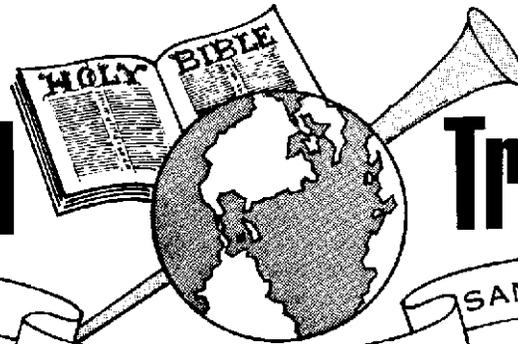


# The Gospel



# 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

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SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

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Vol. 40 November 2010 No. 11



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?"

# Guest Editorial

## THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER USPS #871620

"Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God . . . ."

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Deuteronomy 8:11

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## Do Not Forget

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.

It is Thanksgiving time again, the season that our nation has set aside for expressing gratitude and appreciation for God's goodness shown toward us. Without a doubt, we are the most highly prosperous people on the face of the earth. We have been blessed beyond measure with multitudes of material benefits. America has been endowed with great quantities of natural resources, education, and technology that far surpass other nations. The greatest blessing and privilege we have is being free to worship God without fear of being punished or arrested. God is so very good to us, and we must never forget His blessings so bountifully bestowed upon us or fail to give Him thanks.

earthly ministry, once He healed ten lepers who met Him on His way to Jerusalem and desired to be delivered from their dreaded disease. In His kindness He miraculously healed all ten lepers from their leprosy. They all went happily on their way, but only one "turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God" (Luke 17:15). Only one stopped and considered what the Savior had done for him. In Luke 17:16 we find that this leper "fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks." You can almost hear him saying, "Thank You, Jesus for Your loving-kindness and mercy bestowed upon me." The other nine received healing of the Lord, but they never thought to offer any praise or thanksgiving in return. Our Scripture in Deuteronomy instructs each of us to "Beware lest thou forget God."

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

Have you ever stopped to consider how blessed you really are? Acts 17:28 tells us, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." We are alive because of our loving and merciful Heavenly Father, and we can breathe in fresh air every day. He gives us the strength to rise from our beds each morning and go about our duties. He provides food for us to partake of that brings nourishment to our bodies. We have eyes to see the beautiful creation that He has placed here for us to enjoy and ears to hear the delightful sounds of nature. All these physical blessings come from the bountiful hand of God. It is so sad that His goodness is too often taken for granted. Multitudes are ready to receive, but never think to say "Thank You." Too often praise to the Giver is readily forgotten.

Forgetting to thank and honor God who has so generously bestowed His blessings upon us can become very dangerous. We can so easily become as the nine lepers who received help and then neglected or simply refused to give praise, honor, and thanksgiving to the Lord. When people conduct themselves in this manner, it grieves the heart of Almighty God.

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

### THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

### SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS

#### PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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

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In a world steeped in materialism and humanism, many have the idea that they don't need God. Satan deceitfully convinces men and women that they are capable of caring for themselves. Dear one, nothing could be further from the truth. Jeremiah 10:23 states, "O Lord, I know that

[continued on page 7]

During the time of Jesus'

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*Hebrews 9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:*

*25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth*

*into the holy place every year with blood of others;*

*26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

*27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

*28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*



# THREE THINGS THAT ARE SURE

*Brother Roger L. Decker*

## **Christ Put Away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself**

We know that life is full of events that happen repeatedly as the Lord tarries. The hands of the clock move around and cover the same numbers every twelve hours. God said in Genesis 8:22, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

We go about our daily duties every day. Some routines are fixed. Women who have children have certain daily duties. Men who work in factories, on construction sites, or wherever have specific routines as well. Some routines are daily habits that we hardly even think about. If

we miss doing something one day, normally we can accomplish it another day.

In our Scripture reading we see three events that either have already taken place or will take place, and they only happen once. The first one is the offering of Christ upon the Cross for our sins, the second one is our death, and the third one is the Judgment. These are events that take place only once.

Again, our Scripture text reads in verse 26, "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He put away sin once by the sacrifice of Himself. He is not coming a second time to do that.

There will be no millennium, no second chance, no purgatory, and no reincarnation. After death, you must appear before the Lord.

In Ecclesiastes 11:3 the wise man wrote: "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." This is true in a forest today. When a tree drops in a forest, as the tree falls, there it lies. If a tree falls to the south, it lies to the south. If it falls to the north, it lies to the north. The same is true for you when your time comes to die. Your soul's condition when you take your last breath is how you will appear before God at the Judgment.

Speaking of Christ, the writer of

Hebrews said in verse 24 of our Scripture text, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself." He opened up a way whereby all believers whom He represents can find help for their souls by the offering of His blood as a sacrifice for sin. The high priest did this yearly.

Hebrews 10:1-3 says this: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." Christ did it once for all. There is no other way for the removal of your sins except through the blood of Jesus Christ. There is no need for Him to do it again because once was sufficient for all.

The soul that is sick of sin, or tired of living in sin every day, can receive help. No sin is so black that God cannot clean it up. The Bible states in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." All unrighteousness is sin, and He will cleanse you from *all* unrighteousness. Those who believe that Jesus died on the Cross for their sins accept Him as their sacrifice for sin. They also can appear before the throne of God, clean and washed by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Christ offered Himself once for the sins of all mankind. Revelation 13:8 says, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." This is speaking of worshipping the beast, but thank God we worship One who was the sacrifice for all sins. Faith in His blood can wash away every one of your sins. Literally speaking, not

one of us has a drop of His blood on us. Jesus did not have enough blood in His literal body to touch every one of us. Thank God, faith in His blood can cleanse a lost and dying world. You can be purged from sin if you want to be.

Many people are not sick of sin today. When I got saved, I was sick of living the way I was living. I wanted a change to take place in my life. I was sick and tired of the devil leading me around. I wanted to do right, but I could not do it on my own. When you get saved, the ungodly lifestyle comes to an end. Someone may say, "Well, I've got religion, and I still commit sin." Then what is the difference between you and the world? What are you saved from? Do not underestimate the blood of Jesus Christ.

### **God's Plan of Salvation**

The event of Jesus' dying on the Cross was the result of long preparation. There was the age of the patriarchs, there was the Mosaic Law, there were the prophets, and then the time was fulfilled. Now there is a universal call for everyone to repent. That seems like such a simple thing to do. Do you know why many people do not do that? They know that repentance calls for a change.

We read in Mark 1:14-15: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Peter, speaking of Christ, said in 1 Peter 1:20, "Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." There will be no other sacrifice for sin.

Many people do good works, and they are very giving when it comes to charity. Although they are very supportive of charitable groups, that will not get them into Heaven. They must be saved, or born again. If you want to be saved,

then you must turn toward the Cross of Jesus Christ. He was the sacrifice for your sins and for my sins.

God's plan of salvation needs no improvement. Many people have tried to change God's plan. Some have gone out and joined the church of their choice. Many go out and follow after men. Jesus said to repent. He did not say to base your salvation on speaking in tongues or on water baptism. First of all, you must repent. Jesus Christ was the Son of God when He went into the water, and He was the Son of God when He came out of the water. He is our example.

You ought to be a son of God when you go into the water, and you remain a son of God when you come out of the water. When a man or a woman believes the Gospel, that Jesus died for their sins, and they put faith in that knowledge, a change takes place in their lives. Paul, searching for words to describe what happens to the individual who receives salvation, called that one a "new creature," which actually means "new creation."

### **Salvation Brings Lifestyle Changes**

When you become a new creature, sinful habits come to an end. You put away those old ungodly habits. God's children do not run around with a pack of cigarettes or a bottle of beer. They do not even take a social drink. They do not chew tobacco or dip snuff. They do not try illegal drugs. These are external things that depart from the life of one who becomes a new creature. Their lifestyle changes, and their tongues get cleaned up. The tongue no longer spues out bad things, curses, or tells smutty stories. Also, the ears do not want to hear smutty stories.

A change takes place in the dress standard of the child of God. Sisters start wearing modest dresses and skirts. You may say, "I don't see anything wrong with a sister

wearing slacks." The same Scripture speaks of what the man is to wear and what the woman is to wear. Godly men do not want to be effeminate. That is one reason they get their hair cut.

First Corinthians 11:14 tells us, "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" It is an embarrassment. A godly man wants to look like a man. Nothing about him wants to look like a woman.

When I was a young lad, I did not have a choice about how long my hair was. How did nature teach me? My dad said, "Get a haircut" or he gave me a haircut. I did not tell him how I wanted it. I had no choice in the matter. My dad was not very good at cutting hair, but sometimes he did it anyway. We had horses, and my dad had horse clippers. They had a wide blade, and he would cut my hair when he clipped the horses. Naturally, with a wide blade he always made mistakes, so to cover the mistakes, he would cut it all off. I could take my hat and spin it around when he got through.

When I got a little older, I had to go to my aunt who lived about a quarter of a mile from us. She had hand clippers, and oh, how I hated those! They pulled my hair terribly. Nevertheless, I was going to school, so he sent me down there for a decent haircut.

I was never tempted to have long hair. After I got out of school, I went into the Marine Corps. I went in there with one of those Elvis Presley haircuts with long sideburns. That was the style back in those days. When I arrived at basic training, I got in line, and they would say, "Next." I think it probably took them about two minutes to cut a person's hair, if that long. Everybody got the same style. You went in one side with hair and came out the other side bald. We did not have a choice.

Again, the Bible says, "Doth not even nature itself teach you." Parents need to enforce this in the home. Long hair should not be al-

lowed on the boys in a Christian home.

Now, the girls are different. Verse 15 states, "But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: [It makes her look feminine; she ought to look like a girl. Boys are not supposed to look like girls.] for her hair is given her for a covering." You have to pay to get it cut, but you do not have to pay when you allow it to grow long, because God gives it to you.

Salvation brings a change in people's attitudes. Today many people who profess to be Christians have wrong attitudes in their hearts. When God sees that you want your own way and that you are holding out for it, if you have rebellion in your heart and you want to pout, God will let you have your way.

When you become a new creature and your spirit changes, you are nice to be around. God gives you a new heart. The center of your affection changes, and things take on a different value in your life. Dear one, there is no salvation in any other but Jesus Christ.

### **An Event That We Cannot Avoid**

The next event we want to look at is found in verse 27 of our Scripture text, which reads, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." That is an appointment that God sets up. He does not tell you, "You go on living, and after a while you can set up your appointment to die." God knows you would never set it up, so He does it. God sets it up at a time that you know nothing about. You may be young and think that everything is going right. Many young people have gone into eternity who thought they had their whole lives ahead of them.

Genesis 3:19 says, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." We spend much time taking care of the fleshly body, but we need to

spend a portion of our time on the inner man. Certainly we should be cleaned up and look nice, but we ought to spend a good portion of time on the inner man. The outer man is temporary, but the soul is eternal. It is appointed to man once to die.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The outer man is made of dust. We are dust, and the vegetables we eat come right out of the dust of the earth. God is wonderful to make such delicious food from the dust.

Death is an event that we cannot avoid, although we do not like to think about it or talk about it. Death occurs every second in our world. It is an event that happens only once to each individual, and it comes uninvited, but it comes to all. Death is no respecter of age.

Death is common. We read about it in the newspaper and hear about it on the radio. Often it becomes old news. Many people pay no attention to it until it comes to their own house. There are many ways to be taken out of this life, but death is the same to the victim, whether dying in an accident or dying alone in bed. The main thing that needs to be stressed about dying is not how to prolong it, but how to be ready for it.

We plan our vacations. We make sure that we take everything with us that we think we need. We plan our retirements, making sure that when we do retire, we have enough money to live comfortably. What about planning for an event that you know for sure is going to happen? You know that you are going to die, but you do not know that you are going to be able to retire. You do not know that you are even going to be able to go on a vacation. You do not know for certain that you will receive a promotion at work. Death is an event that we cannot get out of.

I told my brothers and sisters when our mother passed away,

"You know what that does to us, don't you?"

They asked, "What?"

I said, "That moves us up in that slot, and then our children become like we were."

### **The Throne of Judgment**

It is not always the sick who leave this world, but also those who seem to be healthy. Souls are leaving this world at a rapid pace, and many people are leaving unprepared to meet God. Death is not the end. Another event happens only once, and that is the final judgment. I repeat, the Hebrew writer said, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

There is only one way that you are going to go through the Judgment clean and spend eternity with Jesus Christ: you must be born again. You are not going to get through by joining a church. You are not going to get through by just doing good works, but you must be born again. In 2 Corinthians 5:10 the Apostle Paul said, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

The wise man said in Ecclesiastes 12:14, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." God knows about all those secret things that you have kept from your parents. God knows about all the secret things that you have kept bottled up inside. Are you really prepared for the Judgment? Many in false religion and those who have fallen into apostasy have dressed it up to look like everybody is going to make it to Heaven; but unless you are holy when you appear at the Judgment, you will not see eternal bliss.

Christ is on His throne of mercy right now, and He is stretching out His arms of mercy for the repentant one to come home. At the final judgment,

He will move from the throne of mercy to the throne of judgment. All classes of people will be represented at the final judgment. The backslider will be there, but he will be there without mercy, and no one will plead his case. The hypocrite, or the pretender, will be there. The one filled with pride, the scoffer, and the mocker will be there. No one will be exempt, and secret things will be revealed. No one will be there to plead your case, and no excuses will be accepted. If you are unprepared, your soul will be barred from Heaven and you will be told to depart from Him.

It would be a terrible thing to hear Jesus say, as He stated in Matthew 7:23, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Jesus brought up the reason that people were told to depart, and that was due to their being workers of iniquity. There will be no one to hide behind or blame for your condition at the Judgment. Many people try to blame lots of things on other people. Some say, "I would be what I need to be for the Lord if it wasn't for my husband" or "I would be what I need to be if it wasn't for my wife" or "I would be what I need to be if it wasn't for my friend." The truth of the matter is, you are not what you need to be because you do not want to be what you need to be.

You may say, "I can't live right because of my husband." Well, my wife lived right before I was saved, and I was no fine gentleman in the home. The more pressure I put on her, the more determined she was to live for God. Many others have lived for God regardless of their companion. Some people use their companion as an excuse for not serving God.

You need to throw away the excuses, because when you go to the Judgment it will be, "What did you do about your soul? Is your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life?" If it is not written in the Lamb's Book of Life, you will hear the words, "Depart from me; I never knew you, ye that work iniquity."

These are words that I do not want to hear. I would not want to spend most of my life in religion and go to the Judgment and be lost.

Someone may say, "Well, I joined a church. My name is written down on the church record." That may be, but is it written in the Lamb's Book of Life? Others may say, "I believe that once you are saved, you are always saved." Friend, that might sound like a good theory, but it is not true.

### **Choose Life So That You May Live**

Again, the three events that happen only once are these: Jesus dying on the Cross, your physical death, and your standing at the Judgment. Would it not make good common sense for you to make these three events a top priority in your life? Most people do not like to be reminded of them, but whether they are reminded of them or not, these events are not going to go away. They are a part of God's great plan. People grow up and go through phases in their lives. They have an opportunity to serve God, and then they pass away, and another generation comes along.

Included in God's great plan is an opportunity for you to make it through this life unscathed. However, in order to do that, you must take advantage of the opportunity to prepare yourself. If you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, you can be ready for death and the Judgment. God cares for you, and He cares about your being saved more than you want to be saved. God cares about your doing right more than you want to do right.

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 reads: "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither

thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

God made it very plain in this text of Scripture what will happen if you choose evil. He said you will

perish, and your days will not be prolonged. Also, He said those who turn away will be cursed. In verse 19 God gave instructions concerning what you should do. In essence, He said to choose life so that you may live.

God wants everyone to choose life. God loves you so much that He gave Jesus Christ to die for you; however, He sets the choice before you. God tries to persuade you to choose life and good, but again, it is your choice. You will find in Revelation 3:20 that Jesus stands at the door and knocks, but the latch is on the inside. You cannot read that Jesus kicks the door down. He will not pound on the door so hard that He knocks it off the hinges. The door that He knocks at is the door of your heart, and you are the only one who can open it to let Jesus in. I repeat, it is your choice.

There are lots of choices in life in general, but nothing is as important

as how you will fare in this life and where you will spend eternity. We are eternity bound souls. We make lots of plans in this life, and there is nothing wrong with that if you add to it, "Lord willing." People plan to retire, take vacations, build new homes, change jobs, and so on. However, in reality, very few make plans to live free from sin, for death, and for the Judgment. These things are crowded out while the things of this temporal life are brought to the forefront.

Have you taken part in being saved so that you will be ready for death and the Judgment? If you have not, believe me, death is going to be a terror, and the Judgment also will be a terror. Everything in this world is unsure with the exception of salvation. You need to be ready for death and the Judgment.

*(Compact Disc TR-657)*

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[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]

the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Without God's tender hand being extended, we weak mortals are unable to do anything.

Considering the spiritual aspect of God's blessings, we well know that America has been given greater light and spiritual understanding than any other nation. In many countries there is either no light of Truth at all or the light is shining very dimly. We are so blest to have knowledge and understanding, but with that we are extremely responsible. Jesus, speaking in

Luke 12:48, said, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." God expects us to be thankful for His spiritual blessings, and He instructs us to verbally express our gratefulness before others. Another good way to show our thankfulness is to be obedient to His Word. Jesus tells us in John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." We honor Him by walking in the light and by keeping His Word. Being thankful is more than mere words from our lips; it calls for action in our daily living.

God is a jealous God, and He demands everyone to worship Him

above all others. You must not forget God, whether all is well and prosperous or things appear to be on a downhill turn physically or financially. Our heavenly Father is still the Ruler of this universe, and He still controls all things. In spite of the times and conditions in which we are living, we are yet a most blessed people, and we need to be thankful. Unthankfulness will soon lead to discontentment, then to complaining, and finally to unholiness.

Selected

True religion is living a holy life,  
not what a person may profess.

John 12:1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and

anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for

the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

# The Danger of Darkness That Hides in the Light



*Brother Calvin Foster*

## Judas' Betrayal

Jesus saw that Judas' true motive was selfish, and Jesus rebuked him. This expensive ointment was a part of the Jewish burial custom. Jesus said, "Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this." John 13:1-2 reads: "Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he

should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him."

Verses 21-30 tell us: "When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of

you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

"Jesus answered, He it is, to

whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night."

In John, Chapter 18, we read that Judas came back. Verses 2-9 read: "And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?"

"They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground [there is power in the Word of God]. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none."

Matthew 26:47-54 states: "And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. And

Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

"And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

### **Under the Cover of Darkness**

I want to call your attention to the set up. Judas had planned how he was going to set the Lord up. We see in the Scriptures that Satan had put it in his heart to betray Jesus. When he came to Jesus, Jesus knew exactly what was about to happen. I want you to notice that Jesus called Judas "Friend." Then Judas used an expression of affection and love for a selfish and destructive purpose. He betrayed the Lord with a kiss.

One who betrays another is a traitor. A traitor will betray a cause or a trust or commit treason. For three years, Judas lived in the inner circle of the disciples with Christ. Can you imagine walking with Jesus Christ for three years? No doubt, many of us would have asked Him many questions. We would have tried to understand Him from the depth of our hearts. Oh, how our hearts would have burned within us if we could have been with Jesus for three years. Judas had the privilege and the opportunity to walk with Jesus and to be one of His trusted disciples. He was in the position of a treasurer; he carried the money bag.

Let us take a look at Judas. His life teaches us the danger of darkness that hides in the light. You should not try to boast in yourself about how long you have been

saved, how long you have been sitting under the Truth, or how long you have been a member of the Church of God. Judas walked with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for three years, but he had darkness in his heart. As students of the Bible, we know for certain that evil always operates under the cover of darkness. If you wanted to do something wrong and you did not want anybody to see you, you would go where it was dark.

Judas was slipping out behind the other disciples' backs when he made a deal to betray Jesus. He betrayed Christ and the cause of the Gospel. He betrayed the trust of Jesus and the other disciples. He committed spiritual treason. Christian friend, God does not want you to be a traitor. He does not want you to betray Christ. You have no excuse to betray Him. Christ has all power. God is so good to us.

The evil that operates under the cover of darkness is similar to carbon monoxide: it can go undetected for a while, and then it can slowly kill you without warning. You cannot see it or smell it. Sometimes that is the way evil is. It can be like odorless carbon monoxide and go undetected for a while. However, God will eventually expose the evil that has been lurking in the dark.

### **The Fate of Judas**

Proverbs 28:13 says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Judas sold Christ for what would have been the price of an accidentally killed slave. Exodus 21:32 reads, "If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned." Judas sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver. He was a partaker of taking a man out of the world who was healing the sick, raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, and helping people to turn from evil to righteousness. He sold

Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. How much is Christ worth to you?

What was the fate of Judas? Matthew 27:1-5 tells us: "When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."

Young person, if you betray Christ for a few moments of sinful pleasure, your boyfriend or girlfriend will end up treating you just as those people treated Judas. He went back to return the money and said, "I have betrayed the innocent blood," and in essence, they said, "What is that to us? That is your business. You take care of it." That is how the devil will treat you. He will get you to betray Christ and cause you to get all messed up in sin. Then when you cry out for help, he will stand back and laugh and say, "What is that to me?" After you become addicted to drugs or tobacco or pornography, the devil will say, "What is that to me? That is your problem." After people in the world have used you, they will tell you to go home to your parents or to go to church to see if they will help you. Then what will you do?

Judas went out and hung himself. You see, sin will cause you to have a self-destructive behavior. When you play around with sin, it will destroy you. In the Bible you can read about a man who was filled with demons. What did he do? He cried out and cut himself with stones, until Jesus cast the demons out of him.

Darkness lurked right around

where Jesus was. Judas, one of the twelve disciples, betrayed Jesus Christ. You may be sitting under the Truth, but where are your affections? Simply attending church services is not enough.

Judas committed suicide. It is a sin to commit self-murder. It would be a sin for me to intentionally kill someone, and it would be a sin for me to kill myself. Now, if I were to kill someone, I could ask for forgiveness. On the other hand, if I were to kill myself, I could not ask for forgiveness. Moreover, I would wake up in hell. Judas went out and hung himself.

### **"Men Loved Darkness Rather Than Light"**

Psalm 37:37 says, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." There is no peace to the wicked. There is no peace to someone who commits suicide. Such a person is sick and tired of the pressures of the world and thinks he can get away from everything by taking his life; but he will wake up in hell. You need to think about this. You can get close to Jesus and live an abundant life.

John 3:16-21 reads: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 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. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are

wrought in God."

You could sit under the Truth and become a Judas if you are not careful. You can see the power of God working, witness the goodness of God, and see God saving and blessing, yet darkness can lurk in your heart. You could become a traitor to Christ.

I am glad to be a Christian. You could not get me to go another way in life. The Bible is the Word of God. No one else is coming behind Jesus who is greater than He is. There is no other way that men can be saved but by Jesus. When I am talking about God, I am talking about the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He is the One whom Satan wants to get you to betray. Wherever God is working, Satan is working in the dark shadows. When someone falls under another spirit, Satan is working in the dark shadows.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11:12-13: "But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." False apostles and deceitful workers transform themselves into the apostles of Christ. God does not want anything under cover.

Church members should not be deceitful toward the pastor, the choir director, or the Sunday school teacher. Nothing is worse than falsely professing Christianity. Some people smile in people's faces but talk about them behind their backs and laugh at them. That is not true Christianity! When people get saved and they come out of sin, they want to see you practice what you preach. If they want to be around a bunch of lewd fellows, they can go back out into the world.

I do not understand everything, and I do not know everything, but I do not want to be a false prophet. Your wife ought to be able to say amen when you preach. Your husband or your wife ought to be able

to say amen when you sing and testify, because God is real and Christ is real. As I mentioned previously, Judas walked with Jesus for three years. You may say, "I have been saved for forty years." What kind of example are you?

### **The Danger of Allowing Your Love to Wax Cold**

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11:14-15: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

One of the most outstanding things among Church of God ministers that I have always loved and admired, even from the very beginning of my salvation, is that they tell you to bring your Bible to church and read with them. No minister will be able to deceive you if you get hold of God and read the Bible for yourself. What are many people going after? They are going after a name, prestige, or education rather than following Christ.

Judas broke unity with Christ when Satan deceived him, but when he woke up to it, it was too late. Then when suicidal thoughts came to him, he carried them out. You cannot hide from God in darkness. You might hide something from the preacher or the saints for a while, but you cannot hide that darkness from God.

Psalms 139:8-11 reads: "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me."

You may be thinking, "I'm going to hide in the night, and no one is going to see me." Friend, the darkness is light to God. You may

think that you can hold something in your heart against someone and no one will see it, but God sees everything.

Verse 12 states, "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." Friend, we are living in the last days of time. Much betraying of Christ is taking place. God does not want us to betray Christ or one another. We have faith in Jesus Christ. Let us keep the bond of peace in the unity of the spirit. Many kinds of clubs are in the world. There are motorcycle clubs, gang clubs, and other clubs that are loyal to one another. Some say they are willing to die for one another, but we have the message that could save the world; therefore, the devil will try to cause us to fall out over something.

The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:1-5: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

We must not allow our love for the Truth to wax cold. It is one thing to know the Truth, but do you love the Truth? What will happen to you if you do not love the Truth? Second Thessalonians 2:9-10 says: "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; [Wicked spirits and religious spirits can deceive you if you do not stay with the Truth. You must not lean to your own understanding. You must follow the Spirit of God and follow the Truth. When we preach the Gospel, we must have the Bible. We

have to preach the Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven.] because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." You must love the Truth so that you can be saved and so that you can stay saved. Most people do not have a love for the Truth.

God told us to love the Truth. The Bible is the old Book that Rome locked up on a chain. It is the Book that many saints died for. The church had to go underground to keep the Bible alive.

I am not going to allow anyone to draw me away from the Truth. People are doing all kinds of things that are not according to the Truth. Some people are waiting on a thousand-year millennium. That is not according to the Truth. I am not going to back away from the Truth. Paul wrote in 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

### **"The Whole Duty of Man"**

Judas carried the money bag, and He was right there with Jesus. I cannot emphasize that enough. He was right there. He knew the secrets among the brethren, but somewhere along the line, he found time to make a deal to betray Jesus.

People have time for many things, but do they ever have time to pick up the Bible and read it? If you are too busy for God, too busy to visit the sick, too busy to pray, too busy to read the Bible, or too busy to attend the worship services, you are too busy. You must take time for God and take time for your soul. You do not have to prove anything to me, but you have to prove to God that you love Him. You should not look around at others and say: "They did not make it to church, so I am not going either. If they can get by with it, I can get by with it too." You are not to measure yourself by others. You must measure yourself by

the Word of God.

If you are unsaved, you need to receive Christ into your heart. James 4:6-10 states: "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy

to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 says: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Judas kept a big secret from the other disciples. You might be carrying a big secret. Perhaps you have one foot in the church and the

other foot in the world, so to speak. As soon as someone crosses your pathway, you head for the world. God sees those secrets. I hope you do not die in that condition. If you die with sin in your heart, you cannot go where Jesus is. My friend, you need to consider the Word of God. The Truth is Jesus! In John 14:6 He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." If you need to pray, won't you seek Him? May God bless you.

(Compact Disc TR-479E)

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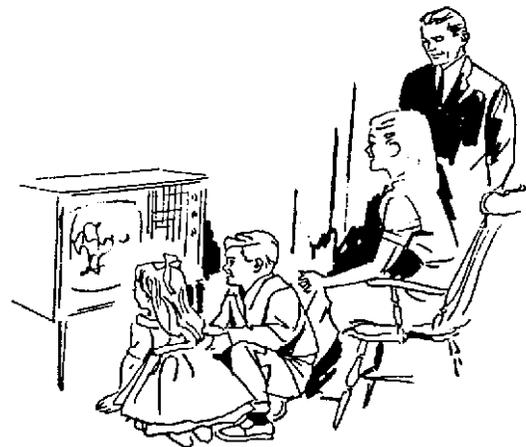
# Doing Without Television

This family's experience is worth considering. They have found the solution to the problem of television.

The James family decided to lock the television set up in the attic. They objected to the set of values television was presenting to them. It was controlling their lives. The oldest son, age fourteen, would just sit in front of the television and watch whatever came on. After the television was removed, he began developing an interest in woodwork. For many, there is a definite period of painful withdrawal when a family's television set is removed. Mrs. James compared it to withdrawal from a powerful drug. It was difficult at first for the James family, especially the children. They would go to school in the morning, hear the other children talking about what they saw on television the night before, and feel left out. Mrs. James said, "At first you have all this time that you never had before. It makes you nervous. But it only takes a few weeks until you get used to it. We are fine now."

Jerry James, as the father, realized that, without the television set, additional responsibilities had been placed upon him. "Without the television set there, I need to plan activities for my family more. The television is an easy way to avoid planning things to do. However, it has allowed my wife and I to provide our own value system for the family, rather than accept whatever comes out of the television. It is a shame how much of your life can be wasted by television, and you never even realize it. My own father is retired. He is wonderful at carpentry and mechanics; he could be doing such wonderful things with his hands, but he does not. He sits in front of his television set all day and night. He's addicted. Television is depriving him of the accomplishments he could be enjoying."

The James children seem to be happy with their family's decision. Both of the older boys said that they do not resent being without a television set. They do not know if others like them are trying to quit television cold turkey. They just know



it is working for them.

Mrs. James said, "The television was like a robber living in our home. It robbed us of time; it robbed us of being together; it robbed us of life. Now it is like the robber is gone. We have each other, and that is enough."

Selected

**THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE IS  
THE WORLD'S BIBLE.**

# Divine and Worldly Conformity

The Scriptures say, "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2). They also say that we should be "conformed to the image of his Son" (Romans 8:29). We have here two sorts of conformity, one of which is condemned and the other approved. Much is said by some classes of religious professors about worldly conformity. It is my purpose herein to point out the essential nature of these two kinds of conformity.

By worldly conformity, most religious teachers mean outward likeness of dress, manner, customs, and so on. This, however, is not its true significance. Conformity to Christ does not mean dressing as He dressed, speaking the language that He spoke, eating the same kind of food that He ate, or observing any of those externals that went to make up His life.

In the true meaning of the word, conformity goes deeper than externals. Two things may look very much alike and yet be very different in their natures. Pyrites of iron looks so much like gold that it has deceived many a person into thinking that he had found riches. For this reason, it is called "fool's gold." Likewise, things may outwardly seem very different, while in reality they are very much the same. A sparkling diamond seems very different from a lump of coal, but the chief difference is only in the arrangement of their particles. Both are composed chiefly of carbon, so in nature they conform closely to each other.

Conformity is a thing of nature, not of external appearance. We were "by nature the children of wrath." Our likeness to the world consists in a likeness of character, and for that reason, we are told that we must be transformed. This transformation is a change of character; it has to do, first of all, with internals, not with externals.

Conformity to the world in some externals is not only advisable but also necessary. We wear clothing as the world does, we live in houses built like those around us, we speak the same language as others around us, we have some of the same habits of thought and speech in general that they have, we use the same tools, we raise the same crops, and we employ the same methods of work and business. We cannot avoid doing this without sacrificing what is vital and proper in our lives. Conformity to the world in these externals becomes evil only when such conformity has its origin in an evil principle in the heart or when it produces an evil effect.

When Christ prayed for His disciples, He said, "Keep them from the evil." Paul said as using and not abusing. It is that which is evil, or the evil use that is made of externals, that is obnoxious to God. A proper use of all things is permissible, and if our hearts are conformed to God, we naturally desire and seek only the proper use of things. The natural heart is wicked. It is set on pleasing itself, and it is full of vanity and pride. So long as this condition

exists, the heart is not conformed to God. There must be a transformation, and this is not one which starts from the outside and works inward, for such at best could be only a reformation. The real transformation is a thing that begins on the inside and works a vital change in the spiritual condition and character. When this internal change is wrought, it gives a new quality and direction to the whole range of thought and activity. It manifests itself in new desires and aspirations, in new habits and customs, in newness of speech and looks and behavior. When we are transformed so that we become new creatures in Christ Jesus, we begin to act like new creatures. However, our bodies are not transformed. We still have bodies of flesh, which retain their natural desires and appetites, and these we may gratify in a lawful way without sin.

When the heart is transformed and purified from its vanity and pride, these qualities will not be manifested in external things. So long as pride and vanity remain in the heart, preaching to people and requiring them to cease wearing worldly adornment is like trying to kill a tree by pulling off some of its leaves: the people may lay off such things under pressure, but they are no better than before. People must be taught the Bible standard of externals, but the chief thing is to get their hearts right. When the heart is conformed to the image of Christ, the words of the old song are true:

*There's no thirsting for life's pleasure,  
Nor adorning rich and gay;  
For I've found a richer treasure,  
One that fadeth not away.*

Neither force nor persuasion is required to get persons with such an experience to act properly regarding external things.

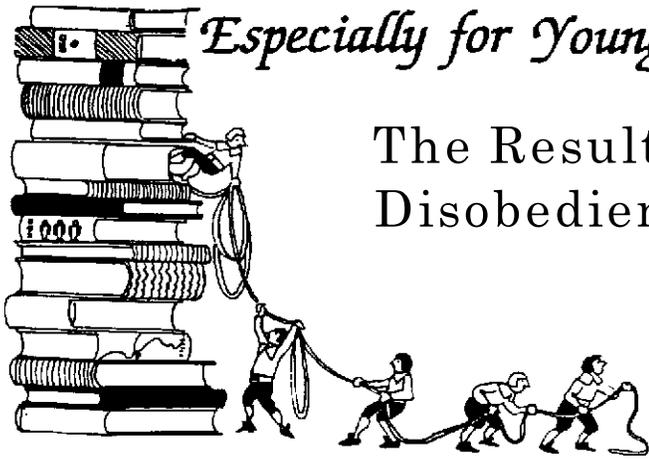
In carrying out their idea of nonconformity to the world, some bodies of people have adopted a special garb or a special form of speech to distinguish them from others. This, however, is not a mark of real nonconformity, but a mark of sectarianism. The true and only difference needful between ourselves and the world in externals is that we need to reject those things that are evil or that produce evil. All things else are lawful to us, though these lawful things must be judged by the law of expediency.

Conformity to Christ means conformity in character. It means purity of desire, so that our hearts reach out for only those things that are pure, and we are moved by pure motives and actuated by holy purposes. It means that we have a conscience toward God in whatever we do. It means to put His will before everything else. It means that the dominating purpose of our life will be to please Him in every detail, and not ourselves. A heart like this is not

*[continued on page 15]*

*Especially for Young People*

## The Result of Disobedience



My parents and their six children, including myself, lived in Flintville, Wisconsin, near the Suamico River and Pond, where a great number of logs had been floated in for lumber. On the opposite side from us were woods, where wintergreen berries were plentiful. One pleasant Sunday morning in October, one of our playmates came to ask our mother if we, my older sister, a younger brother, and I, could go with her to pick some of these berries.

Mother said we could go if we would go down the river and cross the bridge. She knew that we had crossed the pond several times on the logs, but the water was unusually high for that time of year, and there was danger in crossing that way. We promised to cross by the bridge, really intending when we left home to do so. Mother let my two younger sisters, one four and the other six years old, go with us.

We left the house as happy as could be. My mother smiled as she stood in the door and watched us go. She had always trusted us, and we seldom disobeyed her. However, this time we had our playmate with us, and she had been in the habit of having her own way. As she was a little older than we were, we thought that what she said or did was all right.

We had gone for a short distance when this girl, whose name was Louise, suggested that we run across on the logs and get to the

berries so much sooner. We reminded her of what our mother had told us, but she said, "Your mother does not know how snug the logs are piled in and that it would be such fun, and no danger, to cross on them."

We began to look at the matter in the same way, and after playing a few minutes, we started across. I took one of my little sisters, and Louise was going to take the younger one, but as she was about to start, her brother, whom she had not seen for some time, drove up and took her home with him. My brother, thinking he could take our little sister across, started with her, but I called to him to go back and wait for me to do it, for I was then about halfway over. The stream was not wide, and he thought he could take her over as well as I.

Just as I started back, oh, what a sight met my eyes! I saw my little sister slip off the log into the water. I ran to catch her, but I was not quick enough. As I reached for her, my brother and I both rolled from the log into the water with her. Then my sister, who had been standing on the bank to see if we got over safely, came to our rescue; but we were so frightened that we caught hold of her, and instead of her pulling us out, we pulled her in with us.

By that time, our screams had reached our mother's ears, and she came running to see what the trouble was. She saw only one of us, as the others were under water, or

nearly so, and supposing there was only one in the water, she came on the logs to help. By the time she got to us, the logs were under motion, so that she could not stand on them, and she, too, fell into the water.

The six-year-old sister, whom I had taken across, saw it all and made an attempt to come to us. Mother called to her to go back. She turned back and reached the shore all right. Just as Mother spoke, she felt something come against her feet. She raised her foot with the weight and caught the dress of little Emeline, who was sinking for the last time. Mother managed to help her till help came.

That being Sunday afternoon, nearly every man who lived near was away from home. Fortunately, a Mr. Flint, who had company visiting him, was at home. The men were eating their dinner, when a woman who had seen us in the water rushed to the dining room and told them that Mr. Tripp's family were in the mill pond drowning. They rushed from the table, tipping it over and breaking some dishes.

When they reached us, the logs and water were so disturbed that nothing could be done for us until boards were brought to lay on the logs. During this time, I had caught hold of a log that was crowded between others, so I could pull myself up without rolling, but could get no farther. My sister Sarah and brother Willard were helped ashore, Emeline, whom Mother had been

trying hard to hold up, was taken out, but showed no signs of life. She was laid on a log while they helped our mother out of the pond.

As soon as Mother saw Emeline, she told the men to turn her on her stomach. They then saw that there was life. She was quickly taken to the house and cared for by an older lady called Aunt Betsey, who had come to help.

While taking Mother to shore, the nine men who had come to our rescue fell into the water. They all had to walk on the same long board to get to shore. The boards having

been placed so very quickly, it was not noticed until too late that one was unsafe. The men were near enough to shore where they fell in that they could reach bottom and were not long in getting out.

Mother had to be taken home where she was cared for by the best help that could be procured. It was impossible to get a doctor where we lived in those days. Little Emeline and Mother were watched over all night, and at sunrise the next morning they were pronounced out of danger. The men who fell in got off with just an unpleasant wetting. The

water was quite cold, and the pond froze over the following night. They did not start for home that day, as they were intending to do, but spent the rest of the day drying their clothing.

About noon our father, who had been away for three days, came home. When he heard the story of our disaster, he wept and thanked God for sparing our lives.

All this happened because we did not obey our mother, and we children never forgot the lesson.

Selected

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*[Divine and Worldly Conformity—continued from page 13]*

attracted by the vain and sinful things of the world; on the contrary, it is repelled by them.

When a person is adorned with gold, jewels, costly or gaudy array, or immodest clothing, we must needs look for the root in the heart. There is where the trouble lies. There is the seat of the desire. It is useless to take off the externals while the internal corruption is permitted to continue. God hates all vanity and pride. There is no such element in His character. If our character is purged from these things, we have no desire for their external manifestations. God loves meekness and modesty, and these are the opposites of display. If we are meek and modest in character, our dress and deportment will manifest these qualities. If we do not manifest them, it is because we do not possess them.

It may not be out of place here to call attention to the Bible principles relating to the subject of dress and personal adornment. In beginning this phase of the subject, we should note that the Gospel is not a set of rules, but a revelation of moral principles. It is intended for all people in all countries, climates, and ages. We should not, therefore, expect that these principles as they relate to dress would be revealed in other than the most general terms, or applied to the details of the subject. There is just one principle involved. We may sum up the whole subject under that one heading. The Bible standard of dress consists of just three words, but these three words cover the whole scope of life. They are "in modest apparel" (1 Timothy 2:9). This is the standard. We are given a hint regarding how to apply this standard, but our own good judgment is sufficient to draw the line in the right place, provided our hearts are conformed to the divine image. There is no excuse for fanaticism any more than there is for pride. Sound judgment and good sense will help us avoid both extremes.

A definition of modesty is, "Restrained within due limits of propriety; free from indecency or lewdness; not excessive; moderate." A Christian's apparel should be

modest in cut, that is, the way it is made. It should cover the body as a modest person would cover it, not displaying those parts that the prevailing standards of modesty require to be covered. Judged by this standard, many religious professors come far short, their clothing being less than decency really requires. Such a thing, of course, does not have its origin in a pure heart. The woman who displays herself to attract attention is anything but modest.

Clothing should be made to conform to modesty in all other respects also. Useless things added to one's apparel for the purpose of display and show do not conform to modesty. Christian apparel should be modest in texture; that is, it should not be so thin that it displays the body or the underwear. No man thinks a woman modest who wears goods so thin as to display her undergarments. Such things are very unbecoming to saints, and of course not less so to other people. Sisters should dress so that a modest man will not feel embarrassed in their presence.

Some have thought it wrong to try to make our clothes becoming. This is not the case. The Bible says "that women adorn themselves in modest apparel"; that is, their apparel should be such as adorns or becomes them, so long as it is modest clothing. It should be adapted in cut, color, etc., to harmonize with the size and height of the person. To make ourselves outlandish or conspicuous in any way is neither wise nor right. It is violating modesty, and this is not consistent. It is only when we make a proper appearance that we can have a proper influence, and so be effective for God.

God delights in modesty in dress, in words, in actions, and in all things. Pride and show are an abomination to Him. If we conform to Him in our inner life and character, outward conformity will naturally follow. If inward desire runs out after that which is immodest and gaudy, if the heart desires to display upon the person gold and jewels and finery, it is because it does not conform to the image of God's Son, but to the world.

C. W. Naylor

Luke 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true

riches?

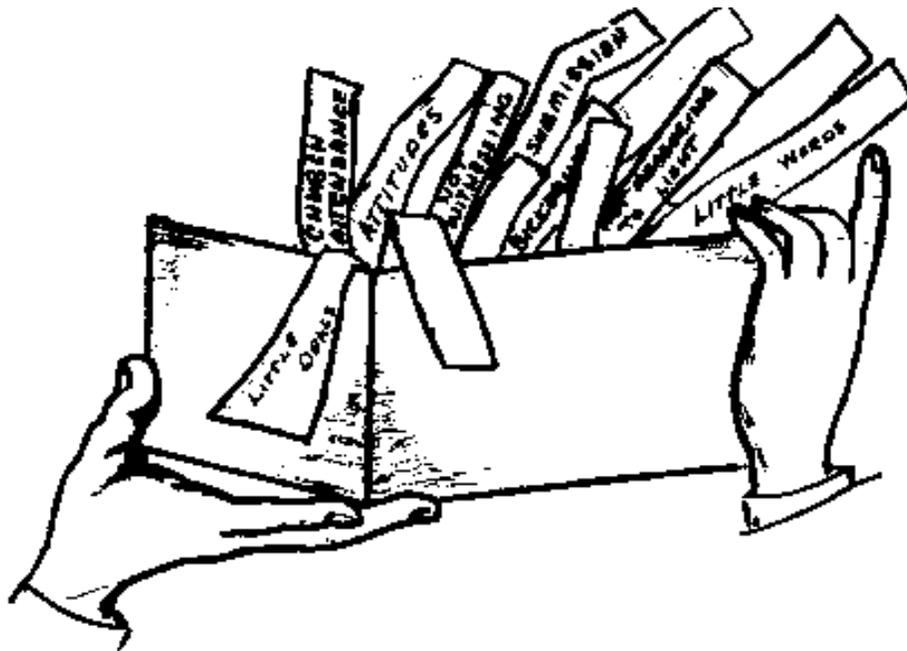
12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to

the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Proverbs 27:18 Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.

# The Importance of Little Things



Brother Richard Talbot

## Use Your Talent Wisely and Faithfully

You need to realize that generally it is not the big things that can mess you up and bring you down, but it is the little things. Again, Proverbs 27:18 states, "Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof." I want you to notice that the writer did not say, "Whosoever takes care of the orchard . . ." or "Whosoever has three hundred trees to take care of . . ." In essence, he was saying, "If a man keeps one fig tree and takes good care of it, he will eat the fruit of his labor."

As a Christian, you have been given a "fig tree" to take care of, and you can do different things concerning it. You may say, "Since I have just one fig tree, why should I bother with it? If I had one hundred of them, I would really do a good job of caring for them, but I don't think one is really worth my time." If you do not put your heart into taking care of that one fig tree, you would not take care of one hundred of them.

In Luke 16:10 Jesus said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." I want you to realize that if

you have only one fig tree, or one thing that you can do, or only one talent or gift, one thing that is in your favor to do, you ought to use that talent wisely and faithfully. You ought to stay right at it and stay true to the cause of Christ. Do not give up in what God has given you to do. Even if it is a small thing, you ought to be faithful, dependable, reliable, and trustworthy in it, even if no one ever sees you doing it. God sees when you are taking care of your fig tree, and He might give you two more to take care of. If He sees that you are doing a good job with what He has given you, He might give you a half dozen or a whole orchard

full of fig trees. On the other hand, He is not going to give you an abundance of what you think you ought to have or what you think you deserve until He sees that you are faithful in that one little thing.

Sometimes people get the idea, "If I can't do something great, I am not going to do anything." I was brought up under the old school, so to speak. If a person felt God's hand on him to preach the Gospel, he did not even think about preaching until he had done the menial tasks around the church and until he had been faithful to his pastor. Fidelity depends not on the amount entrusted but on the sense of responsibility. A person must feel this responsibility in that which is little if he expects to feel it with much. One who can be trusted in little matters can also be trusted in important matters, and one who is dishonest in little matters will be dishonest in important matters.

### Taking Care of Little Things

I am reminded of a story that I read of a giant oak tree in the Rocky Mountains. This huge tree was estimated to be over four hundred years old when it was found to have collapsed. It had withstood floods, high winds, and powerful, raging storms that shook the Rocky Mountains. When it finally collapsed, they found out what had happened to it. Little tiny beetles had gotten under the bark and had eaten the core of that tree. Tiny insects brought that huge tree down. The damage was not visible to the naked eye, but under the bark those insects destroyed that tree.

You might have many little things working on you, dear one, that you do not think are important, such as little attitudes, little feelings, and other little problems. Little things to which you may not pay much attention can bring you down, whether you are a preacher, a pastor, or a layman, if you do not take care of them. You need to realize that there are a host of little

things. Success in life is not made up of the achievement of big things but can only be realized by how well you take care of the little things.

When I was a young boy and went to the altar to pray, someone would come and pray with me. That person would put his arm around me and say, "What are you here for, Richie?"

Often I would say, "I want to get closer to God."

Do you know what he would ask me? "Have you been praying? Have you been reading the Bible and studying the Word?" What was he doing? He was trying to teach me that I could be closer to God if I took care of my prayer life and if I read and studied the Scriptures. This is the way to be close to God.

You cannot be close to God without a good, solid prayer life. There is no way to live close to God until you develop the good habit of praying and reading the Word; these are essential. If you had to choose one or the other, prayer is of all things most important. Also, prayer is the thing that is the hardest. You can read your Bible much easier than you can pray. I am talking about *really* praying.

When you get down to pray, the devil will bring to your remembrance something that you forgot to do. If you will just continue to pray, the Lord will help you to remember it when you are finished. The devil will bring to your mind everything you should have been doing to get you to hurry and get off your knees. He does not want you to make contact with God. He does not care if you get down and just go through a routine of saying words, but when you get down and begin to make contact with God, he does not want that. Nevertheless, it is one of those little necessities that you need to do.

Sometimes a direct question out of the clear blue can startle someone into reality. People do not like to be questioned much, especially on personal things, but God often uses that to help them. Sometimes people need rude awakenings. Are you

getting along as well as you should spiritually? Do you have the victory in your soul? Do you have Judgment Day victory? Have you neglected to pray? Have you neglected to be a good witness?

Maybe you have not lied, but you have something in the shadow of your life, and it troubles you when you are under the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit. You may throw your shoulders back and think you are okay, but when you get under the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit, little things become big things to you.

### Giving Attention to Fidelity

God is particular about the small things. The Bible tells us that He cares for the little sparrow. He beautifies the lilies of the field. He sends the cool breeze and the gentle rain. God cares about *all* things. Fidelity in little things commends itself. It is only by attention to small things that we can ever hope to be faithful in great things. Great events often turn on small hinges.

It was the widow's mite and not the riches of the wealthy that drew the attention of Jesus. It was the little effort that Zachaeus put forth that was saturated with sincere desire that brought salvation to his house. The rich, young ruler went running with great exuberance to Jesus, confident in himself, but he went away sad and sorrowful. Zachaeus made little effort, in that sense. He climbed a tree, but his effort was saturated with sincere desire.

Good, solid marriages are successful because the husband and the wife take care of the little things. A successful marriage is made up of little things. It is not the big things, but it is the little things that you do in a day's time, the little reassurances that you give to each other: that touch, such as reaching out and holding hands. Husband, you are not too big a man to do that, are you? I need my wife's hand. I love to hold her hand. I draw encouragement and strength and a feeling of

contentment when I am holding her hand.

We have been married for a long time, and I still get a thrill when I hold her hand. The little kind words whispered in the ear help to build a marriage and hold it together. It is not just remembering her birthday and remembering your anniversary, but you dare not forget those occasions. Nonetheless, those things by themselves would be nothing if your days were not filled with little kind things. If you get anything out of this message, I want you to understand that it is the little things that will help you to make Heaven your home.

In a marriage it is necessary to give attention to just simple thoughtfulness and being considerate. A marriage can be greatly harmed and greatly hindered by inconsideration, a lack of thoughtfulness, and a lack of concern for each other. The Bible teaches us that a husband should do what he can to please his wife. Also, the Bible teaches the husband not to be bitter toward his wife. The secret is in taking care of the little things.

One of the little things that married couples fail to do so many times is to take care of their time. If they are not organized properly, things get out of hand, and then time runs out on them. They think, "We are going to do this and do that"; but they waste their time, and their opportunity to do the little things is gone. You need to realize that time is an important commodity.

Procrastination is a small thing, but it is such a tremendous danger to the church and to our spiritual lives. If you procrastinate in doing God's will, it may seem like a small thing at times, but I want you to realize that one of these days the time will come when you will not have any days left. You may think, "Well, I can do that any time," but you never get it done. Your time is going to run out, and what could have been done at any time will not be done at all. That time never

comes around. People always seem to have time for everything, and yet they have time for nothing.

I have always been told as a pastor, "If you want something done around the congregation, ask the busiest person in the congregation. He or she will find time to do it." If you ask the person who does not have much to do, that person will never have time to do it. It is the little things that are so important.

### **How Important Are the Little Things?**

Success on the job is brought about by taking care of small things, such as being on time, showing up with enthusiasm, and not being critical of everything you see on the job. You may say, "It's a free country, so I can say what I want." Well, you might be able to do that legally, but it may cost you your job some day.

I drive a school bus, and one day a boy got on the school bus, and he was mouthing off. I said, "Stop it right there, son. You either shut up or go back to the school building."

He said: "What do you mean? It's a free country. I've got a right to say what I want."

I replied, "When you step up on that stepwell, you lose that liberty." He shut his mouth and went back and sat down. He did not like it, but he did not voice his criticism aloud any more.

A lot of people would get along with others much better if they would learn to keep their criticisms to themselves. You can pray in your secret closet of prayer at home about anything you want to pray about. You can talk to God about all the things that you do not like and all the things that are bothering you, but you have no right to go into a sanctuary and spread your criticism through the congregation.

You may say, "That's a little thing." Yes, but that little thing will destroy your soul. Sometimes you have to learn to bite your tongue and turn the problem over to God:

"Lord, I can't handle this. You are going to have to take care of it." Little things can disrupt so many things.

How important are the small things? I was working on my riding lawnmower some time back, doing a general spring cleanup, getting it ready for the summer: I changed the oil, cleaned it up, changed the filters, and so on. It was running when I pulled it into the carport where I worked on it.

After I completed the general maintenance, it would not start. I thought, "What's wrong with this thing now?" So I checked all the safety switches. I had unhooked some of them and rewired them because I do not like all those features. I checked several things but I still could not get it started.

I went into the kitchen, got a glass of iced tea, and poured out my complaints to my good wife. She turned around and asked, "Well, did you hook the spark plug back up?"

I said, "Did I hook the spark plug back up? Well, of course!" It kind of upset me that she would think that I would not have done that.

I sat there rolling that over in my mind, drinking my iced tea. Soon I eased out of the kitchen, slipped back outside, pulled up the hood on the riding mower, and there the spark plug wire was hanging down. I thought, "Oh, no!" I plugged in that wire, sat down on the mower, and the engine started. Oh, that was embarrassing! That was so humbling. I had to say, "Honey, you were right, again." That spark plug wire was such a small thing, but it stopped the whole process.

### **Keeping Your Conscience Tender**

Throughout the life of a child of God, so much depends on being faithful in the small things that pertain to salvation. Everything we have requires maintenance and upkeep, whether it is machinery

or the vehicle you drive. You have to check the oil, change the oil, and keep air in the tires at a proper amount of pressure. You have to be conscious of all of these things to maintain properly operating vehicles.

The same is true with your soul. You have to take care to have a fully functional and proper Christian life. You have to take care of the little things. You must be faithful to the house of God, even when you are feeling bad or feeling tired. It is so easy to stay home and prop up your feet because you are tired. You have to press your way to the house of God.

Someone may say, "Well, since I don't feel good enough to go to church, I might as well do this and do that at the house." God knows how sick your illness really is. If you want to build a good reputation and if you want people to have confidence in you, then you need to be careful, you need to be concerned about what people think of you.

You may say, "I don't care what people think about me. I'll just live my life." That is not the right attitude for you to have. You ought to care about what people think of you. Young person, you ought to care about what your pastor and the saints think of you. You ought to care about what your parents think of you. You need to have a concern that you build a good reputation. Character is what you are when no one else is around, in your private times, in the dark of the night, on the Internet. You must be careful of the little things.

Another thing that you need to be careful of is keeping your conscience tender. You need to listen to that still, small voice. It will keep you out of a lot of trouble. There are things that you can get into, things that you can see with your eye, things that will come into your mind, and that still, small voice will disturb you. You may not even realize what is going on at first, but after a while, it will be just like a light bulb has lit up in your head, and

you will think: "Wait a minute! I can't think about this. It is not of God." You must rebuke it and take a stand against it; then you will be all right. You have not sinned yet. If you let wrong thoughts come into your mind and you pull down the shade, so to speak, and say, "I'm not really going to get into it too much, just a little bit," then you are heading for trouble. You need to listen to the still, small voice speaking to your conscience, the feeling that God would be displeased with your going in that direction. If you listen to that voice, it will keep you from sinning. If you disregard it and cross that line, you will know in the depths of your heart that you have gone too far.

Once you have crossed that line, the only way to get that straightened out is to repent and ask God for forgiveness. At that point, you must own up to the fact that you have sinned. That is humbling. It may be difficult to bring yourself to the place where you will admit it. The problem is that you may try to push it aside and keep professing Christianity when, in reality, your heart is empty and dry.

### **How to Stay Above the Troubled Waters**

Dear one, these little things will effect you in a way that is hard for me to even describe. Certain things are not good to play around with. You must be open, clear, and clean with God. We know the Scripture plainly teaches us in Romans 8:28 that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I am a firm believer in this promise that God has given us. I believe that it was given to help us to be optimistic, so that we can hold up our heads in times of distress. You need to believe that all things work together for good when you love God and are the called according to His purpose.

In the process of all things working together, God is working.

The word *working* is an action verb; and it portrays movement. I have read that when they build wings on jet airplanes, those wings are built to have flexibility; in other words, they can move, although you may not realize it.

At a large mall in Charleston, West Virginia, when you stand on the top floor, you can feel it moving. It scared many people when they first built it, and they put an article in the newspaper about it. It said that the mall was built with the ability to work. The floors work and shift around. Had they built it totally rigid, it would have burst apart, but they built it with such flexibility that you can feel it moving.

There are things in our lives that God gives us that work on you for your good. God wants you to hold steady, to be faithful, and to allow the working process to take place. You may not be pleased with all you see and feel at the present moment. You may be in dire distress. You may be going through some very difficult places. You may be going through a dry spell spiritually, but you must be faithful and steadfast. Let God work in those things. He said He would work good and bring you out with a good hand.

I like to picture the church as a ship. Sometimes I think about large aircraft carriers, tremendously huge ships made of tons of steel and iron welded together. If you were to cut one of them in sections and throw it out in the ocean, it would sink to the bottom. Yet, welded together and launched in the ocean, it floats. That is amazing how one way it floats and another way it would sink to the bottom.

As the church, we are welded together by the Holy Spirit. The church is a floating vessel, the ship of Zion, and she is destined for Glory. You can go there too, but only if you stay on board. If you become separated, you are going to sink; you will go down. If you stay welded in, by the grace of God, you will float and stay above the

troubled waters. Yes, all together it floats, but cut apart, it will surely sink.

### God Will See You Through

Dear one, do not quit! Quitters can never be winners. If you are going to be a winner, you must never quit. You may become discouraged, you may be hurt, and you may feel that no one really cares. I have felt that way lots of times, but I have never quit, and I am not going to quit. I know that God cares, and I know the saints care. I urge you, do not quit.

*When things go wrong, as sometimes they will,  
When the road you are trudging seems all uphill,  
When the funds are low and the debts are high,  
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,  
When care is pressing you down a bit,  
Rest, if you must, but don't you quit.*

*Life is queer with its twists and turns,  
As every one of us sometimes learns,  
And many a failure turns about,  
When he might have won had he stuck it out;  
Don't give up though the pace seems slow –  
You may succeed with another blow.*

*Often the goal is nearer than,  
It seems to a faint and faltering man,  
Often the struggler has given up,  
When he might have captured the victor's cup,  
And he learned too late when the night slipped down,  
How close he was to the golden crown.*

*Success is failure turned inside out –  
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt.  
And you never can tell how close you are,  
It may be near when it seems so far.  
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit –  
It is when things seem worst that you must not quit.  
You must take care of the small*

things; be faithful in the little things. God will see you through. You may get turned off sometimes because you do not have anything special to do. Your special thing is to take care of your soul. You must take care of that one single "fig tree" faithfully – cultivate it faithfully, work to keep the bugs out of it, keep it pruned, and keep it well watered. If you will do that, the time will come when you will find some rich fruit. It is going to be so good that someone else will want some of it, and you can share it with them. You know, word is going to travel: "Did you know that So-and-So has a fig tree, just one fig tree, but he has taken such good care of it. He has some of the juiciest figs that I've ever tasted." Then more people will come around and say, "Can I taste your figs?"

This is a spiritual lesson concerning the fig tree in our Scripture text. God is going to take note and say, "That brother has taken such good care of that one fig tree, so I am going to give him some more." Your life will have a reputation of godliness and well-conducted behavior, and others will be affected. On the other hand, if you do not take good care, you will have a reputation of just the opposite, and people will say: "Don't go around that brother's fig tree! It

has bitter figs, and the figs have bugs in them. He did not take very good care of his fig tree."

You may say: "That's just one tree. I didn't see much sense in wasting all my time on it." Well, you lost your opportunity. You see, in life you might have only one opportunity to prove your worth; therefore, you need to be faithful and stay in the fight for Truth and right. You should never back away from taking care of your soul. God will reward you abundantly if you take good care of it. Oh, it may be years down the road, but when God is ready to call you for something, He is not going to pick the lazy person. He is not going to pick the individual who did not take care of his tree. He is going to call upon the young man or the young woman who has been faithful in the little things.

Have you been faithful in taking care of your soul? Have you been faithful in doing things reliably, dependably, and truly well? Is something stirring your heart? God is bringing your attention back to where you have failed when you let things get out of hand. If you have not been what you ought to be, I ask you to yield to the Spirit of God. Will you listen to that still, small voice and let God have His way?

*(Compact Disc TR-590E)*

### A Little More

A little more kindness and a little less creed,  
A little more giving and a little less greed.  
A little more smile and a little less frown,  
A little less kicking a man when he's down.

A little more "we" and a little less "I,"  
A little more laugh and a little less cry.  
A little more flowers on the pathway of life;  
And fewer on the grave at the end of the strife.

Author Unknown

2 Chronicles 19:4 And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people from Beersheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.

5 And he set judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city,

6 And said to the judges, Take heed

what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment.

7 Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

Colossians 3:23 And whatsoever ye

do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

## "No Respect of Persons"



*Brother Garrett Haylock*

### **The Enemy of Souls Is Crafty**

As we look at these Scripture texts, though they are quite a distance apart (one is in the Old Testament and one is in the New Testament), basically they are saying the same thing. The Scripture says "Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people from Beersheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers." Though these people were God's people, Jehoshaphat had to bring them back to God.

As you become involved in living for God, you need to watch that you do not become complacent, because that is a trick of the enemy. Camp meetings and revivals are about helping you to see how the

enemy is working, as well as for winning souls to Christ. We are glad for every soul that is brought in to the ark of safety. We are also glad for the messages that strengthen those of us who are already saved. They cement that determination within the hearts of those who are sound so that they stay saved. The enemy of souls will always strive to pull souls down. He does not care if you are around the church or if you do not miss a single service as long as you do not allow God to have full control of your life.

The devil will take a little piece of your life at a time, but God requires your whole heart. That is the reason Jesus delivered us from all our sins, not just from some of them. That is what God wants to do in the heart and life of every indi-

vidual. Sometimes it may be a struggle for you to continue to serve God, but you will receive the reward of the inheritance on the day of reckoning if you remain faithful. Paul said, "Follow me as I follow Christ." Too often people become comfortable and complacent and get their eyes on the created more than the Creator. They forget their purpose for being here.

Our Scripture text says that Jehoshaphat appointed judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah. Today no matter how small a congregation of the Church of God is or where it is located, God has an individual there who is upholding the standard for the Lord. Pastor, as you endeavor to judge for the Lord, you are entrusted with a congregation. You must not forget

that everything you do is supposed to be with God in mind. Remember, the Scripture says he warned those judges to take heed concerning what they did, because they judged not for man, but for the Lord.

Sometimes becoming a pleaser of men is easy. Preaching things that you know the people want you to preach is easy, despite God's nudging to preach other things, because you know that certain things will bring offences. Those judges were not to look at personalities. They were not to look at family members and forget that they were judging for God. If you are not careful, you will get yourself in trouble with God. You must remember that you are not preaching to hear the applause of men. You are to strive to do God's will so that at the end of life's journey, you will hear, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

One older pastor used to say, "Let me remind you that you are not going to hear 'Well done' unless you do well." Doing the things that will cause God to say "Well done" is not easy if you favor the applause of men.

### **Take Heed What You Do**

Romans 13:3 says, "For rulers are not a terror to good works." The pastor does not bear the sword in vain. When the Word cuts, it is not going to hurt those who love and serve God and who strive to please Him. Those who love Him welcome the Word when God digs around their hearts and reveals their true condition to them.

Often compromise creeps in when a pastor sees certain conditions arise and God deals with him and points him to messages that he may not want to preach. I have spent many hours striving to know the will of God, and the messages He gives to me seem sweet until I arrive at the services and see some well-known people in the audience. When I know that the message will offend them, I am tempted to draw

the sword back, but I have to bear the sword.

Second Corinthians 3:6 states, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." If you are not careful, you will forget why you are really here. King Jehoshaphat said in verses 6-7 of our Scripture text: "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it." As a minister, you must preach the Truth boldly. Some people may get offended, but those who love the Truth are going to stay.

When God brought the plagues upon Egypt, at first Pharaoh's magicians could not duplicate what Moses did. They could not stop what Moses and Aaron were doing, but as long as they could add to it, they felt there was nothing to it. Nevertheless, when the plague of lice came, they tried to make lice but could not. They said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." You need to strive to remember that you are in this for the Lord.

Verse 7 continues, ". . . for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts." Money should not influence you to favor or respect persons, because it will not influence God. If you only hear applause from men, you will get yourself in trouble. Sometimes while you are working for God, it can become easy for you to forget your mission.

Basically, as we look at these two Scripture texts, we can see that the one in Chronicles was written more toward the ministry and the one in Colossians is a general Scripture that takes in everyone. Paul said in verse 23 of our Scripture text, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." Forgetting that you are doing what you do for the Lord is easy. If you forget that you are doing it for the Lord, you may say, "I will lift up

the carpet and sweep the dirt under it," especially if people are not expressing their appreciation. You need to remember that your reward will not come from people but from God.

### **God's Eyes Are in Every Place**

In Proverbs 15:3 we read, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." God sees the good and the evil, so that should encourage you not to do evil. However, I want to tell you that the good is not going unnoticed either. Do not worry if no one says thank you for the good that you do. It might be an oversight. Since God's eyes are in every place, He is seeing what others may overlook. Let us not forget that we are doing it for the Lord and not man.

Verse 24 of our Scripture text reads, "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance." You need to remember this when you wonder, "What is the use?" There is a lot of use in working faithfully for God. This life is short and as the song says, "Only one life, so soon it will pass, only what's done for Christ will last."

Verses 24-25 of our Scripture text state: "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong. . . ." Just as the eyes of the Lord sees the right, He also sees the wrong. He knows if you hear the Word yet you deliberately do wrong. Sometimes people do things when they think no one else is looking. You need to remember that God's Spirit will not always strive with you. Again, verse 25 of our Scripture text tells us, "But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."

The Scripture says that a little leaven leavens the whole lump. Second Corinthians 5:10 tells us, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." That means preachers and pastors too.

If you are planning to go to

Heaven, you must go God's way. You are going to get yourself into problems if you do not go God's way. God told Ezekiel that if he failed to warn the wicked when he saw the sword coming, "the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezekiel 3:18). I tell my congregation: "I am not going to hell for failing to declare to you what God says. You must deal with what God said." Some preachers make it sound as if no one is going to hell. Those kinds of preachers are deceiving people, and that grieves me. I say, "Lord, help me never to walk in that way."

Moses had tremendous blessings and favors from God. It all started with the burning bush. God personally called him by name. You can read about it in Exodus, Chapter 3. God called him, and Moses approached the burning bush, but it was not consumed. God spoke to him. That was Moses' first encounter with God.

We read in Exodus 24:15-18 that Moses spent forty days in the presence of God. Not many people have had that opportunity, at least not according to the Scriptures. In Exodus, Chapter 34, we read that Moses spent yet another forty days with God after he broke the two tables of stone, being grieved because the people had made a golden calf and went into idol worship.

### **Murmuring and Complaining**

Numbers 12:1 reads, "And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman." Miriam and Aaron said things against Moses, but we do not read that Moses ever responded. The Bible tells us that Moses was the meekest of all men. While all of this was going on, the eyes of the Lord were present, and He came upon the scene and reproved Miriam and Aaron for speaking against His servant Moses.

Verse 6 states, "And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." He went on to say that was not so with His friend Moses, because He would speak mouth to mouth with him. We read in Exodus 33:11a, "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." What a privilege! This man was highly favored with God. The Scripture goes on to tell us of all the dealings that God had with Moses.

Exodus 17:1-7 tells us that the children of Israel had just come out of Egypt and the people began to murmur and complain, and God heard them. People seem to think that when they murmur and complain, God is not listening. We must not forget that we all must appear before Him.

In Numbers, Chapter 20, we read of a similar situation in which the children of Israel were complaining again. Moses was being put to the test. Verses 7-10 read: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?"

Ministers must set an example before the people, even in trying times. This brother was severely tested. You could almost say you would not blame him. However, the Scriptures show us how grieved God felt about what Moses had done.

Verse 11 says, "And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water

came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also." It would seem from this Scripture that what God said was not all that important. He told Moses to speak to the rock, but Moses struck the rock, yet water still came forth. God knew what the congregation needed. God knows what His people really need, but He holds the pastor responsible to do his job and not to forget that he is working for God.

A pastor is in a very responsible position. God sets him before the people, whether they are a small group or a large group. Even in the New Testament the church people murmured and complained. In Acts 6:1 the Grecians complained because their widows were being neglected in the daily ministration. Wherever you find God's people, some people will always complain. If you are one who complains, you should stop it, because you are going to be judged according to your works. With God there is no respect of persons.

### **Payday Is Coming**

Maybe Moses felt he had a right to do what he did, but God did not regard that as his right. With all the privileges that Moses had, the Scripture says, "He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons." You cannot get by with any wrongdoing. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Your reward is going to come from the Lord, whether it is good or whether it is bad. You need to really pay attention to these things. They have caught my full attention, especially concerning how important ministering really is.

Serving God is very important because, even if you are not a minister, all you do ought to be according to the Lord. You are never instructed by God to murmur and

## Obedience

complain or to dig your feet in and say, "I am not measuring to this particular standard or teaching of the church." You do not find that in the Scriptures, yet people do those things and still raise their hands because somebody was not really coming down on them and saying, "You need to do this." You need to remember that your payday is coming. When you have heard message after message and reproof after reproof, yet cast the Word behind you, you will not get by when you fail to apply it to your life.

The Bible does not say there would be no pleasure in the world, but it does say that it will last only for a season. The season of pleasure in the world is the sowing season. Going out into the world and sowing the seeds of sin and getting involved with things may seem pleasurable, but when the reaping time comes, you will not find that season pleasurable at all. Literally speaking, if you sow a handful of corn in rich soil, you may need a pickup truck to reap the harvest. You need to be careful of what you sow.

Regarding Moses, it almost looked as if God was not particular. Moses blatantly disobeyed God, but he was God's friend. It looked as though it would stay that way. However, you need to read the entire account to find the truth of the matter. Numbers 20:12 says, "And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

Moses might have thought, "Lord, am I hearing You right?" It does not matter what you once were. What matters is how you appear before God at the time of your death. If you die murmuring complaining, or fighting God's Truth, that is how you are going to stand before God. He is no respecter of persons.

Numbers 20:13 says, "This is the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them [or He showed Himself to be holy]." Moses might have failed to sanctify God in the eyes of the people, but God has a way. He was sanctified among the people. In essence, God said, "I am God; and I change not, friend or no friend." Ezekiel tells us that in the day a righteous man commits sin, all his righteousness will be forgotten, and for the iniquity that he has committed, in that iniquity, he shall die.

We are to live our lives for the Lord. Let us get pleasure out of living for God. Let us get a thrill from obeying God. Isaiah 1:19 says, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." The Bible says obedience is better than sacrifice. I thank God that through true obedience, we really get to know the good of the Church of God. God let Moses know, "Because of your disobedience, you are not going into the Promised Land."

"Lord, do You mean that for such a simple thing, with all the good times that we have had in the past, You are going to keep me out? You said speak, but I smote. The first time I smote it, You gave water."

We need to realize that we must obey the Lord. God's Spirit deals in different ways and according to the light that is shed on your path, and you are responsible for it. Some people will end up in hell because they did this or that, but in most cases people will go to hell for that which they did not do.

James 4:17 states, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." You need to be careful as you live this Christian life. I am not taking the joy out of it, I am striving to enable you to enjoy the joy of obedience. When you obey and do the right thing, you will reap a rich reward. I do not know some things, and I cannot go

some places. I do not want to go where the Spirit tells me not to go. I am grateful for the life of holiness, and for the privilege of being able to live holy. In myself I could not do it.

The world has become so churchy and the church has become so worldly that you cannot tell the difference. I am trusting and praying that we will never be cast into that category. The world should be able to see where the church begins in our lives and where the world ends. Your friends may like you better if you would fit in with them. I have heard people say, "Well, I go to the movies, not because I really want to, but to go with my friends." If I had friends who wanted to go to see a movie, I would not go. It would not tell me of anything good.

## Consequences of Failure

In Numbers, Chapter 27, we can see how God dealt with Moses. In verse 12 we read that God told Moses to go to Mount Abarim to see the land, and then he would be gathered to his people (verse 13). God was showing Moses that he was not going in, but He gave Moses the privilege of seeing the land.

In Deuteronomy, Chapter 1, Moses was relating to the people some of what happened along their journey from Egypt. He said in verses 34-37: "And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD. Also the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither." That stayed in Moses' mind. He remembered that God said he was not going in, and that must have been difficult for him. He had worked toward that for many years.

Deuteronomy 3:22-26 states: "Ye

shall not fear them: for the LORD your God he shall fight for you. And I besought the LORD at that time, saying, O Lord GOD, thou hast begun to show thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might? I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon. But the LORD was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter."

If God were to declare that you were not going to Heaven based upon your behavior in the church, you would not go in. Once death comes upon you, that chapter of your life will be finished, and that is how it will be revealed. As I read these Scriptures, my knees became weak and I trembled, because Moses had favor with God, yet he was unable to enter the Promised Land.

Sometimes when we have been around the church for a while, we talk about camp meetings of the past and how things used to be, but how is your experience today in comparison to when you first started to serve the Lord? Are you further ahead? You need to live for the Lord. God is very serious.

God gave Moses a chance to see the land, and when he saw it, he was so excited that, in essence, he said, "Lord, let me put my feet on that good land." However, God said, "Do not speak anymore about it, because you are not going in."

I tremble and fear that after I have preached to others, I myself could become a castaway. That is the biggest dread that I have. Whatever your calling is, do not miss Heaven for anything that the world has to offer. If you are doing the will of God, you ought to be faithful. I do not want to become a castaway. I would rather the Lord take me home now if in His wisdom He should see that I would become a castaway later.

I thank God for the times that I have spent with God and in the presence of God's people, but I feel as Paul did, who said, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). I believe that when we are living this way, we are striving to please God in everything we do. When we get a glimpse of Heaven, we will realize that Heaven is better than this life.

Deuteronomy 3:27 reads, "Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan."

### **Give the More Earnest Heed**

Hell will be especially terrible for people who have been around the church, for those who have had a chance to get saved but missed their opportunity. Luke 16:22-23 states: ". . . the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

There is no record that Lazarus saw the rich man's condition, or plight, but the rich man saw Lazarus. In hell you will be able to see the faithful preacher and Sunday school teacher who have striven to get you to know God from your youth. It would be sad to think that you could have been there had you only been honest in your experience; that will make hell a very hot place.

Can you say, "I am close to having the same privileges that Moses had?" At one time, Moses told God, "I would like to see Your face." God said in Exodus 33:20, "Thou canst not see my face . . . and live." However, God put him in a cleft of a rock, and as He passed by, He uncovered Himself and allowed Moses to see His hinder parts. Moses was very close to God. This is what I want you to understand. Even with the relationship that Moses had with God, God still said to him, "You are not going to enter the

Promised Land." This was because one day, God instructed Moses to speak to the rock, but he smote it.

First John 2:1 says, "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." John 8:34 states that "whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." If you go back into sin, you will have to do the first works over again. You cannot just walk into Heaven. You are privileged in that, if you find yourself guilty as the Word goes forth, you can go to God in prayer and say: "Lord, thank You for having mercy on my soul. Forgive me for my erring." Christ will pick you up, dust you off, so to speak, and help you. However, you cannot let sin continue and become progressively worse in your life and still expect to be saved. You must nip it in the bud, so to speak. I am so glad that I was not cut off every time I failed. I took care of the need as soon as I realized it through the Word. When God's Word reveals to you that you have a need, you ought to humble yourself before the Lord and say, "I am guilty; please have mercy upon me." God will have mercy upon you. If you go on and think that, because you are saved, you can do what you want to do when people are not looking, you will land in hell.

I trust that these words will bring the fear of God upon you. Moses was so close, but he did not make it into the Promised Land. Thank God, it did not keep him out of Heaven, because when God wanted someone to cheer up Christ, He sent Moses and Elijah. Friend, you will not get a second chance once death overtakes you. You will not get another chance if you die lost. Romans 9:18 reads, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy." Sin must be confessed and forsaken. The wise man said in Proverbs 28:13, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

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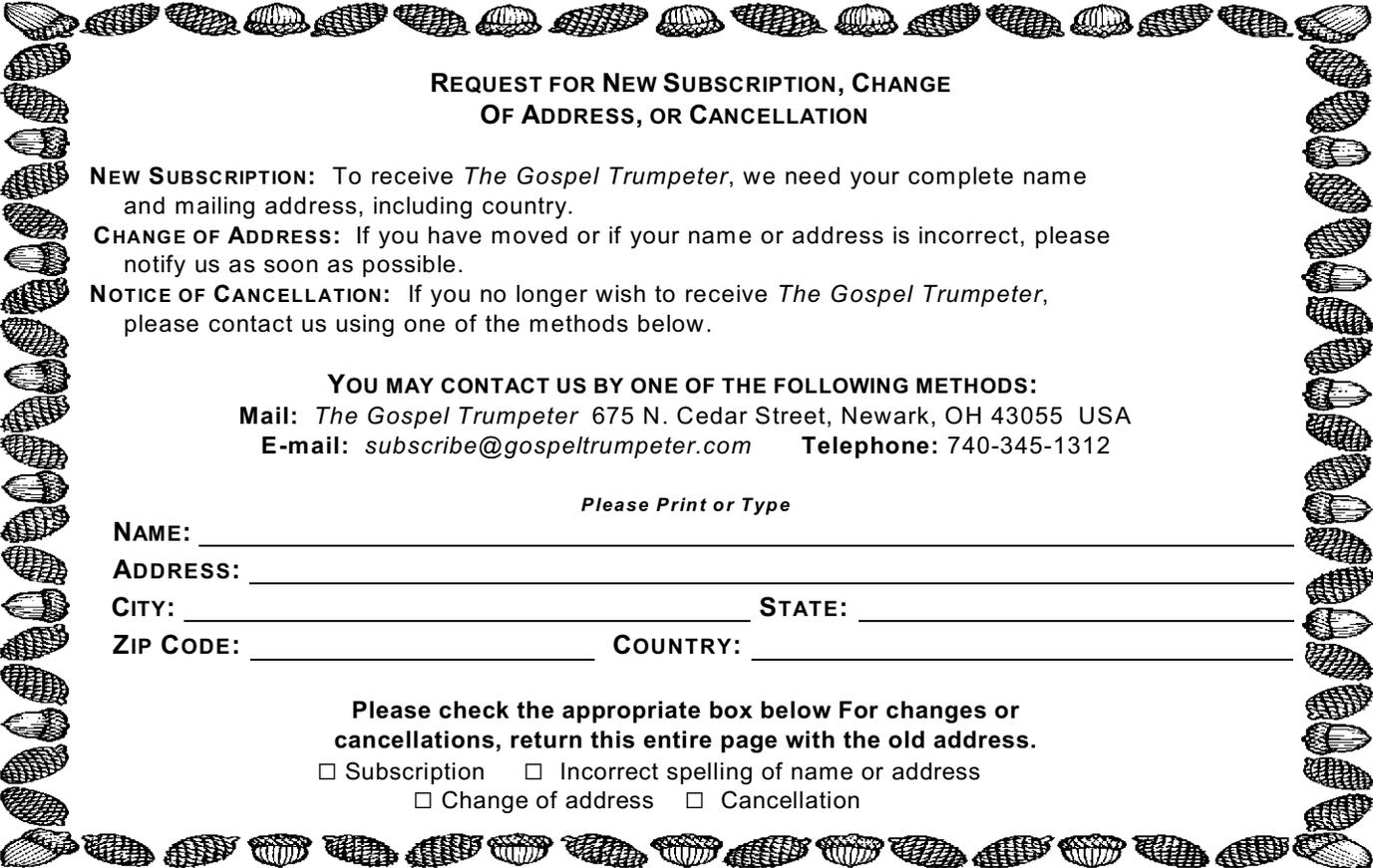


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