

**SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET**

**Vol. 37 May 2007 No. 5**



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

*"I was glad when they said unto me,  
Let us go into the house of the Lord."*

*Psalm 122:1*

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

# Annual Financial Report

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PRAYER: If you need prayer, please phone or write:  
Roger Decker, Pastor  
83 Deerow Ave.  
Newark, OH 43055

Email: [pastor@church-of-god-online.com](mailto:pastor@church-of-god-online.com)  
Phone: 740-344-2543 or 1-888-730-0461  
Fax: 740-344-4737  
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This monthly religious journal is published for the benefit of the  
Church of God universally. It is our supreme purpose to reach  
the world for Christ through the printed page. Our burden is to  
reveal the truth of God's Word to all mankind, to expose sin  
and error, war against apostasy, and to eradicate the  
longstanding traditions of men that have no biblical  
foundations.

Brother Roger L. Decker ..... Editor  
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

### THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

### SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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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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The Psalmist David wrote in Psalm 26:7, "That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works." The burden of this publication over the years has been to herald the message of Truth. We consider ourselves extremely blessed to be put in trust with the Gospel, and we thank the Lord for this stewardship with which we have been entrusted. It is our earnest desire and burden to portray His wondrous works through the written page so that all men may see His wonderful works. It is our prayer that honest hearts will be led to repentance and that many will come the knowledge of the Truth. To this end many saints work tirelessly to present you with this magazine every month. Only eternity will reveal the many hours expended and the benefits gained by this periodical.

Needless to say, the publication of this holiness journal is a large and expensive undertaking, as you can see from the financial statement below. *The Gospel Trumpeter* is not self-supporting. Rarely is any ministry self-sufficient. Therefore, that affords an opportunity for everyone to be a participant in the spreading of the Gospel. Though you may not have a call to preach or teach or compose an article, you may fill a very valuable role in the furtherance of the Gospel through your giving. If Jesus will reward a cup of water given in His name, how much more will He reward you when you provide funds for the distribution of His Gospel. We have never affixed a subscription price to this publication. It has always been our desire to place this magazine in every home possible, regardless of the subscriber's financial means. Nevertheless, the costs of supplies and postage continues to escalate. If you desire to make a donation to help defray these expenses, you may send a check or money order payable to *The Gospel Trumpeter*, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, Ohio 43055.

We trust that this periodical will continue to be a blessing to you and an enhancement to your spiritual growth as well as the means of salvation to many lost souls.

## Statement of Condition for 12 months ending January 31, 2007

	Income	Expenses
<b>Supplies</b> .....		<b>\$ 26,069.59</b>
<b>Wages</b> .....		<b>33,103.97</b>
<b>Donations/Offerings</b>	<b>\$11,439.50</b>	
<b>Equipment Purchased</b> .....		<b>10,579.36</b>
<b>Postage</b> .....		<b>64,524.25</b>
<b>Maintenance &amp; Repairs</b> .....		<b>7,452.86</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Expenses</b> .....		<b>2,233.26</b>
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>11,439.50</b>	<b>\$143,963.29</b>
<b>Balance paid out of the general fund of the Church of God congregation at Newark, OH</b>		<b>\$132,523.79</b>

1 Timothy 2:1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

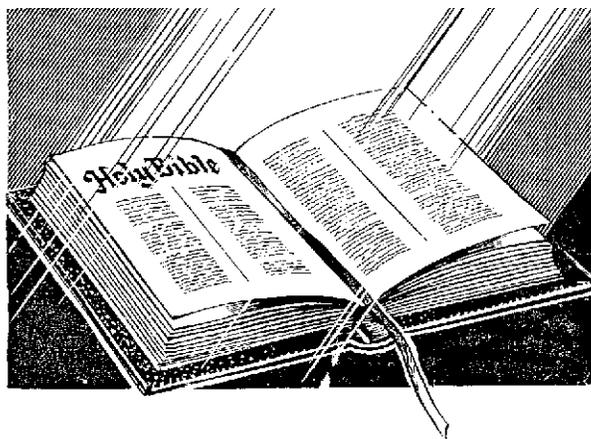
4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Isaiah 1:16 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

# God's Desire for Our Lives



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

## Every Soul Needs Salvation

The Scripture text in 1 Timothy, Chapter 2, tells us that it is God's will that all men be saved. Friend, once you are saved, God's will is for you to come to the knowledge of the Truth. You are not going to know all the Truth when you get saved. Salvation puts you in the learner's chair where you can understand and receive a knowledge of the Truth and grow thereby.

I want you to look at some reasons that you need to be saved. It is God's will, but there are more reasons that you need to be saved. The first reason is, you are lost without Christ. Maybe that does not mean much to you, because you feel you are still able to go about and do things and you have decent health.

Nevertheless, if you are unsaved, you are spiritually dead. You are cut off from Almighty God because your sins have separated you from Him. Luke 15:24, speaking of the prodigal son, says, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." Without Jesus Christ and old-time salvation, you are lost.

Luke 19:9-10 reads: "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Jesus used many things to describe the lost in the Gospel. In one place He likened the lost to sheep. He said in Luke 15:4-6: "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and

nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost."

Also, Jesus likened the lost to coins, or money, in verses 8-10: "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner

that repenteth."

Being lost is not like losing money, your home, your car, or your friends. You can always buy another car, make more friends, purchase another home, or earn more money. You can replace these things, but your soul is irreplaceable. You get only one soul. You might have many homes, many friends, much money, and several jobs, but you have only one soul. I repeat, if you are unsaved, it is God's will that you get saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth.

You cannot put a dollar value on your soul.

### **Sin Deceives**

Jesus said in Matthew 16:24-26: "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 [or gained], if he shall gain the whole world [even if he could have everything he desired], and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Dear one, sometimes the things of the world can cloud your vision of spiritual realities; nevertheless, nothing is more valuable than your soul. Many times people take the least care of that which is most valuable and they take the most care of that which is least valuable in this life. If you are living in sin, you are lost.

Consider the prodigal son again. These Scriptures are good to read. Luke 15:11-24 states: "A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. [What does this show you? It lets you know that sin is very embarrassing and humiliating.] And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

"And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him [God's desire is to save the lost soul]. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."

In this story of the prodigal, we can see how he left his father's house and wasted his substance on riotous living. He was brought down to the depths of the hogpen, and then he finally came to himself and went back to father's house and made a confession. You can see that he left with an arrogant attitude. Sin makes you think that you have things coming to you in your life. In essence, he said, "Give me my inheritance. Give me that which I have coming to me, and I will do with it as I feel like doing." Oh, how sin deceives people in an arrogant attitude! However, you will notice that when he came back the lane of forgiveness, he came with humility.

Often when one leaves Truth, he

usually leaves with an arrogant attitude. Upon the prodigal son's return, he admitted that he had sinned, and he felt unworthy to be called a son. What did the father say? Verse 24 tells us, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." Nothing thrills a father more than to have a son who was lost to be found, a son who was dead to be made alive again. If you leave the Father's house and you go into sin, you will be lost.

### **Sin's Destructive Work**

Another reason that you need to be saved is the constant danger of being lost forever. In fact, when you are in a lost condition, the chances of your being lost forever are greater than the chances of your getting back to God. There is only one way out of sin, and that is to be saved. To be lost is to be separated from that which is good. The prodigal son enjoyed his riotous living until his substance ran out.

It costs to be a sinner, because the flesh is never satisfied. The flesh always wants more, and when you are unsaved, there is nothing to curb the desires of the flesh. In sin you lose the good qualities the Lord gave you. Some people lose their health when they are in sin. Others lose their value of what is right and wrong. They call good evil and evil good.

Many lose their families, their friends, their homes, and their jobs. They lose their finances and become bankrupt. Often they lose all that is good, all the things that God blesses a saved life with. Often people in sin begin habits that defile the body and destroy their health, such as alcohol, drugs, tobacco, partying, and late hours. These things do a destructive work on the body. You might not realize that while you are young, but as you begin to grow older, the wear and tear of sin begins to work, and it will destroy your health. Sin destroys marriages; it causes strife and turmoil in the home. Sin does a

destructive work.

Another reason that you need to be saved is simply because it is right. Salvation leads you in the right way. The Proverb writer said in Proverbs 16:25, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Many are traveling that way today. It seems to be the right way to go, but the writer said that the end thereof was the way of death.

### **God's Service Is Reasonable**

We each are a product of our own choices. Salvation puts you on the right path; it points you in the right direction. If you are unsaved, you need to be saved because it is a reasonable way to live. What did the Prophet Isaiah say? "Come now, and let us reason together . . ." (Isaiah 1:18). Romans 12:1 reads, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Serving God is reasonable service.

The Bible standards of the church are reasonable. Often the unsaved individual thinks, "If you serve God, you will have to give up this and that, and serving God is a dull life." Believe me, you are 100 percent wrong! Serving God is not a dull life. The only thing you have to give up to serve God is that which is wrong.

All I read throughout the Bible is how God blessed His people and gave them that which is good. You do not have to go around as poor as a church mouse. God blessed His people throughout the Old Testament. He blessed the patriarchs. In the New Testament He took care of all the saints' needs as well. God will supply that which you need. He will take care of you physically and spiritually. He will take care of you, your home, and your family. If you seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, He will add all these other things to you. He knows what you need.

You have to remember that God created you, and He knows you. He knows you better than your best friend knows you. Husband, God knows you better than the wife does. Wife, God knows you better than the husband does. Children, God knows you better than your parents know you. He knows all about you. He knows your thoughts, your feelings, your passions, and your desires. He can keep you. He is mighty to save and mighty to keep.

If you are unsaved, you need to be saved because it is reasonable. Often when we talk about salvation, people think about the Bible standard for the dress and the hair. I want you to read a Scripture that the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 2:8-10: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

### **The Holy People**

The world does not, and it never did, set the standard for the true church, the body of Christ. The church shows the world how they should dress. People out in the world wear themselves out going from one fad to another. They even do such things as dying their hair purple or cutting off their hair completely, but they are never satisfied. A fad only lasts until the praise begins to wear off. It is just like buying a new car. When you buy a new car, you park at the end of the parking lot to make sure that no one parks close to it. After you have had the car for a while, you squeeze it into the tightest of places, where you can hardly open the door. What happened? The newness wore off. That is the way it is with fads. They wear off after awhile.

Another fad that many young men get caught up in is walking

around with their trousers hanging down so low that their underwear show and their trousers look as if they are ready to fall down. Now, an individual cannot walk around and feel comfortable that way. Some young ladies get caught up in the fad of wearing shirts that show the belly. There is just not enough fabric to cover them. Modest apparel pleases God. He wants you to dress right and to take proper care of yourself. Also, He wants you to be clean and to smell pleasant. You should not walk around smelling like a goat. God wants you to be clean and to wash your hair and your clothes. He wants the sisters to keep a clean house.

When you get saved, you must take one day at a time, one step at a time. When a little baby is born, no one would expect that little baby to tie its own shoes. Babies have to grow little by little and learn step by step. It is the same with the children of God. They have to grow. Some children grow faster than others, and some children learn quicker than others. That is the same way it is in the family of God, but all of us have to grow and learn one step at a time. God requires more of those who have greater knowledge than those who do not have much understanding.

Isaiah 62:6-12 reads: "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.

"Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the high-

way; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." Who is to lift up the standard? The pastor is to go through and cast up the highway and to gather out all the stones, or the things that offend, and to lift up a standard for the people.

### **The Value of Salvation and Its Benefits**

Another reason that you need to be saved is because of the value of salvation and its benefits. You talk about benefits! They are outstanding. It is the only profitable way to live, and it has tremendous benefits, dear one. It has temporal benefits, spiritual benefits, physical benefits, morally good benefits, and eternal benefits. Salvation will make a real man or a real woman out of you. If you are struggling with growing up, salvation will help you to grow up.

Salvation will make your home better. It will make you a better citizen. In fact, it will make you a better person all the way round. You will be easily entreated, more controlled, and less apt to throw a fit. Salvation will cause the young people to treat their parents nice. They will treat their parents with honor and respect. They will not sass and make little cutting remarks. It will make them better children, knowing that someday they might be in the same position as a parent. It brings out the best in a man or a woman. Salvation will even help you to dress better.

The church is the place where you ought to put on the best clothes you have. You may say, "Well, I believe a person should just go as he is." If you were to meet the president or another dignitary, you would not go looking like a slouch. I believe

that you would want to wear the very best you have. Likewise, when you come into the presence of the Lord, you ought to wear the very best you have.

Salvation satisfies the longing in your soul. When Jesus dwells within you, you no longer have to reach out and grab the liquor bottle, take drugs, or use tobacco. Why? The soul is satisfied.

Another reason you need to be saved is because of the future. We all are on a journey through life. You are on a highway that leads to eternity. Every second that passes on the clock takes you closer to eternity. As a child, you could not wait until you became a teenager. You were anxious to be old enough to get your driver's license, and then you could not wait until you graduated. Next, you were anxious to get married and be on your own. The next thing you know, you have been there and done all those things.

As you move through life, you start to get wrinkles in your skin and your hair begins to fall out or turn gray, or both. All the while, the clock keeps ticking, and time moves on. You could smash every clock in sight, yet time will keep going on. You will not look forward to birthdays any more. You do not look forward to being able to draw social security benefits or to being able to sign up for medicare. You will find yourself talking about how things used to be when you were younger.

### **Eternity**

Eternity comes sooner for some than it does for others. We are not guaranteed so many days of life. Eternity sometimes comes to teenagers, babies, and young adults, as well as the elderly. The Hebrew writer said in Hebrews 9:27, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." We all are on a journey, and we are getting closer to eternity with every tick of the clock. Being closer to eternity means being closer to death. We all are going to stand before God, the

Great Judge of all. Just think of that!

In the Old Testament the wise man wrote in Ecclesiastes, Chapter 12, something that was revealed to him. He was a man who had about everything in life, yet he kept using the word *vanity*. In verses 13-14 he penned: "Let us hear the conclusion [or the end] of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

In 2 Corinthians 5:9-10 the Apostle Paul stated: "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." We all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Dear one, I have given you some reasons why you need to be saved, but the only thing that is lacking is your making the right choice. God is such a gentleman. If you serve God, you must serve Him because you love Him. God will not force you to be saved. He will speak to your heart through His Word and through the wooing of His Holy Spirit, but it is up to you to make the choice. You do not have to choose God. You may choose the way that "seemeth right," but God will let you know what the end of that way is. On the other hand, you can choose salvation, and God will turn your whole life around for the better. All those things that you worry about, if you were saved, would be of no concern to you. Many of those things are lies from the devil. God does not badger His people that way. If you are already saved, I am sure that you could testify that salvation is better than the way that "seemeth right." Clearly, if you were wise, you would choose the way that *is* right, not the way that "seemeth right."

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 reads:

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day,

that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life [this is God's desire], that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the

length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

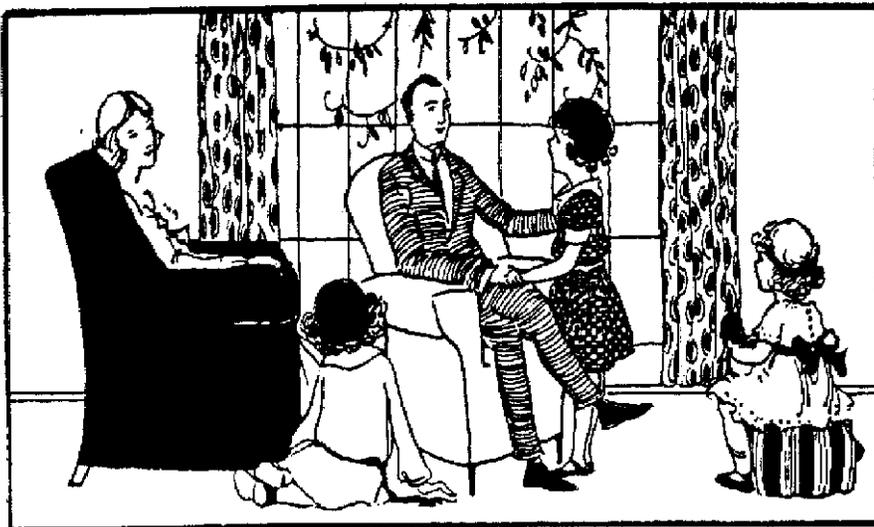
Dear one, if you are wise, you will choose the way of the Lord. Do not choose the way that "seemeth right," which leads to destruction in the end. You need to choose the way that is right, which leads to eternal life and being blessed of God.

(Cassette C-5379M)

## *My Mother's Bible*

*This Book is all that's left me now,  
Tears will unbidden start;  
With faltering lip and throbbing brow  
I press it to my heart.  
For many generations past,  
Here is our family tree;  
My mother's hand this Bible clasped;  
She, dying, gave it to me.*

*Ah! well do I remember those  
Whose names these records bear,  
Who 'round the hearthstone used to close  
After the evening prayer,  
And speak of what these pages said,  
In tones my heart would thrill!  
Though they are with the silent dead,  
Here they are living still!*



*My father read this Holy Book  
To brothers, sisters, dear;  
How calm was my poor mother's look  
Who loved God's Word to hear.  
Her angel face – I see it yet!  
What thronging memories come!  
Again that little group is met  
Within the halls of home!*

*Thou truest friend man ever knew,  
Thy constancy I've tried;  
Where all were false I found thee true!  
My counselor and guide.  
The mines of earth no treasure give  
That could this volume buy;  
In teaching me the way to live,  
It taught me how to die.*

George Morris

*Hebrews 2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*

*2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression*

*and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;*

*3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard*

*him;*

*4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?*

# *How Shall We Escape?*



*Brother E. David Stegmeier*

## **Horrifying Times in This Life**

Most likely everyone in America remembers September 11, 2001. I could take you to the very place I was when I heard what was happening in our country. I was getting ready to go to school that morning when I received a call concerning what was going on. When I got to school that day, almost every classroom in the high school had tuned in to the news channel. The young people and the teachers were absolutely mesmerized at what was going on in our nation. No doubt, people thought something such as that could not happen in the United States, but it did. *The Oregonian*, the leading

newspaper in the state of Oregon, headlined the words, "Day of Terror." The article read, "As flames from one crashed plane burn in the North Tower of the World Trade Center, a hijacked United Airlines jet, carrying at least sixty-five people, hurled across toward Manhattan's South Tower. The plane hit the 110 story South Tower at 9:03 a.m., Eastern Daylight Time, and exploded. Within ninety minutes, both towers collapsed, killing office workers and their would-be rescuers."

In the end this catastrophe killed thousands of victims. Often in my mind, I think about what might have gone through the minds of those people in that horrific situa-

tion. What were those people who were trapped on the upper floors thinking about? Perhaps they thought of their families and their loved ones. I believe that foremost in their minds was the question, "How can I escape?" Many of them jumped out windows to their deaths to escape the flames. Those people were horrified, perhaps screaming and very disoriented. I would say it was the most awful of all nightmares.

In an English class I once taught we studied the Holocaust. Before World War II and in that horrific time, it is estimated that the Nazi's exterminated more than six million Jews. They gassed many people in gas chambers and great numbers were burned alive in large ovens.

All over Europe, Jews were rounded up like livestock and were taken to concentration camps in crowded cattle cars on the railroad.

Survivors of the Holocaust have come to the school where I teach and have spoken to the student body about their experiences during that time. Multitudes tried to escape the hatred of the Nazis by hiding, by moving, and by physically resisting. I heard a story told of a young Jewish mother who arrived at a concentration camp with her two little children, a three-year-old girl and an eight-year-old boy. The Nazis told that young Jewish mother, "You must make a choice. We will allow you to keep only one child with you in the camp. One must go with the rest of the children to the gas chamber."

When they got off the train, they checked the children to see if they were healthy and strong. If they were, they escorted them to dormitories and made them work very hard. They took the weak and the sickly children to the gas chambers. They gave this young mother a few moments to choose between her little girl who was three and her little boy who was eight. The mother thought quickly, "What should I do? What should I do?" She reasoned, "If I send my little daughter to the gas chamber, perhaps she won't know what's happening to her," so she kissed her and sent her on her way to be gassed while she took the little boy to the barracks. In the next few months she groaned and grieved until she lost her mind.

### **The Importance of Seeking God's Will When Making Decisions**

It is unbelievable what people suffered in the Holocaust. Undoubtedly, the Jews have suffered more than any other people down through the annals of history. I believe these people have suffered such fate because they rejected the Messiah, the Christ. People are asking for trouble when they reject the Messiah. They are inviting horrific

problems into their lives. When Jesus was on His way to the Cross, a great company of women followed Him, wailing and lamenting Him. In Luke 23:28 you can read that Jesus turned around and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

I think every parent would say that they dearly love their children. I dearly love my children, my grandchildren, and my congregation. I realize that the decisions I make will, in a great measure, affect the quality of their lives. As a minister, throughout my life, I have weighed my decisions, prayed, and sought God's will. I know beyond any doubt that I have made the right choices.

Once my wife received a call from someone who asked her if she felt that she had made the right choices, and she replied, "Without a doubt I know I have." You can know that you are in the right way. I weigh my decisions in life and consider how they will affect my wife, my seven children, my grandchildren, my congregation, and the thousands of young people whom I have taught in the public schools over the years. I weigh my decisions because they will affect the lives of many other people.

We read in Romans 14:7, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." We are affecting someone either for the good or for the bad. Ministers are extremely responsible. I believe that too many people, even in the ministry, make decisions too flippantly and lightheartedly. Friend, before you make decisions, you need to weigh the choices, deliberate, and look to God before you take a step. One of the first Scriptures that I was taught in the Church of God when I was about five or six years of age is Proverbs 3:6, which states, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." I have had to seek God alone concerning some decisions. I have a wonderful wife, but sometimes she has said, "Honey,

you have to make the decision." It is my greatest desire to build a wholesome, God-fearing, Bible-oriented Church of God. I am not endeavoring to win a popularity contest. My desire is to build up the body of Christ.

### **Heeding the Message of God**

Verse 1 of our Scripture text reads, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." If you have ever heeded the message of God, you ought to heed it in a greater way as you continue through life. You might have been saved for forty, fifty, or possibly sixty years, but you should be even more wary of the devil and his moves on you. He would love to ensnare you. Therefore, you ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that you have heard, lest at any time you should let them slip, or allow them to drift away from you. What you prize more than anything else in your life ought to be an understanding and a knowledge of the Truth. Few people in the world understand the Truth.

Verses 2-4 of our Scripture text tell us: "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"

I want you to think very seriously about this message. I have gone into hospitals where people have been in the Intensive Care Unit. It is a very quiet, serious place. When doctors are operating on the brain or the heart, that is very serious business. Likewise, when a man of God is delivering a message from God, it is very serious business. Men

of God use the tools that God has given them to operate on the hearts of men and women. Therefore, people should not be silly or act frivolously, and they should not talk as the message is being delivered. I take the service of God very seriously. People are making eternal decisions daily. Many people are suffering for making the wrong decisions, and their children are suffering for those decisions. I believe the greatest thing I can leave my children is not money in the bank, cars, houses, or land but the testimony that I have lived a holy life and stayed true to my calling. I have not wavered from that which God has entrusted in my care.

### **Taking Care of the Needs of Your Soul**

Again, verses 3-4 of our text of Scripture read: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" This text of Scripture in the International Children's Bible reads: "So we must be more careful to follow what we were taught. Then we will not be pulled away from the truth. The teaching that God spoke through angels was shown to be true. And anyone who did not follow it or obey it received the punishment he earned. The salvation that was given to us is very great. So surely we also will be punished if we live as if this salvation were not important" (verses 1-3). Dear one, this is so important!

Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." What about putting prayer first? You would be in less peril by neglecting something else you think is important in your life than to fail to take care of the needs of your soul.

You ought to let other things go and get to church. Let other things go and go to camp meeting. Let other things go and pray. Let other things go and read the Word of God. You must put first things first. Solomon said in Proverbs 4:23, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." In other words, you ought to focus on your soul.

What is the condition of your soul? Are you more spiritual today than you were a week ago, a month ago, or a year ago? The word *neglect* means "to give little attention or respect to; to leave undone or unattended to, especially through carelessness." God has given you only one soul, and it is eternal. You need to keep it with great care and be conscientious and attentive to the needs of your soul. Most people are more concerned about and spend more time maintaining their homes, their cars, their boats, their clothing, their personal appearance, and their finances than their souls.

Some people are more concerned about how they look when they look in the mirror than how they look in God's mirror. Very few people give the necessary attention to the needs of their souls. Many people, including those who claim to be in the ministry, are not serious enough about eternal realities. It is not just a job.

When I was a child, I was brought up in the old-fashioned Church of God. Back then the ministers did not retire; they refired. I remember as a child our pastor cried out against ministers retiring and going to Florida or Arizona. God gave me a calling to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and I will have that calling until the day I die.

Years ago, I heard the story of an old fire-buggy horse. They retired the old horse to the pasture, but every time the fire bell rang, it would get excited and want to run as fast as it could toward the fire house until the day it died. The moral of the story is this: once a preacher, always a preacher. Too

many people treat the service of God and the things of God as fun and games or as a form of entertainment.

### **Give God Your Best Now**

Once I attended a graduation ceremony, and the co-valedictorian of that class gave an excellent speech. He said, "You know, I lost my little sister last year. We were in a terrible car accident. We rolled the car, and that little girl was crushed and killed; then I became serious about the things of God." Do not wait for a tragedy. Too many people act as if they are waiting for tragedy. Oh, they do not say that, but without thinking they wait for tragedy, and then they turn to God. I have seen this happen many times. It may take a car accident or a word from a doctor that they have a terminal illness before they turn to God; then they get out the Bible and start going to church. They say, "Preacher, pray for me."

Dear one, while you have the right use of your mind and you are healthy, you ought to give God your best. He is worthy of your best. You can avoid some disasters and calamities by seeking the Lord early in life and living for Him. God is in control. In all the years that I have been in the Church of God, I have never seen anyone leave a thriving Church of God congregation and prosper. In Luke 21:34 Jesus said, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." We are living in that kind of day. If you listen to people's conversations, you will find that most of what they talk about is what pleases the flesh and relates to the cares of this life.

Verses 35-36 continue: "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand

before the Son of man." I want to escape having a broken home and try to keep my children from going down the broad way and being involved in drunkenness or drug addiction. These calamities are coming upon people when they could have been avoided. Luke 21:36 reads, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." I have heard elderly ministers say they were tempted. When I am tempted, I think of my companion, my children, and my congregation.

The International Children's Bible states in Luke 21:34-36: "Be careful! [You need to be careful of whom you talk to. If you are going to sidle up to one and have a conversation, you should sidle up to someone who is deeply spiritual. Do not sidle up to someone who speaks against the pastor or someone who has a bad attitude. If you want to get close to someone, you should get close to an older saint in the congregation who has been a real pillar.] Don't spend your time feasting and drinking. Or don't be too busy with worldly things. If you do that, you will not be able to think straight. And then that day might come when you are not ready. It will close like a trap on all the people on earth. [I realize that Christ was speaking to the literal Jews about some of these things, but the underlying principle is that we are to live right because the day of Christ's appearing is imminent.] So be ready all the time. Pray that you will be strong enough to escape all these things that will happen. And pray that you will be able to stand before the Son of Man."

### **Are You Keeping God's Commandments Diligently?**

You need to be careful of being carnally secure and sensual. You need to be spiritual and live cautiously concerning spiritual things. You do not want to be caught unawares. Sometimes being caught up

in the temporal affairs of life is possible for good saints. In the days of prosperity, forgetting the Source of your help is easy. You need to be wary of becoming secure in a land of plenty. You must become mindful of the Source of your gifts. First and foremost, you need to acknowledge God.

We read in Deuteronomy 6:7-12: "And thou shalt teach them [the words of God] diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house [in other words, you should take every opportunity to talk about God], and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

"And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage." I believe that is where our country is today.

Verse 17 tells us, "Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee." Then verse 24 comes in with a strong positive note: "And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, [Why do we serve the Lord and obey him as we do? We do these things for our good; it is a help and a protection.] that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day."

How spiritual are you, really? I think most people have heard this

adage: "Seven days without reading the Word of God, praying, and attending the house of worship make one weak." The Living Bible says in 1 Corinthians 2:15 that a spiritual person "has insight into everything." As Christians, God gives us the wisdom we need to live right. We should strive to escape the pending judgments of God that have come upon this world because of sin.

### **Choose Your Destiny**

I believe that what happened on September 11, 2001, was a wake up call for our country. God was trying to get people's attention. I repeat, God is in control. I have read reports that after that event, churches were inundated with thousands of people, but today they are as they were prior to that horrific event.

Are you acquainted with the account of Lazarus and the rich man, found in Luke, Chapter 16? Jesus said Lazarus was the beggar often laid at the gate of the rich man's house. The Bible tells us that both of them died, but Lazarus was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, while the rich man landed in hell. In hell the rich man cried out to Abraham and requested that Abraham send Lazarus from the dead to testify to his brothers on earth. In essence, Abraham said, "They have Moses and the prophets. They should hear them."

Today we have the Word of God and the Prophets. Dear one, you need to pay attention and do what the Word of God says. If you will not respect the Word of God or the man of God, no miracle would convince you. God chooses to use the Bible and men of God to speak to you; therefore, you ought to listen.

The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:21, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." The ultimate purpose in my delivering this message is not to hurt or offend you but to persuade you to do something to escape sin and eternal punishment.

God has given each of us the power of choice. The choices you make will determine your destiny and the purpose of your life. Young person, I was young once, and I was a Christian. I want to admonish you to live for a high purpose. In Philippians 1:21 Paul said, "For me to live is Christ." If you will live for God, you will have real meaning in your life. If you ever take anything

seriously, I hope you take this message seriously. Do not throw your life away. God created you to bring glory to Him. Someone once wrote that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

Suicide has become an epidemic in the high schools and the grade schools in our land. I heard about a boy whose family got upset with their pastor and left. The mother

came home, prepared to fix supper, and called her children, but one boy did not come. She walked into his bedroom, only to see that he had removed some ceiling tiles, tied a rope around the rafters, and hung himself. How are you going to escape if you go through life neglecting your soul?

*(Cassette C-5600E)*

## A Mother's Pledge

I will do my part to make our home a happy place of work, play, love, and worship. I will give Christ His place in my life and help each family member to be loyal to Christ.

I will be a loving companion to my husband, mentally, physically, and spiritually. When misunderstandings come, I will be quick to forgive and to ask for forgiveness. I will encourage a happy relationship between my husband and our children.

I will take time to enjoy our children and to appreciate each one individually. I will discipline out of love and not to relieve my inner feelings. I will help our children to befriend all races and to live above petty grievances. I will answer all their questions about life and teach them about eternal life in Christ.

I will maintain an interest in people and affairs outside our home. I will pray, give, and go as God leads me to help those in physical or spiritual need.

I will look upon this life as only a part of God's great plan for me. I will keep busy and happy, with an enthusiasm for life, but with my face set toward my heavenly home.

God helping me, this is the kind of person I will be so that my life might be a blessing to my husband, to our children, to the generations to come, to the church, and to the world.

Selected

# *The Testimony of Mateo's Divine Healing*

In October 2000, Mateo M —, at six weeks of age, and his sister Sandra, were placed in our home as foster children. Due to unfavorable circumstances, their biological mother requested that the children remain with us indefinitely until circumstances improved. The children have now been with us for more than six years.

During the years that Sandra and Mateo have been with us, we have grown to love these wonderful children deeply, as if they were our own. We call them our children, and for some time now, Sandra and Mateo have called us Mom and Dad. How precious these children are to us! They have brought untold joy and happiness into our home! They continue to bless our lives with their presence in our home.

My wife and I are convinced that the Lord placed these children in our home for a specific reason, if for no other reason than to encourage us and to bring much joy to our home. Our home congregation has also grown to love these children as we have, and they have been blessed by their presence.

During the past six years that the children have been with us, many trials and concerns about their future with our family have occurred; nevertheless, God has moved repeatedly to work out those situations. He continues to do so as other circumstances arise. Through it all, God has worked many miracles in these children's lives. I gave the brief history above to establish the setting to the miracle that took place in Mateo's life recently. Please accept this testimony for the glory of God, for He alone is worthy of this praise and honor!

Mateo had been with us for approximately three years when my wife noticed his energy level fluctuating. Previously, Mateo had been a very active child, full of energy, mischievousness, and always bubbly. However, my wife noticed that he grew tired quickly and started sleeping in the middle of the day. During this time, he also began to complain of headaches. This was certainly unusual for a young child. At first, we thought it was due to how hard he played during the day. As this condition continued, my wife decided to take him to a doctor to see if he might have gotten a virus that was causing his headaches and energy level to drop.

When my wife took him to a pediatrician, he told her that Mateo had a sinus infection that might be causing the headaches, but to be sure he wrote a referral to Children's Hospital for a CT scan of the brain. When my wife took Mateo to Children's Hospital, she thought it was going to be a routine visit.

The next day, my wife received a call from a nurse at the pediatrician's office. She said that the results were back from the CT scan, and the doctor wanted to go over them with her.

My wife went to the pediatrician's office to review the CT scan. The nurse said the scan showed a growth on Mateo's brain. My wife was devastated and began to break down emotionally. When she got home, she called me and told me the news. I, too, was devastated and could hardly concentrate on my studies. When I got home, my wife filled me in on the details and told me that the doctor scheduled Mateo for an MRI. We learned that Mateo had been placed in the hands of the best neurosurgeon in the central United States. The staff told us that we were very fortunate to have Dr. Kosnik.

Mateo's birth mother was very upset about her child's condition and wanted the church to pray for him. After the MRI, Dr. Kosnik reviewed the results with my wife and Mateo's mother, explaining that Mateo had a tumor growing inside the lower left optical of his brain lobe. He said that the tumor had already affected 10 percent of Mateo's sight, and it looked as though the tumor was growing. Dr. Kosnik wanted to run more tests, and he scheduled Mateo for another MRI.

We took Mateo to his MRI appointment. As we waited for the results, my mind could not conceive or bear the thought that this child who was so active, so full of energy and life, and who had brought so much joy and happiness into our home actually had a brain tumor. The only thing I could think of was that Mateo would soon lose his sight and then begin to deteriorate and slowly become lifeless.

As we waited, I could only imagine what Dr. Kosnik was going to say. He is known for taking his time and reviewing the test results very thoroughly before making a diagnosis. Finally, he called us back, and we went to his office to hear the results of the MRI. He showed us the brain tumor, which had grown more than 1.5 inches. The first thing Dr. Kosnik said was that he wanted to operate to remove the tumor. Of course, I had grave concerns and wanted to be sure of the success of the removal of this tumor. Dr. Kosnik decided to watch the tumor for awhile to be certain of the location, to see how much mass it had and to determine whether or not it was cancerous.

My wife and I wanted the best for Mateo, so we began to seek other opinions, beginning with Mateo's pediatrician. He said unequivocally that he would not second-guess Dr. Kosnik's diagnosis because he knew Dr. Kosnik and had trained under him. Nevertheless, he gave us the

telephone number of a neurological institution in Cincinnati, Ohio, which specializes in children's brain surgeries. My wife called the center, and they, too, told her they would not second-guess Dr. Kosnik, because he is considered the best children's neurosurgeon. They told her that he had trained most of their neurosurgeons.

Still, we were determined to provide the best care for Mateo and wanted to be sure this was the best direction to go. Therefore, we contacted the Saint Joseph Healthcare Hospital in Kentucky, because we had heard that they provide the best care for children's diseases and terminal illnesses. When my wife called them, she received the same response from the staff there as she had from the other references: they would not second-guess Dr. Kosnik's diagnosis or prognosis. Of course, we were grateful we had Dr. Kosnik for Mateo's care.

It is such a heavy burden for parents to bear when they know their children have a terminal illness. I had often wondered what went through these parents' minds and what they went through emotionally, mentally, psychologically, and even financially. Now I know, and my heart goes out to them.

For the next three years, my wife and I made many trips to Children's Hospital for CT scans, MRIs, EEGs, and EKGs. On one occasion, I spent a week at the hospital with Mateo because Dr. Kosnik wanted Mateo to be under observation due to the pediatrician's recommendation. He was concerned because Mateo's vision was becoming blurry, and he was not responding to cognitive tests. Dr. Kosnik thought it was the tumor causing this. He ordered another MRI, which showed that the tumor was still in the same position.

During those three years, so many dear people joined us in praying for Mateo's healing. I requested prayer for Mateo many times. Our congregation prayed and wonderfully supported us through this time. Also, I requested prayer for him in the prayer group at the university I was attending. The ministering chaplain took a personal interest in Mateo and kept his need before the faculty every day for prayer. Many of our friends and the children's school teachers showed much kindness and compassion to us through this. So many expressed their sincere concern and care during this trying time.

Dr. Kosnik is a very competent and compassionate man, who not only relies on medical science to guide him through surgeries and diagnosis and prognosis but also believes in God as a personal help and friend. In his office he has many Scriptures and prayers posted to inspire him through those valleys that try his soul, those times when God chooses to unite the children with Him rather than to bear the burden of earthly life. How this must try Dr. Kosnik's soul! Also, on his walls are many colored drawings and paintings from children whom Dr. Kosnik has treated. He also has many letters posted on his wall, thanking God that Dr. Kosnik was their doctor. Mateo's picture is among those letters and pictures, because Dr. Kosnik is being used of God in many wonderful ways.

Mateo's CT scan in August 2006 showed some changes. It appeared that Mateo was beginning to have seizures, and Dr. Kosnik scheduled another MRI for September 19, 2006. This test was done the same week as the Bible School our church had. When my wife and I took Mateo for his test, we were just going through the motions, committed to the fact that our little Mateo was going to have a lifelong battle with this tumor, which could possibly continue to grow and become malignant. As we sat in the waiting room, Dr. Kosnik came in the room and said he wanted to show us something. The first thought that came to our minds was the worst case scenario.

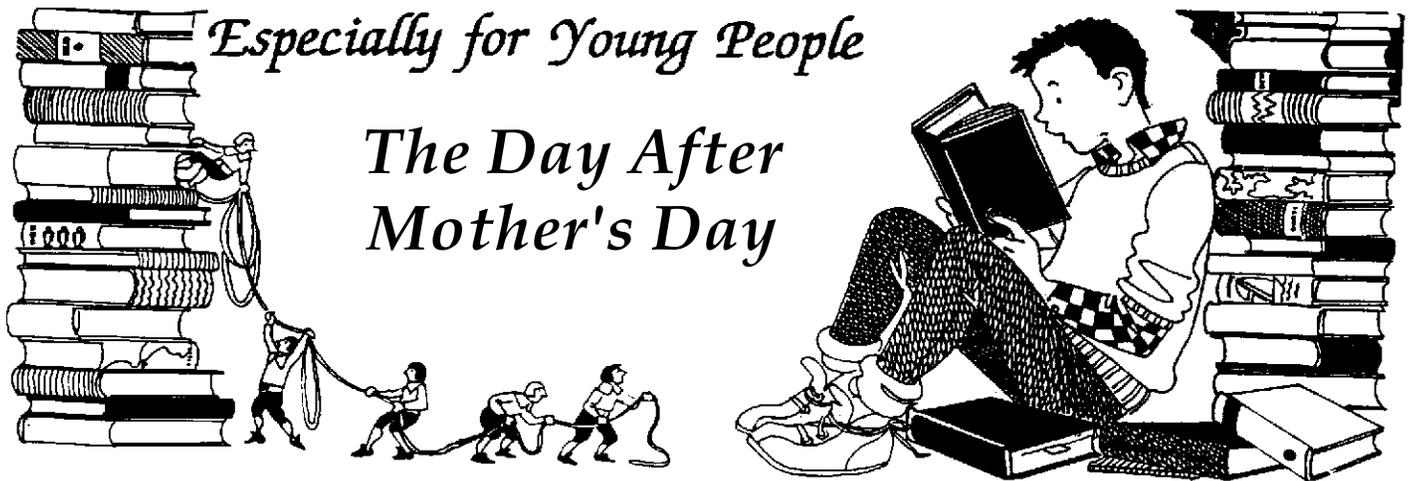
As we walked back to the patient's room to look at the MRI pictures, Dr. Kosnik commented to us that Mateo had a perfect brain. I thought that Dr. Kosnik was trying to lighten the mood for the outcome, so I said that was more than I have. However, as we looked at the MRI pictures, Dr. Kosnik told us that the brain tumor was *gone* and that Mateo had a perfect brain! I thought I was going to shout the hospital down! I said, "Praise the Lord!" and Dr. Kosnik said, "Amen." Then my wife and I began thanking God for answering prayer. God still answers prayer and divinely heals. Dr. Kosnik told us that he believes in prayer and that he believes it was prayer that healed Mateo. He also admonished us to keep on praying because it does help. How I thank God that the Church of God still believes and preaches divine healing!

The theme that Sister Karen Wilks chose for the 2006 Bible School Program was "The Many Mighty Miracles of Jesus Christ." It was a most appropriate theme! Little did I know, this was going to be the time when Mateo was going to experience a personal visit from his Creator and be healed. What a wonderful experience this little boy has had in his young life! Mateo now knows that Jesus does perform "Many Mighty Miracles" in the twenty-first century.

Mateo was a real trooper throughout his ordeal, always singing his children's church songs. He loves to go to the services at the Church of God, and he still sings those precious choruses that kept him through the very dark times in his young life. For a young boy of six years of age to experience such a personal touch from Jesus Christ, surely Jesus will answer the other burdens in his and his sister's lives. Mateo said when he grows up, he wants to be a Church of God preacher. He also told us that he never wants to leave the Church of God at God's Acres, because that is where God healed him.

To end this personal testimony, my wife and I would like to request your earnest prayers for Sandra and Mateo who are facing some very challenging times. This situation has been a very trying time for us, but Jesus has never left us or forsaken us! We have not had to face this trial alone! God intervened divinely without medication, radiation treatments, chemotherapy, or surgery. God divinely healed our little Mateo! Praise God forever for the "Many Mighty Miracles of Jesus Christ!"

Brother Kenny Decker



"We celebrated Mother's Day in the loveliest way," remarked Billy Stone, as he met Miss Fowler, his Sunday school teacher and walked proudly alongside her. "We made Mother a present."

"How nice! I suppose you love her very much, don't you?"

"Lots!"

"Well, Billy, my man," said Miss Fowler, stopping a moment at the corner where she was to turn off, "don't forget your lesson last Sunday. You know what the Bible tells us about how true love shows itself."

Yes, Billy knew. He walked on thinking of it, and presently his round face grew very sober.

"Yesterday we told Mother that we gave her the present with our love. Today is only a day later, and I would not get up in time for breakfast. I was late at school, I made the twins mad, and I sneaked out the back door so as not to have to go for the mail. I cannot see how anybody, by looking at the way I have acted, could tell that I liked my mother at all."

It was beginning to rain when Billy reached home. He and the twins, who had been playing in the yard, all went into the kitchen together. Mrs. Stone, at work in another room, looked out the window with a sigh. She had so much to do, and there was liable to be trouble when the children must stay indoors.

Billy thought of this too.

The twins were hanging their

hats up with a shuffle.

"I say, Robin," asked Billy, abruptly, "how much do you love Mother this afternoon?"

Robin turned and stared at him. What a queer question! It was not a bit like the boy!

"Why?" he giggled. "Do you want me to write poetry about it?"

"That's arithmetic," said Dora.

Dora was the eldest of them all. She was bolstered up in a big arm chair by the fire. She had been ill for a fortnight.

"How much?" repeated Robin. "How can you tell how much you love a person?"

"In plenty of ways," said Billy, wisely. "I'll tell you one right now. I love Mother a boxful." With that he picked up the kindling box and marched out to the shed.

A light broke upon the twins.

"Oh!" cried Harry. "That's what you mean, is it? Well, I love her a pailful," seizing the water bucket and starting for the pump.

"I love her a scuttle full," said Robin, and then he plunged down the cellar after coal.

Dora looked at the clock. She had looked at it five minutes before and said: "I do believe my darling mother is going to forget the medicine this time. I shall not remind her, that is sure!"

"But I guess," she said now, reaching for the bottle with a wry face, "I guess at least I can love her a spoonful!"

There was a shout of laughter

as the boys came back in time to hear her. Mrs. Stone heard and glanced anxiously at the door.

"I hope there is no mischief afoot. I'm in a hurry to get the sewing done."

Kitty Stone had roused herself from her book in the old-fashioned kitchen window seat to listen to Billy and the rest. So far, she had said nothing, but when the kindling box and the pail and the scuttle were full, and the medicine bottle a little less full, the covers of Kitty's book went together with a snap.

"Don't you think," she said, "that all of us together, if we hurried, could love Mother this room full before she came in and caught us? I'll clean the stove and polish it."

They worked like beavers. The last tin was hung on the nail and the last chair set back to the wall when Mrs. Stone's step was heard coming rapidly down the hall.

"Dora, child, your medicine!" she said.

"Yes'm," said Dora demurely, "I took it for love—to you, not to it."

Her mother looked around the tidy room, and when she saw the ring of smiling faces, she kissed them every one, and her own bright face was as bright as the brightest.

"There, now, do you see?" said Billy to Robin. "Can't you tell how much you love a person? Every day is going to be a Mother's Day!"

Selected

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead

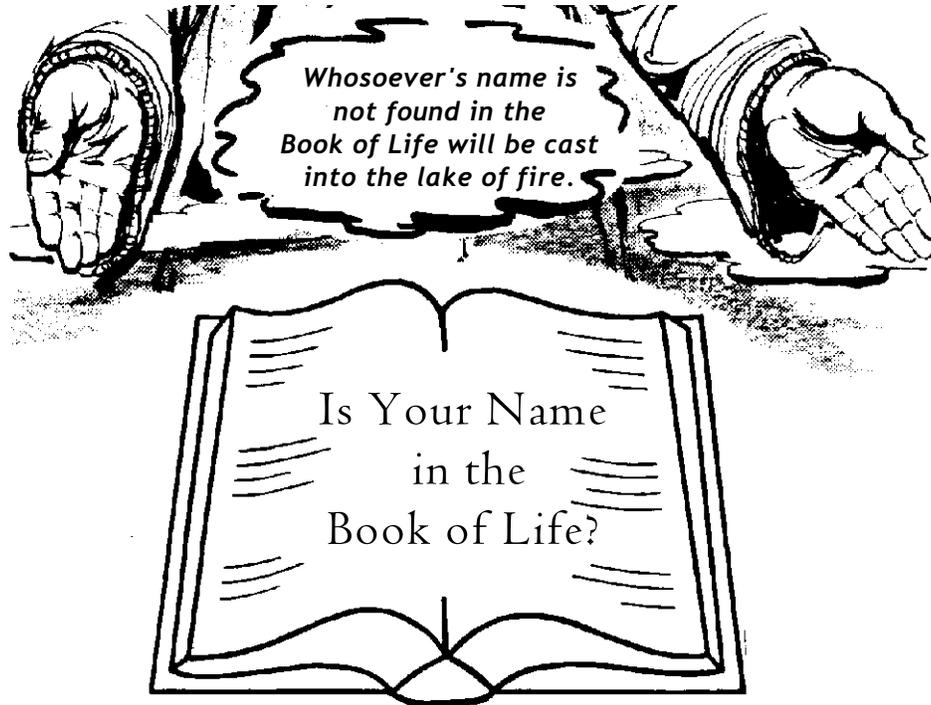
which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found

written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.



*Brother Fred Barrows*

### **Repentance**

If I were to ask the question, "Do you want to go to Heaven when this life is over?" no doubt, your answer would be yes. Dear one, you may profess to have salvation and do many good works, or you might have joined a church, yet there is no reality in your life. One Scripture tells of people having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. The power only comes through the Spirit of God dwelling in your heart. The reason that people do not overcome in temptation is, either they do not have the Spirit of God dwelling in their hearts or they are

not leaning on Him strongly enough.

When Christ comes into your life, He blots out every sin. No matter how deep in sin you have gone or what you have done, the blood can still cover it if you allow it to be applied to your heart and life. Before a person repents of sin, conviction has to work; then he has to have faith, repent, confess, and forsake all sin. The Scripture lets you know that you must be born of the Spirit of God. A man or a woman may slip away from God, but if he or she comes back, repents, and turns to God wholeheartedly, God writes that person's name in His Book.

Psalm 87:5-6 reads: "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah."

Only the Father can put your name in the Lamb's Book of Life, and the only way He will put it in there is if you repent of all known sin, turn your life over to Christ, and make a covenant with Him: "Lord, if You save me, I will live for You for the rest of my days."

Exodus 32:32-33 reads: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out

of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." This was when Moses was so concerned about the people after they had worshiped the golden calf. God was ready to kill the people, but Moses stood up and interceded in their behalf.

One reason Israel of old got in so much trouble was that many times they failed to wait on God. They would not allow God to work through their lives the way He chose to work. That is still a problem with the great masses of people. Often when you ask people if they are Christians, they say yes.

Years ago when I worked with a man and talked to him about the things of God, he said, "I know that I'm a Christian."

I asked him, "How do you know you are a Christian?"

He replied, "My wife and I were driving down the road and we were coming up a hill, and just about the time we got to the top of the hill, a great feeling came over us, and we knew we were saved."

Dear one, that is not the way salvation comes. Salvation does not come by feelings, although there is emotion in salvation.

Often people believe they are Christians because they were christened as babies or baptized. Friend, those things cannot get your name in the Book of Life. If your name is not in the Book of Life, when either death comes upon you or the consummation of time comes, you are not going to make Heaven your home.

### **Salvation—An Individual Matter**

Each of us is going to stand before the throne of God. Many people think that because their mother and father were Christians, that gives them an edge with God. No, when they stand before the throne of God, they will stand as individuals before Him. Their mother and father will not be there. Many

people have family and loved ones who are saved, yet they are not. One cannot pin his or her salvation on someone else's coat tail. This is an individual matter.

Each person must go before the throne of grace before Almighty God and seek His face and ask Him for Christ's sake for forgiveness; then that person turns from sin. When this is done, and God is satisfied, He writes that individual's name in the Book of Life. No man or woman can remove another person's name from the Book of Life except God, and the only way God will ever remove a person's name from the Book is for that one to go back into sin.

If you sin and turn to God in repentance, the Scripture says in Ezekiel that all your unrighteousness will be forgotten. You will put away all sin, and God will never remember those sins against you again. On the other hand, if you have turned your back on God, all the righteousness that you had done will not be remembered. You see, God is fair. In the day that you sin, God will forget all your righteousness, and He will hold you responsible.

Many people have a profession, but they have no possession in their souls. They have a form of godliness, but there is no power in it. Such people may look good outwardly, but inwardly they are unclean. Matthew 23:28-30 states: "Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets."

You must realize that if you sin, you have sinned against God. You have sinned against the Spirit of grace. The Scripture tells us in Hebrews that if you have once known and tasted of the good gift of God

and turn away, there is no more help for you. What does this really mean? Does it mean that if you were once saved and have turned your back on God you will never have an opportunity to get saved again? No, that is not what the Scripture is saying. The reason there is no place of repentance is that people crucify the Son of God afresh on a daily basis. One must come to the place where he stops the sin business, and then there will be grace.

### **Time to Get Into the Ark**

Consider the prodigal son. He had everything his heart desired. He lived in his father's house and ate at his father's table every day, and he enjoyed all the things of home, but something caused him to be dissatisfied. What happened next? He went to his father, and in essence, said, "Give me the portion that belongs to me, because I am going to go out." When he took his goods, he went out and wasted it all, and he ended up in a hogpen. Soon he remembered how well even the servants had it at his father's house.

When the Lord sees that an individual has backslidden, He may not necessarily deal with him in the same exact way He did before he was saved the first time. After all, he walked away from God, just as the prodigal son walked away and chose to go to a far country. That is a picture of many men and women today who have fallen into sin. When you realize that you have gone the wrong way, God will work with you. He is interested in your getting back into the fold.

Is your name in the Book of Life? Dear one, eternity is coming. I do not know that anyone could paint a picture that would be horrible enough for anyone to fully realize the awfulness of hell for those who are lost and the greatness that Heaven will hold for those who have been redeemed. Can you imagine the seriousness when you stand before the throne of judgment and the door of mercy has been shut? It

will be as it was in the days of Noah.

Noah labored for nearly 120 years to build the ark, and he preached the Gospel. When the ark was finished, God told Noah it was time to get into the ark. After all the animals and Noah and his family entered the ark, no doubt people laughed at him. I can imagine people saying, "Hey, Noah, what are you doing in that big contraption?" Noah had already warned them by telling them it was going to rain and then flood the earth. You can just about picture them kicking up the dust. They had never seen rain. Nevertheless, just because they had never seen rain was no sign that a big storm was not coming.

After Noah entered the ark, the Scripture lets us know that God shut the door. When that door was shut, no man could open it. After they stayed in the ark for a few days, suddenly the people began to feel something happening, because water started to come down from the sky. As it rained, the water began to rise and the ark lifted off its resting place. No doubt, the people outside pounded on the ark and cried out for Noah to let them in, but he could not.

### **Lazarus and the Rich Man**

Lazarus did not have much of this life's goods, and the rich man fared sumptuously every day. He had everything he wanted, while Lazarus lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring just the crumbs that fell from his table. Then Lazarus died and went to Abraham's bosom, and the rich man also died. He did not make it to Heaven, and he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and said, in so many words, "Father Abraham, would you let Lazarus dip his finger in water to cool my tongue?"

Dear one, God is striving as never before to get men and women into the ark of safety before it is everlastingly too late. He is working on your heart because He wants you to enter the ark before it is too late.

When you stand before the judgment bar of God and the books are opened, you will be judged out of them. Those books have the record of all the deeds that each person has done. Hebrews 9:27 tells us that it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the Judgment. When we stand before the judgment bar of God, every man will give an account of the deeds done in his or her body, whether they are good or evil.

The Book of Life holds the names of the redeemed of all ages. When Christ has moved from His mercy seat to the judgment seat and that book is opened, He will call your name, and you will stand alone. Neither your pastor nor your spouse will stand beside you. None of the saints will stand beside you, either, to say that you were a good person, because God already knows all about you. The question is, Is your name in the Book?

I remember a song that someone used to sing that reads: "*Please search the Book again, I thought my name was there. I went to church on Sunday, but I never knelt in prayer. Please search the Book again; it's too late now I know. Please search the Book again, Before I have to go.*"

Sometimes I think God wants to get people to a point where He can get them to realize that He truly loves them. Dear one, if you were the only individual who needed to be saved, Christ still would have died for you. The only thing that stands between you and salvation is yourself. Often people make excuses for not serving God, but there are not any good excuses or reasons for a person not to serve God.

### **Death Comes to All**

Jesus said in Luke, Chapter 14, that a certain man made a great supper and sent his servant to bid people to come, but they all began to make excuses. One said he bought a piece of ground and had to go see it. Another bought some oxen and wanted to go prove them.

Another said he married a wife and could not come. This grieved the man and he became angry. Therefore, he told his servant to go out into the highways and hedges and compel others to come in. The word *compel* means "to urge or to encourage."

Dear one, God is striving with your heart. God loves you, and He desires greatly to bring you into the ark of safety before it is too late. Recently a dear young mother only eighteen years of age perished in a fire along with her three children. Sometimes people think, "I'm young and I've got all the time in the world to go out and sow my wild oats," but you never know when God will call you out of this world. The young woman who perished in the fire was not old. Death comes to all. If you die lost and die in your sins, Jesus said you cannot go where He is. He wants you to make it into the ark before it is everlastingly too late.

Everyone will stand before the judgment bar of God in the last day. Every person who has ever lived upon the face of the earth, every person who is living now, and every person who will live in the future will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account of the deeds done in the body. If you are unsaved, Jesus will ask you why you did not serve Him. He will want to know why you rejected Him when He stood with outstretched arms and said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Are you not weary of the way you have been living? Perhaps you are in a situation that you do not know how to get out of. Often when people walk away from the Lord, the enemy draws them away, step by step. Do you know why? He wants to bind the cords of sin around them to the place where they cannot move. It takes the power of God through the blood of Jesus Christ to break the chains that have men and women bound.

The Bible tells of a man named Legion, who had many devils in

him. No man could tame him. He dwelled among the tombs. The poor man was always in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones. When he saw Christ, he said, "Did You come to torment me?" Jesus let him know that He had come to deliver him, and that is exactly what He did. When others tried to bind him, they could not do it, but when he came face to face with Jesus, He broke the power of sin.

Dear one, that is what you need, no matter what has you bound. You might be bound with the habits of life. The cigarette habit might have you so bound that you think you can never get free, but Satan is a liar. He always has been a liar. There is power in the blood of Christ to cleanse you from all sin. Your situation is no more difficult for God than anyone else's. Men need to come face to face with Jesus.

### **Time Is Running Out**

Now let us look at the other side of the spectrum. Suppose you are standing before the judgment bar of God, and as they call your name and you step up before Him, God says, "Is his name in the Book?"

"Yes, Lord, his name is here." That is going to be the most beautiful sound that mortal ears have ever heard when Jesus says, "Come and enter into the joys of the Lord. Come and enjoy that which I have prepared for you." The most hideous words that one will ever hear spoken are, "Your name is not in the Book. Depart from Me, ye worker of iniquity." Then you will be cast into everlasting fire.

God destroyed the world once by water. Every time you see a rainbow in the sky, that is a reminder of God's promise that He will never destroy this world again by water. The next time God destroys this world, it will be by fire. The Scripture lets us know that the elements are going to melt with fervent heat. First, however, the trumpet will sound, and the dead

will be awakened and come out of their graves. Even the sea will give up the dead. Next, all who are alive and remain will meet the Lord in the air. Then we all will stand in the presence of Almighty God.

The question is, How do you stand before God? He is trying His very best to awaken you to your need. The Bible does not tell us of the exact happenings that will take place before the consummation of time. However, we do know that the world is going to wax worse and worse. We are living in the Laodicean age. The Scripture lets us know this is the most deceptive age. It is a time when many people have become lukewarm. Individuals will say, "I go to church every Sunday and never miss. I'm a Sunday school teacher, and I even get up and speak." Do you know what the Apostle Paul said one time? He feared that after he had preached the Gospel to others that he himself might become a castaway. That is possible, dear one.

You need to keep in your mind that one day you are going to stand before God. He is going to judge the righteous and the unrighteous. All the deeds that you have done in your body, whether they are good or evil, will be judged. If your name is not in the Book of Life, are you planning to get it in? If so, when are you going to get it in there? Time is running out. Sometimes people think they have much time, but one does not know how much time he has. Why not let today be the time that you settle the question with the Lord? Will you humble yourself before God now?

### **Enter While the Door of Mercy Is Still Open**

You may be loaded down with many sins, and the enemy will stand at your side and say, "You cannot make it." Friend, he is a liar. Christ came to help us. He had a robe of flesh to overcome. He was divine, but He was human as well. It had to be that way so that He could be a

High Priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Jesus was without sin, but He was tempted with every form of sin; yet He overcame.

When Christ came, He came to His own first, the Jewish nation, but they rejected Him. John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Would you like to be a child of God? God has the door open.

In false religion often they say they are going to open the church doors. Man's roll book might burn or someone could remove your name, but if your name is in God's Book, sin is the only thing that can blot it out, and repentance is the only thing that will put it in.

Sometimes people try to stand on the merits of what they have done. They have been great workers and have done many good things. In 1 Corinthians 13:1-2 the Apostle Paul said: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Charity is the love of Christ in your heart.

The Prophet Isaiah said in Isaiah 64:6, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." God wants to change all of that for you, and He will do it if you will let Him. He will not save you against your will. If you will go to God, He will help you. He sees everything you are bound with. You may be bound with tobacco, drugs, gambling, or something else, but God can set you free. He is strong enough to break every cord with which Satan has you bound; however, you must make some effort.

I can remember Brother E. A.

Wilson telling many years ago that when he got away from the Lord, he had such a tobacco habit. After he got saved, he had a load of gravel or sand that he was scheduled to deliver, and he stopped at a diner for dinner. When he walked out of the diner after he had eaten, he had a

habit of reaching into his pocket for a cigarette. He did not have any cigarettes, but out of habit, he put his hand in his pocket to reach for one. Just then he looked up and said, "Lord, You are going to have to help me with this situation." He

proved to God that he was really interested in being delivered from that habit. Dear one, God will do the same for you if you will let Him.

(Cassette C-5674E)

## Confide in Mother

*The moment a girl hides a secret from her mother, has received a letter she dare not let her mother read, or has a friend whom her mother does not know, she is in danger.*

*A secret is not a good thing for a girl to have. The fewer secrets that lie in the hearts of women at any age, the better. She who has none of her own is best and happiest. It is almost a test of purity.*

*In girlhood, hide nothing from your mother; do nothing that, if discovered by your mother, would make you blush. When you are married, never conceal anything from your husband. Never allow yourself to write a letter that he may not know all about or receive one which you are not quite willing that he should read.*

*Have no mysteries whatever. Tell those who are about you where you go, and what you do,—those who have the right to know, I mean, of course.*

*A little secretiveness has set many a scandal afloat; and much is said about women who tell too much, they are a great deal better off than the woman who tells too little.*

*The girl who frankly says to her mother, "I have been there, and I met So-and-So. Such and such remarks were made, and this or that was done" will be sure to receive good advice and*

*sympathy.*

*If all was right, no fault will be found. If the mother knows as the result of her greater experience that something was improper or unsuitable, she will, if she is a Christian mother, kindly advise her daughter accordingly.*

*You may not always know, girls, just what is right or what is wrong, for you are yet young and inexperienced. You cannot be blamed for making little mistakes ignorantly, but you will not be likely to go very far wrong, if from the first, you have no secrets from your mother.*

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*To thy father and thy mother  
Honor, love, and reverence pay;  
This command, before all other,  
Must a Christian child obey.*

*Help me, Lord, in this sweet duty;  
Guide me in Thy steps divine;  
Show me all the joy and beauty  
Of obedience such as Thine.*

*Teach me how to please and gladden  
Those who toil and care for me;  
Many a grief their heart must sadden,  
Let me still their comfort be.*

Mark 10:46 And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

# WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE THE LORD TO DO FOR YOU?



*Brother Wayne Hafley*

## **Jesus Is Ready to Meet Your Needs**

What a wonderful account recorded in this text of Scripture! Christ came by the blind beggar's way, and when the blind man knew that Christ was near, he began to cry out. I want you to consider what you would like for the Lord to do for you. This blind man expressed a real desire when he saw the opportunity to cry out to God. He really wanted his eyes to be healed so that he could see. Jesus asked him the question, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" When you think about this question, you may think that Jesus knew what his need was, and Jesus did know what his need was. However, He wanted blind

Bartimaeus to ask for help. Friend, God knows what you need. He knows all about your life and your spiritual condition. He knows exactly what your need is, yet He wants you to cry out to Him for that need.

I remember the night that Jesus came by my house when I had a need. I was blind spiritually, but now I can see. If you are lost, friend, you need the Lord. Jesus is passing your way. Many people are letting Him pass by and not asking Him to supply the needs in their lives, but Jesus is ready to meet their needs.

In John, Chapter 5, you can read that Jesus went to the pool of Bethesda and saw a man who was waiting to get into the pool. When the waters were troubled, the first one to

get into the pool received healing. The man had been afflicted for thirty-eight years. In verse 6 Jesus asked him the question, "Wilt thou be made whole?" In verse 7 you can read that the man replied, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." Friend, when you think about getting your spiritual needs met, the devil will try to stand in your way.

In Matthew, Chapter 9, you can read about the woman who had the issue of blood for twelve years. She had tried many physicians but only grew worse. Finally, she heard that Jesus was coming that way, and she made her way through the crowd, saying within herself, "If I may but

touch his garment, I shall be whole" (verse 21). That is positive faith. She had to press her way through the crowd, but she persisted and was healed.

Zacchaeus went up in a sycamore tree because he wanted to see Jesus when He passed by. Zacchaeus was under conviction. He was feeling guilty over how he had overtaxed the people. In Luke 19:5 you can read that when Jesus got under the sycamore tree where Zacchaeus had climbed, He said, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house." Somewhere between the sycamore tree and the ground, Zacchaeus got saved.

In Mark, Chapter 9, you can read of another needy person in the Bible who lacked faith. In verse 24 he said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Then you can read of a centurion in Matthew, Chapter 8, who said, "Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented" (verse 6). When Jesus said He would come and heal him, the centurion said: "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it" (verses 8-9). Jesus said in verse 10, "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

Another time a Gentile woman came to plead for help for her daughter. She received no encouragement from Jesus' disciples. They wanted to send her away. Jesus said in Matthew 15:26, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." In verse 27 she said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." He could not resist her plea.

In Matthew, Chapter 17, you can read the account of the man who came to Jesus about his little child

who was a lunatic. Often he would fall into the water or the fire. In verse 16 he said, "I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him." Jesus rebuked the disciples' unbelief, and then He healed the child. In verse 19 the disciples asked Jesus, "Why could we not cast him out?" Jesus answered in verses 20-21: "Because of your unbelief. . . . Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

### **The Need of Having More Power With God**

Child of God, you ought to be concerned about your situation and why you do not have more power with God. People all over the country have needs. I am glad that I am serving a God who can meet all needs. If you get to the place where you think you do not need Christ, you are in trouble. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

Some people say, "I think the church needs more of this or that." Friend, the church needs more of the Holy Spirit of God working in the lives of the people. Zachariah 4:6 states, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." Saint, if you are not careful, you will think that because you know the Truth, you can never fail. You might have the Truth, but you need the Truth *and* the working power of the Holy Spirit of God.

In 2 Corinthians 12:7 you can read that Paul was given a thorn in the flesh and was buffeted by Satan. He sought the Lord for relief three times, but God said, in so many words, "I will not remove it, but I will give you the grace to go through." We need more of the power and grace of God to take care of the problems that are all around us.

I want you to know that your spirituality stands in a dangerous place. You may say, "Not mine. I've been Church of God for forty years." You need to take heed. What about when someone wrongs you? Certainly, you have a need in your

heart then. Once Peter asked the Lord how often he should forgive his brother. In Matthew 18:22 Jesus said, "Until seventy times seven."

Your spirituality is in danger when you feel that someone has wronged you. Someone may inquire, "What is so dangerous about that?" Well, you are in danger of getting wrong spirits over it, but God has the help that you need. However, you must be honest and cry out to God as blind Bartimaeus did.

This blind man by the roadside cried out to Jesus when He came by. He was concerned about his physical condition, and he was also concerned about his future. He had lived in darkness and wanted a better life than sitting by the wayside begging. Jesus brought a change, and he no longer sat by the wayside begging. He went with Jesus and received his sight. Friend, are you in a condition where you have no desire for more spirituality? Are you satisfied with the way you are? There is more for you. God is ready to meet your needs, but you need to be sick and tired of not having grace and power with God.

### **How to Get More of God in Your Life**

We sing a song that says the kingdom of God will "ever increase in my soul." People need healing for the body, and a variety of other needs, but the greatest need is for people to be more spiritual and more perfect before God. People need to have greater communion with God and a greater touch of God in their lives.

Church, we need a revival, but it must start individually. You need to pray, "Lord, revive *my* spirit." Are you sitting around comfortably while people are dying and going to hell? You need to get stirred about your own spiritual condition. I believe the church needs revival. People like to read books about how others in the past prayed and really got hold of God and how they had

powerful camp meetings right in the midst of great opposition. We serve the same God today, and we need to be as spiritual as they were.

I want to stir you. My friend, if you are not careful, you will relax and not be faithful enough and close enough to God, yet you will go through the motions of serving God. You need to get your needs met and move up close to God. It will take everything you have within you to live the Christian life. You must pray earnestly, fast, and draw near to God. He cannot meet your needs if you will not let Him. No matter how much you think you know about the Bible or how many messages you have preached, you need more of God.

You need to get hold of God, have more zeal, and get more into the things of God in a greater way. The world is waxing worse; therefore, the church ought to be getting better. The world should not have any influence on the saints of God, but today people have allowed worldliness to creep in when they know it is wrong and they know to leave it alone. You will never get the help you need until you come face to face with your real problem. You cannot receive help from God until you are willing to face your own problem.

Going back to our Scripture text, have you ever tried to picture blind Bartimaeus in your mind? That would be a terrible life to live. If everyone who professes to be saved were to get their spiritual needs met and make things right, we could turn this world upside down. God has much that He wants to get done, but can He find more individuals who will apply themselves?

### **Get Rid of Hindrances and Seek to Please God**

Did you know that if wrong attitudes or wrong spirits get hold of you, they will harm you spiritually? They will weaken your faith and hinder your communication with God and your dedication to Him.

Jesus lets you know that if something offends you, you ought to get rid of it. He said in Matthew 5:29-30: "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." Jesus was letting you know how serious it is to get rid of anything that hinders you in your walk with God.

James and John came to Jesus with their mother, and she said to Jesus in Matthew 20:21, "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom." In verse 23 Jesus said, "To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." God has set conditions for when He will bless Zion, and He will bless Zion when people get on their knees and get straightened out; then we will have revival.

Some people have never really gotten filled with the Holy Spirit. Many people want what others want and not what God wants. I believe in working together and having fellowship with God, but you must get your own oil and be dedicated to God. You need to do what God wants and not what man wants. You can never satisfy some people. Paul said in Galatians 1:10, "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

When the time came for Elijah to go to Heaven, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee." Elisha said, "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me" (2 Kings 2:9). Elijah told Elisha that he asked a hard thing, but Elijah said if Elisha saw him when he was taken, then it would be so. Elisha saw him go up, so the Lord gave him a dou-

ble portion of Elijah's spirit, and he did more miracles than Elijah did.

Today we need a double portion of the Holy Ghost of God. Child of God, you ought to live so filled with the Spirit of God that others want what you have. When you become what you ought to be for God and agree with God's covenant, you can set the fields on fire, so to speak. Friend, you must agree with the covenant of God. A covenant is an agreement with God.

Samson had an agreement with God. He was born to be the deliverer of Israel. The power of God came upon him, and he set the Philistines' fields on fire during their harvesttime. If you will get on fire for God and get rid of the little foxes that spoil the vine, you will set Babylon's fields on fire. Some people are afraid to get straight. They are afraid someone will not like them or they will get their money cut off. We need to be teamed up with God and move forward for the Lord. We are going to have to stick together.

When speaking of sticking together, I am reminded of a little story about two boys who went fishing in a boat. One of them fell out of the boat, and when his head came up out of the water, he cried, "Save me!" The other young man reached over and grabbed hold of his arm, but his arm came off, because it was artificial. The one in the water went under again and came up again, hollering, "Save me!"

His friend grabbed his foot, but it came off, because it, too, was artificial. The young man in the boat said, "Man, if you want me to save you, you're going to have to stick together." Church, we need to stick together and stick with God so that nothing can come between us.

Some people are too satisfied with just having a profession. They are unsettled and too wishy-washy. One day you see them, and the next day they are gone. We need to hold on to God. You may say, "Well, I'm just barely making it. I'm just hanging on by a string." Friend, you need a greater hold on God than that.

## "Draw Nigh to God"

In 2 Kings 6:1-7 you can read of a man who was chopping down a tree and the ax head fell into the water. He still had the handle, but he was concerned about what he had lost, because it was borrowed. He cried to Elisha, and the man of God asked him where it fell. He showed him the place, and Elisha cut a stick and cast it into the water, and the ax head floated to the surface. Friend, the Holy Spirit is just as willing to get back into operation in people's lives today when people lose something spiritually, if they will let Him.

Friend, we need to work as if we have only a few days to labor. Many people need their eyes anointed with the eyesalve of the Lord. Blind Bartimaeus received his sight when he cried out to Jesus. Do not be as the Laodicean church that was lukewarm. They were satisfied in their lukewarm condition. In Revelation 3:18 Jesus said, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Sad to say, they did not want it. Too many people seem to be satisfied without the promises being fulfilled, but we can get more of God if we want to.

James 4:8 says, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." That is a promise. Today some people have a desire in their hearts to draw closer to God, but they do not seem to know how. They need to be like a little baby learning to walk. It is in his heart to do it, but many times he tries to take a step and falls. What does he do? He gets up and tries again, and he keeps trying until he finally succeeds.

Before the Apostle Paul was converted, he had a desire in his heart to do the will of God; however, he said he saw another law in his members, the law of sin, warring against the law of his mind. He

could not do what he really wanted to do. Living for God takes more than having a desire in your mind. It takes getting down before God and asking Him to bring deliverance. If you are not careful, you will allow the world to stop your forward progress for God, and the world will move in upon you. In many cases, worldliness has moved into people's lives. The watchman is on the wall, and when the enemy comes around, he will lift up a standard against him. Church of God, we need this standard.

Sometimes people get the idea, "I've found something new! I have new liberty and new truth!" One person made the statement that God had given him new light and more liberty than he had ever had in his life. When someone makes such a statement, you need to consider how much worldliness you see in their lives. Mark it down, there is no freedom outside the Truth.

### How to Obtain God's Favor

Jesus said in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Being free from sin takes more than having the Truth; it takes obeying the Truth. You must be a doer of the Word, not a hearer only. If you hear the Truth and do not obey it, then you are deceiving yourself. False religion is filled with people who hear the Word of God but do not obey it. In John 10:27 Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Some people have a desire in their hearts to follow Christ, but they must conquer their will to do God's will.

When Bartimaeus began to cry out to Jesus, the crowd told him to hold his peace. They wanted him to quit crying out, but something inside him said, "This may be my only chance. Christ is coming by, and I have a personal need." Dear one, are you going to let other people keep you from getting your need supplied? Bartimaeus was determined to get to Jesus. He realized, "This is

my opportunity, so I am going to cry out." The crowd said, "Shhh! Stop that!"

People have tried to stop the message of Truth, and they have even threatened those who preach it. The morning-time Apostles did not worry about people's threats. They said, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). They let it be known when the lame man was made whole, it was not by their power, but through the name of Jesus.

Do you want to see the needs in your life met? Do not let your husband, your wife, your children, a good friend, a boyfriend, or a girlfriend stop you from getting right with God and obeying Him. Many people are fulfilling the desires of the flesh and starving to death spiritually. They are so involved with society, various causes, bingo, selling products, and this and that; but they lack something spiritually. How spiritual are you?

Blind Bartimaeus did not let anyone or anything stop him, and when Jesus heard him crying out to Him, He stopped and called for him. Friend, if you come to Christ with an honest heart, you will hear from Heaven. You have to get God's favor above all other people. You need to quit trying to be like other people. You do not need the fashions of the world. You need the standard of holy character and modesty. People get carried away with the fashions of the world, and it has robbed them spiritually. My friend, you need the preaching of the Word of God, and you need to allow the Word and the Spirit to work in your heart.

Bartimaeus knew what his personal need was. Friend, you know what your need is, and you also know the price that you must pay to get that need met. You may say, "I just want to get close to God." Well, what got between you and Him? Sometimes people know what their real need is, but when they get to an altar of prayer, they fail to deal with it. Instead, they say, "I just want to get a little closer to God."

You need to get right down to the root of the problem and get it out in the open and deal with it. Too often men and women try to justify themselves. When you are justified with God, it means you are clear with Him. When you try to justify yourself, you cannot clear yourself. God is the only One who can justify you, and when the justification comes, peace will come into your soul.

### **Be a Living Witness**

Friend, do not put off turning to God. If you do, you will regret that you did. You may lose the only opportunity you will ever get to have your needs met, and you will regret that you did not get those needs met. In Luke, Chapter 16, you can read about the rich man who died and went to hell. He cried and regretted that he had turned God down. He could have gotten his needs met. He did not have to go to that awful place of torments. Friend, in hell it will be too late to cry then. The rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his five brothers. He knew that they were living the same way he had, and he did not want them to come to that awful place of torments.

Christian friend, you ought to live a holy life so that others will want to live as you do. You ought to be an example to others. You need to ask yourself this question: If every member of the congregation were just as I am, what kind of church would it be? Are you leaving things to get done by just a few others or are you helping? If you want to go to Heaven, you must live Christlike. It is holiness or hell. In Heaven there is not going to be one church on this corner and another church on that corner. The only church there will be is the Church of the Living God.

When Jesus healed blind Bartimaeus, can you imagine the thrill he felt? It was a wondrous miracle to behold! Church, we are not experiencing all that God wants us to have—the beauty that we could have and the bodies that

could be healed. Friend, you need to seek the old paths and walk therein. Is the Word finding that you have a hard heart?

Oh, friend, I hope I am stirring you within. What are you aspiring to do for God? If you will determine in your heart to please God, it would be the greatest thing you have ever done in your life. Blind Bartimaeus could witness, "I was blind, but now I can see!" Others could say of you, "There is the one who was once blind and used to beg on the roadside. Look what happened!" Christian friend, you need to be a living witness, living holy every day. This is evidence of something that is beyond human nature and beyond science. This is evidence

of a divine work of God. Nothing is impossible with God.

Dear one, have you tasted that the Lord is gracious? You can taste and see that the Lord is good. Thank God, you, too, can have this experience. You do not have to just read about it or listen to someone tell about it, but you can have it for yourself. You can have a taste of the pie, so to speak. You can have a foretaste of Heaven when you get saved. Are you living in the hogpen of sin? Are you dying of starvation when there is plenty of food at Father's table? If you will cry out to the Lord as Bartimaeus did, God will supply your need.

*(Cassette C-5112E)*

## **The 23<sup>rd</sup> Channel**

The Television is my shepherd, my spiritual growth shall want.

It maketh me to sit down and do nothing for His Name's sake, because it requireth all my spare time. It keepeth me from doing my duty as a Christian, because it presenteth so many good shows I must see.

It restoreth my knowledge of the things of the world, and keepeth me from the study of God's Word. It leadeth me in the paths of failing to attend the evening worship services, and doing nothing in the Kingdom of God.

Yea, though I live to be a hundred, I shall keep on viewing my Television, as long as it will work, for it is my closest companion. Its sound and its picture, they comfort me.

It presenteth entertainment before me and keepeth me from doing important things with my family. It fills my head with ideas which differ from those set forth in the Word of God.

Surely, no good thing will come of my life, because my Television offereth me no good time to do the will of God; thus, I will dwell in the place of the devil and his angels forever.

# Thistledown

Do we realize the extraordinary dynamic of the printed page? Dr. Goodell, of the American Board of Missions, passing through Nicodemia in 1832 and having no time to stop, left with a stranger a copy of *The Dairyman's Daughter* in the Armenian-Turkish language.

Seventeen years afterward he visited Nicodemia, and found a church of more than forty members. Dr. Griffith John tells of eight churches in China that were reared by tracts alone. Sir Bartle Frere, traveling in India, was amazed to find a small town in which the idol shrines and temples were empty, but the townsfolk professed the Christian faith. It transpired that some years earlier, one of the townsfolk had been given an old garment by an English resident. In a pocket, of which had been forgotten, lay a Gospel portion with eight or nine tracts in the vernacular. Life is not in the sower, but in the seed. Even if an infidel scattered the Scriptures, he would only be exploding his own battlements.

In scattering divine literature we liberate thistledown, laden with precious seed, which, blown by the winds of the Spirit, floats over the world. The printed page never flinches, never shows cowardice; it is never tempted to compromise; it never tires, never grows disheartened; it travels cheaply, and requires no hired help; it works while we sleep; it never loses its temper; and it works long after we are dead. The printed page is a visitor that gets inside the home and stays there; it always catches a man in the right mood, for it speaks to him only when he is reading it. It always sticks to what it has said and never answers back; and it is bait left permanently in the pool.

Another powerful reason for using literature is that the printed page will reach those otherwise utterly unreached, and it may be the only chance they will ever have of eternal life. Someone once gave four copies of H. L. Hasting's lecture on *The Inspiration of the Bible* to four infidels at different times. All four were converted and became ministers of the

Gospel. Many decades ago a lady gave some leaflets to two actors. One of the actors, led by this tract to attend church and so becoming converted, later became a pastor. Through his influence, another man was led into the ministry. Thus, the personal influence of these two notable pulpit speakers is traceable to one little leaflet in the hands of a woman.

No limit can be put to the extent of its possible influence, nor is even its political influence measurable. Martin Luther wrote a pamphlet on Galatians that, falling into John Bunyan's hands, converted him. More than 150,000,000 copies of Spurgeon's sermons have gone into circulation.

A young Frenchman who had been wounded at the siege of Saint Quentin was languishing on a pallet in the hospital when a tract that lay on the coverlet caught his eye. He read it and was converted. The monument of that man may be seen before a church in Paris, standing with a Bible in his hand—Admiral Coligny, the leader of the Reformation in France. But the tract had not yet finished its work. It was read by Coligny's nurse, a Sister of Mercy, who penitently placed it in the hands of the Lady Abbess, and she, too, was converted by it. She fled from France to the Palatinate, where she met a young Hollander and became his wife. The influence that she had upon that man reacted upon the whole continent of Europe, for he was William of Orange, who became the champion of liberty and Protestantism in the Netherlands.

The printed page is deathless: you can destroy one, but the press can reproduce millions. As often as it is martyred, it is raised. The ripple started by a given tract can widen down through the centuries until it bears upon the Great White Throne. Its very mutilation can be its sowing.

When Leigh Richmond was once traveling by coach, passengers got out to walk, and he began to give a tract to every wayfarer he met. One of his fellow travelers smiled derisively as he saw a tract treated contemptuously by the

receiver—torn in two and thrown down on the road. A puff of wind carried it over a hedge into a hayfield, where a number of haymakers were seated. Soon they were listening to the tract, read by one of their number who had found it. He was observed, carefully joining together the two parts that had been torn asunder but were held together by a thread. The reader was led to reflection and prayer and, subsequently, became an earnest Christian and a tract distributor himself; and of the rest, within twelve months three became active Christian workers.

Nor let us forget the enormous electric voltage prayer can put behind the tract. God's thistledown enters doors locked to the evangelist. It can be enclosed in every letter. Its economy places it within the reach of all. It preaches in the factory, the railway carriage, and the kitchen; it visits the hospital ward and the workhouse and whispers in the ear of the dying. For prayer—that is, God—is behind it.

"On every tract or copy of the Holy Scriptures that we give," said George Muller, "first, we should as much as possible ask God's blessings. Second, we should expect God's blessings upon our labors and confidently expect it; yea, look out for His blessing. We should labor on in this service, prayerfully and believingly labor on, even though for a long time we should see little or no fruit; yea, we should labor on as if everything depended on our labors. Whilst, in reality, we ought not to put the least confidence in our exertions, but alone in God's ability and willingness to bless, by His Holy Spirit, our efforts for the sake of the Lord Jesus."

The final, and almost incredible, incentive is that the opportunity is rapidly passing. It may soon be over for us.

*The sunset burns across the sky;  
Upon the air its warning cry  
The curfew toils, from tower to  
tower;  
O children, 'tis the last, last hour!  
Work that centuries might have  
done  
Must crowd the hour of setting sun.*

D.M. Panton



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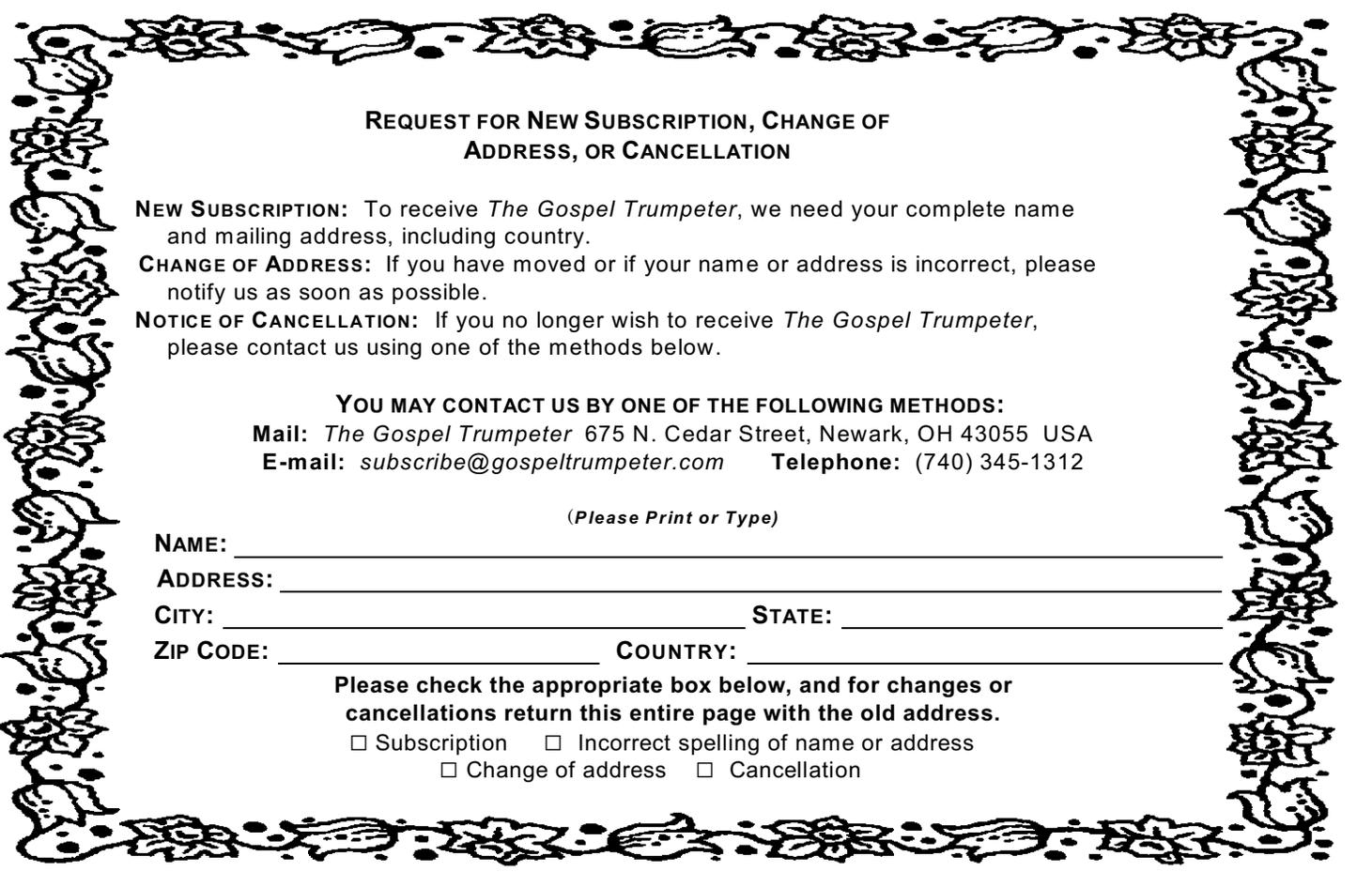
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