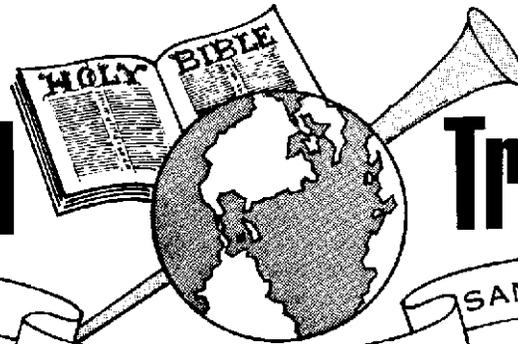


The Gospel



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. 38 April 2009 No. 4



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

Annual Financial Report

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER
USPS #871620

Second-class postage paid at the post office in Newark, Ohio 43055.

POSTMAN, send form 3579 to the printer:

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER
675 N. Cedar Street
Newark, Ohio 43055

This periodical carries no subscription price; however, it is partially maintained through the gifts and offerings of its readers, with the balance of the expenses being paid by the local congregation.

PRAYER: If you need prayer, please phone or write:

Roger Decker, Pastor
83 Decrow Ave.
Newark, OH 43055

Phone: 614-344-2543
Fax: 614-344-4737
Print Shop Phone: 614-345-1312

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

- A personal God (John 4:24)
- A divine Christ (John 1:1, 14)
- An infallibly inspired Bible (II 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 (I 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; I Cor. 11:23, 34)
- Eternal life (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43)
- The Trinity (I John 5:7, 8)

SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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

CONTENTS

The Oneness of God's People.	3
The Purpose of Christ.	7
Especially for Young People.	9
Preaching to Nobody.	13
The Lord Hath Need.	15
What Lack I Yet?.	21
Announcements.	27

Internet Address: GodsAcres.org

Vol. 39 April 2009 No. 4

Ezekiel 33:1-11 states: "Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live? Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

The Prophet spoke some very sobering words that still ring true today. An awesome responsibility lies at the feet of God's people to get the Word of God to a lost and dying world. To this end was *The Gospel Trumpeter* born. From a small beginning to a modern print shop, the single purpose remains today to reach out with a burden for lost souls and to speak the Truth to a religious world who is caught in the confusion of sectarian division.

To accomplish this task, messages must be preached, transcribed, which is to listen to a recorded message and type it. Next begins an editing process. Once edited into its final form, it is then organized to fit into the pages of *The Gospel Trumpeter*. Following this, it is sent to the printer to be printed, collated, stapled, labeled for mailing, and bundled for shipment. In all, it is a great labor that requires hundreds of hours of work and thousands of dollars to operate. Since the very beginning, *The Gospel Trumpeter* has been mailed to subscribers without a given subscription price, so as to make it available to all who wish to receive it. Many send regular contributions for this endeavor, and the local congregation pays all the costs that exceed the contributions. We truly appreciate the Lord for His help as well as those whom He has laid on them a burden to work in this ministry.

Statement of Condition for 12 months ending January 31, 2009



	Income	Expenses
Supplies		\$ 28,107.21
Miscellaneous		1,403.21
Wages		50,398.24
Donations/Offerings	\$23,633.53	
Equipment Purchased		12,286.36
Postage		53,538.97
Maintenance & Repairs		2,908.95
Subtotals	23,633.53	\$148,642.94
<i>Balance paid out of the general fund of the Church of God congregation at Newark, OH</i>		\$125,009.41

Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

The Oneness of God's People

Part 2 of 2



Brother Roger L. Decker

The Basis of the Home

I want to continue the lesson concerning the oneness of God's people, and to do that I am going to talk about the home. The oneness of God's people starts in the home. You are no better at the church house than you are in your own dwelling. If there was ever a time when we needed to look into the Word of God concerning the home, it is now. The devil is running rampant and making a mockery of what should be the best homes in the world. They have

everything that God has provided for them to have a happy home.

First Peter 5:8 says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Although Christians put their trust and confidence in God, they should not be careless. Peter was saying that we should be self-controlled and alert. The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 2:11, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

There is too much sloppiness in some homes. I am not talking about housekeeping. There is too much letting down, and the devil is always ready to try to destroy homes. Paul said we are not ignorant of Satan's devices. The basis of the home is love, just like the love between Christ and the church. Proverbs 17:1 says, "Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife."

Three times in Ephesians, Chapter 5, the Apostle Paul commanded the husband to love his

wife. Paul even went so far as to tell the husband *how* he should love his wife. In verse 25 he told the husband to love his wife "as Christ also loved the church." In verse 28 he stated that men ought "to love their wives as their own bodies." Then in verse 33 he instructed the husband to "so love his wife even as himself." Every one of those verses contain strong words that tell of the husband having a close commitment to the wife. Colossians 3:19 says, "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them." This love is similar to how Christ loved the church and similar to how a man loves his own body.

The devil wants to get bitterness into a home, and it takes true love to keep it out. The man is the head of the home and has great responsibility. He has been given the right to direct and govern, and he has been given that by creation. We read in Genesis 3:16, "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

In some of the newer versions of the Bible, the word *rule* has been removed. Nevertheless, the King James Version states that "he shall rule over thee." Generally, the man is superior in wisdom and knowledge. Normally he can handle crises and calamities better than the woman can. He is better at handling unpredicted incidents that take place. Ordinarily the man is superior, especially in the military, because he can handle crucial situations better and has greater strength than the woman.

It is commanded by God that the husband love his wife. There are men in the world who love their wives, and they are not even saved. If any husband should love his wife, it should be the one who is saved, because of the love of God, which is the highest form of love, dwelling in him. He should be able to love his wife more than a worldly man could love his wife.

A Sacrificial Love

I want you to consider the love of God. Christ left His abode with God in eternity and came to earth in the form of a servant. The love of God is a sacrificial love; it is a love that we do not deserve. When He saved us, it was because of His unmerited love. We did not deserve to be saved. We deserved to go to a devil's hell.

It is part of God's nature to love. His love is not as the world's love, because the world's love is object-oriented. God does not focus on the object because it is His nature to love. God was not bound to love a world that hated Him, but He did, because God *is* love. God loves you, though you may be unlovable. He loves you even though you do not love Him.

Husband, you are commanded to love your wife. There has been a letdown in the home, and the husband needs to take his part. The husband should be able to say to his wife, "I will always love you, in sickness and in health, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, till death do us part," and mean it. Oh, it is easy to say the marriage vows with stars in your eyes while staring at each other, but it is something else to prove it.

Love in the home should grow stronger, not weaker, as the years go by. I have a rather humorous story that goes along with the message. It preaches a real message. It reveals the action of a husband to his wife. The first year that the couple was married, the wife got a cold, so the husband said: "Sugar Dumpling, I am really worried about my little baby girl. You have had a bad snuffle, and there is no telling about those things, with all the strep throat that is going around. I am putting you in the hospital this afternoon for a general checkup and a good rest. I know the food there is lousy, but I will be bringing your meals in from your favorite restaurant. I have it all arranged with the floor superintendent." That was the

first year.

The second year things began to decline just a little. The second year the husband said: "Listen, darling, I don't like the sound of that cough. I've called Doc Miller and asked him to rush over here. Now, you go to bed like a good girl."

The third year the husband said: "Maybe you'd better lie down, honey. Nothing like a rest when you feel bad. I'll bring you something. Do we have any canned soup?"

The fourth year of marriage the husband said: "Now, look, dear, be sensible. After you have fed the kids, washed the dishes, and finished vacuuming the floors, you'd better lie down for a while."

The fifth year he said, "Why don't you take something?"

The sixth year the husband said to his wife, "I wish you would gargle or something, instead of sitting around all evening barking like a seal."

The seventh year he said to her: "Would you stop your sneezing? Are you trying to give me pneumonia?"

Although this is a humorous little story, it is really a picture of declining love. When people are saved, their love should grow stronger as the years go by. The love of God is purifying. Ephesians 5:26 says, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." Jesus wants His church to be clean. God has a clean church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Love Is Caring

Marriage involves purification. The godly husband will do everything in his power to maintain his wife's holiness, virtue, and purity. He would not do anything that would provoke her to sin. He would not want to cause her to be tempted with someone else. The love of Christ is caring. I thank God for the love of Christ. Peter wrote in 1 Peter 5:7, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

The same is true in a marriage—the husband cares for his wife. God has ordained that the husband take care of his wife. He is her provider, her protector, and her preserver.

The Word of God tells us all about a man who will not work and provide for his own. First Timothy 5:8 tells us what this man is like: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." An *infidel* is a nonbeliever. There is a difference between trying to find employment and being unable to get work and trying to get out of work. Some men work awfully hard to get *out* of work. They would be better off going to a job and working forty hours.

There are some things that a husband ought to provide for his wife. I realize there are times when the finances are unavailable. Sometimes husbands might not have work, but if work is plentiful and money is coming in, the husband ought to provide a place to live. He should be the leader in family worship. Also, he should provide clothes, groceries, and spending money so the wife does not feel as though she is a beggar when she asks for a couple of dollars.

The wife is not a slave or a maid, but she is to be in submission to her husband, not with fear or as one who gets yelled at whenever she makes a mistake. She should not have to give an account of every single move she makes. There should be mutual trust between the husband and the wife. The husband should have confidence in her that she wants what is best for the home. Love is caring. It is not "Do this" and "Do that" or "Fix me this" or "What's the matter with you, anyhow?"

I repeat, love is caring for one another as Christ cared for the church. True love is unbreakable. Genesis 2:24 reads, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." You cannot separate Christ and the

church. Likewise, you cannot separate a husband and a wife when they truly love each other. When a man leaves his mother and father, he severs ties and starts his own home. To *cleave* is "to adhere closely or loyally and unwaveringly." That is how strong love can be.

Spirituality Is Important in the Home

The man should be the leader in the home. Men are normally stronger, and they can do jobs that are more strenuous. The wife is the weaker vessel. Wife, do you want to get your husband's attention? Then you must be the weaker vessel.

Some homes are completely out of the will of God, and that is not a good atmosphere for raising children or for living holy. Sometimes in that home there is abuse of every kind. It is not always physical; sometimes that abuse is mental. Not all marriages are made in Heaven.

I still contend that God can bring saved couples together. They do not need someone to set it up for them. We read in Genesis 2:22, "And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man." Too many marriages are prearranged by others who mean well. It may seem that they are interested in the same things, and their dispositions may be similar, but notice that the Scripture says that God brought the woman to the man.

The number one concern of a saved brother choosing a wife should be this: Is she spiritual? Does she ever testify? Does she take part in the services? Does she talk about the Lord or does she talk about everything else? The same is true when a woman chooses a husband. She should be asking: "Is he spiritual?" How well do you get along with each other? If you fight in courtship, it will not get better in marriage. Does he work or is he lazy? Does he overstep moral principles? Does he take advantage of you? Can you be spiritual and still

be around him? When you go out with him and return home, do you feel spiritual or do you feel as if you need to confess and repent?

Colossians 3:18 reads, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." It is not fit to compromise or overstep your convictions. It is not fit to stay home from the worship services just because he or she wants you to.

In our own home my wife was saved before I was. I never wanted to stay home any other time, but I always made a point to ask her to stay home with me when there were church services. That is how the devil used me. She was a newborn babe, but that did not make any difference. She went to church. I thank God that she did. What does that show you? It shows who was on the throne of her heart.

You should never compromise your stand for Truth to win someone to Christ. You cannot win a person by compromising, but you can win that one by staying true to God. Though the wife is to submit to her husband, she still has One higher to whom she must submit, and that is the Lord. Acts 5:29 states, "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."

It is the duty of the husband and the wife to go to the house of God together. The wife should fix herself up for her mate, and the husband should clean up for his wife. You do not have to be wealthy to buy soap. You can be poor and clean at the same time. If you are poor, you do not have to dress sloppily or be unkempt, and you can be clean.

Raising a Family

Abraham is called the father of the faithful. His wife Sarah is called the mother of the submissive. First Peter 3:6 says, "Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." It is the duty of the wife to keep the house clean. If there

are children, she should keep the children clean and be a helpmeet to her husband. Raising children is a full-time job.

You may say, "Well, I just need to take a vacation from my children." They are going to be out of the home soon, and when they are gone, there are going to be days of loneliness. There will be days that you will wish that one of them would call or stop over to see you. You should not be in a hurry to get them out of the home, to have them get a job, or to get them to go here or there.

I love to have our children in the home. I want to have a home where our children want to come and where the grandchildren want to come. Parent, God gave those children to you to raise, and there is going to come a time when the children are going to be gone.

Raising a family is a great responsibility. Today many homes are in a sad state. They are out of the order that God wants them to be. If the wife runs the home, there is going to be contention. Another word for contention is quarreling and strife. Proverbs 21:19 tells us, "It is better to dwell in the wilderness [or in the desert], than with a contentious and an angry woman." Proverbs 27:15 says, "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike." Proverbs 19:13 states, "A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping."

Men can be contentious too. Proverbs 26:21 reads, "As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife." If a home is out of order, it will bring chaos in a congregation. Contention travels from the home to the congregation, and it zaps just as electricity does. It travels from the home to the worship services. When there is arguing and fussing in the home, there will be chaos in the congregation. If you argue and fuss in the home, and then argue and fuss in the automobile on the way to

the service, that same spirit is bound to be in the worship service.

Is Your Home Out of Order?

If your home is in disarray because of someone being out of the will of God, God will give grace to stand to the one who is not out of order. When two people profess to be saved, God is displeased with wrangling and jangling and fussing and fighting in the home. You cannot just shut it off when you walk through the church doors. What you are in the walls of your home is what you are in the worship services. A contentious man stirs up strife.

The oneness of the church starts within the walls of your home. How can you enjoy the things of God and the preaching of God's Word when there is a breach between you and your companion? You cannot do it. If you both are professing salvation and there is disarray in your home, God can help you to get it straightened out. He is not against you. God wants to help your home, and He is reaching out to you. If you will humble yourself, He will help you. The Lord helped my home, and He knows how to help your home too. He knows more about having a

home that is free from contention and strife than all the books that have been written on the subject. Also, He knows more about raising children and having a good home than all the books you can find on this topic.

The devil is bidding high for your home. When the devil was walking about seeking whom he might devour in Job's day, he made a visit to Job. Why? He wanted that perfect one, that one who eschewed evil and lived a good life.

If you need help, the first step in receiving help is to be honest. If your home is out of order, then the Lord is more than able to put it in order. God loves you, and He is more concerned about your home than you are. God will work with you if you will let Him.

God wants your home to be the best home possible. He cares for you, and He cares about the state of your home. He does not want the order of your home turned topsy-turvy. He does not want the wife running the home. He wants the man to take charge of the home and to love His wife according to the Scriptures.

(Compact Disc TR-226E)

SOMEONE HAS SAID:

The solution to the American family problems is contained in one word—CHRIST.

CHRIST at the marriage altar.

CHRIST on the bridal journey,

CHRIST when the new home is set up,

CHRIST when the baby comes,

CHRIST in the pinching times,

CHRIST in the days of plenty,

CHRIST when the wedding pair walk toward

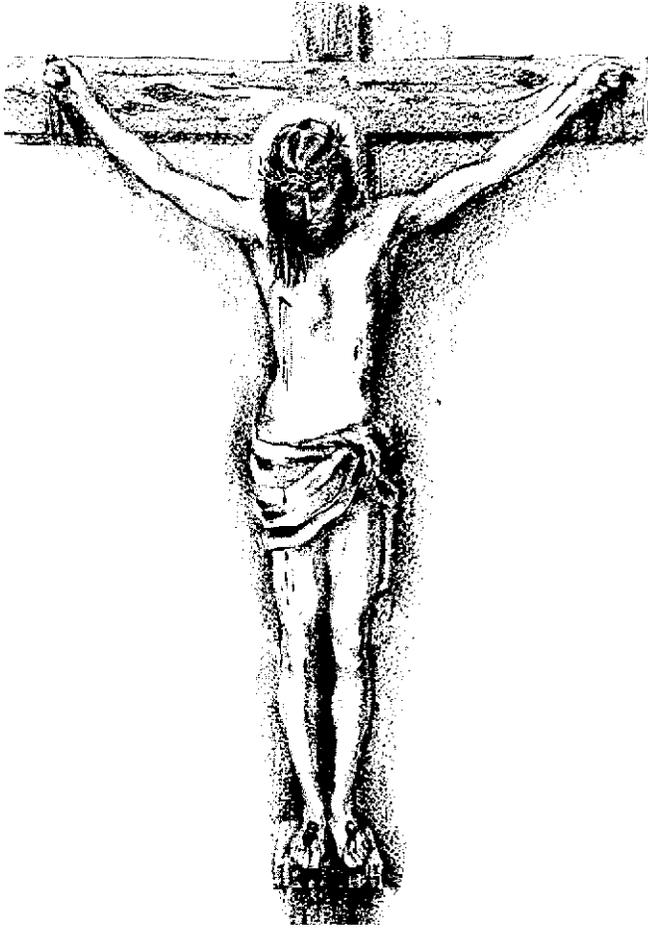
sunset gates,

CHRIST when one is taken home to Heaven and

the other one is left.

CHRIST in time; CHRIST in eternity.

THIS IS THE SECRET of a happy home life.



Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

The Purpose of Christ

Brother Paul Prinkey

Consider Jesus

Many people give little consideration to Jesus Christ, His death, His burial, and His resurrection. I want to draw your attention to where the prophecies of Christ begin in the Holy Scriptures. God first spoke of how the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent and of how the serpent would bruise His heel. That seed is Jesus Christ. In 1 John 3:8 John said, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

I want you to consider the purpose of Christ's first coming.

Many people think the story of Christ's birth, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection is merely a story to entertain, but there is a vital reason behind it all. I thank God that Jesus Christ came. The Bible reiterates itself many times and proves that Jesus Christ had a serious purpose for coming to this earth, and that was to destroy the works of the devil.

Before Jesus Christ came into my life, the devil was having a heyday, but I thank God that when Jesus Christ came on the scene, things changed. That is the way it is supposed to work. Jesus changed my life, and I am not the same person I used to be. I appreciate the Gospel message that I was privileged to hear, and I am glad for the Holy

Spirit of God that convicted my heart. However, it was Jesus Christ who paid me a visit one day.

There is a crossroad that we each come to in our lives. Jesus Christ will knock at your heart's door, and He will pay you a visit. We read in Hebrews 2:14, speaking of Christ, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Jesus Christ came on the scene and made powerless the works of the devil to those who will believe Him and receive Him. Christ destroyed the effects of the devil. Time will not permit me to go through the Old Testament Scriptures to relate to you

the many prophecies concerning Christ, but I want you to look at a few verses in the Book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 53:1-6 reads: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

The latter part of this chapter speaks much about Christ through the prophecies that were given by Isaiah. Isaiah did not paint a pretty picture of Jesus. He said there was no comeliness about Him that we should desire Him. I have often wondered why so many people have attempted to paint a portrait of Jesus. There is only one Jesus, yet there are many different pictures of Him. In all the pictures that I have seen of Jesus Christ, the artists portray a handsome man with a full head of hair, a beautifully trimmed beard, and nice clothes.

Isaiah did not paint that kind of picture of Jesus. He said there was no comeliness about Him that we should desire Him. In other words, nothing about Christ would draw your attention to Him by His physical appearance. Concerning the outward man, the most attractive thing that Jesus had was the seamless robe that He wore. It was the most prized possession that He had. They crucified Jesus and hung Him

on the Cross, and they cast lots for His robe. He was not a man that one would look at and say, "He is a fine-looking man."

Again, Isaiah said in verse 3 that "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him." As long as Peter was walking with Christ as one of His disciples, he loved Christ, but what happened when he stood with those who were afar off? He hid, as it were, his face from Jesus Christ. Someone asked Peter, "Are you not one of His disciples?"

He answered, "No, I do not know the man." When Peter denied Christ, shame gripped him. He did know Jesus, but he was afraid and ashamed to admit it.

"A Light to Lighten the Gentiles"

Another prophecy concerning Jesus Christ is found in Matthew 1:20-23, which states: "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

The angel gave Joseph, the soon-to-be husband of Mary, some consolation concerning what was taking place. He gave prophecy to Joseph about who this Son would be, who He would become, and the impact that He would have on mankind. This was the Messiah for whom the Jews were looking. For approximately four hundred years, from the time of Malachi of the Old Testament until the ministry of Jesus, darkness reigned. The light

was not shining, and there was no open vision before the people. They were awaiting the arrival of the Messiah. Joseph received word from the angel concerning what was to take place with Jesus Christ.

After Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph took Him to the temple. Luke 2:25-35 reads: "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

"And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

A priest in the temple gave a prophecy of Christ concerning some things to take place in His life. Jesus came to save His own people, as the angel had prophesied to Joseph, but Simeon took it a step further and said that Christ would be "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Simeon made it evident that the Gentile nations were also going to be enlightened by Jesus Christ. This was something that was largely rejected and unaccepted by the Jews. They did not want to accept this truth because they wanted nothing to do with the

Gentiles. Before Jesus Christ began His ministry, Simeon made a prophecy that Jesus Christ would be the light to enlighten the Gentile nations.

You may wonder, "What kind of rejoicing should be in that?" Well, most of us are Gentiles. Had it not been the purpose of Christ to enlighten the Gentile nations, you and I would have been shut out from God's blessings. It is marvelous that God opened the windows of Heaven and poured out a blessing on all mankind, not just on a chosen nation. Jesus said in John 10:16, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Of whom was He speaking? He was speaking of the Gentile nations.

What happened when Peter received a vision at Simon the tanner's house? He went up on the housetop to pray, and God gave him a vision. The Bible says he fell into a trance, and he saw a sheet let down from heaven, wherein were clean and unclean animals. A voice told Peter, "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat" (Acts 10:13). Peter said, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean" (verse 14). The voice said, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" (verse 15).

God revealed the vision to Peter three times before he came to the realization that God was working something, and he gave up his Jewish prejudice. Soon there was a knock at the door, and when Simon the tanner answered, servants from Cornelius' house asked if Peter was there. They said they were sent by Cornelius, whom God had given direction that they should take Peter back to Cornelius' house.

God had already prepared Peter, so he went away with them. At Cornelius' house, what happened? Peter preached a message to people who were not recognized by the Jewish nation as being the chosen people of God. When he preached

the message, the Holy Spirit of God fell on them just as He had the Jews at Jerusalem. Peter perceived that God was going to bless the Gentiles just as He had the Jews. The blessing fell on all who accepted Jesus Christ. The door was opened, and Jesus Christ began to gather in other sheep that were not of the fold. This is part of the purpose of Jesus Christ.

Salvation Is Open to All

Luke 11:29-30 says: "And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation." Here again we find the purpose of Christ. He said a sign would be given. The only sign to be given was that of Jonas (or Jonah). Jesus said it was an evil generation that wanted a sign from Him to prove that He is the Son of God. He said the only sign that would be given was that of Jonah.

That went against the grain, so to speak, of the Jewish nation. Why? Jonah was a Jew, or of the chosen nation of Israel, who was sent by God to preach the message of repentance to the Gentiles. Destruction was at hand for a Gentile nation, the Ninevites. They were not part of the chosen nation, Israel. When the Jews heard Jesus speak this, no doubt it caused many of them to become angry with Him. Why? Because Jesus said it was the only sign that would be given.

You can read more about this in Matthew 12:40, where Jesus said, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." What did He do? He laid His body down in death on the Cross, but three days later He rose from the grave. When Jesus hung on the Cross and died, the devil thought he had won the battle.

As the Jews looked on the temple, do you remember what Jesus said? He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). It took forty-six years to build the literal temple, but they did not understand what He was speaking of. He was speaking of His physical body. In three days He arose and came out of the tomb victoriously! The devil did not have the victory that he thought he had. Jesus had victory over death, hell, and the grave. The devil was defeated.

As Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days, likewise, Jesus was in the tomb three days, but He arose. What happened after Jonah came out of the fish's belly? He took the message to the Gentile nations. What happened after Jesus Christ rose from the dead? It was not long until Peter went down to Cornelius' house to deliver a message to the Gentiles.

After the Apostle Paul was converted, his name was changed from Saul to Paul. God raised him up to minister to the Gentile nations. Paul went around raising up new congregations. Many people were being saved and filled with the Holy Ghost. Congregations were established and pastors were appointed. What a great ministry Paul performed!

The Jewish nation rejected Christ. John 1:11-12 tells us that Christ was sent to "his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." There was no longer any distinction between the Jews and the Gentiles. God opened up salvation to all. Jesus said in the latter part of Revelation 22:17, "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." I thank God for that!

Giving Heed to the Message of Christ

Jesus said in John 3:14-19: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of

man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

What do we find in these verses about Christ? We find the reason that God sent Jesus to the earth. We also find something else. Jesus Christ was not sent to earth to bring condemnation to mankind. You may ask, "Then why does the sinner have condemnation?" Well, He explained that people loved darkness rather than light. It is the same in our age. Today people love darkness rather than light. This is the reason condemnation came. People love their evil deeds. They are partaking of and finding pleasure in sinful things rather than believing in the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore, they have condemnation. They are living against what God has purposed and planned for mankind. He never intended for men to throw away their lives in sin. God's Son was sent so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jesus said in John 10:10, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Many people are alive physically, but they are not really alive to God. Spiritually, they are dead. Is that God's purpose? No, it is not. Is that God's plan? No. God made it clear through Jesus Christ that all who would accept Him and believe in Him would have eternal

life. God never intended for mankind to be condemned by the coming of Jesus Christ. You will find as you study Christ's life and read through the Gospels that only those who rejected Christ, only those who opposed Him, only those who disagreed with Him fell under condemnation. They also suffered the judgments and the punishments of God.

Those who believed and gave heed to the message of Christ were blessed. Many times the Jews tempted Christ and tried to ensnare Him, but He turned it right back on them and they left angrily. It still works the same way today. When you witness to people about Christ, it depends on how they receive it as to how they go away from you. I have talked to some people who have given serious consideration to the Gospel and pondered it. They heard some things that caused them to think. Some people do not like what they hear and walk away angry and upset, but thank God others have accepted the Truth and have gotten saved, and they are being blessed today. I repeat, it depends on how you receive the Word as to how you go away.

Christ Gives the Invitation, But the Choice Is Yours

Jesus Christ has already paid the price. The opportunity is available for you today. You do not know how much time you have left here on earth, but even at the longest, life is very short. You should honor Christ, honor the life that He lived and honor His death, resurrection, and ascension. He is reigning today. You can honor Him by giving your life to Him. You may sit in a pew sometimes and say, "My, it is awfully uncomfortable here." It does not have to be that way. Church can be your favorite place to go. If you let Christ into your life, you will see the difference that He can make. Do you know what Paul said in Romans 8:1-2? He said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,

who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Everything changed! What happened? Christ came into his life.

I am not the same person that I used to be. There was a time when I would find a door to go out as soon as the church service ended so that I did not have to pass by the preacher. I did not want to shake his hand. That changed when I got saved; then I found myself staying longer after the services because I enjoyed being around the people of God. The Lord changed my likes and dislikes when I let Jesus Christ in. Thank God, I do not have any condemnation now since Christ is in my life. Why? I do not walk after the flesh anymore; I walk after the Spirit. One song says: "*A resurrection I confess has taken place within my breast.*"

In Luke 9:51-56 we read: "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."

This is typical of Christ's character. If someone will not let Him into his or her life, He will not force Himself on anyone. He just passes by to someone who will receive Him. James and John were upset because those people would not accept Jesus Christ. In essence, they said, "Lord, do You want us to call fire down from heaven to consume them?" You may think the

disciples could not have done that, but I believe they could have. When Jesus called the seventy, He gave power to them and commissioned them to preach the Gospel, and He gave them power to heal the sick, raise the dead, make the lame to walk, and cast out devils. They had power to do all those things. Jesus gave them that power, and He never took it back.

James and John remembered what happened with the Prophet Elijah in 2 Kings, Chapter 1, when the enemies came by groups of fifty to capture him. The Prophet Elijah just waited until they were close enough, and then he called down fire from Heaven, and it consumed them. The king sent out another fifty, and Elijah called fire down from Heaven again, and it consumed them. They could not capture Elijah. When the disciples recalled that, they thought they would just take care of those people.

Christ said, in so many words, "You do not know what spirit you have. That is not My purpose. I did not come to destroy lives. I came to save them."

If people do not accept the Lord, He will not force Himself on them. He will not destroy them. He is a gentleman. Christ will not force Himself on you. I read the Scriptures how He walked by the shores of Galilee and called Peter who was in his boat mending his nets. He said, "Peter, come and follow Me, and I will make you a fisher of men." He did not stop walking. He came to another ship, and there was Zebedee with James and John. He said, "Come and follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men," and He kept walking. He did not stop and plead with them.

Christ gives the invitation, but the choice is yours. Through Jesus Christ, the invitation is wide open. God will not reject anyone who comes to Him, and He will not force anyone to come. No preacher can force you to be a Christian. A man of God can offer the Gospel to you and plead with you because

he wants to see you get saved and be blessed of God, but no one can force you. The choice is yours.

Reconciliation With God

As the ministry, we are ambassadors of Jesus Christ. We stand in His stead, asking you to come and be saved and be a part of the family of God. This was the way they worked in the morning-time church. Peter said in Acts 2:29-44: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

"For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward

generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common."

There was never a message preached like this before. There was never an easier way made manifest to reach the throne of God. Jesus told the disciples in John 14:12, "The works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." This was a greater work that Peter did on the Day of Pentecost.

Jesus did many great works, so you may wonder how Peter could do greater works. Remember what happened during Jesus' ministry? Thousands flocked to Him and followed Him. What happened when Jesus was taken captive? Everyone forsook Him. After He came forth from the tomb, we find that He gathered with some of the disciples and believers in different places, but the time came when He ascended into the heavens. First Corinthians 15:6 says that He was seen of about five hundred at once at Bethany. That is a very small number compared to the five thousand, plus women and children, that sat on the ground while He fed them the loaves and the fish. Later He ascended up into Heaven.

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter preached and the Holy Ghost fell on three thousand souls, and they were added to the church. They did not wander away and leave. They accepted the plan that was manifested by Peter through his preaching. The purpose of Christ was being fulfilled. How? Lives were being regenerated. They were brought to reconciliation with God. In other words, they were brought back into right standing with the Heavenly Father. Conviction came on them, and salvation came into their lives.

Be Resurrected to Newness of Life

Again, Acts 2:37-38 states: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said . . . Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. . . ." This same message is being preached today; it has not changed. If you will repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved.

The way has been made manifest, and the purpose of Christ has been revealed. What is Christ's purpose? It is to see all mankind brought back to God. I repeat, He did not come to condemn the world. It is not Christ's desire that you live in condemnation. He came so that the world through Him might be saved. In Acts 4:12 Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." No other name has been given. This is the way that God has prepared.

Will you accept Christ? Will you accept His offering? He is still sending out the call. There is no other way to get this salvation but through Jesus Christ. Sometimes people do good works to try to redeem themselves, but it does not work that way. Salvation does not come by doing good works. Salvation comes when you humble yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have found Christ to be very real in my own life because I humbled myself at an altar of prayer and admitted to God that I was a sinner and that I needed salvation. I asked God to forgive me, and salvation came into my life. God will do the same for you if you will humble yourself before Him. He will open the windows of Heaven and pour out a blessing upon you. How? He will do it through salvation.

God will make you a new creature. You may not think you can do it, and I would have to agree. You cannot do it in your own

strength, but if you will let God come into your life, He will help you. No man can bend over and get hold of his own bootstraps and pull himself up. It takes God to lift you up out of sin and give you salvation. Will you accept Him? Will you listen to God and yield yourself to Him?

A resurrection can take place in your life today. If you will open your heart's door, He will resurrect you to newness of life. Words could not express your joy if you would let God into your life today.

(Compact Disc TR-062)

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I survey the wondrous Cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Isaac Watts

Preaching to Nobody

Stephen Grellet believed that those who love God can count on His direction in all that they do. One day as he went quietly about his work, a conviction grew in his mind that he should go and preach to the men in a certain lumber camp. The camp was a long way off and the ride would be difficult. Mr. Grellet could not think of a good reason that he should set off on such an errand, but he was quite sure that God was making this plan for him. Therefore, for Stephen Grellet, there was no question of good reasons. God pointed the way, and he could only obey.

Folks said he was going on a wild goose chase; nevertheless, he set off on his long journey. Nearing his destination, he thought to himself, "Soon I shall see the smoke curling from the cooking fires," but he saw no smoke. He rode nearer. "Soon I shall the sound of axes and the scream of saws through the timber," he thought, but he heard nothing. When he rode around the last bend of the trail, he saw the camp clearing was empty.

Mr. Grellet stood very still and thought, "Have I come to the wrong camp? No, God would not misguide me! Then could it be that I was mistaken and was the voice that set me in my way a mockery? No, never has God let His servants be thus mocked! I will wait now, and ask Him to show me what He would have me do."

So Stephen Grellet waited in the deserted clearing. He waited for God to speak to him. Almost as clearly as if a voice spoke, he heard God's message: "Preach." He pushed open the door of the big shed, where two hundred men had

once gathered for their meals, and walked in. He faced its emptiness. "Friends," he said aloud, "I have come to you with a message from God." At first, it was difficult to speak to the emptiness. He could not help feeling as though he were a fool, but as he spoke about God and His love, he forgot himself and



preached as he had never preached before. When he had finished preaching to nobody, Stephen Grellet started on the homeward trail, serene and happy that he had obeyed God.

Years passed by and business took Grellet to London. He was going over the London Bridge one day when a man spoke to him. "There you are! I've found you at last!"

Mr. Grellet turned. He had never seen the speaker before. "I think there is a mistake, my friend."

"There is no mistake," the

stranger said, "I've looked for you half around the world, and I'd recognize you anywhere. I owe you everything, sir."

"How is that, my friend?" asked Mr. Grellet.

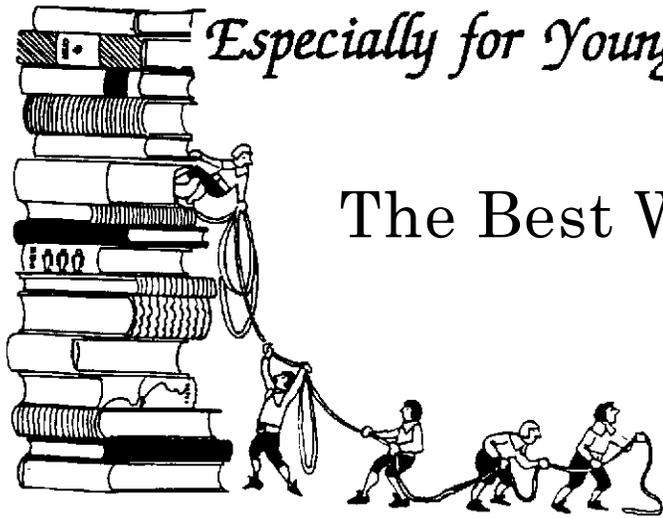
"I'll tell you," said the man. "I used to be a foreman of a lumber gang. Once, many years ago, I had to go back to a clearing which we had abandoned to find something that I had left behind. When I got there, I heard a voice, and there was someone speaking in the empty dining hut. I listened, and it was wonderful! It just fitted me somehow. I slunk away before the man came out, and he had no idea that I was there. I could not forget what he had said, and when I finally found a Bible, I read it and believed its teaching. Then I wanted the other men to believe too. I talked to them, and one day a whole group of us got down on our knees and asked God to save us and make us better men."

The stranger went on, "You thought you were preaching to nobody, sir, but it was the Word of God that you spoke, and it found me. Three of those men to whom I later spoke are now missionaries. We are all so glad that you did the Lord's work well, and that you were brave enough to preach to nobody."

Selected

The degree of our spiritual vigor will be in direct proportion to the time we spend in God's Word.

Especially for Young People



The Best Way



"But, Father, it's not wrong."

"No," said the man slowly, "It's not wrong — *not wrong*."

"Then I may go!" exclaimed the boy, happily. "It will be loads of fun!"

"Son, you are old enough to decide for yourself, and I won't say you may or may not go. I would rather leave the decision entirely with you."

"But you don't want me to go?" said the boy reluctantly.

"You've heard my objections, but as you say, it's not wrong, and you are to decide for yourself."

"I wish you would not put it that way. I want to go so much; it will be such a jolly crowd, and they will have a splendid time. Please say you think it will be all right."

"Son, I don't want to preach to you, and I won't prejudice you in your decision, but I want to remind you of one thing. This is not a question of good or bad; it is a decision between good and the best. If it was the question of right or wrong, I know you would not hesitate. In fact, I think there would only be a little temptation for you. It is in choosing the best that the test comes.

"So many of us are satisfied if we just crawl out of the muck of wrong and don't try to climb up the hills of better and best. The world, as a rule, is satisfied with the merely good. So the sacrifice, for choosing the best, it usually seems necessary we must make. Every time you have a chance to choose, and you choose

the best, your character grows a little stronger, purer, and higher. When you decide that the merely good is sufficient, your character softens a little.

"Sometimes men are made famous in a moment by the hard choice of the best. Famous men have been ruined by failing to take the highest way. The law may make you choose the good, but only with the help of God can you choose the best."

There was silence in the room for a few minutes, and then the boy heard the shrill whistle of his chum and hurried to answer it. The man sat and wondered, and soon the boy returned; he did not go.

Selected

The Count and the Dove

Cruelty to animals is always the sign of a mean and little mind, whereas we invariably find really great men distinguished by their humanity.

I remember having read a beautiful story of Count Zinzendorf when a boy. He was a great German noble and lived to do much good in the world.

One day, when he was playing near the banks of a river, which flowed outside the walls of a castle where he lived, he espied a dove struggling in the water. By some means the poor little creature had fallen into the river and was unable to escape. The little Count immediately rolled a large washtub, which had been left near, to the water's edge, jumped into it, and though generally very timid on the water, by the aid of a stick, he

managed to steer himself across the river to the place where the dove lay floating and struggling. With the bird in his arms, he guided the tub back, and got safely to land. After warming his little captive tenderly in his bosom, he ran with it into the woods and set it free. His mother, who had watched the whole transaction in trembling anxiety from her bedroom window, now came out.

"Were you afraid?" she asked.

"Yes, I was, rather," he answered, "but I could not bear that it should die so. You know mother, its little ones might have been watching for it to come home!"

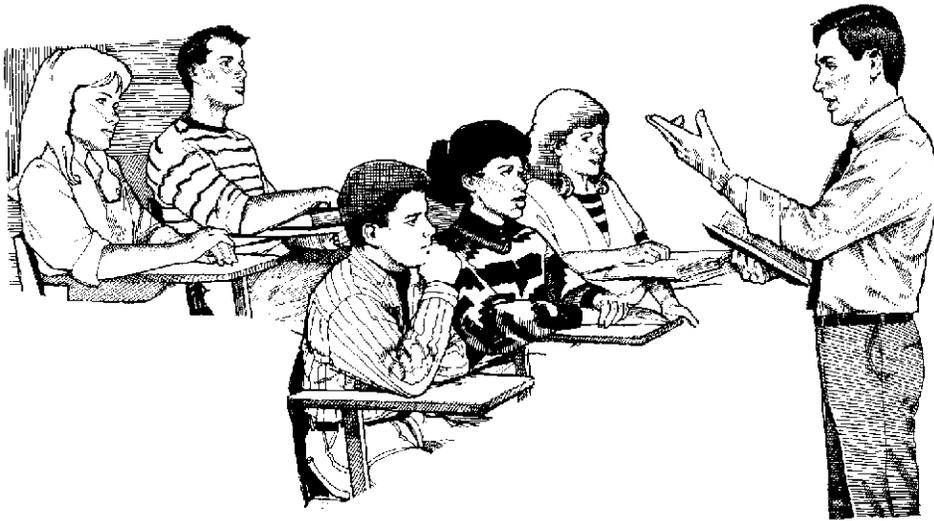
Author Unknown

Luke 18:15 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

The Lord Hath Need



Brother Leamon Whitehead

Neglecting the Needful Things

I believe we need to be more solemn about serving God and really listen to what He has to say. You see, in the busy hustle and bustle of life, you need to slow down and listen to what God has to say. Friend, we only have a few days to sojourn here, and soon it will be over. Of all the accomplishments that we make in life, only those things that we have done for God are going to be worth anything; those are the only things that will last.

Satan would like to get us so busy in living, going to and fro, that we neglect the needful things. The Bible says it is going to be as it was in the days of Noah at the Second Coming of the Son of Man. People

will be going right on with everyday living. The enemy of souls does not want you to stop and take note of how late it is in life and what is going on and what will befall you at the end of the way. I trust that you will give your attention to God.

Satan is doing his best to try to get young people to go out into the world and give their youth and their strength to the devil. I believe that the devil laughs a little harder when he can take a precious young soul who has been cradled around the church and has heard the Truth. The devil enjoys that in a greater way when he can get that soul to go out into the world and say no to God. The Bible lets you know that when you have been exposed to the Truth, you are not just going to go through life and not give an account for what

has gone on. You will have to give an account for the opportunities that you have had, for those opportunities that you have let slip by, and for those opportunities that you have played around with.

Many people have never stopped at a Church of God to hear the message, but they will have to give an account at the Judgment for the opportunities they could have had. They could have rejoiced and enjoyed the good things of God, but they chose to go on their way in sin. As long as the prodigal son had money, he had friends. As long as he was having a good time and the party kept going, he never came to himself. However, when he ran out of money, and he got right down to the bottom and began to think about his condition, he came to himself.

He had time to think of how poor and how down and out he was, all because he chose to leave his father's house.

The good thing about the story of the prodigal son is that he came to himself. In essence, he said: "I know what I am going to do. I am going to go back to my father's house and tell him how sorry I am." Thank God, if you are away from Father's house, if you will come to yourself, God is waiting on you, friend. He wants to take you back, clothe you, feed you, and kill a fatted calf for you.

Serving God Really Pays

Some people have the opinion there is a great difference between the older folks and the younger folks, but this salvation is for everyone. God has just one salvation; He does not have one for the young, one for the middle-aged, and one for the elderly. There is only one way, and it will suit you to a tee. Your age does not have anything to do with it.

What is needful is for you to get to God, to be a vessel for Him, and to give your life to Him so that you will have an experience that will make you happy. Then you can rejoice and shout the victory right on down through life. Sometimes fathers and mothers are tempted to let down a little on the children and think it is going to take something different for them. I want to show you by the Word of God that God needs you and wants you. It does not matter if you are a young person. God has a job for you to do. He wants to use you in the work of God.

It is only a trick of Satan to get you to put off salvation and wait for a more convenient time. You may think that when you are a little older, you will serve God. I want you to know that it will never be any easier for you to serve God than it is right now, because another day in sin could put you into a bondage that you have never dreamed of. It could put you in such a position that it would seem almost impossible for

you to get to God. The devil has placed the thought in people's minds that there is always time to serve God. He may give you another opportunity, but you may be in such a condition that you cannot find the grace and the strength and the confidence to live for Him. The devil wants precious young people to go out in the world and seek a companion. Young person, suppose you go out into the world and find a companion and get married; then the Lord speaks to your heart and you decide to serve God. What if the person to whom you are married does not care anything about God and the things of God? That could be a thorn in your side all the days of your life.

I can speak to you from experience that serving God really pays. Serving God is the best way. It is best to get hold of God while you are young and while you have an opportunity, while you have your life ahead of you. I can testify to that from the Word of God and from personal experience. It pays to serve God. I have witnessed the many different conditions and circumstances that precious young people have gotten into later in life. They were innocent when they first went out into the world, but they got themselves into all kinds of troubles and problems, and then they wanted to serve God, but they got bogged down with troubles on every hand. It did not have to be that way.

God has one standard, and it will fit all ages. Anyone who will really get an experience with God can have the joy and the peace and the satisfaction of living for God regardless of his or her age. The devil has gotten some people to think that they need to split the worship service so that they can get down on the level with the young people and have something different for them. Friend, we do not need to have something different for the young people. Salvation is the same for all. We need to just preach the Truth. Fathers and mothers ought to

hold the standard of Truth in the home and be what God wants them to be and let the young people know there is only one way.

Keeping Your Integrity

I want to give you a few examples of young people whom God used throughout the Bible. You do not have to be almost ready for the grave to serve God. You can serve Him while you are young, and He will be real to you. Salvation can be real to you, and you will be glad to turn from the world. You can commune with God and have that sweet fellowship with Him in your soul.

In the Old Testament you can read about a young lad named Joseph. The Bible lets us know in Genesis 37:2 that Joseph was seventeen years old when God began to use him. That is a young age, an age when the devil would like to conquer young people and get them to rebel against their Christian heritage, rebel against their parents, rebel against the pastor, and then go out in the world. God began to speak to Joseph, and he had great respect for God and God's way. He might not have understood a lot, but at seventeen years of age, God used him in a mighty way.

You can check the record all the way down through his life, and you will find that he never lost his integrity. He stayed true to God even when he was sold as a slave and was taken down to Egypt. In Egypt Potiphar's wife tried to bring him down, but he said in Genesis 39:9, ". . . how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" She caught him by his coat, so he left it and ran outside. He still had the love of God in his heart, and he purposed in his heart that he was going to be true to God.

Young person, you can keep your integrity just as Joseph did. God needs you, and He is calling for you. If you will just turn from your hardheartedness and surrender to God, you do not know what He can

do with you. It is hard to tell what He could do if you would just surrender.

Joseph was a bright young man, and God had something great in store for him. He has something in store for you too, but He cannot use you unless you turn yourself over to Him. You should not resist Him. You need to receive Him into your heart and life. The Lord wants you to understand this: you do not have to wait to serve Him. Some people are under the impression that they have to go out into the world and taste of sin to really have a testimony of thanks to God for what He has done. Let me assure you, that is a lie from the devil, a trick of the enemy. My friend, it is just as great a testimony to be saved from a life of sin and never ruin yourself as it is for people to stand and say, "I thank God for saving me from drugs and alcohol" or "I thank God that He saved me from this and that." You can rise to your feet and say, "Glory to God! I am glad that He kept me from going out into sin!"

I got saved when I was fifteen years of age. I can shout and praise God because He kept me from a lot of things that I would have gotten involved in had I not gotten saved when I did. Some people can testify that God has healed them of cancer or many bad diseases, but do not let the devil press you down because you never had those things and do not have that testimony. You have just as great a testimony as they have, because thank God, He has kept you from that.

No Pleasure in the Reaping

One of the great differences between the individuals who went out in deep sin and the individuals who never got very far out is that those who went deep in sin still have scars and perhaps still have some things they are struggling with in their lives. I heard dear Brother E. A. Wilson say one time, "Right in the height of my rejoicing and praising God, the devil tries to bring up

my past, those old things that I had done." If you never go out in the world, the devil will never be able to drag that through your mind and spoil your rejoicing.

The devil will tell young people who have been raised in the church that if they do not get out in the world to taste and see, they will not know how to really praise God for what He has done. That is the devil talking. You do not need to do that. He just wants to get you out there because he knows that if he can get you out on the sea of sin, you may *never* get back. You may never reach for the lifeline when it is thrown out to you.

The devil works so hard on precious young people who have a Christian heritage of mothers and fathers and grandmothers and grandfathers who are saved and have been living right in the Church of God down through the years. I beg you, young person, do not throw it away. You need to take advantage of the time and the opportunity to live for God, because it is going to be a sad day at the Judgment if you turn Him down and end up lost.

Joseph's brothers got upset with him because he told them about the dreams he had. Oh, I am glad we can have some good dreams. Some people only have nightmares. Is that what you have? After some people have played in sin and done their thing through the day, they are left with nightmares. In the night they are afraid to go to sleep, afraid they will never wake up again. There are some pleasures in sin, but it is not all pleasure. I want to remind you, the pleasure is just in the sowing; there is no pleasure in the reaping.

God was grooming Joseph as a young man, and then He used him to save a nation from starvation. Oh, what a great man God made him down in Egypt! It was God who did that, not Joseph. No wonder David said in Psalm 84:10b, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Being a part of the

family of God is better than anything the world has to offer. Praise God! The things of God are far greater than what the world has to offer.

Joseph was just a lad, but God used him and worked with him. He worked with him mightily and gave him wisdom that saved a nation from a terrible famine. The wisdom that God gives is wisdom that this world cannot impart to you. It comes from God. Young person, there is a place for you. God wants to use you to work in His kingdom. Salvation can be just as real to you as it is to anyone else if you will get the experience that God has for you.

Hearing God's Voice

Another young lad of whom I would like to speak is Samuel. In 1 Samuel, Chapter 1, you can read that Hannah had no children, and she wanted a son. She got under a heavy burden one day at the temple in Shiloh when they went to worship the Lord and take their yearly sacrifice. She got under such a heavy burden that old Eli, the priest, thought she was drunk. When Eli told her to put away the wine, she explained that she was not drunk, but that she was heavy-hearted and had brought her request before God. Then Eli told her to go in peace and it would be as she had asked God.

Sure enough, when the time came, God gave her a son. She vowed to God that she would give her son to the Lord all his days. She nursed that child, and when she weaned him, she took him to the house of God and left him there with Eli, and that is where he stayed. Glory be to God!

There is no greater place than the house of God for children to be raised. Children understand more than you think they do. While Samuel was just a lad, one night he went to bed, and as he was lying there, he heard his name called. He got out of bed and went to Eli and asked, "Did you call me?" Eli said, "No, I did not call you," and he went back to bed.

When Samuel lay down, he heard his name called again: "Samuel, Samuel." Samuel heard his name clearly. God speaks plainly. He could call your name, and no doubt He will. I wonder, will you give Him audience?

Samuel rolled out of bed and went to Eli again and said, "Did you call me?"

Eli said, "No, I did not call you." Eli then perceived that God had called him and, in essence, said, "Go back and lie down, son. If you hear that voice again, just say, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant hears.'" God gave that little boy a message that night. My friend, you can have close communion with God even though you are young. You do not have to wait until you have wasted your years for the devil, only to hobble into church and say you would like to get saved. We thank God for those who do, but you do not need to wait that long. You need to come to Him while you are young, while you can shout for God and jump for joy, before the devil can ruin your life.

I believe those folks who have been out in sin and have marred their lives would like to get saved and shout and testify and praise God, but every time they get ready to, the devil presses them back down. He says, "People know about you." Many people have battles like that.

God spoke to young Samuel that night. God never said any more than Samuel's name when He called him, and Samuel responded to Him. That may be all you are going to hear. He is calling you, and if you will surrender to Him and say, "Yes, Lord, I will live for You," then He has something wonderful for you. Samuel became a great prophet for God, and he started out as a child. God has plans for everyone.

The Bible tells us that God is no respecter of persons. He wants all men to be saved. He has a purpose for your life, no matter who you may be. He has it all worked out, but first you have to come to Him,

accept His plan of salvation, and be delivered from self and the world, and then God can use you.

Letting God Take First Place

The world has humanism working, and one of those humanistic thoughts is to let children go and be what they want to be. The devil would like for the saints to do that. He would like for us to turn them loose and say, "Well, they are not saved, so I will just have to let them go and let them learn for themselves."

The enemy would like to blind us and make us think there is a different standard for the children. You may say, "You cannot dress younger folks the same way that older folks dress." Well, the Bible does not say anything about a dress standard for younger folks and one for older folks, but it does tell us to dress modestly. There is no generation gap when it comes to modesty. Some people get lost in that generation gap. Nevertheless, God has a standard of modesty for the young people. The world says you cannot put an old head on young shoulders, but I am talking about what God can do. We cannot do anything, but God can move, and salvation can be real. Samuel spent his childhood days in the temple. Sometimes people get the impression they must have so much of this and so much of that to be used of God. What we need is God, first of all, and He will take care of everything else when we really get hold of Him.

I thought of all the things the enemy has to entertain young people with today, and then I thought of Samuel, that little fellow there in the house of God with Eli, just ministering to Eli. Samuel did not say, "Eli, there is a big dance going on in town tonight, and I want to go. I'll try to get in early. Some friends invited me, and I don't want to miss it." No, I am persuaded that he enjoyed being in the house of God. As long as Samuel lived, he never forgot about God talking to him and

pouring out the message on his soul.

Young person, you can get a wonderful experience with God and bid the world goodbye, burn the bridges behind you, and press on for God. You will be in the prayer meetings, in the services, and in the revivals, and your soul will be on fire. You will love to go to the house of God.

You have to be in love with God. You cannot let this be just one part of your life. You cannot add it to all the other things in your life, but you have to surrender everything else and let Jesus sit on the throne of your heart. You must love Him more than anything and let Him take first place in your life. Samuel's mother made a great sacrifice when she left him down at the house of God. That would be quite a sacrifice for a mother. The greater the sacrifice we make for God, the greater the return we get, and the greater the blessings He bestows upon us. Sometimes we want God to do great things, but we do not want to make any sacrifice.

Hannah was with that child only for a little while. As soon as she weaned him, she took him to the temple and only visited him once a year. I believe she was just as satisfied with that little boy as if she had him right around the house, because God had given him to her. She had made a vow to God that she would not break. God blessed her and God blessed Samuel, and he grew up. When Eli stepped off the stage of action, God had Samuel ready to do the work of God.

My heart rejoices in the fact that young people serving God can be just as contented as the older folks are. They can be well contented in the Lord. Praise God! Young person, this message is directed to you, especially if you are wasting your life and spending your years in sin.

Trusting God for Power and Victory

We can also read of a young fellow named David whom Samuel

anointed. He already had some experiences where the Lord had delivered him as a young shepherd boy taking care of the sheep. King Saul had rejected God, and God told Samuel there was no need to pray for him. Then He instructed Samuel to take a horn of oil and anoint another to be the king. In Acts 13:22 we read, "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart."

There was something special about David. He loved God, and he loved the ways of God, even from the days of his youth. His father called him one day and said, in so many words, "Son, I want you to take this food to your brethren and see how they are doing." When David arrived where the army was camped, he found that they all had turned back like cowards. The Philistines had them in a corner, and Goliath was coming out every so often, roaring and carrying on, and they were just falling back in fear.

When David saw them, it stirred something within him. He said, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine?" They began to tell him who he was, and David said, in essence, "He cannot do that. I am going over there to get him," but his brother did not want him to go. Even the king began to inquire, "Who is this lad?" David was not an old seasoned soldier, but he knew something about God and God's power. God had delivered David in every circumstance.

David told the king about the time when he was taking care of his father's sheep and he killed a lion and a bear. Then he said that the same God would help him kill that uncircumcised Philistine. Young person, there may be Goliaths in your life, but there is a God in Heaven who will give you power and victory.

King Saul tried to weigh David down with his armor, but David said he could not go that way, so he took it off and laid it aside. Next, he strolled down the way and stopped along the brook to pick up five

smooth stones, and then he went on up the way. He went on even though Goliath said, "Am I a dog, that you would come to me with staves?" That insulted Goliath.

David was a young fellow, but he had a big God! Someone may say, "I'd like to serve a God like that if He would do those things for me." If you will make the sacrifice that David did, if you will surrender your life as David and fall in love with God as David did, He will do the same for you. Too many times people want victory without a battle and without any sacrifice, but if you will make the sacrifice, He will be the same God to you as He was to David. The same God will deliver you and take care of you. He will never leave you or forsake you. He will go all the way with you.

Giving God All That You Have

We also have the account of a young king by the name of Josiah, who began to reign at eight years of age. You may ask, "What could a child do?" You can read in 2 Kings, Chapter 22, about the life of Josiah and see what he did. Many of the kings that reigned over Israel back then did evil in the sight of the Lord. Some were worse than the others before them, but Josiah did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. He knew enough to do what was right in the sight of God, and he led that nation back to God. He loved God, and he had reverence for Him. That is what it takes.

One may think, "I will wait until I get a little older, and then I will know more about what I am doing." Dear one, you may understand a little more about what you are doing, but you might have less power to make the sacrifice. It will never be any easier for you to serve God than it is today, because tomorrow will bring new experiences that may bring a hardening process to your heart and more searing of your conscience; that is what sin does. May God help you.

If you read about young Josiah,

I believe it will impress you. He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and he started cleaning up things. Friend, God has a plan for your life if you will serve Him. You do not know what God could do with your life until you give it to Him. He has great plans for you if you will just sacrifice and surrender your all to Him, everything you have.

We can read of another young lad in John, Chapter 6. There was a great crowd one day listening to Jesus, so Jesus said something to His disciples about food, and the disciples looked out over the crowd and said that even two hundred pennyworth of bread would not be enough for them, even if everyone just took a little. One of them said there was a lad in the crowd who had five barley loaves and two small fish. What were they among so many? He was the only one in the crowd who had any food. I want you to see that those fish and loaves belonged to the lad, but he gladly surrendered them to Jesus. He never dreamed that morning when he left home that so many people were going to have lunch with him out of his bag. Glory be to God!

Friend, you do not know what God can do and will do with what you have if you will give it to Him. You talk about a picnic that day—they had one! The Bible lets us know that five thousand people ate from that lunch, and when they finished eating, the disciples picked up twelve baskets full of the fragments that were left. Now, I want to ask you, will you give your life to God? I wonder what He might do with it if you would give Him your whole life? That little boy might have thought: "I cannot do much, but here it is, Lord. If You can use it, take it and do what You will with it." It fed five thousand.

Sinner friend, the devil may be telling you that God does not need you and that you would not be any good to God, but he is lying to you. When that lad was willing to give all that he had to Jesus, they all ate

and were full. Jesus did not say it would only hold them until they could get to town, but they ate and were *full*. God wants to use you, friend. He has need of you. You are unique, and no one in the world is like you. God has a purpose in life for you. He has a work in His kingdom that He wants to use you for.

I wonder, has this message touched your heart? Why not surrender your life to God? David went on to be a great king, the greatest king Israel ever had. He led Israel through their battles. David was a great warrior, and God used him in a mighty way. Why not start early in life before the devil can mar your life? The devil does not want you to see this, but it is like Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me" (Matthew 12:30).

Young person, if God lets you live, you are going to grow up and possibly get married and have children of your own. You know, nature itself teaches you a few things. When you get a little older, you do not look at things the same way you used to, and there will come a time when you will look around and see your children growing up in a world that is so wicked and so sinful. Then when you look back on your life and how you have lived for the devil, you will realize that you have no way to really point them to God. All these things have to be reckoned with. Won't you surrender your heart and life to God now, and then when you get to that phase of life, you can set the right example before them. You will not send them to church; you will take them.

I am not just building for this time-world; I am building for eternity. As I live, I do not just have my own life in mind, thinking only about myself. I am thinking about my children, my relatives, my friends, and the Church of God. My life has an influence, and I am either influencing others for good or for evil. The devil would like for people to stick their heads in the sand, so to speak, and hope that everything will

turn out right, but they are doing everything wrong. The parents who are unsaved and are hoping their children will be good and respectable are not setting the right example before them. You have to put forth some effort. You have to labor at this thing and labor in the right way so that you can see God

move and work in the lives of those whom you love. Would you give God audience, friend? Do not spend another day in sin. Won't you come to Jesus right now?

(Cassette C-2059E)

Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no languor know,
These for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone;
In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to the Cross I cling.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyes shall close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold thee on thy throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.

Augustus M. Toplady

Luke 18:18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

20 Thou knowest the command-

ments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

22 Now when Jesus heard these

things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

What Lack I Yet?



Brother Larry Dishman

Being Hindered by People

I believe that many people will be lost in the end because one or two sins will keep them from entering the Kingdom of God. If it were possible to interview poor lost souls in hell, you would probably find that many of them lacked only one thing. The young man in our Scripture text who came to Jesus seemed to be interested in eternal life and in finding out what he needed to do to obtain eternal life, yet he lacked one thing.

I would like to mention some things that hinder many people from getting saved or from being what they should be for God after they do get saved. Sometimes bad company holds people back. A godless person might have a strong

influence over someone, and it could be more than one godless person. Someone may consider yielding to Christ, and suddenly the thought comes, "What would So-and-So say? What would my friends say if I should get saved? I would have to cut off his [or her] acquaintance and no longer have this person's friendship, unless I could get him to go with me."

One may think, "I dread his [or her] displeasure. I'm afraid of ridicule. If I get saved, I could never face that person again. I know I ought to be a Christian, and I wish I were a Christian, but for the sake of that individual, I can't yield to God." Such a person is under the fatal charm of an evil companion, and rather than break with that companion, that one deliberately

turns his or her back on the Redeemer and drives away the good Spirit of God.

I wonder how many individuals have failed to yield to God's Spirit because they were afraid of ridicule. Sometimes young people are under peer pressure from other young people, and they fear ridicule. If your friends or associates are hindering you from becoming a Christian, you would be better off to sacrifice their friendship than to sacrifice your soul's salvation.

No relationship on this earth is more important than your getting saved. You would be surprised to know how many people over the years have stood during an invitation and failed to move because one person or thing kept them from going to the altar. The thought in their

minds might have been, "What would my husband [or my wife] do?" or "What would my friends say?" or "I am unwilling to give up this individual."

Failing to Obey the Truth

Luke 14:26 states, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." God must be first in your life. This is very clear in the Word of God. It does not mean that you have to hate someone literally, but it means that you have to love these individuals less and put God first. People can hinder you from being what you ought to be for God. Galatians 5:7 says, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"

Sometimes things hinder people rather than individuals. The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 5:8-9: "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Friend, do not allow anyone or anything to stand in your way of getting saved. If anyone has a fatal influence over you and keeps you from being what God wants you to be, that person is *not* your friend. He or she does not really love you. If that person did, he or she would wish the best for you, and the best thing you could do, if you are unsaved, is to get saved.

I have asked sinners who were under conviction during the service why they failed to get saved. I inquired: "What is holding you back? Why don't you get right with God?" Some people say, "There are too many hypocrites standing in my way." Well, hypocrites cannot answer for you on the Day of Judgment. If you do not get saved, you are going to be in eternity with those hypocrites. Friend, you are not responsible for the hypocrites. You will not have to give an account for them. Romans 14:12 says, "So then every one of us shall give account of

himself to God." You do not have to give an account for anyone but yourself.

About thirty years ago, I made up my mind that I would rather go to church with hypocrites every service, if need be, than to go to hell with them. You should not allow a hypocrite to keep you from getting right with God. You need to get your eyes on people who live right. Thank God, there are many saints to whom you can look who have been faithful and who have lived good lives.

Occasionally you will meet people who claim to be Christians who act in an unchristian manner. Should you see such inconsistency in the lives of professing Christians, you should not allow them to disturb you unduly. You may see hypocrites, but rather than allowing them to hinder you from getting saved and being what you ought to be for God, let them serve as a challenge to you to let the world know that, although there are imitations of Christianity, thank God there are still people who love God. There are still God-fearing people, and that is what you can be if you will get right with God. Dear friend, you may stumble over a hypocrite and end up in hell, but you could never climb over that person and get out. You should not allow a hypocrite to stand in your way.

Doubts and Unbelief

Some people have a hard time believing. Faith is the one thing that they lack. Doubt and unbelief are hindering them from getting right with God. Some people have prayed at an altar of prayer and have gotten up before they have really prayed through. Therefore, the devil has convinced them that they cannot be saved. Sometimes the devil tries to convince people that they have committed the unpardonable sin or that they have gone too far in sin. I have asked the questions: "Well, did God deal with you? Were you under conviction during the altar call? Was

the Holy Spirit striving with you?" If so, that is proof that God is willing to save you. If God deals with your heart and brings conviction upon you, that is proof that you have not blasphemed against the Holy Ghost and committed the unpardonable sin. If you had committed the unpardonable sin, God would not be striving with you and convicting you.

Acts 10:34 states, "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Jeremiah 29:13 says, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Friend, you need not despair. If you will search for God with all your heart, you can find Him. You do not have to wait until tomorrow, next week, or next year. You can find Him now.

First Chronicles 28:9 reads, "If thou seek him, he will be found of thee." The truth is that man's sins have already been paid for. I thank God that two thousand years ago Jesus Christ paid for your sins and my sins. He tasted death for every individual and made a way so that whosoever will can be saved. Friend, that includes you. God's wrath is turned away from every sinner who will come and truly repent with godly sorrow and place faith in the Son of God.

The Apostle Paul said in Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." He did not say it might happen, but he said "shall be saved." Peter wrote in 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." God is willing to save *you*. It is the will of God to save every individual. On the other hand, Jesus said in John 8:24, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." You cannot go to God's Heaven unless you believe.

The devil convinces some people that they cannot live right. Then

they say: "I would get saved if I knew for sure that I could live it. I do not want to be as other people whom I have seen make a start and then make a mess of things. I want to make sure that I can live it." Friend, no one can live the Christian life in his or her own strength, but God can give you the power to live it. This is something that you will never understand until you experience the saving and keeping power of God. God is the One who saves you. You cannot save yourself. God's power saves you and keeps you, and He will help you.

Trying to Get Saved on Your Own Terms

Jude, verse 24, tells us, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." God in Heaven is great enough to save you and powerful enough to keep you after you are saved. You can live it when God moves inside. First John 4:4 says, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." That is the reason you can live it.

If you try to do it within your own strength, you will not be able to do it. I tried many times on my own and could not do it. One time when I was a teenager, I went back behind the place where I was working and prayed, "God, if You will save me here, I will be a secret disciple and will not tell anyone about it. I will just start living differently." Friend, it did not happen that way. I went to a church service, and under conviction I humbled myself at an altar of prayer. I am not saying that you cannot get saved at home, but I was trying to bargain with God and trying to get God to save me on my own terms. God does not save a person on his or her terms. You can only be saved on the terms found in the Word of God.

I like what the Apostle Paul said. It will help you to understand how you can stay saved and how you can live right. He said in

Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." It is not you, but it is God living in you. If you really get saved, it will be God in you. You may not think you can quit smoking or get off drugs. You can when God gives you the power. You can quit drinking alcohol when the Greater One lives on the inside.

You can know for sure that you can live it. We read in Ezekiel 36:26-27: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you [God gives you the power to live right], and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Philippians 1:6 says, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." The work that begins at an altar of prayer will be performed until the day of Jesus Christ. Friend, this is good news! You can live the Christian life by the help of God.

"The Way of Man Is Not in Himself"

You may hesitate to get saved because you know what will be required of you. You would be one of the happiest persons in this world if you would get right with God, because those things that seem like burdens will not be burdens at all. Christ's yoke is easy, and His burden is light. You will find it so. The commandments in the Word of God will not be grievous anymore because you will love God and you will want to do His will. You will want to do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

You may say, "I am just waiting until I get a little older" or "I am waiting until I get things worked

out, because there are situations in my life that are hindering me from getting saved." Friend, the devil is going to see to it that you never get them worked out, and they may get worse.

The good news is, God is not asking you to improve your life or to improve your situation. Jeremiah 10:23 reads, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." If you break just one thread in the hem of virtue, you do not know how much will unravel. The longer you continue in sin, the greater the chance is of the devil getting your life messed up, and you will go further and further away from God.

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. If you stay in sin, you are going to continue to get your life in a worse condition. That is the reason a songwriter was inspired to write the song, "Just As I Am." Thank God, that is the way I came years ago—just the way I was. I was lost and unworthy and on my way to a devil's hell. God did not ask me to change myself. Thank God, He did the saving and the changing. Only God can regenerate your heart. You can go to Him just as you are.

Some people think, "I am a good person. I do not do this and that." Satan tries to convince people that they are so good that they do not need a change of heart. I do not deny the fact that many people live good, moral lives. However, no one is so good that he does not need the forgiveness of God. According to Romans 3:23, all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Many people have been led to believe the lie that if you lead a good life, then you are going to make Heaven your home. My friend, that is not true. It is not good enough just to go to church faithfully and pay your tithes. Every individual must be born again to enter Heaven.

If the devil cannot convince you that you are a good person, he will go the other way and make you think that you have gone too far in the depths of sin and, therefore, there is no hope for you. On the contrary, the good news is, God's grace can go deeper than the stain of sin has gone. Isaiah 1:18 says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Though you may feel that you have gone to the very bottom, God still loves you, and He is willing to save you. In fact, you are the very one Christ came to save, because in Luke 5:31-32 He said: "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." No matter how awful a sinner you may be, there is hope for you. The Lord will save the worst person in existence if such a one will just own his condition, repent of his sins, and place his faith in the Son of God.

Harboring Bitterness

Bitterness will stand in your way and keep you from getting right with God. If you are one who harbors bitterness, you need to seek salvation with your whole heart. God can remove the hatred from your heart. He is able to remove that bitterness. Though you have been mistreated and abused, God can deliver you from unforgiveness and bitterness in your heart. Christian friend, bitterness is something that you have to guard against after you have been saved.

Hebrews 12:15 reads, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." Many people are being defiled through bitterness. Bitterness will hurt you spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Bitterness is deadly; it is like a cancer.

I heard one time about two neighbors who had fought against each other for many years. They held grudges against each other, and it got worse and worse. One of them got sick and was on his deathbed, so the other man thought he had better go make things right. He went over to his neighbor's bedside and said, "You know, we have had hard feelings all these years, and I have come to apologize. I have come to make it right, but I will tell you something right now, if you live, this apology is canceled." It was not much of an apology, was it?

God only knows how many people have been contaminated by bitterness. You should never underestimate the power of bitterness. Many times when someone is proud and that pride gets wounded, that person becomes a bitter fountain. Once defiled, a wicked person can be the means of destroying many others. Many times a person will get bitter and become a poisonous fountain. Friend, if you become bitter and die in that condition, you will go to hell. Moreover, the chances are, you will take someone with you. If you are bitter, you will end up sharing it with your close friends and relatives, and they, too, could end up bitter. That is what the Bible is talking about when it says, "Thereby many be defiled." Thank God, if you will truly repent, God can remove the bitterness. God can save you and change you.

Too Busy to Serve God

Perhaps you will not get saved because you are living with a boyfriend or a girlfriend, and you are afraid that if you should get saved, that person would never have anything to do with you again. Friend, if you get saved, you may never see that person again. On the other hand, that person could get saved and maybe you could get married in the future. If you will get saved, God will work all things for good in your own life. What seems to be an impossible situation is not impossi-

ble with God. He can change the whole situation. If you will turn to Him, it will be the best thing you have ever done in your life.

Some people say they just do not have time to go to church. You may work six days a week, and Sunday may be your only day to rest and get caught up on things around the house. Nevertheless, you had better start taking time for God. If the devil can cheat you out of your time, he can cheat you out of your soul. When time runs out (and it will run out for each of us), you will regret not taking time for God. Even if you possessed all the gold in the universe, you could not buy back one minute of that time, so it pays to put God first.

The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:29, "But this I say, brethren, the time is short." Paul wrote in Romans 13:12, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Time is going to run out one of these days, so you had better think about your soul.

You should not be too busy to do something about Heaven or think that you will get around to it later. Young person, you should not wait until you get a little older. Ecclesiastes 12:1 says, "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."

The time to plow the ground is in the spring. Farmers do not wait until winter when the ground is frozen. The time to mold concrete into desirable shapes for future usefulness is before it sets up. Once it sets up, it is too late. The time to yield your heart to God is while you are still young and your heart is tender. Friend, do not wait until your soul becomes deafened to the tender call of God's Spirit. The devil will tell you to put it off just a little longer. He will say, "Wait until another service" or "Wait until this works out" or "Wait until you get

out of school" or "Wait until you get married and settled in."

The devil knows how to lead you past opportunities, step by step, until one day you turn down your last opportunity. As age advances, many people find an increasing disposition to defeat their soul's salvation. If you cannot find a convenient season while you are young, the chances are that you will not find a convenient season when you get older. Today is the day of salvation. Many people lack humility. Pride is going to keep a lot of people out of God's Heaven. The gateway to hell is pride. The serpent in the Garden of Eden lured Eve into sin with the prideful promise that she would be like God. Pride is the doorway to hell, but humility is the doorway to God's Heaven.

Unwilling to Give Up Sin

Many times people lack a willingness to give up sin. Some may possibly be unwilling to give up pornography, the tobacco habit, alcohol, drugs, or sexual immorality. They say they just cannot help themselves. They may feel that way now, but after they have been in hell for about five minutes, they will know that they could have helped themselves. If you think what you are doing now makes you happy, let me tell you, friend, it is not worth

eternal torment. You should never think that you will be able to keep living in sexual immorality and go to Heaven. When you die and wake up in hell, you will say to your partner, "I would to God I had never laid eyes on you."

Some people do not get saved due to an unwillingness to give up one sin. Often they are brought to the very door of the kingdom but cannot enter because they want to hold on to one sin. That sin has wound its frightful coils so tightly about their lives that they are ready to cry out in agony as Paul did before his conversion in Romans 7:24, which states, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" They rattle the chains of their slavery and clutch and kiss them as if they were the cords leading them to Heaven. Angel's hands are reaching down to release men and women and boys and girls, but with deliberate effort they beat back the hands that are reaching down to rescue them.

If you could go to hell and interview the poor lost souls writhing in flames of despair, you would find that almost all of them would say it was not fifty sins that sent them there; it was not even ten. It was one sin that they were unwilling to give up. One sin willfully held on to will stand like an evil spirit between you and the Kingdom

of God, and it will shut its gates against you forever. The power of one cherished, unforgiven sin has kept multitudes out of God's Heaven.

Whatever your excuse is (I might not have mentioned it), whatever you lack, will not excuse you on the Day of Judgment. I believe that many people will try to seek the Lord when it is too late. The door will be shut because they did not make godliness the chief business of their lives.

Sinner friend, suppose you were standing on the edge of the great Grand Canyon, with God on one side of the chasm and you on the other. The chasm that separates you from God has been formed by your sins. You are cut off, helpless to reach God on your own. No matter how rich you are, how powerful you are, how smart you may be, how popular you are, or how athletic you are, you could not possibly jump across that wide gap. If you were to try, you would plunge straight to the bottom. The only way to get across the chasm would be to find a bridge. Friend, Christ is that bridge to God. He forms the connecting link by which you can come to God. Won't you call upon Him today?

(Compact Disc TR-039M)

IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS

*For all that God in mercy sends—
For health and children, home and friends;
For comfort in the time of need,
For every kindly word or deed,
For happy thoughts and holy talk,
For guidance in our daily walk—
In everything give thanks.*

Author Unknown

Does Your Anchor Hold?

For times like these, it takes a good anchor. We need more than anything else to take a good long look at our true selves, not always the person the world sees, but the person we see as we look deep and long into the looking glass of God's eternal Word. To be honest enough with one's own self and God, to use Christ, the perfect man, as our measuring stick is always a humbling experience.

Many today have drifted far from where they once were. They are not at all alarmed by this. They rationalize by saying that times have changed and we have to keep up with the changing times. We do not deny there is some logic in this

argument, yet there is also a great spiritual danger.

To illustrate, if you have been out fishing and anchored your boat in a choice spot, the wise fisherman will test his anchor to make sure that it is holding. He then settles down to catching fish. All goes well for a while, but finally his luck runs out, or so he thinks. What he does not know is that the changing tide has moved his anchor and his position has been greatly changed. It took place so gradually that he never knew what happened. This is happening to movements as well as individuals. They are not sufficiently anchored and have lost the old paths and landmarks. They are not sure of just where they are.

I must confess that these are

the most difficult times that I have ever witnessed in my Christian experience. To know just where the will of God is for our lives is not always easy. It only comes from feeding daily on the Word of God and maintaining a faithful prayer life. In these busy days, it takes extra effort. The wise Christian learns to take time to care for his spiritual needs. This is the only way we can escape the broad path so many are traveling today.

My dear reader, are you sure that your anchor is holding? Have those changing standards affected you? There is no one who can answer this personal question but God and you.

Selected

New Printed Publications

Several new booklets and tracts have recently been printed by our print shop.

BOOKLETS

- ▶ *Daniel and Revelation Texts Examined* by Earl R. Borders
- ▶ *Prophecy and Revelation Concerning Gog and Magog* by Earl R. Borders
- ▶ *Prophecy and Revelation Concerning Seraphims, the Way of the Tree of Life, and Cherubims* by Earl R. Borders
- ▶ *Did Jesus Descend Into Hell?* by Earl R. Borders
- ▶ *Gifts, Offices, and Operation of the New Testament Church* by Earl R. Borders
- ▶ *Properly Understanding the Position of the Old Testament* by Earl R. Borders

TRACTS

- ▶ *Cutting Off the Cross* (author unknown)
- ▶ *The Need of a Sanctified Life* by Roger Decker
- ▶ *Seek Ye First* by B. W. Cheney
- ▶ *Is Your Jesus the Bible Jesus?* by Marie (Fowler) York
- ▶ *What Then?* (author unknown)

Publications can be downloaded at GodsAcres.org (click on "free study helps"). Printed copies are available for a donation of \$.75 per booklet and \$.15 per tract (plus postage and handling). You may order by writing *The Gospel Trumpeter*, Publications, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, Ohio 43055, by calling the Print Shop at 740-345-1312, or by sending an e-mail to: publications01@church-of-god-online.com.

Don't miss these . . .

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MT. PLEASANT, PA

April 18

FELLOWSHIP MEETING: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA. Service time: 10:30 a.m. A meal served by the local congregation.

MOTELS: *Holiday Inn Express*, 724-547-2095 (This is on the same road as the church. Please mention that you are there for the church meeting.); *Super 8 Motel in New Stanton*, 724-925-8915 on I-70W, 10 miles north of the church); *Melody Motor Lodge*, 724-628-9600 on 119N in Connellsville).

For further information contact: Pastor Paul W. Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666

Telephone: 724-547-2151

NEWTON, KS

April 19-22

REVIVAL: Church of God, 400 N. Meridian, Newton, KS 67114

Evangelist: Brother Roger L. Decker, Newark, Ohio

Service times: Sunday 10:45 & 7:00 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday 7:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Sandy Killfoil, 315 Old Main St., Newton, KS 67114

Telephone: 316-842-5127

SUMMERSVILLE, WV

April 20-26

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

Evangelist: Brother Leamon Whitehead, Minerva, Ohio

Service times: Monday-Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday 6:00 p.m.;

Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders

Telephone: 304-872-4047

Visit our website at: www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com

KENSETT, AR

April 24-26

REVIVAL: Kensett Church of God, 409 Southeast 2nd St., Kensett, AR 72082

Evangelist: Brother Roger L. Decker, Newark, Ohio. Holy Ghost preaching.

Service times: Friday-Saturday 7:00 p.m.; Sunday 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Calvin L. Foster

Telephone: 501-742-3006 or 501-742-3961

HONDURAS

May 4-10

CONVENTION: Church of God, Honduras

Evangelists: Brother E. David Stegmeier, Canby, Oregon &

Brother Roger L. Decker, Newark, Ohio.

For further information contact: Pastor Esau Brooks

Telephone: (Honduras) 011-504-451-514; (Grand Cayman) 1-345-947-2114

KENSETT, AR

May 22-24

MEMORIAL DAY FELLOWSHIP MEETING: Kensett Church of God,

409 Southeast 2nd St., Kensett, AR 72082. Holy Ghost preaching.

Service times: Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday—Dinner will be served at 3:00 p.m.

Service at 7:00 p.m.; Sunday school 10:00-11:00 a.m., Morning worship 11:30

a.m. & Evening worship 6:00 p.m.

Dinner will be served after the Sunday morning service.

For further information contact: Pastor Calvin L. Foster

Telephone: 501-742-3006 or 501-742-3961

Postman send form 3579 to:

The Gospel Trumpeter

675 N. Cedar Street
Newark, Ohio 43055 U.S.A.

PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID
AT THE POST OFFICE IN
NEWARK, OH 43055
USPS # 871620

REQUEST FOR NEW SUBSCRIPTION, CHANGE OF ADDRESS, OR CANCELLATION

NEW SUBSCRIPTION: To receive *The Gospel Trumpeter*, we need your complete name and mailing address, including country.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: If you have moved or if your name or address is incorrect, please notify us as soon as possible.

NOTICE OF CANCELLATION: If you no longer wish to receive *The Gospel Trumpeter*, please contact us using one of the methods below.

YOU MAY CONTACT US BY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:

Mail: *The Gospel Trumpeter* 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055 USA

E-mail: subscribe@gospeltrumpeter.com **Telephone:** (740) 345-1312

(Please Print or Type)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____

ZIP CODE: _____ **COUNTRY:** _____

Please check the appropriate box below, and for changes or cancellations return this entire page with the old address.

- Subscription Incorrect spelling of name or address
 Change of address Cancellation