

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

Fall 2006 Camp Meeting Report

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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

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They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

Psalm 36:8

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

Isaiah 12:3

Spiritual Oasis

The Fall Camp Meeting was truly a spiritual oasis to the saints of God, for it was a time of drinking the cool water that comes down from above. This spiritual refreshment brings great delight and satisfaction to the soul. The world can only offer a spiritually dry and barren condition that leaves the soul thirsting for something greater, but the saints drink to their hearts delight of the good things of God. Over and over, our hearts were blessed as we enjoyed the gentle rain that came down to refresh the soul of man. Our hearts rejoiced and our eyes shed tears as the Lord worked throughout the meeting. We readily agree with the Psalmist as he said in our Scripture text, "They shall be abundantly satisfied. . . ."

It all began Sunday morning, August 6, as the host pastor, Brother Roger Decker, brought the opening service to order with prayer. He welcomed everyone to the services and encouraged each one to draw close to God. From that time forth, God just opened the windows of Heaven and poured out His blessings upon us, and we drank it in. The beautiful singing by the choir brought inspiration and encouragement to each heart as did the special

singers and the congregational songs. The congregation sang the song that begins, "We have met today on the old campground." There is no greater place to be than where the sweet presence of God is in the midst. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom and liberty to worship Him.

The prosperous outcome of any meeting is attributed to the effectual, fervent prayers of righteous men and women. Whenever the saints gather together and call mightily on the Lord for His help and guidance, you can be assured that wonderful things are going to happen. Prayer is such a vital part to the success of a worship service. The sweet incense rising before the Lord attracts His attention and causes Him to move in behalf of His people. The morning prayer service was well attended as God's people called on the Lord to send His presence into our midst.

Time after time, our cups were made to overflow as the Lord moved in and blessed us beyond measure. Being in the presence of God is wonderful and always brings an uplifting to the hearts of the saints of God. His visitation also brings an awakening to those who are not in right fellowship with Him. The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:17, ". . . where the Spirit of the

[continued on page 26]

*Job 20:5 That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?
Job 27:8 For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?*

The Hypocrite



Brother Roger L. Decker

Characteristics of a Hypocrite

Hypocrisy is the pretense of being something you are not. Most Bible concordances render the word *hypocrite* as "a pretender or an actor, one who plays the part, or an imitator." Hypocrisy has touched most areas of life. For example, it is in businesses and politics. Politics is full of hypocrisy. There is hypocrisy in morals. The worst of all of these is hypocrisy in religion. There are hypocrites who are pretending to be patriots and lovers of virtue. Whenever there is something genuine, there will be counterfeits.

Jesus said in Matthew 24:24, "For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Revelation 2:9 says, "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." In these verses of Scripture Jesus spoke of false christs, false prophets, and those who said they were Jews but were not. He said if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect.

There have been hypocrites in all periods of time. They pretend to be lovers of God but are not. They claim to love the saints, but the "love" they manifest is very strange indeed. The Bible speaks of them in Job's day, in Isaiah's day, and in Solomon's day. Jesus also had to deal with them. Once people get caught up in hypocrisy, it is very difficult to shake them loose. Even Jesus had to turn them over to woe.

Hypocrisy is a sin that is very critical, and once an individual gets caught up in it, he is almost to the place where his soul is sealed for eternity, because hypocrisy always

gets worse instead of getting better. What is the hope of the hypocrite? Verse 8 of our Scripture lesson says, "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" When this verse says, ". . . though he hath gained," it is not talking about gaining things from God, but the hypocrite thought he had gained influence, the things of this world, and social status. What does he gain when God takes away his soul? This is serious, dear one.

I want you to consider some characteristics of a hypocrite. These are right in the Word of God. *Hypocrisy* is the pretense of being what one really is not. It is the act of pretending to be a better person than one really is. Jesus dealt with it. It is highlighted in Matthew 6:1-8: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly [in other words, you do not have to worry about being rewarded of men; you will be rewarded openly by God Himself]."

"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. [What is their reward? It is being seen of men.] But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for

their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

Giving for the Wrong Reason

Deuteronomy 15:7-11 reads: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

"Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land."

God expected His people to be charitable; it was called the giving of alms. According to Deuteronomy 15:9, not doing so was considered sin. Giving is also expected of God's people in the New Testament. However, Jesus instructed us not to give as the hypocrites do. Though the giving of alms is necessary, you should not do it as the hypocrites do. They do it to be seen of men and to have the glory, the praise, and the honor of men. You should not give because you feel that you have to, because you feel a sense of duty, or for the prestige of having given. Your giving should stem from a heart of love. Jesus did not condemn their alms giving, but rather He condemned their motive, or the

reason behind their giving.

Matthew 6:3 says, "But when thou doest alms. . . ." The giving of alms is the Christian thing to do, but it is also a place where hypocrisy can get in when the heart is not in it.

Second Corinthians 9:7 says, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." To be a cheerful giver, the giving has to come from a heart of love. Hypocrites seek the glory of men, but the true Christian does all to the glory of God. He gives God the praise, and he is thankful that he can give. Jesus said when your giving is for the glory of men, you have your reward.

The Apostle Paul stated in Romans 12:8 (speaking of the different offices and gifts given), "Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." To do something with simplicity means to do it generously and not as one who is self-seeking, seeking one's own glory, or the glory of men.

Mark 12:41-44 reads: "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance [in other words, they cast in what they had leftover]; but she of her want [or of her poverty] did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

Praying Just to Be Seen of Men

Jesus went from the giving of alms to praying to be seen of men — praying while standing before a crowd in a synagogue or on a street corner. To the Jew, prayer was

to be given at nine o'clock, twelve o'clock, and three o'clock regardless of where that Jew was. In some foreign countries it is carried on the same way yet today. The Jew easily could have been at the entrance of the synagogue or on a crowded street corner. He could make sure that when the time of prayer came that he was on a crowded street corner or in a synagogue.

The Jew often made long, lengthy prayers, feeling that if he battered long enough at God's door, he would certainly get God's attention as well as the attention of the people. Jesus said these people loved to pray, but they loved to pray when they could be seen of men.

Again, Matthew 6:5 reads, "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men." Jesus said to pray in secret to God, and He will see it. Those hypocrites stood where men could see them with their hands stretched forth and their palms turned heavenward.

You cannot connect prayer with going to the house of worship. If that is the only time you pray, you are in a sad condition. First Timothy 2:8 says, "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." You do not always have to get down on your knees to pray. You can pray as you are driving a car, working around the house, cleaning the house, working on a hobby, or working in a factory, and God will reward you openly.

Jesus told us how *not* to pray. We are to pray to God, not to man. Dear one, you dare not pray to impress people; that is hypocritical. You do not have to impress God. He can see the heart. The thoughts of your mind and the desires of your heart should be to God.

What else did Jesus say *not* to do? You should not use vain repetitions when you pray. Again, Matthew 6:7 states, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the hea-

then do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." Vain repetition is much speaking without thought, or just rambling on with the thought that many words will get God's attention and will cause God to notice you. It is speaking words mechanically instead of from the heart, coming from habit, not the heart. One writer has well said this: "When a man begins to think more about *how* he is praying instead of *what* he is praying, then his prayer dies upon his lips."

Lastly, in dealing with prayer, you need to remember that God loves you. You do not have to coax, pester, or yell at God to get Him to answer your prayers. Why? Well, you are going before a God who wants to give more than you want to even ask. You are coming before a God who bids you to come.

Acts of Pride in the Heart

Jesus said in Matthew 6:16, "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." What was their reward? Jesus was not condemning fasting, but rather He was condemning fasting as a deliberate demonstration before men as a sign of spirituality. If you are fasting to show others how spiritual you are, then you are fasting for the wrong reason.

What did the hypocrites do? They disfigured their faces and were of a sad countenance so that they might appear to men to fast. When others looked upon them, they wanted them to say, "My, look at them. They really have a heavy burden." Jesus said not to do that. Why? It is a hypocritical act of pride in the heart.

Jesus mentioned something in this chapter that will help us. He mentioned the words "in secret" three times. Why did He do that? God is the One who rewards us, not man. Man cannot do a thing for you;

it takes God. The best that man can do is to give you honor and praise and to applaud you. God can bless you. Man does not have to be brought into your giving, praying, and fasting. Man does not even have to know of your private devotions to God, but they will see a display of it when God blesses you openly. They will know that you have been with God. The Spirit of God witnesses and anoints an individual.

The hypocrite does things in the open to be seen of men, and he receives his reward of men. People can tell that one has been with Jesus without his blowing the trumpet. Many times he will cower down when it comes to personal evangelism. He will talk about himself, but he has a problem talking about the Lord. People perceived that Peter and John had been with Jesus when they saw their boldness in the midst of the hottest trials.

Hypocrites have a strong desire to have the approval of men. Sometimes when you meet a hypocrite, he will say, "Praise the Lord. Isn't Jesus good to us?" They will deceive you if you do not have good discernment. How can you perceive that they have not been with Jesus? How are they living? What kind of standard are they living? How much Truth are they obeying? How much are they standing on the Word of God?

You should not get carried away with people running around hollering, "Praise God, hallelujah! Isn't Jesus good?" Sometimes people say such things out of habit or to be accepted. They want you to think they are really spiritual. Sometimes they are the ones who sing the loudest or testify the loudest, but they do not have a secret prayer life with God. When an individual does not spend time in secret with God, then he wants to be rewarded of men and with men's applause.

If you do not spend time in secret with God, you will not have grace to stand. Men cannot see you when you spend time in secret with God, but God sees you. If you do

not spend time in secret with God, you will be hunting for praise in the open, and your praise will come of men, not of God.

Hypocritical Judgment

What is another characteristic of a hypocrite? Many times a hypocrite is judgmental. Jesus said in Matthew 7:1-5: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

In this chapter Jesus was not talking about judging righteously, but rather He was speaking of hypocritical judgment. Sometimes people put judgment on the leaders of a congregation. They will put judgment on the Sunday school teachers, the song leaders, and the ministry, yet they are guilty of terrible things in their own lives. They cannot help their brother with the little thing in his life that may be hindering him, because they are not there to help him. Also, they cannot help because they have greater things in their own lives. If your brother has some problems, you ought to reach out and be out there to help him. You both have the same Father, and a family wants to help one another. If he has not gone out into open sin, you should be there to help him, lift him up, and encourage him. You should not put judgment on him and try to shove him down further.

When Peter was walking on the water and got his eyes off Jesus, he began to sink, and immediately Jesus' hand went out to help him. You should help your brother and your sister. They are in the same

kingdom that you are in, they are having some of the same battles you are having, and they are fighting the same devil you are fighting. You should reach out your hand and help lift them up before they go under or give up completely.

If you are struggling, do not give up and quit. I would much rather struggle and attempt to serve God than to give up completely and go out and struggle in the world. Do not quit serving God because you are struggling. Everyone has had struggles in the Christian life. You should not quit and go outside of where you can receive help. There is no help out in the world. If you get any help, it will be through Jesus Christ. If the devil has knocked you down a few times, you need to get up and go again. If you know a good spiritual brother or sister, you can ask that person to pray for you.

As saints, we can help one another through battles. We have a common salvation, and we all are alike. We all have human desires and passions just as Elijah did. We all have to battle the same thoughts. The devil works on me just as he works on you. We should help one another as children of God. We all have weak places in our lives.

Are you in a struggle? What do you do with those weak places? You should take them to God in prayer. That is the reason you do it in secret, and God will reward you openly. He will give you victory over it. Man cannot give you victory, but God can. If you want the glory of man, there is no victory. On the other hand, when you have the glory of God, there is victory. We each need to reach out to our brothers and sisters.

There is nothing worse than church members squabbling amongst themselves. We all are serving the same God, fighting the same devil, traveling the same road to Heaven. You should not put judgment on your brother. Why? You have a beam in your own eye when you do, and you are trying to cast a little thing out of another person's

eye. What does the Bible say? "Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans 12:19). You should not try to take vengeance out of the hand of God and put it in your own hands. There is no sense in your trying to go after someone with vengeance. If you do, you are in worse shape than the one you are going after. You need to stay where you can help others.

Some people run around casting judgment when they, of all people, are not in the condition to judge righteously. Romans 2:1-3 reads: "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Remember this: when your finger goes out, there are more fingers coming back at you. Jesus is not against being able to judge, but rather not judging righteously.

Jesus said in Matthew 23:25-26: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also." This chapter is filled with nothing but judgment all the way through. Jesus used the word *woe* eight times in this chapter. The chapter is filled with judgment against hypocrites.

Throughout Matthew, Chapter 23, Jesus was dealing with religious people who were sticklers for keeping the outside clean, and that is necessary. However, they left the inside dirty. If you are going to clean up your life, you should clean up the inside as well as the outside.

Jesus said the scribes and the Pharisees were full of extortion and excess. What does that mean? They

were full of greed and self-indulgence. He said those things come out of the heart. Today some people walk around with the outside looking right, but their hearts are not right. They appear unto men as righteous, but they are not right inwardly. The Bible says in Matthew 23:27-28: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [How would you like Jesus to come in on Sunday and preach to you? That was quite a message, wasn't it? Some people get upset when a pastor even mentions the word hypocrite today.] for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." What a terrible charge!

Inside a tomb are the remains of death, and inside those whited sepulchres there was no life. They appeared beautiful to men, but there was no room for righteousness because they were already full of hypocrisy and iniquity. You may ask, "Does a hypocrite have any hope?" There is no hope for him as long as he remains a hypocrite, or a pretender, because he lives in a world of make-believe.

Our Scripture text says in verse 8, "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" There is no hope for an individual who is a hypocrite if he is willing to stay a hypocrite. He is not going to change when God takes away his soul. There is no chance after death; then it is all over, and there is no hope. What is his hope? His hope is when God reaches in and takes away his soul. That is very strong, isn't it?

Where is the old-fashioned fear of God with people today? Some people play religion and do just about anything they want to do, yet they believe that God will pat them on the back. There is no hope when God reaches in and takes away an individual's soul. There is no purgatory or second chance; there is no

crying out for mercy. The hypocrite is sealed as long as he still stays a hypocrite. Though he gains the approval of men, he does not have the approval of God. God never gave anyone the right to go out and attack his brother or sister. Why? "Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord." He knows how to give it out. We do not know how to give it out. God never gave a badge to them to go clean up the church. That is the reason we have pastors, evangelists, and teachers who preach the Word of God, and God's Holy Spirit brings people to the Word of God.

There is no hope for the hypocrite until he sees his need of repentance and ceases to be a hypocrite. When he or she does that, the church will be right there to help that person. The church will not condemn that individual or put him down. Why? They could be in that condition. There is no hope until the hypocrite sees his need of repentance and ceases to be an actor. He must no longer be a pretender. He must come clean. I do not want to appear to men to be righteous; I want to *be* righteous.

When a person ceases to be an actor, or a pretender, God will be right there for him, and He will receive him to Himself. He will be so

glad in the day of the final judgment that he ceased to be a pretender and got cleaned up on the inside.

This life is very short. Oh, I know some people have longevity of life. Some live to be one hundred years of age, but what is that compared to eternity? If you are going to live that long, why not live right? The more you live right, the more you are storing up treasures in Heaven. Why play with religion? Why not do what it really takes to live for God?

What is the hope of a hypocrite, though he has gained, when God calls him home? That is sad. You can pray all you want for your loved ones, but if they are playing the role of the hypocrite, they are going to appear naked, spiritually speaking, before God. They have been appearing before men, but they will have to appear before God, and the inside is going to be dirty throughout eternity.

If you have a need, the message was not sent to condemn you or to put you down, but it was sent to help you. It is the washing of water by the Word. If hypocrisy is working in your life, God wants to help you.

(Cassette C-4205E)

"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits. Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established. The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished. By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil."

Proverbs 16:2-6

Ecclesiastes 6:1 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men:

2 A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease.

The Evil Diseases



Brother David Watson

The Security of God

The words of our Scripture text were written by King Solomon, who possessed great knowledge and wisdom that God had given him. During his reign, he judged many cases that people brought before him. He had occasion to see and understand much as he watched men and women maneuver through life. He realized that people love to receive blessings, but too often they do not love the Blessor. We need to love the Blessor and use the blessings He has given us for His glory.

Solomon spoke of those to whom God had greatly blessed with wealth, riches, and honor so that their hearts wanted nothing. Many

times people allow their hearts to be turned away from God as they prosper and are blessed materially in this life. He called this an evil disease. One would think that they would appreciate the blessings that God has given them and show the Lord that they enjoy what He has done for them. Unfortunately, it seems that they turn for worse instead of better.

I want to use the Scripture text as it pertains to the spiritual realm. The Laodicean church age, as described in Revelation 3:14-16, was found in a lukewarm condition spiritually. They were neither cold nor hot; therefore, God said He would spew them out of His mouth. They said they were rich and needed nothing, but Jesus said in verse 17

they were poor and blind and naked. Many times folks forget what their souls need and get caught up in taking care of their surroundings.

The Prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 5:20, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" Sometimes surroundings look good, but they cannot satisfy the heart. The heart needs to be satisfied, and the only place it can find rest is in the security of God. The soul cannot find rest in financial security. That is temporary and will soon pass away. You were placed upon this earth for only a short time. This world is merely a dressing room for eternity, to enable you to get ready for your long,

eternal home.

If you are not careful, you will allow temporal things to mean more to you than your eternity-bound soul. The soul needs to secure itself in God's salvation and in His joy and peace and righteousness. God wants you to be happy in this world. He created you for His glory and honor. He has given you everything you need.

Giving Heed to Satan

When I see broken homes and things going wrong, I wonder what evil disease has gotten hold of that family. In Genesis, Chapter 3, you can read that Satan talked to Eve. Verse 7 says, "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." Verse 14 reads, "And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."

Bible students know that God created a wonderful place for Adam and Eve to live. He prepared a beautiful garden, and He put in that garden everything necessary for their well being. It was complete and met every need they had. I believe that the souls of Adam and Eve were completely satisfied in that home, but the devil came in the form of a serpent and spoke to Eve about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was not an ordinary tree.

Ecclesiastes lets you know that when knowledge increases, then sorrow increases. When Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of that tree, spiritual death came. They lost their home and were driven from the garden.

Many times people have a secure, happy home, a good family, and are blessed with wealth and good health, but then the devil comes along and plants evil in their minds, and they forget the needs of

their souls. For example, the husband may step out on the wife or the wife may step out on the husband. Next, the home breaks up, leaving brokenhearted little children.

In our world today the courts are filled with divorce cases, and schools have difficulty finding out who the real grandparents are because of the confusion and divisions from broken marriages and remarriages. That kind of life can never satisfy the soul. The soul needs God. The best place to turn is to Jesus Christ. The best place to take the children is to Jesus Christ. If you are not a churchgoing person, you ought to be. You need to go to a church where old-time Truth is preached so that you can get what your soul needs. It is not the flesh that you need to satisfy so much. The soul stands in need of help from God.

Today courtrooms are filled with cases where judges and magistrates have to make decisions about where to place little children to give them security. It is all due to sin in the world, friend. Do not think that situation will get better; it will get worse. Satan is on the rampage, and breaking up your home is not going to heal your problem. The older you get, the more you will realize the mistake you made, and one day there will be a day of reckoning. You will have to face the Judgment of God and give an account for how you have lived in this world. You may fool the preacher, but you will never fool the all-seeing eye of God. He is watching you.

Some may think the pasture looks greener on the other side of the fence. Many jump the fence, and after they get across, they wish they were back home. Some wives have left home even though their husbands made good money, paid their bills, had fine homes, and good cars. The wives went out, and the next thing they knew, they were out on the streets with no money and no one to turn to. Sin mistreated them. I want you to know that sin is an evil disease. If you do not turn away

from sin, it will surely destroy you. We are living in a world that has many evil diseases.

Man-Made Religion

In Genesis 3:14 God said to the serpent that beguiled Eve, "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field." This portion of the Scripture helps us to see there is a spirit out there that is of a low, beastly nature. It is a heathen spirit, and it appears in beastly forms.

This spirit is found in the knowledge of a tree in Daniel 4:13-14, which states: "I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven; He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches."

In this tree all the beasts of the field came, and the fowls of the air lodged there. There is no real soul satisfaction in man-made religion. Those beasts represent men and women under Babylon's teachings. God had shown Daniel this vision, and the meaning of the vision was to be made known to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon.

The people under his rule represented a type of ones resting under his shadow and under the fruits of his doings, but God said to cut it down and drive the people out of there. You see, there is a deception in sin that takes hold of people. Many people are living under a shade-tree religion, with a knowledge of the tree, and their souls are not satisfied. An evil disease has gotten hold of them. They may enjoy the wealth and the honor of it, but they do not have their souls admonished and fed on the blessed Truth of God's eternal Word. You see, you cannot get God's blessings just anywhere.

Some people are more interested in the honor and the wealth of their religion than in what their souls

really need. They brag and boast about it and give it a name of their choosing, and they desire to build it up. They are like the Laodicean church spoken of in Revelation 3:14. They are lukewarm and think they have need of nothing, yet their souls are miserable, poor, and blind.

Old-time salvation will bring you peace with God and peace with one another. It will cause you to love one another and to tear down the walls of division that people have built up. It will bring us all together in unity.

Jesus went to the Cross of Calvary and destroyed the enemies of the Cross. The Jews and the Gentiles could not worship together until God pulled down the middle wall of partition. Every Jew who put away the old ceremonies and rites and every Gentile who did the same and got old-time salvation became a spiritual Jew. Then they all came together in the oneness of God and walked together in the Truth of His Word.

The Bottomless Pit

Revelation 9:1 states, "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit." In John's vision he saw the power of evil being released. (The stars in Revelation 1:20 represent the ministry that God holds in His hand.) The star that John saw fall from heaven represents a fallen ministry used by Satan to release the evil diseases and the powers of hell on the souls of men and women. If you are truly saved and enjoying the blessings of God, the devil is using every tool he can to bind your soul. An evil disease in our world, under the guise of religion, is deceiving souls by the thousands. It is bringing spiritual death to souls. They have no joy, no peace, and no righteousness with God.

Verse 2 continues, "And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the

smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit." The smoke represents the offering up of prayer or praise. The smoke coming from the bottomless pit (a place with no foundation) darkens the eyes and the spirit. It blinds the spiritual eyes so that they cannot see the good things of God. It leads souls into the place of the beast. In such a state they may possess wealth and honor, yet they do not have soul satisfaction.

I would rather have my soul satisfied than to have worldly honors. Many people will pat you on the back and give you honor and set you in a high position among themselves if you endorse them and go along with their false teachings. I would rather have old-time salvation in my heart and be right with God than to have the honor of the whole world. There is an evil disease in the world. People get in dark places and cannot see the light. How can so many people who are well educated and who hold high leadership positions in our world call one man "Holy Father?"

The bottomless pit has no biblical foundation. Men wrest the Scriptures to their own damnation. The soul is not satisfied in such conditions, and then when such a person comes close to death, he is afraid to die. On the other hand, the saint of God who has things fixed in his heart with God is like the Apostle Paul. He was in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ or to remain here. Salvation will satisfy your soul.

The Deception of False Teachings

Revelation 9:3 reads, "And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power." The Prophet Nahum wrote about locusts on the earth. He penned in Nahum 3:17, "They crowned are as the locusts . . . which camp in the hedges in a cold day, but when the sun ariseth they flee

away. . . ." If they were satisfied, they would not have to flee. The sun represents God. Psalm 84:11 tells us, "For the LORD God is a sun and shield . . . [He] will give grace and glory. . . ."

In Revelation, Chapter 12, you can read about the woman clothed with the sun. The light of God's Word exposes the darkness and the deception of false teachings. The locust thrives in darkness, and it devours and destroys. On the other hand, whenever the light of Truth comes, he flees. You see, truth has the devil on the run, but he does not want to confess it. That is the reason some people are afraid to go where Truth is preached. They have a fear within them, and they like to hide in the hedge when Truth is going forth. The evil disease of sin keeps them on the run, and their souls are never satisfied.

I love the old song entitled "My Soul Is Satisfied." Can you say that your soul is satisfied? I do not want to be like the locust, living in darkness and fleeing every time Truth is declared. I have seen people rejoice and feel good when others patted them on the back, but then I have seen the same people on the run when Truth was preached. I said to myself, "They are just as the locust." I believe in shouting praises to God, but people should rejoice in the Truth. They should not shout only because they have worked up emotions. It takes old-time salvation to cause you to rejoice and shout praises to God. I thank God for Truth! It will satisfy the longing soul.

Revelation 9:4-5 continues: "And it was commanded them [the locusts] that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man." They were to hurt only the men who

did not have the seal of God in their foreheads.

In Ephesians 4:30 Paul spoke of being sealed when he said, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." In Revelation, Chapter 5, John tells of a Book that is sealed with seven seals. Under the seal of the Holy Ghost is that which will satisfy the longing soul. That is the reason the seal needs to be opened and loosed, so that men can look therein and see what they need to satisfy their souls. Without the seal of the Holy Spirit you are not God's child. You may shout praises, dress modestly, and do many good works, but without the Holy Ghost you cannot prove that you are a child of God. It takes the power of God to show the world that you are a Christian.

Living on Easy Street

In Revelation 9:4 the locusts were charged not to hurt the grass. Isaiah 40:6 says that "all flesh is grass." Those locusts were given a command not to hurt the grass or any green thing, referring to the godly, but "only those men which have not the seal of God in their forehead." Many people want to hear smooth things. Israel of old did not want to hear the Truth. In Isaiah 30:10 they said to the Prophet Isaiah, "Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits."

One who prophesies smooth things works evil. Many people are intrigued by their smooth talk. They like to live on "Easy Street." Amos 6:4-5 reads: "That lie upon beds of ivory . . . and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David." They did not want the flesh to be troubled. If the only honor you have is fleshly honor, you need to destroy it, because it will make you lean in your soul. You need old-time salvation that will

satisfy the longing soul.

Walking after the flesh is an evil disease. God said if you live after the flesh, you will die, spiritually speaking. If you will eat the bread of life and drink the blood, Jesus said you would have eternal life.

Jeremiah 17:13 tells of those who forsook God: ". . . they that depart from me [the Lord] shall be written in the earth. . . ." No matter which church membership book your name is written in, if your heart is not right with God, you have an evil disease. You need salvation, and then your name will be written in God's Book. Therefore, if it is in God's Book, you will not need it in man's book. If man writes it in a book, he can remove it.

There is an earthly religion. Revelation 13:11 foretold of its coming. In John's vision he "beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." He was in the form of a lamb, and he looked like true religion to the people. He went forth in that way for a little while, but soon he began to speak as a dragon. It could not satisfy the heart of man. It is an evil disease that is widespread in the world.

Earthly religion cannot get you to Heaven. You might have heard people say, "It was good enough for Mom and Dad, and it is good enough for me." Let us leave Dad and Mom where they were. They might have walked in all the light that they had in their day. They might have done some things in their day that you and I cannot do in this day. In Ephesians 3:4-5 Paul explained to the church that some things were understood then that were not understood in prior times.

In Zechariah 14:7 Zechariah wrote, ". . . but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." Light brings understanding. The soul is truly satisfied when it gets good understanding of Jesus Christ, His precious Word, His kingdom, and His church. Earthly religion cannot satisfy.

The Little Foxes Spoil the Vines

In Luke 15:11-32 Jesus told of the prodigal son who desired to have his portion of goods, and he left his father's house. Every Bible student knows that father's house represents the church. An evil disease got hold of the younger son and plagued him. Friend, sin will plague you.

Song of Solomon 2:15 states, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." Often the little evils get hold of people and begin to hinder their souls and take them away from Father's house. Had the prodigal son returned the first night, he would not have lost so much.

I know what it is to be in a backslidden condition. I have tried both sides of life. When I walked away from God I told myself that I would not forget the Scriptures that I knew, but the further I roamed, the less I remembered about God. Friend, if you backslide, you will lose what you had with God. You will lose it all. The evil disease will take you down and leave your soul empty.

The prodigal son spent all he had, and there arose a famine in the land, so he went down into another country. No one knew him there. That is the way sin is. You will be among strangers out in the world. They may show you the highlights of the world, but the evil disease of sin will leave the soul empty and dissatisfied. The prodigal son joined himself to a stranger, and then he still was not satisfied. (You may join some things and yet find your soul longing, because it is still empty and dissatisfied.) One day he remembered that at his father's house even the servants had plenty to eat. In essence, he said to his soul, "I'll arise and go home to my father."

Jesus said in Matthew 5:5-6: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

The prodigal son had a burning

desire to go back home, and he returned. When his father saw him coming, he ran to meet him and told the servants to bring the best robe and put a ring on his hand. They put shoes on his feet and welcomed him back to his father's house. In so many words, the father said, "This is my son. He was lost, but now he is found. He was dead, but now he is alive." Thank God, the best place for

the soul is at Father's house.

Dear one, if you are away from God, sin is working on you. Perhaps you are in a backslidden condition and you have a broken home. Maybe you have turned to alcohol or drugs. You may be in such a state with sin that you look to a counselor to try to subdue the pressure and the heartache you are going through. The best thing you can do is turn to

God. You need to get out of the devil's territory and come to the fountain of God. An evil disease is working in your soul. If you do not know Jesus, you need Him. Won't you come to Him? He wants to help you and bless you.

(Cassette C-5167E)

When a Great Big Smile Won

Mr. R. Forrest was to hold a meeting in a large city and had been requested to send a photograph of himself for advertising purposes. Since he had an aversion to pictures and did not send one, the students in the school where he taught connived to get one of him. Someone told a joke, and Mr. Forrest leaned back and laughed with his mouth wide open. The snapshot was taken and then sent to where Mr. Forrest was to hold services.

The first thing Mr. Forrest saw when he got off the train was a large poster with that great, big mouth staring him in the face! Small cards to large posters all pictured the same big smiling mouth. He was almost angry. Here they had gotten the most ridiculous looking picture one could imagine, with a mouth wide open.

Mr. Forrest started down the street with his suitcase. A drunken man stumbled up to him and said, "Just a minute, Buddy. I know you."

Mr. Forrest said, "What do you mean? This is the first time I have ever been in this town."

"Ah, but I know you. Say, I got you right here in my pocket." He pulled out one of

those pictures and said, "Look at it." Then he said, "Mister, I don't know much about you, but I like the way you smile. You know, Mister, if you could tell me how to smile like that, I'd give you everything I've got in the world."

Mr. Forrest then said, "All right, I will tell you how you can smile like that, but you won't have to give me anything. You come to the meeting tonight, and you be on the front seat. I'll tell you how to smile like that."

"I'll be right there," he said, and he was! Mr. Forrest preached his sermon and before he got through, he picked up that card, told of the incident, walked down to the front, took that drunkard by the hand, and told him publicly how he could smile, with a new heart and a new life. The drunkard rose to his feet, went to the altar, and gave his heart to Christ.

Fifteen years passed. Mr. Forrest went back to that city. It was announced that he would be there. When he stepped off the train, a fine-looking fellow stepped forward and said, "Mr. Forrest, I am glad to see you again."

He said, "Again? I have

never seen you before."

Oh, yes, you remember the drunkard whom you taught to smile?"

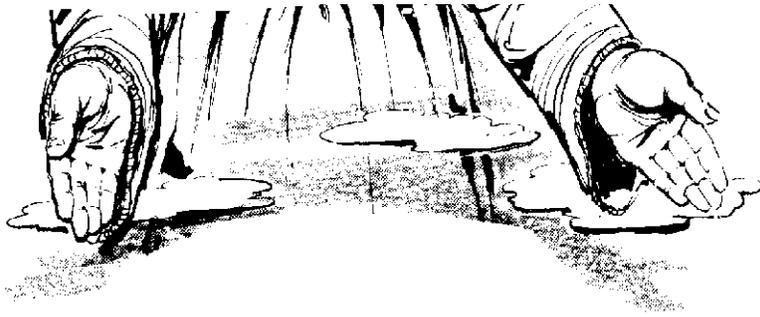
"Why certainly, but that wasn't you."

"No, I know I am not the same, but I am the same man, nevertheless; the same body but a new heart. You've got to come out to my house. I came down here to get first claim on you."

As Mr. Forrest walked into his living room, there on the mantle, framed, was one of those pictures. Fifteen years old—there it was—great, big, open-mouthed, wide smile. Tears coursed down the man's cheeks as he said, "Mr. Forrest, I can smile like that now. I have been able to smile like that for fifteen years. God has blessed me, my family, and my business. I have a smile that will never disappear. Praise God!"

That, my friend, is salvation—salvation that results in the absolute revolutionizing of a life.

Selected



"His Grace Is Sufficient"

When our daughter came home from college for the holidays, she was sick with an unknown illness. After thirteen days in a diagnostic hospital, the illness had been named, and she was released with the usual prescriptions and instructions. After three months in bed, she was feeling better and could be up and about some.

The news of her illness spread and hundreds of people prayed for her. We learned of one couple in a distant state who had never seen her, yet fasted and prayed for her after one of our friends told them about her illness. We expected a miracle, but it did not happen.

The weeks turned into months. We talked, planned, and enjoyed each other's company. The cards and visits from a multitude of friends were encouraging, but I could see her losing ground all the time, but not losing faith. Once, after she had been sick for two years, she asked her daddy and me to come in to talk. She said, "Mother and Daddy, I want to talk to you. I want you to know how much I appreciate all you have done for me these two years. I'm sorry I've been such a burden." Here we both interrupted her to say she had been no burden—we had thoroughly enjoyed having her home with us.

She went on, "Even though I have been able to care for myself much of the time, I know I've been a worry to you. I don't know why the

Lord hasn't healed me; that is not for me to question, but I thank Him for giving me such a good home and for you. You see, if this had not happened—if I had not gotten sick, I would have left college as soon as I graduated and gone right on out into my life's work and missed all these good times we have had together the past two years. I will probably be able to go back to school in another year and may go on the mission field some day. There I may be called upon to give my life, or may take sick and not be able to return to you. If that should happen, I will look back on these two years as the happiest years of my life. I love you better than you will ever know, and I want you to know how much you mean to me."

After two years and eight months, she closed her eyes in a coma, never to awaken. For four days I stood by her bed praying for a miracle. Once, while watching her struggle with death, watching her fight to stay with us, I cried out to God, "O God, how do You expect me to take this? I can't let her go. I can't live without her. What more can I do? Please give me something to hang on to!" I thought of Romans 8:28, which says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. . . ."

I protested, "Lord, that Scripture won't do. I cannot stand on that. I can't see how any good can possibly come from her dying. Give me

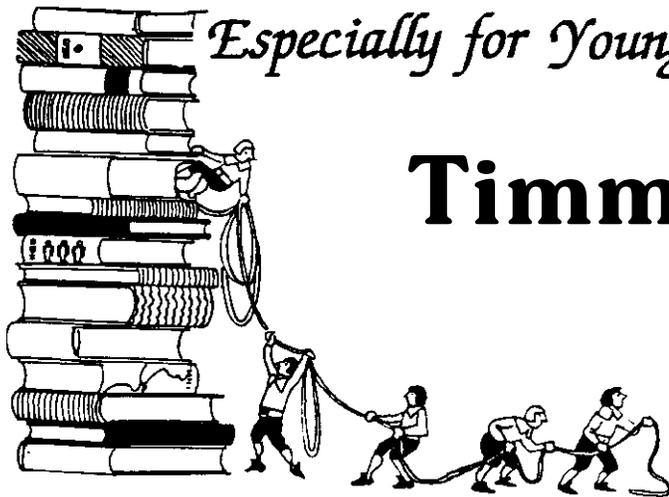
another one, God. Help me!" Then I remembered the verse that says, "His grace is sufficient." The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, explained it to me: The Scripture does not say *what* His grace is sufficient for. If it had named one particular thing, it would have limited the sufficiency to that one thing. Since no one thing or any specific number of things is mentioned, it must mean that God's grace is sufficient for everything. The promise covered my grief as well as every other trial I had or ever would have. I said, "Thank You, Lord. I can stand on that, if You will just keep reminding me."

It was still a devastating blow when our little princess left us. To learn to live again was next to impossible for me. I was so depressed that a few times I felt like the sun was mocking me when it covered the world with sunshine. If I had turned loose of God for one brief moment, I am sure I would have slipped past the point of no return. Had I been unable to read God's Word and other good books, I could not have made it. It was through persistent effort to find comfort and persistent faith in an all-wise God that I fought my way back to a world of happiness, laughter, and music.

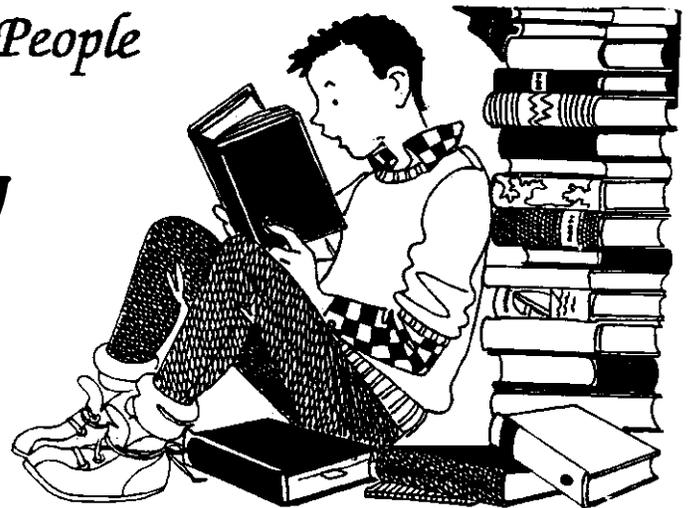
That battle was not easy. My daughter and I had had a very close relationship. She was everything I could possibly want in a daughter: intellectual, talented, a dedicated Christian, and a pleasing personality. Why did I have to give her up? Everywhere I turned I was reminded of her music. At church we sang songs, and she and I played together on the piano or organ. Even a radio program might bring a reminder of the music we shared at the piano or organ. There were all the other familiar reminders of my loss too, along with the persistent question: "Why? Why could she not live to do the great work she had prepared herself to do? Where did I fail? I could not force God to heal her. The doctors had done all they

[continued on page 25]

Especially for Young People



Timmy



Matthew 16:24-26 reads: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

This story is about a little boy named Timmy who had a wonderful life. He had everything a little boy could ever want. He had a mother and father who loved him and provided his every need. They often gave him toys and gifts and took him on surprise trips to far and exciting places. He also had an older sister who played with him often, read him stories, and really loved him.

Timmy lived in a big house in one of the nicer neighborhoods in town. He had a sandbox in his big backyard and a big, old tire swing that he loved to swing in and see how high he could go—up, up, into the tree branches like a little bird. He also liked to ride his new bicycle up and down the sidewalk all day, for he had the fastest and the best bicycle in the neighborhood.

All of Timmy's friends wanted to ride his bicycle too. All his friends liked to play in his sandbox because it was, after all, bigger, fuller, and cleaner than anyone else's. Timmy's friends loved to come and play in his yard because it was so big. It seemed as if one could run around in it all day and never get bored. Then, of course, all the other little boys liked to come to Timmy's house to play because his mother always made the yummiest cookies in the winter and handed out plenty of cold popsicles on those hot summer days.

So, you see, Timmy really did have a wonderful life, full of all the things one could wish for. But lately, he had become bored. Yes, Timmy was proud to have the best of everything, but what he wanted was something new, something that no one else had. His birthday was coming soon, so he knew he would get to pick out something at the big store downtown. However, that was the store where everyone shopped. He was almost

sure that they would not have anything unique. After all, didn't he have most everything they had to offer? He already had the best bicycle, a new sled, the latest in roller blades and ice skates, a remote control truck and airplane, a whole set of army men with all the accessories, the special edition of building blocks, board games galore, and all the electronic hand games you could imagine. What could he possibly find to ask for this year for his birthday? He was sure he would never be satisfied with the same old stuff that he always got.

Timmy's birthday came, and his mother had a great big party. All his friends came, and they had the best time ever! He had all the cake and ice cream he could stand to eat. The games! Wow! There were so many games for the boys to play, and they all got prizes. Each of the boys left with a very nice party favor as a thank you for coming.

Timmy's party was the talk of all the little boys in town, but Timmy was not really happy. Oh, he thanked his mother for the wonderful party and thanked all his friends for their gifts, but he just did not see anything special in any of them that satisfied that craving for something new.

Later, Timmy's father came home and asked him how his party went. After Timmy told him who had come and told him about all the gifts he had received, Timmy's father told him he had bought him something special.

When Timmy's father was little, he had been given a small set of construction trucks. They were made of a sturdy metal, and he played with them in the dirt for hours. But he had always wished they were bigger and able to haul lots of dirt. After a few years, they were rusted, dented, and scratched, and he never was sure what had happened to them. What he bought for Timmy was a bigger and better set of the same heavy-duty construction trucks! Wow! It seemed to Timmy that they were almost as big as him! Just wait until all his friends saw his latest toys! He would be the envy of everyone!

The very next day Timmy got up early. He was so

excited and could not wait for everyone to see his trucks! When his friends came over, they were all ready to play with Timmy's new toys, and when he showed them the new trucks his father had bought him, they could not believe their eyes! Was Timmy ever lucky!

Of course, the first plan now was to take these trucks outside and see what they could do in the sandbox. Then Timmy remembered that his father said when he was little, he had always wanted bigger and better ones and that his eventually rusted and he didn't know what had happened to them. Surely Timmy was proud of these trucks, for they were bigger and better than his father's, but he did not want them to rust or get lost and forgotten because they were worn out. These trucks were grand! So Timmy told his friend that he did not want to take them out today. And, for fear that they might break them, or dent and scratch them, he suggested that they save the trucks for another day and play with all the other things he had received for his birthday.

Day after day, it was the same story. Timmy was so proud of his new construction trucks that he was afraid his friends would somehow ruin them. Thus, he continued to make many excuses to keep from playing with them. Eventually his friends stopped asking to play with the trucks, and without this constant reminder of them, Timmy seemed to think about them less and less. Now, instead of being stored on the back porch, they were put out in the garage where it was damp, and they were hardly ever noticed.

As the years went by and Timmy grew older, he forgot about those trucks in the garage. Occasionally his mother would suggest that they give them to some little boy who would play with them, but Timmy still loved them and refused to give them up.

Timmy's father was transferred to another job in a far away city, so his family was going to move. How sad they all were at first to have to leave this wonderful home where they had been happy for so many years. And how scary to move somewhere new and start all over in a strange place without all their friends. The family started packing all their clothes and furniture,

and the moving vans came to take all their belongings to their new home.

Soon they had the whole house packed, and the moving vans were nearly full. The last things that had to be loaded were all the things in the garage. That is where Timmy found his precious construction trucks—all rusted, dented, and scratched. It seemed that they could not be that same shiny new set he remembered getting not so long ago. How he wanted to take them with him as a special memory of his childhood, for he had loved them so much.

Then Timmy realized that he had no memories of playing with them except for the first day he received them. There were no hours of playing with them with his friends. There were no pictures of all the things they could have built. Now they were useless, with little or no worth, even to a poor boy who had no toys. Sadly, Timmy set each truck on the pile of stuff they were leaving behind for the trash collectors. He realized that by saving those trucks when he was little, he had lost a lifetime of valuable memories. What was once a very precious gift had never been used and now had no worth.

This is how some people live their lives. They are given a wonderful life with good health, family, and friends. They are blessed with talents, all from God, but so many keep those things for themselves. They live their lives for self. They smoke, drink alcohol, use drugs, and waste their health. They forget their friends and family and either take them for granted or push them aside in pursuit of their own pleasures in life. How many have taken their God-given talents and used them for fortune and fame!

Dear one, there will be a time when you will be going away to a new home. Will you be able to take with you a life full of values, a life lived for the Lord, and time spent for Him? Or will you also leave all you ever valued in a "pile of trash" here on this earth? Consider your ways, and give your life to the Lord every day.

Rachel Fowler

*Life with Christ is an endless hope;
life without Christ is a hopeless end.*

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

27 He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes

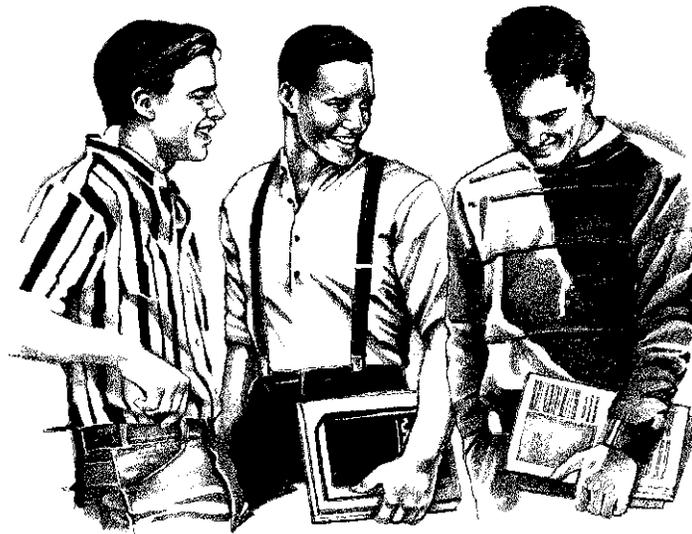
shall have many a curse.

28 When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.

Proverbs 29:1 He, that being often

reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

The Danger of Pushing God Too Far



Brother Esau Brooks

"Love Not the World"

It is dangerous to set yourself on a course that keeps you pushing God off and away from your life. Man was not made to serve the devil; he was made to serve the Lord. Many people look at this business of serving God as if it were a waste of time. No, friend, it is not a waste of time. It is the best investment you can make of your life.

Divine inspiration is letting you know that to be often reproved is to harden your heart. God does not chastise people willingly. As far as He is concerned, He wants each of us to be holy, obedient, and set on

pleasing Him. Many times I have wished within my heart that there was really something one individual could do to cause every heart to turn toward God. Many people obstinately refuse to turn to God. The sad part of it is, they are not going to fully realize the privilege afforded them by having been exposed to the Gospel until it is too late.

Those who reject their opportunity to serve God are not making their lives better, but they are making their lives worse. Serving God is not just make believe; it is real! Sinner friend, you need to become awakened to how unfortunate it is that you have not yielded yourself to the service of God.

There is not much good left in this world. Thank God for what good is left, but I remember as a boy that there were more God-fearing people than what there seems to be today. As you look around, you may get the impression that we have many blessings to enjoy, but they are through the mercies of God. In Proverbs 28:26 the wise man said, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." You can bank on that; it is a fact. We need to shake loose from the influence the world is having on us. People are loving this world too much. Too many people are allowing themselves to be influenced by the world and its ways and the things of the world, in spite of the

fact that the Bible commands us not to love the world, because the love of the Father is not in one who loves the world.

I am carried away in serving God. That is all I think about. That is the only thing I spend my life in doing. I am glad for the day God saw fit to reveal Himself to me. The great Apostle Paul said when the time came for God, who separated him from his mother's womb, to reveal His Son to him, it was a glorious experience! As you face your trials and as I face mine, let us be encouraged and keep looking up, because this life will soon be over. Everything will be done but the shouting when we get home.

Rebelling Against the Word of God

The Book of Proverbs was supposed to have been written by the wise man, Solomon, giving us warning from God: "He, that being often reproved. . . ." I know that many people resent being reproved. Often it seems that people do not want straight, down-to-earth preaching anymore. They want the preachers to candy coat it, but that has never helped man.

Many times as I have read the epistles written by the Apostle Paul and thought about the times Paul said "I never cease to pray for you," I have said, "You know, we can do better." Things are shaping up really bad. There are those who want to destroy America. What would we have done without God in America? Regardless of what few things are wrong about America, there is much good that we can thank God for, such as the privilege to have the Gospel preached and the privilege to rejoice in the God of our salvation. Do you know how many countries today cannot do that? They are living miserably.

I beg you to fulfill the position that God has called you to fill with joy. There is much ungratefulness, but in spite of it, had Jesus only looked on the way He was being

treated, He might not have died for us; but He could say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He saw something more than is ordinarily being seen today.

God is saying, "Beware of pushing My mercies too far from you." Every warning from God is intended to be productive. When the writer was speaking of hardening one's heart, or neck, against God, he was letting us know that to do so is to invite disaster. Many people have found, to their bitter regret and sorrow, that to reject God in one's life is not a good thing.

Young person, your life needs to be spent living for God. I beg of you to remember your Creator in the days of your youth. Do not wait until your life is about gone, but turn your heart and your soul toward God. He has set a limit on how far people can go on in wickedness. In Matthew 23:31-32 we read: "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers."

There are enough bad people out there that we do not need them around the church. If you are going to rebel against the Word of God, the church is not the place to come to do it. It is hard enough as it is to keep things going for God; therefore, we do not need any more hindrances to obstruct the way of God. If you have deliberately refused God and allowed rebellion to supercede gratefulness to God, that is not a good practice. Many have discovered this to their bitter regret. If you are not careful, the same will happen to you.

A Space of Time to Repent

I want you to understand that the Gospel was not intended to be trampled underfoot. It was not intended to be rejected and abused by feeble man. It was given to be obeyed. John said in Revelation 2:21-22: "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented

not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds." This is part of a message that God gave John to one of the seven churches on record in the Book of the Revelation, and it reaches down to us today. People need to start dealing with this thing called sin. It has become a little more subtle today than it used to be, yet wickedness is increasing at an alarming rate.

In many places people are turning their churches into theaters. They would rather show movies than preach the Gospel. Now, that may afford much diversion and much enjoyment, but it is not the cure that is needed for sin. Only one thing can cure sin: the blood of Jesus Christ. I thank God today that we have the opportunity of having that blood applied to our souls. Thank God, through obedience to the Gospel, many can yet experience the transforming power of the grace of God.

"And I gave her space to repent," Christ said. Is that not what He is doing with many people today? He is giving people a space of time to repent. What are you using that time for? Are you using the time to find more enjoyment for the flesh or for rebelling against God? Well, Christ said, "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds." Friend, God wants repentance; I mean heartfelt repentance. It is good to go to an altar to have the ministry pray for you, but what God actually wants is repentance and obedience to His Word.

Again, Proverbs 29:1 states, "He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." What did the wise man mean when he said "without remedy?" He meant there would be no remedy in the blood, no remedy in salvation. By your rejection, you can go beyond the reach of the salvation of God. If that has not happened to you

yet, you need to be aware that it *can* happen. It has happened to many others, and it will happen to you if you fail to repent. God is saying, "Do not continue to harden your heart against Me." You were born to serve the Lord. You were made to be God's child and to spend your life to the glory of God.

In those words, first, we see a merciful dealing portrayed: "He that being often reproofed." Second, we see a dreadful awakening: ". . . shall suddenly be destroyed." We see reproof and then destruction. Destruction has ever followed rejection of God. People are not going to get by today, even with all the technology that we have at our disposal, any more than the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Widespread Abominations

What seems to be utmost in people's minds anymore? It is same-sex marriage; that is ridiculous! It can bring no lasting joy, no lasting pleasure, and no lasting happiness; it can only bring swift destruction. Every now and then, we are being surprised where I live by hearing of gay cruise ship visits. That is terrible, ridiculous, and sad. Why would intelligent people fall for that? It is an abomination to God! That is not any way for a human being to spend his lifetime, especially being so dependent upon the mercies of God.

I thank God for the Church of God that still preaches against sin. God bless every minister who still has the courage to lift up his voice in crying out against sin. Sin has never been any good to man. It is a curse, and it brings destruction. Let us take the warning: "He, that being often reproofed. . . ." God is reproofing right now. It may not be pleasant or enjoyable, but it is needful. We need to be reproofed by God for things that are no good for us.

In our Scripture text we have a merciful dealing portrayed: "He, that being often reproofed. . . ." Every time the Gospel is preached,

God is sending reproof, yet people have the audacity to rebel against it. I thank God for His goodness and mercies that afford us the opportunity to be reproofed. We need more preaching against sin now than ever before.

Homosexuality and same-sex marriages are becoming more and more widespread. The worst part of it is, religious circles now are reaching out and covering and encouraging it. God wants you to know that it brings His wrath down upon any individuals who indulge in that kind of living, the same as it did to Sodom and Gomorrah and the antediluvian world.

It is good that God has not given up on people yet. How many years have you been presuming on the mercies and the goodness of God? Friend, you are too smart for that rubbish. You are too wise to allow yourself to get into such a practice. You see, it is a blessing for God to reprove you and to make you aware of His displeasure.

Remember, God is under no obligation to anyone to deal in mercy and love. It is Christ's mercy and love that cause Him to say, "Wait, Father; give them another chance." According to the Scriptures, God's mercy is under His own sovereign will. No one can actually justifiably go before God and demand His mercies. Paul stated in Romans 9:15, "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

Do you know what an insult to God it is for people to walk around and say that God calls homosexuals to the ministry. What kind of ministry is that but a ministry of destruction? You may say, "You need to consider that those poor people were born that way." No, sir! They were not born to be homosexuals any more than they were born to fear. They picked it up after they were born. God brought them into this life with greater expectation than that.

The Consequences for Failing to Obey

To be often reproofed is to be singled out by God and dealt with in this special way. When people are being reproofed, they are being singled out to be dealt with in mercy and compassion, yet men and women disregard that. Very few people are enjoying God's mercies because of these things. Everyone who has done so has been hanging under the threat of destruction.

Consider King Belshazzar in the Old Testament. He was doing all right with his functions. He did not have to meddle with God's vessels, but sometimes it just seems that man gets the feeling he cannot do enough wickedness. He just has to reach out and do something sensational. Belshazzar had his servants bring in the vessels of God to drink wine from them at this party. Not long after he started on that course, a hand appeared, writing on the wall, telling the king that he was weighed in the balance and found wanting and that God had numbered the days of his kingdom and finished it. That very night, Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was slain. God did not even wait until the next day; he was destroyed that night.

Those who fail to obey God will suffer the consequences. Friend, God is calling your hand. How many times has He dealt with you in the past in mercy, kindness, and love? Each time God sends His message and His mercies to you, it is very disappointing to Him when you harden your neck.

I want you to notice that the hardening of the neck, or the heart, against God is a deliberate act. To harden your heart means to continue as you are, just as if it does not even matter. Today many people are acting as if they are unconsciously doing it, and God is displeased. Friend, it is time to heed the reproof of God. One can become so accustomed to hardening his heart that he can do it and not even realize it. The church gives an altar call, a song is

sung, the pleas are made, and that person acts as if you are not even there. That is a shame! Therefore, God is saying, "You are not going to do this for as long as you think you are.

I have heard people say, "Everyone can't be a Christian." Why not? Everyone can be a sinner. If you can be a sinner, you can be saved and be a Christian. Holiness will keep you living holy. If you get the work of holiness performed in your

soul, you will not have to do it; He will do it for you. Then whenever the devil comes around to tempt you along those lines, you will begin to look deeper, and there will come the realization, "This is not right. I ought to be doing better."

What is God's judgment for hardening your heart against Him? The judgment promised is that individual "shall suddenly be destroyed." People in America need to wake up to the goodness of God. Let

us do what we can to arrest these conditions that are becoming so widespread in our time. Do not get angry when God reproves you for your wrongdoing and your wrong living. You ought to appreciate it and thank Him for it, and then turn and do better, for in so doing, you shall live and not perish. May God bless you.

(Cassette C-5611E)

AMERICA Bless God Again!

Many times we've prayed, "God bless America,"
But America has forgotten to bless God.
We have followed after pleasures,
And sought for worldly treasures,
Rather than seeking after the Lord.
We have seen sin abounding everywhere.
Do we even have a conscience anymore?
But now from across this land
It's time for everyone to take a stand.
It's time for America to bless God again!
From the mountains, to the prairies,
And from sea to shining sea,
It's time for America
To put her trust in God again.
Yes, it's time for America
To bless God again!
Our laws no longer honor God and country,
But seem to mock the God that made us great.
Can we tell the wrong from the right,
Or darkness from the light?
We have read in the Bible God would bless
The nation that would live in righteousness.
It's time for us to seek His face.
And turn from our wicked ways.
It is time for America to bless God again!

Selected

Psalm 93:1 The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

2 Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted

up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

4 The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

5 Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever.

Holiness Cometh Forever



Brother Charles Ferguson

How Long Is Forever?

I never thought too much about the noise of the world until I read this Psalm. Again, verse 4 reads, "The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." I thought of the noise of all the great seas together. What an awesome noise that would be! It would probably deafen your ears. God is greater than all of that. He is a wonderful God, and He is greater than everything in this world.

I want you to focus your attention on verse 5 of our Scripture text, which reads, "Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever." Forever is a very long time. Often when we look up at the sky, we do not think about the vastness of space. If we were to fire a rocket ship straight up that could go a million miles an hour and travel for a million years, it would just be starting into space. There is no end to it. It is beyond our comprehension. We serve a mighty God! He has made things far beyond

our understanding.

May God help us to get a little insight concerning what forever is. I understand that the sun is approximately ninety-three million miles away. If one were to make a round trip from here to the sun, it would be 186 million miles. It would take a little bird flying thirty miles an hour, 258,333 years to fly one round trip. If it could take a little portion of the earth in its bill and fly the distance of the sun and drop it and come back and get another, by the time it moved the entire earth that distance,

it would be just the beginning of eternity. What an awesome thought!

Dear one, how diligent you should be to make Heaven your home! It is very important where you are going to spend eternity, or forever. I have seen many people act so indifferently to the Gospel. They do not seem to care about the Gospel, but they should care, because eternity is real.

I have seen many people die in my lifetime, but I guess it never came to me so forcibly about how permanent death is until my dear companion passed away; then I began to realize that she was never coming back. Dear one, death is permanent. When you pass away, that will be forever, and the condition of your soul when you die determines where you will spend eternity. May God help you in a special way.

Where Will You Spend Eternity?

Luke 16:19-26 reads: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried [both men died and were buried, but they did not go to the same place]; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

"And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, be-

tween us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

Dear one, when you leave this world, however death catches you, whether you are lost or saved, that is how you are going to be in eternity. You cannot move from one place to the other. I have heard people preach that when Christ returns, He will set up His kingdom on earth and people will have another chance, but that is not so. The rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers, because he did not want them to come where he was, but Abraham said they had Moses and the prophets. He said if they would not hear them, though one rose from the dead, they would not hear that person either.

God has given me eighty-one years. Had I not done anything with the years that He has given me, what good would it do if He were to give me eighty-one more years? He would be wasting His time to give me another chance. If a person is not going to serve the Lord in eighty-one years, he is not going to do it at all. Dear one, you need to decide where you are going to spend eternity. If you do not choose to serve God, you are going to be wishing for relief for a mighty, long time, but you will never obtain it.

The rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to dip his finger in water and cool his tongue, but his request was denied. He is still there today; nothing has changed. There is no road from this earth to hell and back. There is a broad road to hell, but no road leads out of there. There is only one strait and narrow road that leads to Heaven, but none lead back. The way death finds you is how you are going to be for eternity.

Ecclesiastes 11:3 states, "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." Dear one, once death overtakes you,

you cannot move from one place to another. There is no way to change your soul's destiny after death. God has given each of us a space of time to choose Heaven or hell, because there is no choice after death.

Becoming a Member of God's Household

The Psalmist said, ". . . holiness becometh thine house, O LORD." Are you a member of God's household? In the Old Testament the tabernacle was looked upon as the house of God, but in the New Testament there is a new house, a house that is not made with hands as in the Old Testament. This is a house of flesh and blood.

In 1 Timothy 3:15 Paul wrote to Timothy, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The house that Paul was speaking of is the church. The house of God is not a building, but it is the people in whom God dwells. When one comes to Christ, instead of being the house of the devil, he becomes the house of God, the dwelling place of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Hebrews 3:1-8 we read: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 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. Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost

saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts. . . ."

A man in prison wrote a letter and told how God spoke to him at a young age to get saved, and he thought, "Not now – sometime later." Although the man is saved today, according to his testimony and reports, had he yielded himself to God when He first dealt with him, his life would have been so much better. That is one of the tricks the enemy uses on souls to keep them from getting saved. The devil is always there to say, "Not now. There will be a better time than this later" or "There is an easier way than this."

May God help you, dear one, to truly be the house of God, a dwelling place where Christ may dwell. If you are truly a child of God, then you are an ambassador for Christ. How you live your life has much to do with whether you win anyone to Christ. If you claim to be a child of God, you ought to be one from the crown of your head to the soles of your feet. Too often professed Christians are hypocritical. They say they are saints, but they have set a horrible example before others. For this reason many people become hard, cynical, disheartened, and critical about the things of God.

"He That Keepeth Thee Will Not Slumber"

You need to lift your eyes higher than the things of this world. Church of God, you are a partaker of the highest calling in this world. As one man once said, "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of the wicked."

Saint of God, you are the light of the world. You are not a candle that is put under a bushel basket that does not shine its light, but you are a candle that is put on a candlestick, lifted high for the world to see. You ought to be an example in all things. May God help you to be all that He would have you to be. You should not just be a hearer of the Word, but

a doer of the Word.

In Psalm 121:1-4 David said: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." Isn't that good? He who keeps you will not slumber or sleep. Many times I have to call upon the Lord. I am glad that He is not somewhere sleeping.

In 1 Kings, Chapter 18, you can read about Elijah and the prophets of Baal. The prophets of Baal were leaping and cutting themselves and crying out, "O Baal, hear us." Elijah mocked them and said, "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awakened" (verse 27). They cut themselves until the blood gushed out upon them. They holstered and screamed throughout the day, but to no avail.

I am thankful that God is not like that. We can call on Him, and He will answer prayer. I remember one instance many years ago when my wife and I really prevailed in prayer. We thought there was no way that a certain situation could be changed. We prayed earnestly that God would somehow turn it aside. In our own selves we saw no way for it to change, but we went to God with the problem. I do not know how it changed, but it changed one hundred eighty degrees. God is still on the throne! He is no different today than He was two thousand years ago or ten thousand years ago. He has not lost any power. He is still in control, and He will always be in control.

David continued in Psalm 121:5-8: "The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out

and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore." May you put your all into serving God. He is worthy for you to give Him your all.

Obedience Unto Righteousness

In Luke 1:68-75 you can read that Zacharias, who was John the Baptist's father, said: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."

Holiness and righteousness do not come from us, but they are gifts of God for obedience. None of us has any righteousness of our own. What we have comes from Him. He has separated us from sin and made us vessels worthy of His use.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 6:16, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Dear one, you are a servant of the one whom you serve. You know, no unsaved individual likes to be reminded that he or she is serving the devil. That may not set well with some people, but it is the truth anyway. If you are not serving God, you are serving the devil.

Jesus said in John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." If you really love God, you will keep His commandments. If you do not love Him, you will not keep them. Keeping God's commandments can

come only through love for Him. If you do not love Him, you will not keep them.

If a child in a family really loves his mother and father in the manner that he ought to, he will be obedient. When a child becomes disobedient, his love has grown cold. If a husband really loves his wife and the wife really loves her husband, they will stick together. Nothing can separate them if they really love each other, but if that love grows cold, they will separate. Love is the glue that molds them together. If your love grows cold for God, you will find yourself going in another direction.

Jesus said in verses 20-23: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." If you really love God, you will keep His commandments.

Are You Living Free From Sin?

The Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 1:16-19: "For by him were

all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."

When you come to Jesus, He will make you holy. Your obedience causes Him to give of Himself, and you become like He is. We read in 1 John 3:7, "Little children, let no man deceive you: [We are living in a time when holiness is a strange word to the world. I have talked to people about living free from sin, and they have pointed a finger at me and said, 'You are the sinner, because you are standing here and telling me that you can live free from sin. You are a liar, so that makes you a sinner.'] he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."

There are not two kinds of righteousness; there is only one kind. As God's people, we receive the righteousness that comes from Jesus Christ. Our righteousness is not our own; it is His.

One application of Jesus' blood is sufficient for all sin; that makes a person holy. Dear one, Where do you stand with God? Are you living

a holy life? Has God saved you from sin and disgrace? He can put His Spirit within you and enable you to walk successfully for Him day by day. If you are unable to walk with Him day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, then you need help from Heaven.

(Cassette C-5609M)

Surrender

This life is so uncertain—
Every moment flying fast,
O my dear one, turn to Jesus,
Death and hell will come at last.

Jesus gives you time to serve Him—
Do not waste these flying hours;
For they vanish, oh, so quickly,
Like the dried and withered flowers.

All your life's a fleeting vapor,
O how soon 'twill all be past;
But the joy of serving Jesus
Will the universe outlast.

How the worldly things allure us,
And old Satan holds us fast.
Turn to Jesus—do it quickly—
He'll forgive your guilty past.

He will break the power that holds you
In a life of sin and shame;
He will give you life eternal,
For that's why from Heaven He came.

You've been warned by those who love you,
"Come to Jesus, come just now."
Do not wait until the death sweat
Lies so cold upon your brow.

If you gain a world of pleasure
And you lose your soul at last,
You'll regret it then forever
For your dark and guilty past.

Heed the call when first you hear it;
Don't put off from day to day.
Quickly come to Christ your Savior
Walk the strait and narrow way.

Selected

The Church of God, Inc.
 Membership Application
 Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____
 Zip: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Pastor: _____
 Church: _____
 Date: _____

The Church of God, Inc.
 Financial Statement

1975	15,755	15,907
1976	13,108	12,884
1977	0	0
1978	0	0
1979	15,105	12,888
1980	0	0
1981	0	0
1982	250	250
1983	250	250
1984	15,225	15,181
1985	512	588
1986	15,755	15,857
1987	51.50	57.81

 Signature: _____
 Date: 10-2-88
 References to Publications: _____

Church Leadership

Leadership in the church is one of the most abused doctrines in the Bible. While some would overdo it and want to bring the whole church, collectively, under one earthly head and into bondage, others completely ignore any God-ordained leadership in the individual congregations. Both of these views are conducive to error and failure. While there is no Scripture for any head of the church collectively, certainly many Scriptures teach leadership and authority in the local congregation, without which no congregation can grow and prosper spiritually.

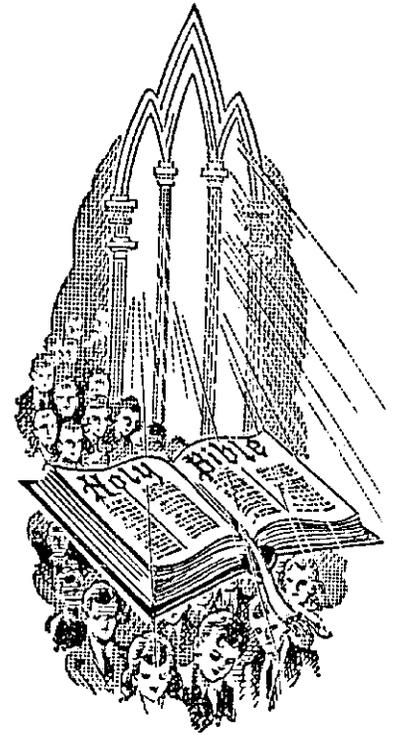
No Authority Higher Than the Local Pastor: Although the Bible speaks of there being wisdom in a multitude of counsel (certainly there is nothing wrong with consulting with other ministers concerning some important problem or doctrine), the fact still remains that there is no higher human authority in any given congregation than the pastor. The pastor is responsible directly to God for his flock. Acts 20:28 tells us the Holy Ghost makes overseers (plural) over the flock (singular). There is only one Church of God, but many congregations that make up the church. Therefore, the overseers are the pastors of the individual flocks that make up the church.

The Holy Ghost Hath Made: Acts 20:28 says the Holy Ghost makes the overseers of the flock. First Corinthians 12:18 says, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." Notice that the Scripture does not say as it hath pleased you or me, but as it hath pleased God. This is telling us that God Himself calls, qualifies, places,

and sends a pastor to the congregation that he is to be responsible for. There is only *one* pastor in each congregation. All others under his leadership or who attend his congregation, regardless of their positions, are directly under his leadership and authority and are as accountable to him for their responsibility he has placed them in as any other lay member.

Who Needs a Pastor? Everyone who is not pastoring needs a pastor. Now, this may shake you, but this is truth. Whether or not one is ordained, has been ordained, or expects to be ordained into the ministry and are not actively pastoring a congregation is automatically under the pastor in whose congregation he attends. Fasten your seat belts for the next statement. All ordained evangelists have a pastor. The local congregation he attends nearest his home when he is not in the field preaching is his home congregation, and the pastor of that congregation is his pastor while he is home. Technically, the pastor of the congregation in which he is evangelist is his pastor while he labors there, while maintaining his individuality and liberty in his office as an evangelist.

All those in a pastor's congregation are directly responsible to him in all the positions he places them in. All heads of committees, Sunday school, vacation Bible school, choir director, building maintenance, building programs, printing works, radio programs, or whatever are all under his leadership and directly or indirectly responsible to him and have no more freedom to be absent without permission, or to work contrarily to the pastor's wishes than any other lay member.



Every Man Has a Head: In the human family, God has a plan in His Word. The Apostle Paul said, "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3).

Also, in the spiritual realm the head of every person is the pastor and the head of the pastor is the Lord. That is the reason Paul said in Hebrews 13:17, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

Since the pastor is responsible to the Lord for you, is it not reasonable to expect the members of the congregation to be cooperative and submissive to his leadership? Those who do not, make it grievous for the pastor to watch and be responsible for him. This should not be hard to do. First Timothy 5:17 tells us, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."

The Bible makes it very plain that it is a sin for anyone to rebuke an elder or to receive an accusation against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses (1 Timothy 5:1, 19). Let us take heed lest we find ourselves disobeying the Scriptures and falling under condemnation and the wrath of God for disrespect to God's anointed.

God's Wrath on Those Who Will Not Submit to the Pastor: There are numerous examples where the wrath of God was poured out on those who disrespected God's leaders in the church. Moses' own sister earned the wrath of God for challenging her pastor, and she was

stricken with leprosy (Numbers 12:10). Korah got some influential men behind him and proceeded to foolishly resist the leadership of Moses and the priesthood, and God had the earth open up under their feet and swallow them up, both Korah and those who followed him in rebellion against God's man (Numbers 16:1-32). Then we have the example of Uzzah who thought he was justified in putting his hand on the ark of God to steady it, and God struck him dead, for God's Law said the priesthood was able to take care of the ark (2 Samuel 6:6-7). It is a very serious thing to touch God's anointed and resist his leadership

and authority.

Saints Take Warning! It is better to play around with a keg of dynamite than to play around with the pastor and his responsibility. Do not ever get involved with any individual or group of people who are in any way undermining or trying to kill the influence of your own pastor. You should flee for your life and let your pastor know what is going on, or you, too, might be swallowed up in the "earth," even as Korah and his sympathizers were.

Walter R. Ogden

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls."

Proverbs 25:28

[His Grace Is Sufficient—contin. from p. 13] could. Had I?" I could see nothing but defeat for myself and all who knew and loved her. This was hard to pray through.

I remember hearing the trite saying, "Our loss is Heaven's gain." I was not interested in Heaven's gain. My mind was centered on what we had lost. When I stopped complaining and began to thank God that we had the privilege of enjoying her for twenty-one years, nine months, and twelve days, I began to see that our defeat was our daughter Martha Joy's victory. She had won every victory, even a victory over the last enemy—death. Also, she had done more good in her short life than many whose life spans had multiplied hers several times. This thought was presented to us many times by friends.

I kept winning small victories. The battles came a little less frequent and were a little less severe, but they continued to come for a long time. I

learned that comfort is an elusive thing. It slips out and grief comes back in. As long as we entertain grief, it is hard to find comfort. Underscore the word "find." Comfort never comes looking for us. We have to go after it and want it enough to give up grief and its offspring, self-pity. When we give up something, we always have to have something ready to take its place, for life has no voids. Many people find serving others as a good replacement for grief.

Victory is a glorious word. We love the feeling of accomplishment after winning a victory, regardless of the type of contest. We are willing to work hard for a good cause and to pray fervently for victory, especially if we can hear the cheers of family and friends. Yet, there is another kind of victory, one that might have every sign of defeat outwardly: one of the spirit and soul. It is peaceful, quiet, and constant, even when the mind and the

heart are in turmoil. It is the assurance that God is in control of things and that He is at work, working things out for our good. He knows what He is doing, and we should not murmur and complain when He says no to a request that means the world to us.

When the answer is no, it does not mean that God has quit loving us. It does not mean we have done something worthy of punishment either. If we fall into the slough of despondency, we should look for victory on the other side of it. We need to simply trust God and travel on. He has made provisions for our every need. Read His promises. There can be nothing but victory in the heart and soul whose strength is from Him. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," because "His grace is sufficient." Praise God!

Selected

[Camp Meeting Report—continued from p. 2]
Lord is, there is liberty." Certainly there was freedom to worship the Lord "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Amid the happy praises there were those who jumped for joy while others shouted amen or shed grateful tears. When the Lord moves into the midst, He brings rejoicing, enlightenment, instruction, and conviction. He provides all things for all men, both spiritually and physically.

Many wonderful things were accomplished during this Fall Camp Meeting. Wounded and broken relationships were reconciled during this gathering of the saints. The main highlight of any meeting is witnessing the saving of men's and women's souls from sin. It is a beautiful sight to see those who were bound under Satan's yoke break free and weep their way through to the throne of

grace. In a second of time the chains of sin are broken and souls are delivered from bondage. They are as Paul described it: delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son (Colossians 1:13). Several conversions took place, for which we are truly grateful. Many gained strength and encouragement to continue in the good fight of faith.

During the camp meeting, one service was devoted to the preaching of divine healing. In this service those who were afflicted with physical ailments were reminded of God's love and concern for their physical needs. In God's great plan of redemption, He has made provision for the healing of the body and the saving of the soul. Divine healing for the mind and the body is not a thing of the past, as some would think. It is very much a part of

God's complete plan for man yet today. In Third John, verse 2, we read the words, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." The Lord is very much interested in the whole man and his needs.

We can thankfully say that we were gathered at a spiritual oasis. We drank from a well that the world knows nothing about, and it will never run dry. This water brings spiritual refreshment when spiritual dryness and drought are all around us. The glorious thing about this water is that the more a person gets, the more he or she wants. God has a vast supply, and it will never run out. These times of refreshing and fellowship always create a desire for the saints to want to be together continually. Someday our desires will be fulfilled.

Revival Announcement

The Church of God

**74 Armstrong Road
Summersville, West Virginia 26651**

November 20-26, 2006

Meeting Evangelists:

**Brother Daniel Webster, Medina, Ohio (Monday-Wednesday)
Brother Irwin Seshier, Heath, Ohio (Thursday-Sunday)**

*Service times: Monday-Friday 7:00 p.m., Saturday 6:00 p.m.,
and Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.*

**For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders
Telephone: (304) 872-4047**

Fall 2006 Camp Meeting



Tape List



TAPE NO.	DATE	MESSAGE TITLE	MINISTER
C-5628M C-5629E	8-06-06	We Will Not Come Down Do You Honestly Have a Deep Settled Peace?	Bro. E. David Stegmeier Bro. E. David Stegmeier
C-5630M C-5631E	8-07-06	The Kingdom A Family Talk (Debt, Money, and Bankruptcy)	Bro. Roger L. Decker Bro. Calvin Foster
C-5632M C-5633E	8-08-06	The Little Book Be an Overcomer	Bro. Roger L. Decker Bro. James Lovingood
C-5634M C-5635E	8-09-06	Temptations: How to Overcome Them Knowing the Terror of the Lord	Bro. E. David Stegmeier Bro. Calvin Foster
C-5636M C-5637E	8-10-06	Standing in the Night What Is a Sinner?	Bro. Allen Polston Bro. Calvin Foster
C-5638M C-5639E	8-11-06	The Attitude of a True Repenter "I Am the Lord, I Change Not"	Bro. Daniel Webster Bro. Calvin Foster
C-5640M	8-12-06	"Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself"	Bro. Matt Schwartz
C-5641M C-5642E	8-13-06	Faith Brings Divine Healing Work to Keep the Spirit of Unity	Bro. E. David Stegmeier Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
MD-298 MD-299 MD-300 MD-301 MD-302 MD-303	2006	Fall Camp Meeting Songs #1 Fall Camp Meeting Songs #2 Fall Camp Meeting Songs #3 Fall Camp Meeting Songs #4 Fall Camp Meeting Songs #5 Fall Camp Meeting Songs #6 Fall Camp Meeting Children's Service	

Please Note: Message and song recordings may be purchased on CD or cassette tapes. *CD's are \$3.50 each and Cassette Tapes are \$2.50 each.* Please be sure to specify whether you want CD's or cassette tapes.

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