Lamb, and there is no better place to stand! John said in John 1:29, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." When the Gospel was preached, God gathered them from the places where they had been scattered in the dark and cloudy day, and according to Ezekiel 34:12-14, He put them back on the mountain. This mountain is where the Husband (Christ) is, and it is where the bride belongs. There she can stand in her territory and sing the song of deliverance.

When those saints got back home, they were glad to sing! They were standing on a sea of glass, and they had the harps of God. God reminded them what Moses and the people did when He delivered them from bondage. He opened the sea, and they walked through on dry ground. God destroyed their enemy. Child of God, if you are going to have victory, the enemy must be destroyed.

God's people sing because they have victory in Jesus Christ. Revelation 15:3 tells us that the Hebrews sang the song of Moses, but they did not sing until they had crossed the Red Sea and the enemy had been defeated. I want to show you something about their getting across to the other side. In 1 Corinthians 10:2 the Apostle Paul said, "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The sea was before

them, and the cloud was overhead.

In Exodus 13:21 we can see that the cloud was a figure of leadership. Whenever the Hebrews passed through the sea to Moses, they were all baptized to the leadership and under the control of the Word of God. Whenever the Holy Ghost baptizes you, He inducts you into the body of Christ. You are to follow the Leader, and the Leader is Jesus Christ. He will not tell you to stay home Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, or during the time of revival. He will send you into the highways and hedges to compel men and women to come and receive the liberty, the freedom, the righteousness, and the holiness that belongs to the Church of the Living God.

The people sang the song of Moses, and then they also sang a little more. They saw that they had victory over the enemy. (Whenever you hear Truth, it will spoil you for everything else. You will not hunger for anything else but Truth. You will want the Living Water, the Bread that comes down from Heaven. You will want your soul fed by the Word of God. You will say, "Pastor, feed me; give me Truth.")

God's people sang one more song: the song of the Lamb. They sang about where the Lord had brought them from and praised Him because they were free. The bondage, the filthiness, and the pollution was gone. They had been delivered and were standing on Mount Zion, on the sea of glass. This is where Jesus is. I am living where a fountain is open, and my thirsty soul is drinking from the fountain of God!

The Way to Victory

I love what Jesus does! His saints are singing. All the singing that you hear in the world is nothing compared with the singing that God anoints. When the saints of God sing with a melody in their souls, it is due to the Lamb and the victory they have through Him. When that anointing comes, it is just as David

of old wrote about in Psalm 133:2 when he said, "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard: even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments."

This anointing will refresh your soul, just as the dew that comes upon the ground. Nothing at the drug store can refresh you, quicken you, and raise you to a heavenly atmosphere like the precious anointing of God. The Word of God will raise you, bless you, glorify God, and give you liberty. Oh, what God does for His people! The church has victory, not only over the beast but also over his image.

When I heard the Gospel and gave my heart to God, He killed the old man, spiritually speaking, and created a new man. Praise God! When people see me and hear me talk, they know that I have a new tongue, a new spirit, and a new song. When they see me going, I have a new place to go. Whenever they hear me in the highways and hedges, they hear a different conversation because Jesus is living in me. I have found the way, and that way is with Jesus Christ.

God's people have victory over the mark of the beast. Every Babylonian religion wants to mark you. You have to be careful. Sometimes getting out from under the mark will cost you things that are dear and precious to you. Jesus taught His disciples, "If your eye offends you, pluck it out. If your hand offends you, cut it off." He was not speaking literally but spiritually. He meant that if you have the wrong vision, you should cut it off. You need a vision of God's church, and you should have fellowship with the great Church of the Living God.

In Luke 14:26-27 Jesus said: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters; yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." That is independent of self and

everyone else. You need to follow Christ.

When you leave false religion, it may cost you, but it is worth the cost. Your soul longs for home, and home is where Truth is. No matter what other people do—your wife, your children, your brother, or your sister—whether they follow a custom, a tradition, or whatever it may be, you should lay it all down, turn your back on it, and walk away from it so that you can be free to worship God in spirit and in Truth. God's church is a church of victory.

The New Jerusalem

God wanted John to see the church. John wrote in Revelation 21:9-10: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels . . . and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain. . . ." The church is built far above the world. The world wants to drag you down. People in the world want to feel justified in what they are doing, and they do not want to feel alone. The church cannot be pulled down. Some people want me to come down, but I have been to the mountain, and I am not about to come down. Praise God, I have found a dwelling place in Mount Zion, a resting place! Isaiah spoke of it, Malachi spoke of it, and the writer of the Book of Hebrews spoke of it in Hebrews 12:22.

God carried John up to the mountain to show him what God's people are enjoying today. This came from Heaven and not from man. It was Heaven born, not earth born; it is not carnal but spiritual, from Jesus Christ. Again, Revelation 21:9-10 reads: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy

Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."

In the first part of Chapter 21 we read of the bride adorned for her husband. In Chapter 19 we read that His bride has made herself ready, and it was granted to her that she should adorn herself in fine linen, which is the righteousness of the saints. When John got to that high mountain, he did not see a woman but a city. When he saw the city, he saw the prophets of old, the patriarchs, and Israel of old. Also, he saw how they received their inheritance. It was set by the gates. No wonder God said He loved the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jerusalem.

Ephesians 2:20 tells us what is in the foundation. If you read Matthew, Chapters 5-7, you will understand why Jesus taught them as He did. Second Peter 1:21 lets us know that the Scripture was inspired by the Holy Ghost. It is the Spirit of God who shows us the Church of the Living God. Ephesians 4:11-12 says that he gives pastors, teachers, and evangelists for the perfecting of the saints. God uses them, but the Holy Ghost gives us understanding.

God saw the measures of this city. I thank God for the measures of the church! Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:13 that we have "a measure to reach even unto you." There is only one line of Truth. Psalm 19:4 reads, "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun." We read in Isaiah 28:10, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."

Paul told young Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." God will not change His Word for anyone. The Word cuts straight. God is no respecter of persons. He will show us the same church that He showed John. He will show you the same city that He showed John.

This city is not Heaven; it is the church, the new Jerusalem. We are in the new Jerusalem, which came down from Heaven. Can you see it? We can see it through God's Word. The Holy Ghost will show you the Church of God. How is your vision, spiritually speaking? Have you lost your vision of the church? If you have, God wants to anoint your eyes with eye salve so that you might see.

(Cassette C-5430M)

Alone With Jesus

*Have you power in prayer or service?
Have you victory over sin?
Have you courage in the conflict?
If not, then get alone with Him.*

*Are the joy bells ever singing?
Does your heart feel light within?
Then, my friend, I know your secret;
You have been alone with Him.*

*Do the clouds seem thick about you?
Does the devil seem to win?
Then you're working at it backward;
'Tis time to get alone with Him.*

*Does your day seem clear as crystal,
Or the clouds seem very thin?
You have come out in the sunshine,
For you've been alone with Him.*

*Have you been too busy?
Do the cares of life come in
And keep you from your daily
prayer life?
Take time to get alone with Him.*

*Do you know it's almost evening
When our Christ will come again?
If you wish Him then to take you,
You must get alone with Him.*

*Do you wonder about your brother,
Why his life has ever been
A life of victory and triumph?
Why, he's been alone with Him.*

Carry Sunshine

*Many people carry shadows
By the gloomy lives they live,
By their grouchy way of speaking,
And by what they do and give;
But there is a way of living
That is better far than this
Blessing men to joy and bliss.*

*You can carry sunshine, neighbor,
Carry sunshine day by day,
Which is done by righteous living,
Yes, by what you do and say;
And it makes you feel much better,
And your fellows that you meet,
When your face is wearing sunshine
And your voice is kind and sweet.*

*Carry sunshine by your smiling,
By your gentleness and grace,
By the prayers you breathe for others
And the kindness of your face;
By the love your heart possesses,
By the sympathy you show,
By your patient way of dealing
With your friend or with your foe.*

*Carry sunshine to the needy,
To the sick and to the sad;
To the men and to the women
Who are good or who are bad;
Though sometimes 'twill cost you money,
Cost you effort, work, and time;
Yet to be a sunshine-toter
Is both noble and sublime.*

*You will never regret it, neighbor,
As the years of life go by,
For it's this that makes you happy
While you live and when you die;
Then when you shall meet the Master
After you have run your race,
You shall not be disappointed
When you see His smiling face.*

Selected

Selected

[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]

we allow Satan to accomplish his evil desires, he will cut off our usefulness, rob us of our blessings, and take us to hell for all eternity.

Some people feel that because they cannot preach the Gospel, teach a Sunday school class, sing a special song, or fill an outstanding position, they are of little or no value to God and His kingdom. This is not true in any way. God's church is not made up of only preachers, teachers, and singers. The body is made of many members, with a place and a specific work for each one to do. Although some are called to greater positions than others, each person is important in God's sight. It is not how great the position one fills for the Lord that counts, but it is how faithful one is to do the task God has given him to do. When Jesus explained the parable of the talents, He said the man told those servants who had been faithful, "Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25:23). It requires each one to do his part wholeheartedly to enable the spiritual body to function efficiently.

God does not grant the choosing of one's place in the body to the individual. If one were to have the privilege of selecting a particular place or position, that could prove to be dangerous. An individual may select a lesser place than what God

knows he is capable of doing or that He desires for him. On the other hand, one might select a position that is above his ability. For one to try to preach when God did not choose him would only bring hurt, not only to the individual but also to the work of the Lord.

God chooses capable individuals to be in the ministry, to preach His Word, and to pastor. One may not desire to have such great responsibility placed on him; however, to continue to wholly follow the Lord and to keep His smile of approval resting upon him, he must submit his will to God. Only He knows the ability that one has and his potential for being effective for service in His kingdom. God places each one in the body as it pleases Him, but if an individual refuses to accept his position, God will become displeased.

There is such a great need for more workers and helpers for Christ in each local congregation. God needs ministers and missionaries who will consecrate their lives to Him, and He also needs you and me to surrender our lives to be helpers in any position. Helpers may be called to work behind the scenes where their efforts might never be seen. They are what Paul called the "uncomely parts." These parts are always in place functioning and doing their jobs wholeheartedly before the Lord. God places the members in the body, but it is up to

each individual to get up, get out, and do that duty to please Him. Some may feel they need to have some special prodding from the Lord before they act. Dear one, you are robbing yourself and the Lord if you just sit around and wait. There is a great work to be done.

If you desire to work for the Lord but do not know for sure what your place is in the body, then you should go to God in prayer and let the Lord know that you are available and willing to be used wherever He sees fit. Also, you should consult your pastor, if you have one, and tell him of your desires. Remember, prayer is a necessity before you visit the sick or contact some soul who is discouraged. Working with those who have become discouraged requires God's guidance. There are many ways that God's people can be used. Praying for the burdens of others is one of the greatest needs. Working on the buildings, improving and keeping the grounds, and preparing food for the sick and those who have lost loved ones is so needful. There is a place for you in the body and a work for you to do. Regardless of how great or small the task you have been given, there are rich blessings to be received from the Lord.

Selected

*Half-heartedness consists of
serving God in such a way as
not to offend the devil.*



Coming
SOON

Spring Camp Meeting
June 18 - 25

We encourage you to make plans to attend our old-fashioned Spring Camp Meeting here at God's Acres.

Two services daily: 10:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

We have special services for children, youth services, morning prayer services, inspirational Gospel singing, Holy Ghost preaching, divine healing, and fellowship with the saints.

On the grounds we have a large air-conditioned dining hall that serves delicious, home-style cooked meals and fresh baked desserts, snack stand, dormitories, camp sites with full hook-up, laundry facilities, and so much more. Most important of all, you will hear anointed men of God preach the Truth.

We welcome everyone!

To make reservations, please contact:
Brother or Sister David Bush
1-740-345-1213