

The Gospel Trumpeter

JUSTIFICATION

SANCTIFICATION

UNITY & TRUTH

"So will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." Eze. 34:12 Jer. 32:39

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished." Rev. 10:7 Mal. 2:13

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 37 October 2007 No. 10



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?"

Fall 2007 Camp Meeting Report

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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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A Spiritual Outpouring

It is with deep regret that another beautiful camp meeting has drawn to a close. Eight days of fellowship and feasting on the wonderful Word and Spirit of God is now history. We can only reminisce over the sweet times we have shared together again with the people of God who gathered to be with us. Blessed memories of things accomplished for the Lord will linger on in our minds for a long time to come. Surely, each saint who was in the meeting would agree that the services were overshadowed with the presence of the Lord. Relationships that had been strained or even broken were mended. Brethren were drawn together in unity again through the moving of God's Spirit. Our hearts are overwhelmed at the way God works when people allow Him to have His way.

Another crowning point of this meeting was seeing new people come in for the first time. These are children of God that we had never met before, precious saints who truly love God and want to serve Him faithfully. They are seeking other brothers and sisters who have a like kindred spirit as their own, desiring to have fellowship in the Spirit with Christ, those who are redeemed from sin and made new through salvation. This fellowship binds the hearts of all saved men and woman together by sweet chords of love created by our Savior Jesus Christ. The worldly or carnally minded man knows nothing of this blessed experience.

Spiritual outpourings falling like rain from heaven brought refreshment to souls and encouragement to hearts. This camp meeting proved to be very beneficial to all who attended. As the Spirit of the Lord moved in and through the services, He brought help and strength to His saints. As God blesses His people, He also showers conviction upon those who are lost in sin, backslidden, or walking afar off. When God sets the table, He prepares something for each one. No one ever has to go away empty from Spirit-filled services. Unfortunately, though, many do because they fail to respond to God's call to surrender their lives to His great plan. This always grieves God, and it also saddens the hearts of His people to see needs go unmet. Another regret when the meeting closes is to see needs yet unfulfilled.

The main purpose for having camp meeting is to see people in need of God find salvation for their souls and deliverance from the bondage of sin. It is an opportunity for men and women to be enlightened to their need of God. Spiritual outpourings of conviction throughout the meeting made it difficult for needy ones to resist His tender tugging. What a precious sight it is to see lost souls weeping their way into the loving arms of our wonderful, caring, and forgiving Savior! Great joy fills our hearts when a lost soul submits to God. In a second of time the old sinner is "delivered from the power of darkness, and . . . translated . . . into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Colossians 1:13). The Lord knows just how to pick up the broken pieces of a shattered life and mend that life back together, making it a new and beautiful vessel. Jesus said in Luke 15:10, "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

It was a blessing to see a goodly number of the ministry present and sitting on the rostrum, backing the men of God as they preached. A sweet spirit of unity permeated the atmosphere, both of the ministry and the laity. In Psalm 133:1 the Psalmist David penned these words: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." The ministers preached exceptional messages throughout the meeting. God used His angels (His ministers) to sound forth the Truth in a manner for all to understand. Provision was made for every spiritual need to be met.

The camp meeting in August yielded a harvest of many good things and rich blessings for each one in attendance to enjoy. These times of refreshing do not just happen automatically. It takes seeking God earnestly and telling Him we need His presence and help. Many prayers went up to the Lord weeks before the meeting convened. Now, we want to thank Him and express our sincere gratitude for His divine guidance and answers to our petitions. We ask you to join with us in continued prayer that God will hold the new converts steady.

Our Winter Camp Meeting will be held the last week in December (December 26-30), and we cordially invite you to come and worship with us.

Nehemiah 6:1 Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;)

2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.

3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

4 Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

5 Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand;

6 Wherein was written, It is re-

ported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.

7 And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.

It's a Great Work



Brother Roger L. Decker

Counting the Cost

You could do no greater work in life than the work of God. All other works will cease, but the work of God will be with you throughout eternity. Nehemiah was the king's cup bearer, which was a prominent position in the court of King Artaxerxes of Persia. In modern times we would call him a butler. In the Book of Nehemiah, Chapter 1, Nehemiah inquired about the Jews who had escaped captivity and concerning Jerusalem. Verse 3 says, "And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire."

When Nehemiah heard that the remnant left was in great affliction and reproach, that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down, and that the gates were burned with fire, he sat down and wept. Verse 4 tells us that he "mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven." We have before us a true, consecrated man of God who was concerned about the welfare of God's people. He was very saddened by the report he had received, so he made a request of the king to go to Jerusalem, which the king granted. Nehemiah traveled to Jerusalem and tarried there three days before he even started to assess the situation. He stated in Nehemiah 2:11, "So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days."

Nehemiah did not rush into the

task without first counting the cost, but once he began the work, there was no turning back. That is how you should be concerning God's work, child of God. First, you should have counted the cost before you became a child of God, and then once you had counted the cost, you ought to be determined that you are not turning back. You should not leave the work of God; it is for eternity.

Jesus spoke along the same line in Luke 14:28-30 when He said: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was

not able to finish." Dear one, Nehemiah counted the cost. He tarried at Jerusalem three days, and then he went out alone at night to inspect the ruins. He did not share his burden with others.

Nehemiah 2:12-13 reads: "And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire."

Nehemiah was determined and consecrated; he was sold out completely to the work of God. After Nehemiah inspected the ruins, he rallied the people and encouraged them to rebuild. Verses 17-18 state: "Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work."

When Nehemiah told them that the hand of the Lord was upon him and that God had strengthened him and called him to lead them in that work, that strengthened his brothers and sisters, and they were ready to rise up and build. They strengthened their hands for that good work. Nehemiah 4:6 says, "So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work."

Remain Steadfast at Any Cost

Our Scripture text in verse 3 states, "And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down."

The work of God is a great work because it is God's work and we serve a great God! It is not man's work. Church, we are doing a great work, and we cannot come down. We have no time to go to the plains of "Ono" and fool around. All work that God ordains is a great work. The welfare, the prosperity, and the destiny of God's people depended upon Nehemiah and that work.

The work of God has enemies. God's men and God's people have always had enemies to deal with. In the beginning of time Cain rose up against Abel. Pharaoh came against Moses. In the wilderness God's people had many "ites" with which to contend. In the days of Jesus, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and others rose up to oppose our Lord and Savior.

Nehemiah also had an enemy to deal with. The Truth always has its opposers. In Nehemiah 2:10 we find that some factions were upset: "When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel." Nehemiah was doing a great work, and those men recognized that. They did not like it; therefore, they came on the scene to try to disrupt the work. Nevertheless, that did not stop Nehemiah.

Where would we be today if those who have gone before us had cowered down under persecution? Suppose Martin Luther had given in to opposition and recanted when God revealed Truth to him. Suppose John Huss had given in. Suppose John Wesley had let down and backed away from what God had shown him. What if D. S. Warner had given in and let down because he did not want to take the persecution? Where would we be had our former pastor, Brother Emerson Wilson, let down? Thank God, none of them cowered down.

Nehemiah said in verse 3 of our Scripture text, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." Church, we dare not give one inch

to the enemy or we will reap destruction. The Bible says in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding." You are to buy the Truth and sell it not, not at any cost. Do not let anyone buy you off at any cost. Buy the Truth, and sell it not!

God Will Prosper His Work

I want you to consider some of Nehemiah's foes: Sanballat, the Horonite; Tobiah, the Ammonite; and Geshem, the Arabian, who was a mighty, powerful man. That was quite a mixture. All three of them were foreigners to the welfare of God's people. Look at some methods they used against Nehemiah to try to hinder the work. Again, Nehemiah 2:10 reads, "When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel."

I want you to look at their plan, step by step. Although these things happened in the Old Testament, they are as up to date today as though they had happened yesterday. First, these enemies made fun of Nehemiah and his workers. They laughed and smirked at them. Nehemiah 2:19 states, "But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?" In essence, they were saying: "You people are a joke! Do you actually think you are going to complete this? Who are you, Nehemiah? This has been attempted before. Do you think you can really do it?"

Look at Nehemiah's answer in Nehemiah 2:20, "The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem." In essence, Nehemiah told them: "This is a great work, and it takes great men to do it; therefore, you have no part of it."

Notice that Nehemiah said, "God will prosper us." Why would he say that? He was pointing right back to how God had prospered them so far. He had confidence because God had been with him so far. The king had given him permission to go there, and he had gotten a first-hand look at the problem. Also, he had support from the Jews, the rulers, and the priests. God had surely been with him all the way, so no wonder he said, "God will prosper us." God had been prospering him right up to that point.

Nehemiah said those who were not truly Jews had no part or claim to the work. In other words, they had no right to the privileges of that place. Once they had built the wall, those other fellows were going to be on the outside looking in. Nehemiah would not cower down to the enemy, and he spoke with boldness, courage, and authority. He had all the qualities of a great leader to do a great work for God. He would not cower down.

Oh, how God is looking for those who will be like Nehemiah! He is looking for those who have the boldness to stand up for what is right, the courage to stand for Truth. He wants those who will not cower down to the flesh or to persecution. God can prosper us! To be prosperous is to be successful.

Be Strong in the Lord

The Lord spoke to Joshua in Joshua 1:7, saying, "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest." As long as Joshua stayed in the center of God's will, he prospered. However, when he turned to the right or to the left, he had trouble. That is the same way it is with people in their experiences today. As long as you obey God's Word and stay in the center of His will, you will prosper and be

successful. If you turn to the right or to the left, you will cause God to become angry with you, and you will fail to prosper any longer.

The enemy does not quit, does he? One thing you can be certain of is that the enemy is going to be around. He will use whatever sources are available to work on you. He will use the person or the thing that is closest to you. Oh, yes, he will! He will use a girlfriend, a boyfriend, a husband, or a wife. He will use anyone or anything he can, because he knows your weaknesses. How can you make those places strong? You must be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, as it states in Ephesians 6:10.

After the wall was built, the enemy came around again. Nehemiah 4:1-2 tells us: "But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth [or angry], and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?"

Whenever people do a work for the Lord, opposition from the enemy will come from the outside first. What does he use? He uses ridicule and scorn. For example, the devil will cause someone to say: "He will never be able to pastor. He's not like the other one." Sanballat used cutting words to try to bring Nehemiah down. No doubt, Sanballat thought, "This will be a crushing blow to Nehemiah and his workers!"

In the Book of Ezekiel, you can read how God brought life to those old, dry bones in the valley where God took Ezekiel. This was a type of the church, or a type of Israel, and showed how God revived them. How did He do it? He told the man of God to prophesy to them, or to speak the Word of God to them. When people really believe the Word of God, life will begin to take hold of them. "Thus saith the LORD"

will bring life where death once reigned.

The best that you were when you were living in sin was a pile of rubbish, but when God runs a pile of rubbish through the recycler, it will come out a new creature in Christ Jesus. You might be in sin and think highly of yourself, but in God's eyes you are like a pile of rubbish, or old, dry, dead, withered up bones. The only way you can get life is to hear "Thus saith the LORD."

"The People Had a Mind to Work"

Those warring factions in Nehemiah's day laid down their differences with one another to come against Nehemiah. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem were warring factions. They were opposed to one another, but they laid down their differences for a while to come against Nehemiah. They wanted to crush, destroy, and humiliate him.

Sanballat ridiculed Nehemiah, but it was only a cover for what was truly wrong with him. What was it? He was angry, and he used ridicule to cover it up. Nehemiah 4:1 states, "But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth [or angry], and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews." Sanballat really did not have any reason to be against Nehemiah for building the walls. He had no sound argument against it, and because of that, he was angry; so he ridiculed and slandered Nehemiah.

Many people do the same thing today. They have no sound argument against Christianity, so what do they do? They ridicule the saints. They become angry, and they persecute them and say things that are hurtful and wrong even though they have no sound argument against them.

How did Nehemiah handle the persecution? Nehemiah 4:6 tells us, "So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work." If people have a

mind to work, they will keep their minds off the opposition and on the work of God. Your mind will not be so troubled with other things if you keep your experience up to date and stay focused on the work of God. However, if you allow your mind to stalemate and become void of the work of God, the enemy will run all kinds of thoughts through your mind.

The people in Nehemiah's day kept on working. God's people did not get down over the difficulties. They did not find fault and gossip. They did not retaliate; they just kept on building the wall. Church of God, that is what we must do. Do not get caught up in scandals, slander, or retaliation. Just keep building the work of God. Why? We are working on a great work, and we cannot come down. Just keep building and keep your mind on the work of God. Do not pay any attention to the trash haulers, the gossipers, or the garbage collectors.

Nehemiah said, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." His attitude was, "Why should I leave the work of God and come down to you people?" That should be your attitude today, because if you were to go down, you could wind up leaving the work of God. It is a great work! How would Jesus have handled such a situation? First Peter 2:23 tells us, "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

Beware of the Enemy's Tactics

The enemy does not like to give up. He used ridicule, threatenings, abuse, and scorn, but when the work was almost complete, he changed his tactics. It did not work to blast away at Nehemiah or to laugh, scorn, ridicule, and threaten the people. What did the enemy try next? He took a complete turn and tried to be their friend.

Nehemiah 6:2 reads, "That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me,

saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief." They wanted to get Nehemiah to go down to have a meeting in one of the little towns. In other words, they were saying, "We are going to be your friend, Nehemiah. We are going to rally with you. Come on down to the plain of Ono. We will stand behind you," yet they thought to do him mischief.

The enemies of Truth work the same way today. They will say, "Come down to our level and lay aside the extremism. Let down a little on the standard that you have been preaching. We all are Christians; we can all get along. We love God too. We are your brothers and sisters. Come on down and meet with us. It makes no difference where we meet as long as we have a meeting. Leave the work of God for a while and come on down."

Nehemiah could see through their tactics. How did he answer them? Verse 3 says, "And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"

Next, they tried slander. When Nehemiah would not come down on his own, they tried to force him to come down. Verse 5 reads, "Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand." He would not willingly get together with those fellows, so they sent him a letter. Verses 6-7 tell us: "Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words. And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together." In other words, they

brought charges against Nehemiah. They wanted him to leave the work and come down to discuss those charges. In so many words, they were saying: "There are some things we have heard about you, Nehemiah. Come on down and we will take counsel together. We will help you."

What had they said about him? Again, they said in Nehemiah 6:6-7: Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen [even the nonbeliever], and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall [in other words they were saying that was the only reason he was building the wall], that thou mayest be their king, according to these words [in other words, 'You are building up your own little kingdom']. And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together."

They acted as though they were going to help him out of that mess. Since Nehemiah would not come down, they charged him with pride and with being self-seeking. "You are doing this for your own good, Nehemiah. You want nothing but preeminence. Come on down and we will talk about this and work it out together."

They were trying to be friendly to his face, but they were plotting his downfall. How did Nehemiah answer them? Verse 8 says, "Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest [Nehemiah was saying, 'I am not guilty of what you are saying'], but thou feignest them out of thine own heart." Nehemiah knew they were trying to lay a snare for him. They could not get him to meet with them, so they tried to force him to come down, but he still would not come down. Since they could not get him to come down and meet with them, they ridiculed him: "Who are you anyhow, Nehemiah? You are

nothing of a prophet. Who are you, saying God's hand is upon you? God did not call you."

An Enemy From Within

Last, a man who professed to be a prophet urged Nehemiah to shut himself up in the temple, because he said an enemy would slay him. Verse 10 reads, "Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee." Notice that the enemy moved from the outside to the inside. Who was he? Supposedly a man of God, one whom Nehemiah knew.

Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem could not get Nehemiah to meet with them and could not discourage him through ridicule, so they moved to the inside by getting hold of a priest on the inside. Nehemiah 6:10 reads, "Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee."

Look at Nehemiah's answer in verses 11-12: "And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in. And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him [or conspired with him]."

Why did Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem want Nehemiah to go into the temple? The temple was the holy place, and Nehemiah had no business in the holy place. Had they been able to get him to step out of line by stepping into the holy place, he would have been ridiculed before the people. Nehemiah knew he had

no business in the holy place, and right away he discerned this was an evil scheme against him. Nehemiah was not in the priesthood; therefore, he was not allowed in the holy place. Had Nehemiah gone into the temple, he would have become a laughingstock to his own people, and he would have disobeyed God. Conspiratorial talk had been going on between a priest and those fellows on the outside, and they conspired together against Nehemiah. The fellows on the outside could not get to Nehemiah, so they moved to the priesthood on the inside.

Nehemiah said in Nehemiah 6:13, "Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me." Nehemiah knew that he would have committed sin if he had done as the priest suggested. Nehemiah was a great leader, and had he run to the temple after receiving the news of a threat upon his life, he would have committed sin before God, the people would have laughed at him, and he would have been a disgrace.

The Final Outcome

What was the final outcome? They were building a great work, and they would not come down. These accounts are encouraging, and they are up to date concerning how the enemy works. They are as up to date today as they were in Nehemiah's day. The enemy has not changed the way he operates; he just changes people.

You can read of the outcome in verses 15-16: "So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days. And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God." You see, it was not Nehemiah's work after all. It was God's work!

Nehemiah was a mighty vessel because of God. He had passions and feelings just as we all have. However, he had settled in his mind that he was doing a great work, and he would not come down. Building the Church of God is a great work, and we dare not come down. Some people get feeble along the way, and some may turn and run, but we dare not leave the work of God. It is a great work, and we cannot come down.

What did the enemy do after they could not get Nehemiah to come down and the work was finished? Sanballat had his daughter marry the high priest's son and had an intermarriage. Then he had the high priest's, son go to Mount Gerazim in Samaria and build a temple as an identical replica of the temple in Jerusalem and set up an exact high priesthood with that son. They set up a temple worship that was identical to the temple in Jerusalem and tried to pull the people away to the temple in Mount Gerazim. That was where the woman at the well worshiped in John, Chapter 4.

Sad to say, some people along the way get caught up with the Sanballats and the Tobiahs. Nehemiah stayed right with the work of God and would not go down to the plains of Ono. He refused to leave the great work of God and go down to man's operation.

I brought the message to encourage you, church. You need to stay right in the work of God and have a mind to work. Ecclesiastes 1:9 reads, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." If you have allowed the enemy to work on you, you need to seek the Lord wholeheartedly and get back into the work of God. God will deliver you if you will seek His face.

(Cassette C-4197E)

1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The Foundation and How We Should Build Upon It



Brother Esau Brooks

Take Heed How You Build for Eternity

We are a part of a generation that is desperately in need of hearing from God. Words would fail to describe the seriousness of our time. Paul summed it up this way in 2

Timothy 3:13 when he wrote to the young minister Timothy: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." That statement describes a *very* serious time, and we are in the midst of that time today. May God help you to be away of it. The

church has a foundation. I have found that many people do not even realize that. Some people refuse to recognize the foundation. Others, instead of building according to the foundation, are changing their building. All these conditions are making life difficult for people to

live right for God.

May God solemnize your heart as you consider His Word. I want to deal with what the Apostle Paul disclosed in verse 10 of our Scripture lesson where he stated, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." These words are well worth considering. Volumes of Truth could be preached from them, but let me point out to you, as Paul pointed out to those people, how and what to build upon this foundation.

First of all, Paul was not talking about *a* foundation, but rather *the* foundation. He said, "I have laid *the* foundation." Some might question what the difference is. There is a world of difference between *a* foundation and *the* foundation. "A" is an indefinite article; "*the*" is a positive article. The Apostle was not talking about laying just any foundation, but he was speaking specifically of laying the one and only foundation. Now, this may cross many people's ideologies and many popular notions of our time, but this is an irrefutable fact, as revealed in the Word of God. One must exercise care in building upon this foundation.

Any and every kind of material cannot be used. Notice what Paul stated in verse 12-13: "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; [he needs to bear in mind that] Every man's work shall be made manifest." There will be a day that shall declare every man's work, because it shall be revealed by fire. When speaking in terms of fire, fire will not harm gold; it will only purify it. The same can be said of silver and of precious stones that beautify it. However, when it comes to wood, hay, and stubble, fire is a dreadful enemy.

Therefore, in the latter clause of verse 10 of our Scripture text, Paul said, "But let every man [no matter where he comes from—he might

have come from the greatest and the most renowned institution of learning; nonetheless, let him] take heed how he buildeth thereupon." My beloved reader, there is a need of exercising more care concerning how you build for eternity. The great Apostle Paul, as he exhorted the church at Corinth, made it quite plain that there is a foundation and that we must build upon it carefully.

Prerequisites for Building on the Foundation

The trouble we are facing more every day is that too many people do not even see the foundation, let alone know there is one and know how to build upon it. Therefore, the Apostle went on to outline three prerequisites for building on the foundation. *Requirement number one is the need of the grace of God.* Going back to verse 10 of Our Scripture text, we read, "According to the grace of God . . . I have laid the foundation."

Requirement number two is the need of God-given wisdom. "As a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation." He was not speaking of being as a learner or a beginner, but as a wise master builder. This business of going to Heaven is much more serious than many folks are taking it, and sectarianism is not making the job any easier. The popularity of false religion is not at all lessening the dangers. If they are making any difference, they are making it more serious and more dangerous.

Old Jezebel is around today giving a sip from her cup to everyone who will allow her. So many have already partaken of her cup and of her spirit, and though they might have once had a vision of this foundation, they have lost it. On the other hand, some are growing more vehement in opposing the idea of a foundation. They say, "We want to feel free to build however we want to build and in whatever way we want to build"; yet they still claim to be on the foundation. Friend, that is

impossible. Again, Paul said in verse 10 of our Scripture text, ". . . as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation . . . let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

Requirement number three is that you must build on the foundation as a wise master builder. Now, let me say this with every bit of consideration that I can summon together: if God required in those bygone days after Calvary for men like the great Apostle Paul to regard the importance of building upon the foundation, and if he regarded it to be of such great importance that he stressed these facts to the people at Corinth, think how much more necessary it is today. Of course, the world is increasingly becoming more liberal, and the more liberal the world gets, the more liberal it seems that the church is getting. An old saying states, "As the church goes, so goes the world." I say this respectfully and very considerably, but nonetheless, unashamedly, because it is a fact.

Paul said, "According to the grace of God . . . I have laid the foundation." He did not lay it according to his own ideas, his own understanding, or his own reasoning; but he laid the foundation according to the grace of God. It takes the grace of God to lay the foundation, and it takes the grace of God to continue to build on the foundation. There is no way that you can build on the foundation unless you have the grace of God.

Building as a Wise Master Builder

The Apostle Paul went on to say that "as a wise masterbuilder" he laid the foundation. He could have as easily said, "as a masterbuilder," but he did not say that because just any kind of master builder will not do. In other words, it takes godly wisdom. You have to know how to build the foundation according to the grace of God instead of trying to build the foundation as you choose to build it

One reason that men are as confused as they are and one reason for

the complexity of religion is due to the lack of spiritual wisdom. As I read what Paul said about being "a wise masterbuilder," that really struck me, because it seems that today we are getting more wreckers than wise master builders. Paul gave the formula concerning how to build on the foundation.

I want to point out the connection that Paul was making before bringing out this expression. In verse 1 of our Scripture lesson he stated, "And I, brethren [as your minister, or as your leader] could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." What was Paul talking about? He was speaking of people who were inexperienced in the things of God and about people who had not even gotten started in the things of God.

The church had been started for quite a while when Paul wrote this letter to the church at Corinth, but the Apostle was telling them that he could not write to them as mature brethren. In essence, he was saying, "I must yet deal with you as inexperienced professors. I have fed you [down through the years] with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." Why were they unable to take it? Paul said they were carnal. In other words, they were living too close to the borderline. They had not yet gone into the land of Canaan, where the figs grow and the honey flows. He let them know they were walking as unregenerate men. Too many people are looking to the world rather than looking to Christ. He told them they were walking as carnal men and getting their instructions from men. There is a difference between carnal men and spiritual men.

The Apostle Paul stated in verses 4-7 of our Scripture lesson: "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos [the only difference today is that people are saying, 'I am a Baptist' or 'I am a Methodist' or 'I

am for this group'], but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." Today I see this as being just as real as it was when Paul said it, and it is just as true.

Verses 8-9 read: "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. [In other words, they had the respect that was due them, but they were merely laborers together with God] For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building [not Paul's or Apollos', but God's]." Paul made plain that we are builders, and the building we are working on is God's. We are building for God, not ourselves, so we must always bear that in mind, please.

How Are You Building?

People need to see this today as much as they needed to see it in the days of the Apostle Paul, otherwise they will go on wrecking the work of God instead of building upon it. Look at the wreckage that we see along life's pathway of groups and people and congregations and places where God was once honored and glorified; however, today they are a disgrace and a shame because of the letdown and the liberality that prevails. Believe me, it is heartrending! Many people are content to merely say they have a congregation and just to be called a pastor or a preacher. They seemingly have no concern whatsoever about the people's spiritual condition or the people's spiritual welfare. This is serious, friend.

Do you see the foundation today? How are you building? We need more builders today than ever and fewer destroyers so that the world can be rescued and our up-and-coming, drug-prone generation can be redeemed. Such scoffing

at the teachings of the Bible and such mockery displayed in the things of God that are being manifested by churchgoers is distressing.

Paul wrote to the church at Galatia in Galatians 1:13, "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it." That was when he was in the Jews' religion, not after he came into the Church of God. This was not his testimony of what he was doing after he was born into the Church of God. Religion has ever been disastrous to the work of God—never uplifting and never upbuilding. You see, there is a difference between religion and salvation.

Paul stated in verse 23, "But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed." Paul was converted from being a wrecker, or a destroyer, to being a wise master builder. Therefore, he stated in the language of our Scripture text that it was the grace of God that did it for him. Again, Paul said in verse 10, "According to the grace of God . . . I have laid the foundation."

The Corinthian church was built solidly upon the foundation, but some began to get her to move. That is the reason Paul went on to say, "For other foundation can no man lay. . . ." This is still true today. Another foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. You may ask, "What is it these folks are laying today?" They are laying imitations. When you are not building on the foundation, you are building on the sand. It is as simple as that.

What the Grace of God Will Do

Paul, writing to this church in 1 Corinthians 15:9-10, let them know that he attributed all the success he had in the work of God to the grace of God: "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I perse-

cuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

I repeat, Paul attributed his success in the work of God to the grace of God. To what can the lack of progress, the lack of advancement, and the lack of success be attributed today? It is due to a lack of the grace of God. When Paul wrote to Titus, he said the grace of God is what brings salvation. Wherever the grace of God is, there salvation will work; so we can see that this is the core of building for God.

In too many cases, people are emphasizing everything else but the grace of God and the need of it. Men and women need to be constantly reminded of their need of retaining the grace of God. It is not something that you can set like a clock, by winding it up and leaving it to run. Having the grace of God is something that needs to be attended to. We must grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Today many people are more concerned about the theory of the grace of God than the experience that the grace of God brings. Oh, they talk about the grace of God, but others ought to be able to see it.

I am always thrilled to read about when the church at Jerusalem heard that the church at Antioch had received Christ. They dispatched Barnabas there to see what those people had. When he got there, he saw the grace of God. He did not see people trying to put themselves on display. He did not see everyone scrambling and fighting about who was going to be this and who was going to be that. He saw the grace of God. How do we know that he recognized the grace of God? He had come from the church that had great grace upon them.

If you read Chapter 4 of the Book of Acts, you will find what that great grace did. The multitude (not

just two or three hundred) believed, and they were of one heart. When the grace of God prevails, it will make us one. Theorizing is not going to do it, but the grace of God will. Too often people work hard to get their heads together when what they need first is to get their hearts together. Once they get their hearts together, the rest will follow, and there will not be any trouble. We need unity. Every child of God who is born into the family has unity.

Building According to the Grace of God

Paul, writing to the Ephesian church, stated in Ephesians 4:1-3: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness of mind, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." You cannot keep what you do not have. The fact that Paul said "Endeavoring to keep the unity" implies that they had it.

We find in this Scripture that even Apollos was a great preacher of the grace of God, and he blessed the church because of the grace of God. When he went to Corinth, his work was so remarkable that they started to follow him instead of the grace of God. In essence, Paul said, "I did not lay this foundation telling you to build on Apollos or to build on me. I laid this foundation according to the grace of God." People need to get their vision worked on concerning the importance of this foundation and become further enlightened, encouraged, and inspired about how to build on this foundation.

Paul had the grace of God, but unless he used true wisdom, the work would not have been as effective. There is no area in this whole world where wisdom is more needful than in the building of a work for God and in the rescuing of souls from the darkness of sin. In many

cases people should be digging instead of building, but they call themselves ministers, so off they go to build something. However, without the grace of God they cannot build the right thing.

Have you been wondering why there are so many congregations across the country, this one having nothing to do with the other one and the other one having nothing to do with this one? Where is the trouble? The wise man tells us in Proverbs 24:3, "Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established." Proverbs 21:30 reads, "There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD." The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Paul was telling those people that if they were going to build on the foundation, they had to be sure that they saw that some things cannot go with this foundation or they would suffer loss. We need to see that all our works are going to be tested with fire. We need wisdom to see that. We are not just building and left alone to carry on as we want to. It is not building that should concern us, but what we build on the foundation. Did you know that we all have been brought into this work to build it? It is not merely to enjoy it, but to make room for others as others have made room for us, to reach out and gather in others, just as others reached out and gathered us in. This is such a need!

Paul charged them to take heed how they were building, because some things were not needed that had to be left out. What were they? Wood. Why do you have to leave it out? It will decay. You need to leave out hay, because it is not substantial enough. You would not like to build a house with hay, would you? Then, stubble is only make believe. Therefore, each of these materials is unfit to use in building on the foundation. These are only terms the Apostle Paul used to signify other things, other methods, and other ways that men and women employ to build up

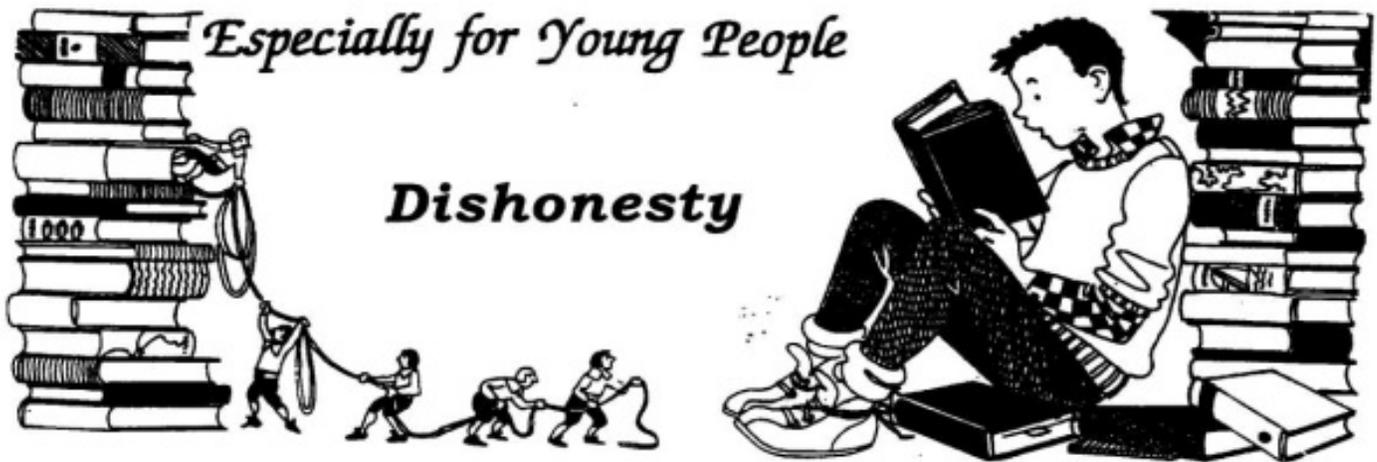
a work for God.

Some folks today think they should use bingo to build up the work of God. Others want to use volleyball, baseball, or a church club to keep their young people. It may sound good to have someplace where the young people can find recreation; nevertheless, at His right

hand are pleasures forevermore. You do not need any of the devil's stuff to build God's church. God has enough. He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Paul said in verse 10a of our Scripture text, "According to the grace of God which is given to me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid

the foundation, another buildeth thereon." It is our job to take up where the great Apostle Paul left off and to keep building. Let us take heed how we build upon the foundation. May God bless you.

(Cassette C-3679M)



Some time ago a youth of about sixteen came from the country to Boston to fill a subordinate situation in one of our first mercantile houses. The head of the firm received the youth in the most kindly manner and had his own son take the stranger around town and show him the principal places during the afternoon of his arrival.

While amusing themselves in this way, the stranger youth told his companion that, in coming along in the train that morning, he had given a boy a bright cent for a pond lily, and that the coin having been mistaken for a five-cent, the vender of lilies had paid him four cents back as change.

The merchant's son questioned the honesty of the transaction, but the young man from the country defended it on the score of its smartness. Shocked at the absence of principle in his companion, the merchant's boy told his father of the transaction, who next morning inter-

rogated the young man from the country concerning it and found that he was somewhat inclined to pride himself on account of the act.

"Was the cheating of the poor boy, who, perhaps, had a sick mother to provide for by his industry, not cruel let alone its injustice?" queried the good merchant.

"It was his lookout," the boy replied.

"Was your conduct not dishonest?" asked the merchant.

"I don't know that it was. He ought to have been smart enough not to have given me the money.

"Young man," said the merchant, "I call your share in the matter stealing; and if the four cents had been so taken by me, I believe they would have burned a hole in my pocket."

The youth boldly replied, "They have not burned a hole in mine, sir." Disgusted at discovering such moral obliquity in the young man, the merchant told him it was impossible

that he could employ one who exhibited such dishonest notions concerning a small thing, for in matters of great importance the possessor of such loose ideas of honesty would most likely give way.

With much good advice the youth was sent home to his father, with a letter from the merchant relating the affair stated above and expressing regret that the circumstance had completely shut the boy out from his confidence. So the young man lost an excellent chance of succeeding in life, but it is hoped that the lesson may teach him hereafter that "honesty is the best policy."

Bad habits are like a comfortable bed—
easy to get into,
but hard to get out of.

Fall 2007 Camp Meeting Recordings

CD No.	DATE	MESSAGE TITLE	MINISTER
TR-119M	8-05-07	The Lord's Complete and Marvelous Work	Bro. Irwin Seshier
TR-121E		How Is Your Love?	Bro. Fred Barrows
TR-122M	8-06-07	Behold, How Great a Matter a Little Fire Kindleth	Bro. Daniel Webster
TR-123E		The Bread of God	Bro. Calvin Foster
TR-124E	8-07-07	Preparing Your Way Before the Lord	Bro. Richard Talbot
TR-125M	8-08-07	The Decision God Has Put Between His People and the World	Bro. Garrett Haylock
TR-126E		Patience	Bro. Allen Polston
TR-1 27M	8-09-07	God's Plan for Man	Bro. Ula Bland
TR-128E		Will Your Anchor Hold? Part 1	Bro. E. David Stegmeier
TR-1 29E		Will Your Anchor Hold? Part 2	
TR-130M	8-10-07	The Intoxicating Power of Babylon's Cup	Bro. Earl R. Borders
TR-131E		As the Eagle Stirreth Up Her Nest	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-132M	8-1 1-07	God's Amazing Grace	Bro. Adam Wolf
TR-1 33E		Ye Are the Light of the World	Bro. Aurelius Raines
TR-134M	8-12-07	On the Other Side of Jordan	Bro. Leamon Whitehead
TR-1 35E		The Curse of a Life Away From Christ	Bro. Esau Brooks
TM-041	2007	Fall Camp Meeting Songs #1	
TM-042		Fall Camp Meeting Songs #2	
TM-043		Fall Camp Meeting Songs #3	
TM-044		Fall Camp Meeting Songs #4	
TM-045		Fall Camp Meeting Songs #5	
TM-046		Fall Camp Meeting Songs #6 (Children's Program)	
TM-047		Fall Camp Meeting Songs #7	
TM-048		Fall Camp Meeting Songs #8	
TM-030	2007	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #1	
TM-031		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #2	
TM-032		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #3	
TM-033		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #4	
TM-034		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #5	
TM-035		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #6	
TM-036		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #7	
TM-037		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #8	

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Messages, First half of this meeting
 Messages, Second half of this meeting
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Becoming an Adult



Brother Calvin Foster

The Fear of the Lord Is the Beginning of Knowledge

I can remember the time when many of my children could hardly wait to get into the teenage class at church. They anxiously awaited the time when they would be old enough. Those of us who are grown now possibly may recall a time in life when we could hardly wait to grow up. You may hear your children say, "I am eighteen. I am a grownup." An adult is one who has attained maturity or legal age. When a person becomes an adult, he or she should make mature decisions, although that is not always the case.

A child's judgment should mature with age, but sometimes that does not happen. Some adolescents entering adulthood may become a little lazy about cleaning their rooms

and picking up after themselves. Being lazy means being resistant to work or exertion. They might begin to perspire a little and think they are working too hard. Laziness is conducive to idleness.

Young person, it is good to work, to be busy and to be doing something, otherwise you will be idle. Laziness and procrastination work together. Procrastination is when you keep putting off a task, not because you forgot or because you do not have all the tools, but because you are lazy. As far as we can see in the Scriptures, Adam and Eve were created in the adult stage of life, and they made a very bad decision when they disobeyed God. As we live in this life, we have to make decisions all the time. In 1 Corinthians 13:11 the Apostle Paul said, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I

thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." A person's judgment should mature with age and experience. As you get older, you might look back on some decisions that you made and say, "I wish I had not made that decision," because now you have better insight.

Proverbs 1:5-10 reads: "A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck. My son, if sinners

entice thee, consent thou not."

Perhaps you are familiar with the story of the prodigal son found in Luke, Chapter 15. When the prodigal son left home, he had no idea that he was heading for the hogpen. He went to his father and, in essence, said: "Father, I am a man now, and I am ready to go out on my own. Give me the portion of goods that pertains to me." No doubt, he thought he was going to turn the world upside down. He was going to meet people, go places, and do things. However, he ended up in the hogpen, desiring to eat the same food that the pigs ate.

When he came to himself, he said, in so many words, "Wait a minute! I have wasted all my living and done these things of the world, and now look at me. I have nothing!" He remembered that his father's hired servants had plenty to eat, and he was about to perish with hunger. He said in verses 18-19: "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." He came to himself and matured. His condition caused him to awaken.

The prodigal son found that people did not give him things out in the world. He found that people did not treat him as well as they did at his father's house. He went out in the world and learned something, but he learned it the hard way. He thought he was a man and ready to go, but when he got out there, look what happened to him. Perhaps he thought his brother was a fool for staying home. He was probably thinking, "Look at me! I am on my own. Look at what I have! My brother should have followed me. He is a fool for staying home."

Be an Example of the Believers

Paul, writing to Titus in Titus 2:6-8 said: "Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things showing thyself a pattern of

good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you." Young man, young woman, you ought to be an example of good works, and you should have sound speech that cannot be condemned.

In 1 Timothy 4:12-14 Paul wrote to Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

Young person, if you are saved, do not despise your youth. Do not think you are too young for God to use you. God can use you. This Scripture gives you something to do: you must be an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, and in Spirit. You should not throw temper tantrums.

Paul also told Timothy not to neglect the gift that was in him. God has a gift that is in you, and He wants to use it. People have natural gifts and spiritual gifts. You ought to turn your life over to God and let Him use your talents and your gifts. This is not just admonition for young people, but for all of us. You need to turn your life over to God. You should not let fear cause you to sit in your seat and not participate in the services of God. Do not put your light under a bushel. Let God use you.

In Luke, Chapter 2, you can read that Jesus got separated from His parents. His parents had lost sight of where He was, and they were going back home. When they found Jesus, He was in the temple talking with the doctors, asking and answering questions. In verses 48-49 you can read that His mother said to Him, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said

unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" He was only twelve years old, but God used Him. Jesus submitted to his parents, and verse 52 says, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." If you have godly character, it will please God, your parents, and man. You can please your employer by the life you live and with the faithfulness of your life. I want to encourage you to be obedient to God.

Whatsoever a Man Sows, That Shall He Reap

Many people have lots of ambitions in life. God may allow you to fulfill your ambition, but if He blesses you to achieve it, do not forget Him. Sometimes when people get saved and God blesses them with jobs and material things or restores their health, they go back to the hogpen and serve the devil. When God blesses you to fulfill the desires of your heart, you ought to follow Him all the way. Do not cut God out of your plans. You should make room for Him in your life. If you have vacation time at your place of employment, you should tell your employer early so that you can set it up and come to camp meeting. You should want to be with the saints.

We read in Hebrews 11:23-26: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." Moses refused worldly fame. He could have been called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, but he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God. Friend, the world

will build you up and sing your praises, but that same world will cut you down.

First John 2:15-17 tells us: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." All the glitter, the gold, the money, and the pleasures of the world will pass away, but he who does the will of God will abide forever.

Proverbs 14:9 says, "Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour." Sometimes when you talk to people about natural things, the conversation goes well, and they stay right with the conversation. However, when you start to mention God and things that are right, suddenly they are gone. That is a mocker. The Bible says fools mock at sin. Young person, anytime you cover your ears or wave your hand in disapproval to your parents discipline, that is being a mocker. You see, you can mock by poking out your lip, by jerking away, or by saying scoffing remarks such as, "Oh, boy, here they go again." You are also mocking by feeling that way on the inside without an outward expression. Perhaps you say to yourself, "I hope they hurry and get through." Foolish people mock and do not care if they sin, so they mock.

Galatians 6:7 reads, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." You cannot do wrong and get by. When a farmer sows corn, he reaps corn. He does not reap wheat. If you sow wrong, you will reap wrong, and wrong will do you wrong. It does not make any difference if you are a preacher, a song leader, or whatever position you may hold, you cannot do wrong and get by. God is not mocked. You may go the ways of the world, but

for all these things God will bring you into judgment. He sees how you act, how you treat others, and how you talk about others behind their backs. You have no business playing around with the Gospel.

Beware of Satan's Snares

Some preachers get up and preach, but they do not mean it because they do not live what they preach. They can preach it all they want, but they will not be blessed by God if they do not live it. If you read Matthew 27:30-31 you will find that Jesus was mocked and spit upon. No one wants to be spit upon, but they even spit upon Him.

The devil will try to make you feel ashamed that you are serving God. He even wants to make you feel ashamed that you do not have anything to be ashamed of. It is good for a young person to be able to say, "I have never been arrested; they do not have my picture downtown at the police station." The devil wants to make you feel ashamed of that. He will cause you to feel ashamed that you do not use drugs. Many young people are experimenting with drugs, and if you have never tried any, the devil will say to you, "You need to try some. Aren't you ashamed that you have never even tried any?" The devil will use people to tell you: "You don't smoke? Oh, come on! Let me show you how to do it. I can smoke and make it come out my nose." Friend, you should not smoke. You do not need bad breath and brown teeth. The devil will make you feel ashamed that you are still a virgin. At school, others will say, "You are still a virgin?" The devil wants to make you feel ashamed of that, but do not listen to him. You ought to keep your virginity until you are married.

The devil will say, "You haven't even stolen anything?" Friend, if you have not stolen anything, that is good, because most thieves get caught sooner or later. Even the best of them get caught. Sometimes

when thieves get caught, it is the last time they ever steal anything, because they get killed in the process.

The devil may make you feel ashamed of your good report card. Why would you want a bad report card? You should feel good when you receive a good report card, and you should feel good about yourself.

God wants you to have profitable pride. You must have some pride to have proper respect for yourself, to have a sense of dignity and worth. Each of us is valuable to God. Friend, you are worth something. God does not want you to go out and throw your life away and mess up your life with sin. You are valuable. You can have the proper pride and the proper self-respect. You need to have delight or satisfaction about your own achievements in life. You should be thankful and be happy about the achievements and the blessings that others receive. We each should encourage one another to do well.

Profitable pride is not evil pride. Evil pride is having an overly high opinion of one's self. Such a person may think, "No one can do it as well as I can. It cannot get done right unless I do it." That is an evil, overbearing pride, a feeling of self-importance: "I am most important of all. The program can't start if I'm not there." Friend, the work of God is going to continue. The Church of God is a mighty army on a white horse, going forth conquering and to conquer. The Church of God needs you, but if you backslide and go out into sin, the Church of God will march right on. God always has and always will have a people. I am blessed to be a part of the body of Christ. I am just one member, but I am glad that I am a member of the blood-washed church.

We are living in a time when high morals and respect have faded away in the lives of people. Some people do not care how they look, how clean they are, or how they do their work. These days finding peo-

ple to do good work can be difficult. Finding a good, honest mechanic or a good house painter who will do the job right and not slap on the paint any old way and then come to get his pay is difficult. We need to take pride in what we do. I am talking about profitable pride, where you can look back and know that you did your best by the help of the Lord. So many do not care how they work or where they go anymore. Many people are very irresponsible today.

Evaluate Your Decisions

Young person, when you go out into the world to work and tell people that you are a Christian, they are going to watch your life. Many people do not care how they work or how often they miss work, and they come and go as they please. They dress as scantily as they want. They do not care how they might attract the opposite sex or cause someone to be tempted to fall. It is a shame the way some women dress. I feel ashamed for them. It is a spirit that the devil puts in them. Some of them have been raised right and raised under the Truth, but the devil gets in them and causes them to do things that they know are not right. They know they were not taught to dress immodestly.

Many people are neglectful. They just keep procrastinating and neglecting things; then when they get to those things, the tasks will be harder. Life is about making good decisions and accepting responsibility. Do not fool yourself, young person. When you make a decision to do something, you must take the credit or take the blame.

You must evaluate your decisions and think about the effects your decisions will have. In other words, as an old-fashioned saying goes, look before you leap. I can remember one time when I was a boy and had my first visit at a swimming pool. Ole Pete took some of us swimming, and I was happy all the way. I could not even swim, and I

jumped into the seven foot area. The next thing I knew, I was trying to tippy-toe, calling out, "Pete! Pete!" God helped me. Had it not been for God, I would not even be living today. I learned the hard way that if you cannot swim, when you go to a swimming pool, you had better look around and find out where the shallow water is.

When you make a decision, you need to ask yourself, "Why are things working out the way they are?" Would you decide differently the next time? Someone may ask, "What is a good decision?" Generally, a good decision is well thought out ahead of time. A good decision will match your values. It must match your values and the rules by which you live. You should think about the answers to those questions before you make a decision: Does this go along with the rules by which I live? Will this decision put you or anyone else from danger? Will your decision keep you healthy? You want to come out healthy. I made a decision to jump in that water, and I almost did not come out healthy.

Once you make up your mind, things are easier said than done. Life is full of decisions. Pastors have to make decisions all the time. This is one reason you should pray for your pastor. His decisions are not always easy. Young person, when it comes to clothes, dating, and drugs, sometimes you may feel it is easier to do what others are doing. However, letting others decide for you is risky, because not everyone has learned to make good decisions. Some of them merely do what their friends are doing. If you follow the crowd, remember that Jesus said the broad way leads to destruction, and many people are going that way. You need to think about the fact that you have to live with the consequences of your decisions.

Count the Cost Ahead of Time

You ought to make some decisions ahead of time, before the heat

of the moment arrives. It is better to know where you stand ahead of time. Perhaps you have told your mother and your father that you are grown and that you are an adult. You have to know where you stand when it comes to sex, smoking, drinking, and using drugs. You ought to know where you stand on those issues before the heat of the moment comes upon you. Sometimes it is very good to talk to a friend or someone you can trust who shares your values. If you should choose to drink alcohol or use drugs, you need to know how alcohol affects your feelings and your judgment. Drinking can cause you to take risks that you will regret later. Thirty minutes of pleasure, thirty minutes of making a wrong decision, can result in consequences for which you will have to pay for many years; or even a lifetime.

An alcoholic drink is any drink that contains a half ounce of alcohol, such as a twelve ounce can of beer or a four ounce glass of wine or a ten ounce wine cooler or a shot. One ounce of hundred-proof hard liquor contains a half ounce of alcohol; therefore, beer and wine are as dangerous as hard liquor. Most people know that drinking too much alcohol is unhealthy. Over time, alcohol can damage your liver, your heart, your central nervous system, and your brain. Drinking too much at once can make you seriously ill, and it can even be fatal. I have heard young people say, "I am grown now, and I am going to the club." You may think everyone there is friendly and happy, but someone could drop something in your drink that could mess you up for years to come. Alcohol can affect you in many ways and interfere with important, life-changing decisions.

Time Magazine published a debate among researchers in 2006 stating that nearly one in three public high school students do not graduate. In one small town, at the request of a former principal, a local factory promised to stop tempting dropouts with jobs. Sometimes

young people get distressed and high school gets difficult, so many of them drop out. I thank God that God's people are not dropouts.

I know of a case where one superintendent is scouting for vacant store fronts to start alternative high schools, because some educators say today's teenager does not like the way the schools are set up and all the constant pressure. Sad to say, that is the way it is in the church world too. Nowadays people are getting tired of the songbooks, the singing, and the choirs. They want to go to church smelling any way and looking any way, and then sing, and come and go as they please. Some people want to bring that spirit into the church. Now children want to go to school any way, bumming in and out. So school administrators have started to look for alternative schools. They are trying to make school a little more comfortable, where they can drink coffee and eat a donut while they are in school. The old discipline in the world, the way many of us older citizens were brought up, is going out of style with today's world.

Do Not Become a Dropout or a Push Out

I would like to relate an account of a young lady who was a victim of what is termed a push out. As an intelligent but rebellious teenager, she began to fall behind in attendance and class work during her freshman year. She and her friends often skipped school after lunch and cruised around. One morning she went to the school office to discuss getting back on track, but to her surprise, one administrator asked her, "Why don't you just quit school?" She was just a kid, so with a laugh, she told that person okay and left. She never set foot in high school again. She eventually obtained a General Equivalency Diploma (GED), but now she regrets leaving school early. She said: "It would have been nice to have had someone pushing me to stay in

school. Who knows how things would have turned out?" Young person, you should not let anyone cause you to become a push out when it comes to serving God. You might be having a struggle serving God, and you might have some failures in your life, but do not quit. God will bless you if you stay in the race. You must keep praying, keep fasting, and keep attending church. Do not become a push out. There are drop outs and push outs.

Preachers have to be careful that they do not push people out of the church. I am going to lay down the law of God by His mighty help and have the Spirit of God and love in heart, but I do not want to give anyone cause to say that I did them wrong. If someone leaves because the Truth offended him, let him take his Bible and go, but that person will not be able to look back and say that I treated him wrong.

Sometimes people come to church and try to tell me how to that preach, but I always say, "God, help me." I am not going to treat them wrong, but I am going to preach the Truth. I am not going to allow them to cause me to back away from preaching the Word. On the other hand, I am not going to push them out, by the grace of God.

Young person, some teachers and educators may want to push you out, but do not quit. Saint, relative, friend, mother, father, you ought to help children to stay in school. You ought to be there for them and encourage them to stay in school. I am not trying to preach so much on getting an education, but this is a stepping stone for serving God and being responsible. I am laying down a basic foundation. God is the One who put the world in order. Sad to say, many of those life, drop out eventually end up in jail.

Ten years ago, some educators would try to find a way to get rid a problem student. Today they want to try to help them. One factory with president said: "A diploma shows that these applicants had the discipline to get through a tough process.

They learn how to get along with people, some of whom they might not have liked so well, in order to achieve their goals. A General Equivalency Diploma does not prove they can do that."

Young people need a foundation in our society that they can use for God. The young lady of whom I spoke earlier found employment in a local automobile parts factory four months after she dropped out of high school. She has to get up at 4:30 a.m. to make the first shift every day, and she said her back is killing her. Now she says, "I tell all my friends who are thinking about dropping out not to do it. This is real life out here, and it is not easy."

Life's Greatest Decision

Young person, do you feel you are an adult and that you want to get married? You need to remember that vows go along with that. Young man, when you become twenty years of age, remember that you have about forty years or so to work and take care of the young lady you marry. God showed me that a long time ago. I was in my late twenties. The young lady that you marry may not want to eat five-dollar pizzas all the time. Young lady, if he can only buy you five-dollar pizzas, are you going to marry him anyway? Did you talk to your father about that? Suppose he is lazy, and he does not want to work. Do you still want to marry him? Remember the marriage vows: . . . till death do us part." You ought to think seriously about it.

One young lady whom people called "the restless one," was behind on class credits and impatient with the minor indignities of high school life, so she quit school three months before graduation. Quitting is never the solution. Some have served Jesus for many years, and then they quit near the end of their time. I do not want to quit; I am going all the way with Jesus, by the grace of God. Sometimes when people get old, they get mixed up and follow a preacher they do not even know

anything about. They have had a pastor who has preached the Gospel, and they know how godly he lives, yet they allow a fellow who tickles the people's ears to lead them astray. Church of God, if your pastor preaches the Truth, you ought to get behind him and stay with him. You know how he lives. You have seen him come to church sick and in pain. What is he doing? He is caring for the souls of the saints. He loves his flock. He will not leave them in the hands of a hireling.

An estimated 67 percent of inmates nationwide are high school dropouts. In 2002 a Northeast University study found that nearly half of all dropouts between the ages of 16 and 24 were unemployed. You have to make many decisions after high school. Are you going to go to work full time? Are you going to go to college full time and work part time or vice versa? You have to make an adult decision.

Friend, the greatest decision you can ever make is to serve God and stay with Him. Christian young person, you should be thankful for the older saints, for your local congregation, and for your family members. They are concerned about you. Also, you should be thankful that you are a part of the body of Christ, where you can enjoy your life and enjoy living for God. However, you have to dare to be a Daniel and dare to stand alone for God.

You may ask, "Why are you so concerned about the youth staying in school?" Third John, verses 1-2 read: "The elder unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." God wants you to prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers. That is the reason I am concerned. God is concerned about the whole man; He loves you.

Put God First in Your Life

I want to tell you a story of a boy whom the public school system did

not want. Who was that boy? I was that boy. I did not like school, and I did not want to go to school. I got saved when I was in my last year of high school, and when God saved me, He put me on the right track again. I was straight off the street and from a broken home. I had no daddy, and I was running the streets with thugs. We lived in a war-zone neighborhood. I was afraid to walk around outside at night. The dean of the school noticed the change in my life, and he gave me the greatest honor that I had ever had in my life when he said, "Calvin, I want you to lead the graduation class in the pledge of allegiance to the flag."

I thank God for my Christian mother. She prayed many times for me, and she had the saints praying for me. She used to stand by the window at night and wait on me to come home before she would go to bed, with gunshots all around the neighborhood. She was at my graduation, and oh, it made me feel so good to make Mama happy. You need to stay on the right track, young person. The saints of God love you, and they are concerned about you.

Matthew 9:10-13 reads: "And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans

and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

God came to call sinners to repentance, to get right with Him. He will give you a new life. It is a true saying that sin will take you further than you want to go, it will keep you longer than you want to stay, and it will cost you more than you want to pay. I want to challenge you to put God first in your life. Again, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13:11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Friend, it is time to get serious about serving God. You do not know when death will visit you. You could leave this world today. Tomorrow is not promised to any of us. I want to encourage you to be ready when He comes for you.

(Cassette C-5605M)

2008 CAMP MEETING DATES

**Church of God
675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, Ohio**

**JUNE 15-22
AUGUST 3-10
DECEMBER 28-31**

**We invite you to join us for
these old-fashioned camp meetings.**

Ecclesiastes 11:9 Rejoice, O young man [or young woman], in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these

things God will bring thee into judgment.

10 Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

Keeping Your Affection Set on Heavenly Things



Brother Reggie Stegmeier

Keep Your Mind Fixed on Jesus

As a youth, you hold certain things dear and cherish them, but a day will come when those things will not mean much to you. If you will set aside those things for God, put them behind you, and put all your effort into the things of God, God will greatly reward you.

You ought to consider your Creator. We did not just evolve. Some theories taught in science classes really bother me. Often teachers and professors talk about the supposed evolution of animals. They speak as though the animals had something to say about it. Neither the animals nor we humans can add any height to our stature. God created us. Scientists teach that all the continents were once connected.

They say South America fit to-

gether with Africa and there are sediments of volcanoes that erupted when they were together, and then they divided. However, there are many things out in the world that if you do not really want to know the truth, those things will deceive you. The truth is, God did all of that. He divided the water from the dry land, and He placed the continents where they are.

First Corinthians 10:12 says, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Christian friend, when you feel good in your soul, that is when the devil tries to work. It seems that the more you put yourself out for God, the more the devil works on you. He will set up traps and work through people. People out in the world will try to lead you astray. They are not seeking the best for you. They are

just out to hurt you and to lead you astray. Therefore, you must be careful. If you think you are doing well in the things of God, you ought to humble yourself and cling to Jesus so that you do not fall.

Salvation is a gift from God. The Apostle Paul told the Hebrews, concerning those who had fallen away, that they were crucifying the Son of God afresh and putting Him to an open shame. He talked about not being able to renew them or bring them back into the fold. That is serious. If you go back out into sin, you may never have another chance to get saved.

Peter spoke about the devil and how he comes in, and he admonished in 1 Peter 1:13, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you

at the revelation of Jesus Christ." You must keep your mind fixed on Jesus. Also, you must gird up your mind, be sober, and watch to the end. You need to be aware that the devil will come in sneaky ways to try to lead you astray, so you have to keep your focus on Jesus.

Upholding the Bible Standard

The epistle written by the Apostle Paul to the Colossians was a letter of encouragement and correction to the church at Colosse. The Apostle Paul had received word while he was in the Roman jail that the church in Colosse was struggling with influences of the world. The Apostle Paul was concerned that if they continued to allow the culture and philosophical ideas of the people to work on them, they would lose out in their walk with God. This concern that the Apostle Paul had in that day is also a concern today. Child of God, if you are not careful, the influences of the world will work on you.

The standards of the world can influence the way a Christian dresses. It is amazing to me how people think they can call themselves Christians and dress any old way. The Bible says that those who bear the vessels of the Lord are to be separate. Some professing Christians claim that it is modest for women to wear pants; however, God wants a distinction between men and women. In the Old Testament Moses said that a man shall not wear a woman's garment and a woman shall not wear a man's garment. There has to be a distinction, and often it gives a woman an opportunity to witness for Christ. People may ask why they wear dresses. It is important that we uphold the Bible standard and that we do not allow the world to influence us.

We must weigh all teachings and all philosophies of men by the Word of God. Most of the time that you spend reading should be in the Word of God. I realize there are great books out there; nevertheless,

the Word of God is where men have received inspiration to write their books. There is always a danger of coming across false teaching in books, so you must be careful of what you read. If a teaching contradicts the Bible, then the idea is false. It is that simple.

The great Prophet Isaiah wrote: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isaiah 40:7-8).

You and I will be judged according to our obedience to the Word of God, not by the commandments of men. You do not need to worry so much about what men say, but what God says. The religious world is trying to make their experience and walk with God more complicated than it really is or should be. People are trying to fabricate their own governments and ways of ruling the church and, in most cases, leaving God and His authority completely out of the picture.

Some religions have gone so far as to put a man in their church office that dictates their religious practices. That man holds their confessions, taking the place of God. The Apostle Paul said such teachings are doctrines of devils. They are not of God. You do not have to confess to a man; you have to confess to God. When you kneel at an altar of prayer and a minister prays with you, he will try to help you and encourage you, but you do not have to confess everything to him. You need to confess to God. A real man of God does not want to know everything that is going on in your life. He does not necessarily need to know everything, but God does.

The church at Colosse that the Apostle Paul wrote to was trying to mix some of their culture in with God's church. The two do not mix. You cannot mix anything with God's church. It is perfect. Today many churches have what they call worship teams that cater to the younger

generation, and they focus on more contemporary music. In many cases they promote the sounds of rock music to draw in crowds. They sing songs filled with empty messages of love and peace in some distant future, songs without the message of true salvation found in a born-again experience. A genuine experience of salvation brings an individual into love, joy, and peace, right in this present day, amid all the evil that bombards us. As Christians, we are not looking to some future day for peace and joy and love; we have it today. The kingdom of peace dwells within every child of God.

The Way of Holiness

Getting the youth involved in the church services is extremely important. So many young people are lost to the ways of the world, to sin. However, there should be a definite distinction between the sounds of the world and the sounds of the church. We should not mix them. We must be a separate people, set apart for God's use. True Christians, young and old, still love the old songs of Zion. These songs are filled with the doctrines and the teachings of the church. The world has done away with them. Modern-day churches have gone to empty choruses with nothing in them. I am extremely involved with music, and the most beautiful songs out there are the Church of God songs. Their melodies and harmonies are beautiful. The world does not have anything that compares with the songs of the church.

God's church and His way is the way of holiness. God's way teaches us how to keep ourselves unspotted from the world and how to be one with Almighty God. Isaiah 35:8 reads, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

John wrote that Jesus Christ is

the way to everlasting life. Peter wrote concerning this way in 1 Peter 2:6, "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion [the church], a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded [or confused]."

God's chosen people, the New Testament Jews, who make up the new Jerusalem, do not have to be confused. God is not the author of confusion. If you are in confusion, it is because you have allowed some kind of spirit or false teaching to work on you. If your vision is blurred, you need to come to Jesus and let Him clear up your vision so that you can see clearly.

Church of God, we should be excited about the Truth that we are blessed with and the knowledge that we can live a sin-free life while we are in this world. We can keep these earthen vessels clean and unspotted from the world. Titus 2:11-12 tells us: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

You may inquire, "How can I live free from sin?" Well, it is God living in the heart and soul that keeps one from committing sin and keeps one on this highway of holy living. First John 4:4 says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

God has only one church. He has only one bride, and the church is the bride of Christ. God is pure and holy and so is the church. It is a beautiful institution. This sinless institution came down from God, right out of Heaven. Acts 20:28 speaks about the name of the church. It says, ". . . the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Jesus Christ did not purchase any other church. He purchased His church, which is the Church of God, and she takes the

Father's name—God. Are you a part of this great church? Are you a follower of Jesus Christ? Does He live within your heart?

"Seek Those Things Which Are Above"

The main idea that the Apostle Paul wanted to get across to the church at Colosse can be found in Colossians 2:8-10: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."

We have to be careful that we are not spoiled through philosophy and vain deceit. Many intelligent people are out in the world, and I have heard people say this person and that person really know the Bible; however, when I see their lives, I wonder if they know much about it at all. It is much more than reading through the Scriptures and being able to quote verses. It takes the Spirit of God to bring all things into understanding. If you are not living according to the Word of God and you do not have the Spirit of God, you will not understand the things of God. They will be foolishness to you.

In Colossians, Chapter 3, the Apostle Paul exhorted the people to be heavenly minded, not earthly minded. Verses 1-13 read: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God [the Psalmist said in Psalm 16:11 that at God's right hand are pleasures evermore]. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence,

and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." God wants His people to get along, and thank God in the church they do.

What are you seeking? What are you pursuing? Again, verse 1 says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." If you have been born again and God has raised you up from the life of sin, your eyes should be on the Kingdom of God and God's ways; that is where they should be fixed.

God Must Come First

The Apostle Paul gave a beautiful definition of the Kingdom of God. In Romans 14:17 he wrote, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." You and I can enjoy this kingdom right now. Saint, your joy should be in the great privilege of having God's presence in your life. The Lord's presence in your life will fill all the needs of the soul, heart, mind, and body. God has truly done this for me. He has given me joy beyond measure.

Again, Colossians 3:2 says, "Set your affection [or set your heart] on things above, not on things on the earth."

Young person, we all have desires, and we need to be careful. The Apostle Paul let you know that if you cannot control your thoughts and your affections, then it is good that you marry. God ordained marriage, but the Apostle Paul said that when one is not married, he can completely consecrate his life and his thoughts to God. All your affection can be on God. When you are married, part of your affection goes toward your wife or your husband and toward pleasing him or her.

Let me encourage you to get established in the things of God, first and foremost. Marriage is wonderful, and it will come; but getting established in your Christian experience is best, otherwise the wife or the husband could lead you astray. God must come first. Your love must first be to God and to the church, then to your wife or your husband, and then to your family and friends.

You need to set your affection on things above. Brother, God will bring a woman to you. Psalm 84:11 says, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Proverbs 18:22 reads, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD." If you want to get married, you can hold to those verses of Scriptures.

The word *affection* means "a tender feeling; a warm liking of the mind or moving of the mind in any way; a mental state caused by an influence, an emotion, or a feeling." It is so important that you keep your emotions and feelings centered on God. Your mind should be on the things of God. Most of your thoughts should be on spiritual things.

The Amplified Bible in Colossians 3:2 says, "And set your minds *and* keep them set on what is above—the higher things—and not on things that are on the earth." You need to let heavenly things fill your

thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

You should not think on bad reports when people bring things to your mind. You should not speak about or think upon reports that are against a brother or a sister. You should leave them with God. I am so busy and have so much on my mind that I do not think about negative things, and I think I am better off for it. You should not dwell on other people and what they are doing.

We should not look at one another to see what we should be doing; we must look to God. The Apostle Paul said not to measure yourself by others; that is unwise. Other people may lead you astray or lead you into confusion. Look to Jesus and ask Him for help and direction, otherwise you will make a mess of your life. You need His direction. The work of God must have the preeminence in your life. God must come first He will not take any other place. Either He must have first place in your life or you do not have Him at all.

Laying Up Treasures in Heaven

The Apostle Paul had much to say about the spiritual mind. In Romans 8:6 he said, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." In 1 Corinthians 2:16 we read, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. Then Philippians 2:5 says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

As Christians, with the mind of Christ we should consider what Jesus thought on and where His

affections were centered. Jesus lived about thirty-three and one-half years, and He did not have romantic relationships. He was not married. When He was on this earth, He set about doing the will of the Father. That is what we should do. I am not saying that you should not get married, but I am saying that if you are not married, first you should get established in the things of God; then God will send you a husband or a wife.

What was Jesus really concerned about? Where did Jesus say your affections should be centered? He said in Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." My mind goes to the story of the rich man in the Bible who came to Jesus. He thought he was doing quite well. He kept all the commandments of the Lord, but what did Jesus say in Matthew 19:21? "Go and sell that thou hast . . . and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Instead of doing what Jesus told him to do, he turned away and was sad; his countenance was down. Why? His affection was on his earthly treasures. Serving God takes more than just observing the commandments of the Word and doing what you think is right; it takes your heart being fully obedient to Jesus.

Christian, Jesus will ask you to set aside some things. That is all part of the sanctifying process. Sanctification is a daily work. Daily, you must be set apart from the world. As you continue in your walk with God, you must lay aside more and more. That is part of your growth. You need to grow spiritually. If you become stagnant, you will go backward. You must be careful of where you set your affection. Is your affection set on material things or spiritual things? Are you setting up for

yourself earthly treasures or spiritual treasures?

The Danger of Wealth

King Solomon, the wisest ruler that ever lived (except for Jesus Christ), spoke from experience of the evils and dangers of following after the material things of this world. King Solomon had much to say about this. He had wisdom from God, and he had great prosperity as a king and ruler. He had it all from the worldly standpoint.

The daily food requirements for Solomon's temple were one hundred fifty bushels of choice flour, three hundred bushels of meal, ten oxen from the fattening pens, twenty pasture fed cattle, one hundred sheep or goats, as well as deer, gazelles, roebucks, and choice fowl. Solomon's dominion extended over all the kingdoms west of the Euphrates river, from Tiphshah to Gaza, and there was peace throughout the entire land. Throughout the lifetime of Solomon, all of Judah and Israel lived in peace and safety. From Dan to Beersheba, each family had its own home and garden. Solomon had four thousand stalls for his chariots and twelve thousand horses. The district governors faithfully provided food for King Solomon and his court, each during his assigned month. They also brought the necessary barley and straw for the royal horses and the stables. King Solomon composed some three thousand proverbs and wrote one thousand five songs. He could speak with authority about all kinds of plants, from the great cedars of Lebanon to the tiny hyssop that grew from cracks in walls. He could also speak about animals, birds, reptiles, and fish. Kings from every nation sent their ambassadors to listen to the wisdom of Solomon.

After many years of riotous living, Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 6:1-2: "There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and

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

Solomon had great riches. If you are seeking wealth, you might attain it, but you could lose your soul in exchange. This is serious! Where is your heart? Upon what have you set your affections? While I was growing up, we did not have great wealth. We had sufficient, but we learned to appreciate the little things so much more. I have seen people with riches. They might have all kinds of money, but did that bring happiness? No. Some of the poorest people I have seen are some of the happiest people.

First Timothy 6:6-10 states: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

I think faith is really lacking today. In the past people did not have as much materially as we have, and people had to rely on God more. The danger in wealth is that you have so much that you think you have need of nothing, but we do have a need. You need to realize your need of God.

Put on the New Man

Again, the Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 3:5, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." You must mortify, or put to death, fleshly desires, because they will war against your soul. Those things will work on you. Peter wrote

in 1 Peter 2:11, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." He mentioned "inordinate affection." This is disorderly or unregulated affection on someone out in the world. This will work on you if you are not careful. If your desire is to marry, then you should marry in the Lord. God will send someone to you. He is faithful, and He will supply all your needs, if you stay faithful.

Child of God, you should not be so comfortable in this world that you join in with all the world's activities. This world is not your home. It is only a testing ground. Your eyes should be fixed on your heavenly home, where you will spend eternity. You must put off the old man with his deeds and desires. You need to take on the mind of Christ and begin to view the things of the world as He sees them. First Peter 4:1-2 reads: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God."

Again, the Apostle Paul penned in Colossians 3:10-11: "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew. . . ." He went on to let us know that in this New Testament dispensation, there is no difference between the literal Jews and other nations. Verse 10 speaks of the new man you become when you are born again. Speaking of the new man, Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." If you claim to be a Christian and you are not a changed individual, something is wrong. All things become new in Christ.

In Ephesians 4:24 Paul said, "And that ye put on the new man,

which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." When you are born again, in place of the old man, you are clothed with a brand-new nature that is continually being renewed. As you learn more about Christ, you should become more and more like Him. What a trade when you trade your own sinful, fleshly ways for the ways of God! The plan of redemption is so beautiful! I thank God for His forgiveness and His mercy.

"Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain"

Colossians 3:15 says, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Saint, you ought to be thankful. Certainly you have battles and trials, and sometimes you will feel down, but put on a smile and overlook it, because people are watching. They want to see how you act and how you look amid trials and tribulations. That is what separates the church from the world, because the grace of God enables the child of God to smile through the hard times and be happy. Trials will work on you, but we all have trials. You need to stay right in the race and never give up.

First Thessalonians 5:18 tells us, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Again, 1 Timothy 6:6 says, "But godliness with contentment is great gain." Verse 8 says, "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." Saint, you should be content and happy in the Lord, happy in the church, happy in the things of God, and happy in your life.

After Jesus had eaten with some of His disciples, He asked Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" Peter's response was, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee" (John 21:15). If you read on, you will find that He asked him three times. How many times did Peter deny Christ? He denied Him

three times. The Lord knew what would happen, so He asked Peter that very serious question three times. Friend, do you love the Lord more than the things of this world? You need to consider this. Often the cares of this life burden people down and hinder their having a clear vision of Christ. These weights, if left to grow, will cause you to lose hold of where your affection should be centered.

I wonder, do you find more interest and pleasure in the things of this world than in the things of the Lord? Where do you really find joy? Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, wrote in Philippians 3:7-8: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." The Apostle Paul had overcome the flesh. He had been beaten, stoned, thrown in prison, and suffered many other maladies, but he still rejoiced in the things of God. When Paul and Silas were thrown in prison after they had been beaten, at midnight they prayed and sang praises to God, and a great earthquake shook that jail house.

When you come to the knowledge and understanding of Christ, you will begin to see yourself and the things of this world the way God sees them. The things that you once regarded as important will not be so important anymore. The price you pay is so small and the gain is so great. Someone said this: we give up our own little contracted life and receive in return a rich, full, overflowing, triumphant, victorious, and abundant life.

Forsake All and Follow Christ

Christ spoke to Peter about the great reward that is won by forsaking all and following Him. He said in Mark 10:29-30: "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left

house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." The promise of one day seeing our Savior and spending all eternity with the One who died for you should be great enough assurance to keep you walking faithfully before the Lord. Your hope should be anchored in Him.

In Ecclesiastes 6:7 Solomon addressed the evils of riches when he said, "All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled." I believe he was speaking about the spiritual appetite of the soul. People go out and do many things, and then they try to suppress that longing for a Savior. They do all kinds of things and take all kinds of drugs, but their appetites are not satisfied and their souls are not filled. Whatever you try in the world cannot satisfy your soul.

Filling the physical appetite will not suffice the appetite of the soul. It takes spiritual food to feed the soul. It takes preaching and the reading of God's eternal Word to satisfy the soul. Jesus is the Bread of life. Those who come to Him will never be hungry, and those who believe on Him will never thirst. Jesus is everything.

Saint, you need to work to keep your affections and your desires set on heavenly things. Since you have risen with Christ, you must always seek those things that are above; set your affection above and not on things of this earth. Your abode here is but for a moment when compared with eternity.

James stated in James 4:14b, "For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." Those who are up in years will tell you that this life flies by so quickly. One songwriter wrote, "Only one life so soon will pass, only what's

done for Christ will last." You must keep your affections centered on things above and not on things of this earth.

When you really see the beauty of God and get a clear vision of the church, you will not look anywhere else. You will not want to look anywhere else. Without a spiritual vision people will perish. It is very important that we have a vision of the church. Saint, you need to cling to eternal things and set them in your heart, and God will bless you. The Psalmist David wrote in Psalm 119:9-11: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I

might not sin against thee." When you have the Word of God written on the table of your heart, you will not want to sin. When you are tempted, God will prick your heart and bring a Scripture to your mind; then you will say, "How can I do that and sin?" If you go back into sin, the Scripture says that you crucify the Son of Man afresh and put Him to open shame. Why did He go to the Cross? It was for sin; therefore, when you sin, you crucify Him afresh. It is good that you think about that when temptation comes upon you.

Psalm 119:10-16 reads: "With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach

me thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word."

You must keep your affection centered on things above, not on things of the earth. People will fail you, and the things of the world will let you down. If you are not careful, you will allow things into your heart that will cause you to become discouraged and depressed, and then there is no telling where you will end up. You need to keep your eyes fixed on Jesus.

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Announcements

HAMILTON, MT

October 1-7

REVIVAL: Church of God, 307 N. 2nd Street, Hamilton, MT 59840
Evangelist: Brother Roger Decker, Newark, OH
Service times: 7:00 p.m. each evening; Sunday 10:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor Patrick Brower, 58 Rockland Ln., Victor, MT 59875
Telephone: 406-642-3956

MT. PLEASANT, PA

October 5-7

REVIVAL: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666
Evangelist: Bro. Allen Polston, New Castle, IN. Service times: Friday 7:00 p.m., Saturday 2:00 p.m., and Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 2:00 p.m. MOTELS: *Holiday Inn Express*, (on same road as the church), 724-547-2095; *Super 8*, in New Stanton (on I-70, 10 mi. north of the church), 724-925-8915; *Melody Motor Lodge*, (on St. Rt. 119N in Connellsville).
For further information contact: Pastor Paul W. Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666
Telephone: 724-547-2151

PORT REPUBLIC, MD

October 12-21

REVIVAL: Church of God at Calvert County, 2525 Hance Rd. Port Republic, MD
Evangelist: Brother Calvin Foster, Kensett, Arkansas
Service times: 8:00 p.m.; Sunday 11:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor Ron Hawkins.
Telephone: (Home) 410-586-2885 or (Cell) 443-277-1227

MEDINA, OH

October 22-28

REVIVAL: The Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH 44256
Evangelist: Brother Roger Decker, Newark, Ohio
Service times: Monday-Saturday 7:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor Daniel Webster, 92 W. Main Street, Seville, OH 44273
Telephone: (Home) 330-435-6490 or (Church) 330-725-5993
Visit our website at: www.ChurchofGodMedinaOH.com

MOSS POINT, MS

Oct. 31-Nov. 4

REVIVAL: Pine Grove Church of God, 11629 Highway 614, Moss Point, MS 39562
(The church is located 18 miles west of I-65 Mobile, Alabama, on Airport Blvd., which turns into Highway 614)
Evangelist: Brother Roger Decker, Newark, Ohio
Service Times: 7:00 each evening; Sunday 10:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. (Saturday, November 3, is a Fellowship Meeting. The service times are listed below). MOTELS: *Motel 6*, Rate: \$54.71, incl. Tax. Phone 251-343-8448; *Fairfield Inn*, Rate: \$112.86, incl. tax. Phone 251-316-0029; *Hampton Inn Suites*, Rates: \$189.00, incl. tax. Phone 251-776-5866
For further information, contact: Pastor Larry Dishman, 11629 Highway 614, Moss Point, MS 39562
Telephone: (Home) 228-588-6288; (Cell) 251-776-2100

November 3

FELLOWSHIP MEETING: Two Services: 10:00 a.m. & 2:30 p.m.
Meals provided by the local congregation.

MECHANICSBURG, IN

November 7-11

REVIVAL: Church of God, Mechanicsburg, Indiana
Evangelist: Brother Tim Wilson, Sylacauga, Alabama
Service times: Wed.-Fri. 7:00 p.m. @ Mechanicsburg; Saturday Fellowship 10:00 a.m. @ Mechanicsburg; Sun. Morning 10:30 a.m. @ Mechanicsburg; Sun. Eve. 6:00 p.m. @ Brown Rd.
For further information contact: Pastor Allen Polston, 2020 N. Ralph St., New Castle, IN 47362
Telephone: 765-521-8284 or visit our website @ www.ChurchofGodIndiana.com

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