

The Gospel Trumpeter

JUSTIFICATION SANCTIFICATION

UNITY & TRUTH

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

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

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 41 April 2011 No. 4



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS

PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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

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Vol. 41 April 2011 No. 4

Annual Financial Report

In Matthew 24:14 Jesus declared, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." Since March of 1971, this has been the commission and the burden of *The Gospel Trumpeter*. Now in its fortieth year of continuous publication, this monthly holiness journal literally reaches around the world.

Over the course of the years, we have seen many people saved as a result of this publication. We have seen people flee sectism and embrace the precious Truth, we have seen saints gain inspiration that resulted in divine physical healing, and we have seen saints abroad take a stand for Truth and bring entire mission fields to a point of standing for this evening-time message. Only eternity will reveal the encouragement, enlightenment, and edification that multiplied thousands have received over the years. For these things we surely ascribe all the praise, the glory, and the honor to God.

Certainly, it is as the Psalmist recorded in Psalm 68:11, ". . . great was the company of those that published it [the Word]." The labor of publishing *The Gospel Trumpeter* is certainly absorbed by a great company, and it is absorbed by an almost entirely voluntary staff.

These dedicated saints give many hours of labor to present to you such a publication as you now have in your hands. It is the burden of each of these laborers to see that the Gospel is communicated in every manner possible.

As you will see below, with the costs of postage, paper, and supplies continually escalating, this requires a substantial financial commitment on the part of the local congregation at Newark. We are committed to this ministry, as the years have proven, but should you desire to help defray some of the costs of publishing this periodical, you may send your offerings to *The Gospel Trumpeter*, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, OH, 43055.

Our prayer is that this publication will continue to be a force for Truth worldwide and that we can continue to see "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened" (Ephesians 1:18) through these printed pages. All of us here at *The Gospel Trumpeter* earnestly covet your prayers, that in this world of religious uncertainty where there is a babel of spiritual voices crying out, *The Gospel Trumpeter* will continue to give that certain sound to help each reader to "prepare himself to the battle" (1 Corinthians 14:8).

Statement of Condition for 12 months ending January 31, 2011



	Income	Expenses
Supplies		\$ 30,848.00
Labor/Payroll Taxes		60,906.00
Donations/Offerings	\$11,039.00	
Equipment Purchased		15,171.00
Postage		59,035.00
Maintenance & Repairs		<u>6,694.00</u>
Subtotals	\$11,039.00	\$172,654.00
<i>Balance paid out of the general fund of the Church of God congregation at Newark, OH</i>		\$161,615.00

1 *Thessalonians 2:1* For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness:

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our

labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

Our Daily Living



Brother Roger L. Decker

Slandering Reports Against Paul

It is very obvious that when Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonika in these few verses, he had to come against slanderous reports. Opponents of the Thessalonians had brought some very serious slander against him. In

verse 2 he referred to imprisonment and the abuse he received while at Philippi. He said in verse 2, "But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention." The phrase *with much*

contention means "amidst much opposition and where great effort was necessary."

The Greek word used here is **agoni** (the same word as agony), which usually refers to the Grecian games, and it means "a course, or place of contest." The Apostle Paul meant in this Scripture that because

of the opposition he faced, there was need of effort on his part, like the desperate struggles of those who were contending for the mastery at the Grecian games. There is no doubt that the opponents of Paul used this opportunity to slander him.

This was a time when the Apostle Paul was speaking out of season. Second Timothy 4:2 says, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." The slander that Paul faced was cruel. They could have used slander to say he was a criminal and that he was running from the law. Paul said that he suffered and was shamefully entreated at Philippi.

Now let us go back and read what the Apostle Paul was referring to. Acts 16:14-24 reads: "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us [wherever God is doing a good work, you can rest assured that the devil will work in opposition].

"And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

"And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought

them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks."

Paul was shamefully entreated by being beaten and cast into prison. The shame of the treatment consisted in the fact that it was wholly undeserved. It was contrary to the Roman law, and it was accompanied with circumstances designed to make their punishment as humiliating as possible. The Thessalonians knew of this. In our Scripture text in verse 3, we read of three charges against Paul: "For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile." The talk was going around that Paul was a deceiver, that his motives were impure, and that he was hypocritical. Verse 4 of our Scripture text states, "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." This verse indicates that he was being charged with being a man pleaser.

Verses 5 and 9 of our Scripture text hint to the fact that there were those who said Paul was preaching the Gospel for what he could get out of it. Verse 5 reads, "For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness." Verse 9 says, "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God." He said in verse 6, "Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others,

when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ." No doubt, he was accused of seeking personal prestige.

The Power of Righteous Living

In 1 Thessalonians 1:5 we read that the Apostle said, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." In verse 7 of our Scripture text we read, "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children." It was hinted that he was charged with being harsh, as a dictator. With all this slander coming at the Apostle Paul (the charges of deceit, of impurity, of being harsh, of being hypocritical, of preaching for self-gain or self-prestige) what did he do? He lived right; that is what will put down a lot of slander. The power of God lies in daily righteous living.

Paul lived holily, justly, and unblameably before the church. Then the Apostle let the church know that since he had lived righteously before them, he was gentle, and he nourished them. Verse 11 says he comforted them "as a father doth his children."

They also had responsibility before God. Verse 12 reads, "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." The church was concerned about the Apostle Paul walking straight and not being a deceiver. He turned right around and let them know that they also needed to "walk worthy of God," which brings us to the thought of our daily living. You cannot do anything against living right. You can accuse, slander, and gossip; but you cannot stop one from living right by the grace of God. There is enough power in the Gospel to enable each and every one of us to live right.

Away with the thought, "I can't live it because of my husband" or "I can't live it because of my wife" or "I can't live it because of my girlfriend

or my job or my circumstances." The truth is, you are not living right because you do not *want* to live right. People need to do away with all their excuses. Many people in the past have gone through adverse circumstances that you and I will never have to endure, yet they still came out clean on the other side.

What are you going to do with Job? with the martyrs? with the Apostles? What are you going to do with Jesus? God is no respecter of persons. If you want to live right, you can live right. The power lies in the daily living. You may make great boasts and have a high profession of spirituality, but if your life does not back it up, then it is to no avail.

Paul denied the accusations against him, and he lived in such a way that it brought acceptance to the Gospel. He said in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth [the Gospel prevailed], the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

Walking With God

The convincing part of salvation is in our daily living. Dear one, you may sing beautifully or preach outstanding messages or testify and shout in the aisles, but if your daily living keeps coming up short of the glory of God, then it is not being witnessed by the Holy Spirit. It is merely bodily exercise, and it profits little.

You need to live in such a way that it pleases God, and that should be your greatest goal. Young person, when you start to seek a companion, you still have to keep God first in your life. You should not get so close to an individual that he or she takes all your time. That is not of God. He or she did not die for you, is not your Savior, and cannot deliver you. If you receive any help

from another individual, it has to come through God.

I want you to read about an individual in the Bible in the Old Testament who pleased God. Hebrews 11:5 reads, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." The Scripture says "he pleased God." What a testimony! It was not just that he sacrificed to God or that he was a good person. Genesis 5:22 tells us, "And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters." The Scripture says he walked with God for three hundred years. Today it is difficult to get some people to walk with God for three days.

We read of another Old Testament patriarch who walked with God. Genesis 6:9 tells us, "These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." These patriarchs lived in such a way that their lives honored God. It pleased God that someone on this earth would consider Him first, especially when the Bible says the earth was full of corruption at that time. It pleases God yet today when an individual gives Him first place in his or her life with corruption all around.

To walk with God is to honor God. When a person gets saved and walks with God, his affections have been changed and His affections are on things above. The Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 3:1-3: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

What was the Apostle Paul saying? When you are risen with Christ, your seeking is different than it was before. If you have died to sin and have been resurrected a

new creature, then you will be different. What is the difference? The heart of the Christian must be set on higher things than this world. His priorities change from the love of the world to the love of God. The things of the earth no longer control the Christian's life, but he weighs what he does against the backdrop of eternity.

Now, as Christians, we do not withdraw ourselves from all works and activities of this life, but the things of this life seem so trivial when put alongside eternity. In the light of eternity, earthly things lose their value and seem so cheap and vain.

Moses' Wise Choice

Let us consider Moses for a little while. Hebrews 11:23-25, speaking of Moses, says: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

Moses refused the finer things of the world and chose to suffer affliction with the people of God. When he came to years (he was forty years old), God laid His hand upon him. Today some people feel they are "over the hill" at forty, but Moses was just getting started.

We read in Acts 7:22-25: "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood

not."

Verse 30 reads, "And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush." Moses received a divine call at forty years of age. He chose to suffer the afflictions of the people of God rather than to enjoy the best that Egypt had to offer, and God rewarded him.

When an individual comes to years and understands salvation, if he is wise, he chooses to be born again. When one is saved, a great change takes place.

Christian Values

Let us read about the one who wrote most of the Books in the New Testament. There are fourteen books ascribed to Paul's writings. Acts 9:1-3 states: "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven."

These verses speak of the Apostle Paul before his conversion and tell of how God visited him. He was one who was born out of season. What does that tell you? The church was not praying for him; they were praying against him. God visited Saul (who was later called Paul) on the Damascus Road rather than to try to get him to come around Him.

A great change took place in the life of Paul. He turned from being a fighter against the Truth to being a fighter for the Truth. First Corinthians 3:10 says he was "a wise masterbuilder." After his conversion, He organized many congregations and debated many times in the synagogues. Paul had been a

Pharisee and had sat at the feet of Gamaliel, the greatest teacher of the Law that there was. God used Paul mightily. He knew several different languages. God used him at Corinth to lay the foundation as a wise master builder.

When one is saved, those things that he thought were so important and could not do without lose their sparkle. The ambitions that dominated Paul's life when he was of the world seemed so empty and void.

The Christian is still in the world, but he uses the things of the world in a much different way than he did before. He puts giving above receiving, serving above ruling, and forgiveness above revenge. The Christian's values are those of the Lord, not of men. The Christian puts love above hate and the Holy Spirit above the flesh.

Do you have a wrong attitude against anyone? If you do, you are in trouble with God. If you have unforgiveness in your heart, unless you repent, it means that when you get down to pray, you are wasting your time, because God will not hear your prayer. He will not hear your prayer until you get the unforgiveness cleared up.

When I got saved, I had many wrong attitudes. I had a lot of meanness, but I can truthfully say from the depths of my heart that when I got saved, that was all cleaned up and a new life came in, which caused me to love the souls of people.

Has a change really taken place in your life? You may profess Christianity or hold a position in the church, but if you have an attitude against someone, you are not going to make it to Heaven in that condition. Why continue to let the condition get deep-seated to the degree the Holy Ghost cannot even move you anymore?

Mortifying Your Members

The Apostle Paul had some things that were very strong in his life. He wanted to wipe out every

Christian. It is amazing how he reaped what he sowed. Soon after he got saved, he was preaching the Gospel, and the Jews were out to kill him. Paul was reaping the trouble that he had sown. Before his conversion, he wanted to bind the Christians and take them back to Jerusalem to put them in prison. After his conversion, the Apostle Paul wrote most of his letters to the church from prison.

The Christian puts love before hate and wants to please God above the flesh. The Christian puts modest apparel above worldliness. True Christians do not want to be worldly. The Christian young lady does not want to use her body to attract the opposite sex. She does not desire to be a show off. Also, the Christian is concerned about the welfare of others.

Colossians 3:5-10 reads: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

The Apostle Paul said to mortify your members. The word *mortify* means "to put to death; do not let them be active." The Greek word used here means "to deprive a thing of its power, to destroy its strength." In other words, you should not use any member of your body to sin against God. Gratifying sensual appetite is giving it the very food and nourishment by which it lives and thrives and is active. The physical body may suffer by excessive sensual indulgences, and the appetite increases with the indulgence.

The more you partake of something sinful, the more it takes to gratify that appetite.

Romans 6:12 says, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Here sin is represented as a king, a ruler, or a tyrant, as one who has the desires of the mind and the members of the body under his control, so that by influencing the passions, sin governs the body. Dear one, do not let sin reign in your soul, because sin will increase, and soon sin will take over the whole man.

Traits of the Old Man

Ephesians 4:27 states, "Neither give place to the devil." You should not give the devil room to work. If you refuse to give place to the devil, the devil cannot have it. How is sin known? Sin is known by evil influences in the mind and evil acts in the life. Wherever sin is felt, sin has dominion, because sin is sin only as it works in action or passion against God. Sin cannot be dormant. If sin is not working, then it does not exist. If sin is in your life, sin is working; it is not lying dormant.

Paul said not to let sin reign. You must not let it control you and be your master. Romans 6:11 says, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." A man cannot live physically just because he is in the air. He has to have the air *in* him. A man cannot live spiritually merely because he is around spiritual people. He must have spirituality within him.

We want to look at some things that the Apostle Paul said accompany the daily living of a person living in sin. He mentioned fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth, and lying to one another.

First of all, there were some

things that used to be part of the sinner's life, but he put them away at conversion. The Gospel demands a complete elimination of everything against God. The Apostle Paul mentioned fornication, illicit sex, sexual appetite, uncleanness, moral uncleanness, inordinate affection (such as lust), evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is greediness with the desire for what a man has no right to have.

Colossians 3:7 says, "In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them." There was a time when we were considered to be children of disobedience. Verse 6 lets us know that we were under the wrath of God. When you are involved in these things that I mentioned, you are not under the blessings of God; you are under the wrath of God. You cannot walk with God and have these things present in your life.

The Apostle Paul went on to some other fleshly things that needed to be put off in daily living. He mentioned anger in verse 8, which is bursts of temper. Some people get along very well as long as they keep hearing the word yes, but when the word is changed to no, they start to carry on and show their temper. The slightest little thing sets them off. In verse 8 Paul mentioned wrath, which is long-lasting anger.

Next, Paul spoke of malice, or viciousness of mind, and blasphemy. Then Paul mentioned filthy communication out of your mouth, or talk which should not be. Some people do that freely. You need to be careful of that. If someone tells an off-color joke, do you laugh? Remember, God heard it, and He saw you too. The message is to try to help you to walk worthy. God is displeased with off-color jokes and off-color remarks.

In Colossians 3:9 Paul said, "Lie not one to another." The devil will tell you, "If you tell the truth, you will get in trouble. It is better to get in trouble here than to be in trouble with God at the Judgment. It does not matter whether you tell "little

lies," "white lies," or "big lies"; all lies are bad. The liar will not have his place in the Book of Life. All liars are on the outside. All these things are traits of the old man, or the man before salvation. These things are not to be included in the Christian's daily living.

Guard Your Soul

After Paul said to put off all these things, he spoke of some things to put on. In verse 12 he said to put on bowels of mercies (or pity), kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, and long-suffering, which is patience. In verse 13 he said to forbear one another and to forgive one another. The Christian must forbear and forgive. He does so because God forgave him. Only the forgiving can be forgiven. The Christian is forgiving.

In Matthew, Chapter 18, you can read about Peter. In verse 21 we see that he thought he was doing great if he forgave seven times. In verse 22 what did Jesus say? "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." In other words, there is no limit to forgiveness. You may say, "If you forgive that person, he will turn around and do it again." You need to leave him with God. God knows how to handle him.

Paul instructed in Colossians 3:14, "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." Charity is the cement that holds the body of Christ together. When charity gets low, or when the love of God begins to dwindle in some members of the body, then division begins to work. The same thing can work in a home, and then a couple will begin to consider divorce. Without love the body of Christ would soon drift apart. I repeat, love is the cement that holds the body together; it makes the body unbreakable and brings unshakable fellowship.

Paul said in verse 15, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts," which literally means to let

the peace of God be the umpire of all things in your heart. If the peace of Jesus Christ is the umpire in your heart, then when feelings clash and you are pulled in two different directions at the same time, the decision of Christ will keep you in the way of love.

There are going to be times when saints are going to disagree with one another. We all are not going to agree when it comes to things of this world or decisions in this world, but we do not have to fuss or hold out for our own way. The love of God will hold the saints together. The way to do things right

is to have Jesus Christ as the arbitrator of conflicting emotions in our hearts.

Jude, verse 24, says, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." The Apostle Paul said in Colossians 3:17, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." This is the test in our daily living for Christ. We must bring every word and every deed into the presence of Jesus Christ in order for our lives to please God.

How is your daily living before God? Do you have the same testimony that Enoch had before God took him, that you please God? God wants to help you. He is not against you; God is for you. I brought the message to help you to guard your soul against the wiles of the devil. The devil is ever lurking and ever tempting and alluring, trying to draw away the souls of mankind. God knows the truth about your daily living. Is it what you profess? It is what you possess that makes the difference.

(Compact Disc TR-653M)

Tomorrow Will Not Do

The story is told of a man who dreamed one night that he was carried to a conference of evil spirits. They were discussing the best means of destroying men. One rose and said, "I will go to earth and tell them that Christ was only a man." Still another said, "Let me go; I will tell them there is no God, no Savior, no Heaven, no hell."

"No, that will not do," they said. "We could never make men believe that."

Finally, one old devil, wise as a serpent but not harmless as a dove, rose and said, "Let me go; I will journey to the world of men and tell them that there is a God, there is a Savior, there is a Heaven and a hell too. But I will tell them there is no hurry, that tomorrow will do, that tomorrow will be even as today." And he was the devil they sent!

The story is fiction; but its message is a fact. That devil is among us today, *now*; but the wise are not deceived by his lies. "What will you do with Jesus, who is called Christ?" Face to face with that question, the man who thinks that tomorrow will do even as today is of all men the most deceived.

2 Corinthians 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that

we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by

sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 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.

Winning the Approval of God



Brother E. David Stegmeier

Take Heed to Your Ways

I have often thought of what I would say to my family or to my congregation if I knew that it was my last time to be with them. In my mind I have thought of what I would like to say to them. In the Bible we have the record of many great men who have left this world with some very profound final words. I want you to read some of them.

The first one is King David, recorded in 1 Kings 2:1-3: "Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: [Isn't the Word of God powerful? He said, 'I go the way of all the earth.' Each of us is going that way sooner or later.] be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man; And keep the charge of the

LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself."

True prosperity is contingent upon your obedience to God. A father who is not serving the Lord is not really prospering, even though he might have many material possessions. Jesus said in Luke 12:15 that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." A father is failing his children, his wife, and society by not living a godly life and leading by godly example. No matter how prosperous you are in the world or what people think of you, if you fail to serve God, you are not truly prospering.

As David spoke to Solomon, he continued in 1 Kings 2:4 with these words: "That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way. . . ." Ministers must take heed to their ways. I will let you in on an innermost secret. When I stand in the pulpit, everything I have said and done the previous week goes through my mind. I cannot have the authority to preach to others unless I have lived an impeccable life all week. I should not preach to others if I have not lived a perfect life. The things that I have said to my wife and the things I have done in the community come to my mind. We must be careful of how we live. God's Word lets you know that you must take heed to your ways.

Ministers are extremely responsible people, yet we are human. If I

say something to my wife a little too firmly or if I see that I have hurt her, that hurts me; then I have to say, "I'm sorry; I shouldn't have said that." My prayers would be ineffective if I did not treat my wife right.

Again, David said in verse 4, "That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart [everything you do for God must be done with all your heart] and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel."

Be a Godly Example

I thought of a New Testament setting next. In Acts, Chapter 20, the Apostle Peter had met with the elders of the Church of God in Ephesus. His closing words hurt them and brought sorrow to their hearts. In verses 35-38 Paul said: "I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship."

I would like to say a few words to the Christian. You must continue what you are doing. You ought to continue to be a godly example to those around you and continue to walk the strait and narrow path that you are on. The devil would like to thwart your progress.

Through the years I have worked in the field of education. I have worked with lots of principals and others in education, people in church work, and people in the government. I live in a very small city. Some people came to my door and asked, "Would you take the

position of mayor?" I said, "I have a congregation that is growing, and I have a family, and they come first." They said, "Please." So I ran for mayor and became the mayor of our little city. That was not a big deal to me. However, I will tell you, dear one, the eyes of the community are on us.

I have been pastoring in Oregon for more than forty years, and I hope that I can continue to pastor there until the Lord comes. I love my people. First Corinthians 15:58 says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." I like the positiveness of the Word of God.

At the end of time, when the last trumpet sounds, everyone who is in the grave and everyone who is still alive will meet the Lord in the air, where we all will be given new bodies. That is what the Bible says. Everyone will have an everlasting existence.

I do not agree with the teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. We will have an eternal existence, as stated in Daniel 12:2, ". . . some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Our soul is living in a tent that some day will be taken down. That is about how temporary these houses of clay really are. One of these days, we are going to move out of them at the second resurrection.

Walk by Faith

In verse 2 of our Scripture text, Paul said at times we become very weary in our physical bodies. Sometimes we suffer pain and groan in this body, especially as we get older. We look forward to our eternal bodies, to put on that new set of clothes, so to speak. In verse 3 Paul lets us know that our spirits will be clothed with an immortal, everlasting, undying body.

Verse 4 says that we groan and sigh at various times; however, someday we will have immortal bodies that will be swallowed up with everlasting life. In verse 5 we see that God has prepared this for us and as a verity, or a pledge, He has given us the Holy Spirit. What a privilege!

Verse 6 lets us know that we will have this promise of everlasting life and a new body; therefore, we live a life of confidence, knowing that every moment we spend in this mortal body is one more moment absent from the Lord. We live a life of eager expectancy, anxious to be with the Lord. I really enjoy living, but I am anxious to meet the Lord someday.

Verse 7 of our Scripture text says, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." We do not see these things yet, but we know they are coming to pass. Verse 8 lets us know that when the time comes, we will not be afraid to die.

My main thought is found in verse 9 of the Scripture text, which states, "Wherefore we labor [we work, we toil, we put forth great effort], that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." We are working hard every day to be accepted of God. Verse 10 is the clincher. We all are going to stand before the Judgment seat of God, where everything will be open. What a sobering thought!

We need the approval of God, where He is the all-important ambition in life. I personally cannot conceive of a higher way of living. The highest way of living is to live to please God in everything we do with an eye upon the approval of God. We are to live with the thought in mind that someday we each will stand before God.

In Romans 14:11-12 Paul said: "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." I am not worried so much about what others are doing because I have to

give an account of myself. I cannot bring my wife, my children, my congregation, or my community with me. I will have to stand alone.

Amos said in Amos 4:12, "Prepare to meet thy God." Each of us should be actively employed every day with this thought in mind. Paul said in Hebrews 9:27, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." I believe the Apostle Paul did not leave this life with earthly success or fame or ambition. Paul knew that he was a very responsible person, and all his efforts were put into pleasing God. The more we know, the more responsible we are.

Walk in Obedience to the Word of God

There is a Heaven and a hell, and we will be either rewarded or condemned according to our degree of light and our obedience to it. Jesus affirms this in Luke 12:47-48 when He said: "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." What is your greatest ambition in life?

My wife and I have a very beautiful relationship, but we have to work at it. Sometimes we have to sit down and talk about it. Have you ever done that, husband and wife? We want strong congregations, but they cannot be stronger than our individual homes. Sometimes we need to talk about some things we have said to each other. Sometimes we talk about some things we need to do differently in the congregation, in the home, or in the community. We have family conferences. Sometimes it is just the two of us, and other times it is with the whole family.

First Peter 3:7 says, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them [the antecedent of *them* is the wife] according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, [Do you still open the door for your wife? Have you told your wife how beautiful she looks? Did you hang up your coat in the proper place?] as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." We need strong homes. A father is the most responsible one living in the home. I like to have a good relationship with my wife so that when I get in the pulpit, I can preach to her as well as to my family, to the congregation, and to the community.

People have many goals and objectives in life. One of them is accumulating wealth. Often graduating high school seniors are asked, "What do you want to achieve in life?" Usually number one on the list of priorities is money. Some want pleasure, some desire popularity, and others want more education. God had better come first.

In the Book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon examined the many inventions of mankind. The word *Ecclesiastes* means "the teacher or the preacher." Twenty-five times in the Book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon stressed that everything under the sun is vain; all is vanity. Some day we are going to leave it all behind. What really matters, friend, is your relationship with Almighty God. Are you pleasing Him? Solomon wrote these very sobering words in Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: "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."

I fear God more than anyone in this world. If you fear God and put Him first, you will be a successful person. It is extremely important that you have the approval of God upon your life while you are living.

Furthermore, it is absolutely imperative to have His approval when you die.

What you are presently and what you will be in the future is determined by your relationship with God. Not long ago a poll was taken in America to see who the American people thought was the greatest President of the United States. The majority said Abraham Lincoln, and I agree. Why? He feared God.

If you are concerned about your standing with God, all your decisions will be made in light of this question: "How will it affect my relationship with God and my eternal destiny?" You should never make any decisions without first consulting God and considering how those decisions will affect your relationship with Him. You should weigh your thoughts. The Battle of Armageddon is going on in the mind. I weigh every thought that strikes my mind.

Martin Luther once said, "We cannot help it if the birds fly over our heads, but we can certainly keep them from building a nest in our hair." Likewise, we weigh our thoughts, and the Bible says that God is able to help us to bring every thought into obedience to His will. Also, you must weigh your attitudes and your choices according to the principles in the Bible.

Having a Personal Relationship With God

Too many people rely on things that are unreliable, undependable, or untrustworthy. Some people rest on the experiences or the relationships that their parents had with God. Others rest on the fact that they grew up in a minister's home. You might have had godly parents and grandparents, but you still need to have a personal relationship with God. There are those who rest on their church affiliation, making sure that they have a church membership letter. There are those who rest on the approval of others. How-

ever, the most important question is, What does God think of you? Some say, "Well, my husband thinks I am okay" or "My wife thinks I am all right; she thinks I am clear with God." Many people may put their approval on you, but what does God think?

King Saul was more concerned about his rating with the people than his standing with God. That is the case with most worldly ministers today. They work to win a popularity contest.

You may question: "Do you want your school children to like you? Do you want your administrators to like you? Do you want your community to like you?" Yes, but sometimes the decisions that I make do not go along with what they want me to do. Sometimes we have problems, and I have some enemies. Some people watch me very closely to try to catch me in my words.

King Saul was concerned about gaining the favor of the people. In his confession and humiliation, because he had failed God, he said to the Prophet Samuel, "I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice" (1 Samuel 15:24). I love my people very much, but if I feel the need to tell them something, I tell them without fear or favor of men because I am responsible before God. Saul continued in verse 30, "I have sinned: yet honour me now [or treat me with honor], I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel." Saul was very concerned about his standing with the people.

I remember reading the story of Jenny Lind, an opera singer from the country of Sweden. She was very popular, and she was very rich, but right in the midst of her career she quit singing. She purchased a little cottage beside the sea and retired there. Someone asked her why she quit singing. They wanted to know why she left the stage. She said, "It was because of this," and she pointed to the Bible.

She added, "Every day I was thinking more of my career, more of the applause of men, more of the money I was earning, and less and less of this Book, so I thought it was time to quit." There she sat reading her Bible. We all ought to be thinking more and more of this Book and wanting more and more knowledge of Jesus. There are those who fear the people more than they fear God.

Measuring to God's Word

In John, Chapter 12, Jesus, who had been speaking to a group of people, said in verses 42-43: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

We talk about peer pressure among our youth. We tell our children, "Don't be swayed by the crowds or by your peers." We scold the young people and say sometimes, "Oh, shame on you for going along with the crowd and submitting to peer pressure." Yet I see that same thing happening in the ministry, and it is accepted. You had better be careful about being hard on the young people and the children if you are guilty of some of those very same things. When I am preaching, I weigh everything first. I look at myself as I am preaching to see if I am measured up. You must be very careful not to submit to peer pressure. You must stand alone, if need be, and be that one man with God.

Luke wrote in Acts 5:29, in his recording of Peter and the Apostles, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Today many people fail to obey God because they have a greater concern for the approval of friends and their peers than the approval of God. They care more about what people think of them.

Paul wrote some very profound words in 2 Corinthians 10:17-18: "But he that glorieth, let him glory

in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved [You can commend yourself, pat yourself on the back, praise yourself, or laud yourself, but not with God's approval], but whom the Lord commendeth." Your greatest concern ought to be the commendation of the Lord.

Let me bring some thoughts to your mind for you to think about. When people are at odds with God and fail to win His approval, they are at odds with the people of God. When people fail to receive the commendation of God, they become an enemy of the children of God.

God attempted to bring this truth to Cain after he killed Abel. The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. Some people say after they sing a special, "Our song did not go over very well." Let us sing to win the approval of God. Sometimes we might sing a very soul-searching song and people will be very quiet. I have been in music all my life, and I hear all these things and weigh them. In our singing, or in whatever we do, let us do it to bring glory to God and to win His approval. We bring an offering to God in a testimony, a song, or a prayer.

Genesis 4:4-7 states: "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. [If you have God's approval, that will not happen in your life.] And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well [that is the key], shalt thou not be accepted? [Acceptance of God is contingent upon obedience to Him.] and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Instead of Cain correcting his own misbehavior, he turned his attention upon his brother Abel. People who do not receive the

approval of God turn their attention on their brother or sister who is. We are responsible for our brothers and sisters. God said to Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" Likewise, you are responsible for your brethren. Cain became envious of God's approval on Abel's life, and he slew him. We may not see that today, physically speaking, but we see it in some attacking the character of others. Hatred and bitterness overtook Cain, and he conceived a plan to murder his brother.

Contentment

I would like to bring some points here. First of all, having the approval of God upon your life will bring peace: peace of mind, peace with God, and peace with your fellowman. You will be a person of peace. Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 26:3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace. . . ." Wherever you are, you will have peace with God, peace with yourself, and peace with your fellowman — perfect peace. In Psalm 29:11 we read, "The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace." Do you have peace?

Next, having the approval of God will bring contentment into your station in life, wherever you are, physically speaking, temporally speaking, financially speaking, and spiritually speaking. You will be contented, happy, and satisfied with who you are. Sister, you should be satisfied in submitting to your husband, in keeping the home, and in being a good housekeeper. People sometimes really get uptight because I preach that the first place for a woman is in the home. I tell women, if you have a problem with keeping house and being a homemaker, you should not expect your husband to get out of bed and go to work happily every day. Again, if you have peace, you are happy in your station or position in life. Spiritually speaking, Paul said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content"

(Philippians 4:11).

Next, God's approval on your life will bring a deep assurance of everlasting life and eternal bliss. You will have a deep assurance in knowing that this is not the end. You are going to have an eternal home with an eternal body. A song that an older brother sang when we first started pastoring in Oregon is "Satisfied with Jesus." He has gone on to be with the Lord. The song reads:

*I am satisfied with Jesus,
He has done so much for me:
He has suffered to redeem me,
He has died to set me free.*

*He is with me in my trials,
Best of friends of all is He;
I can always count on Jesus,
Can He always count on me?*

*I can hear the voice of Jesus,
Calling out so pleadingly,
"Go and win the lost and straying";
Is He satisfied with me?*

*When my work on earth has ended,
And I cross the mystic sea,
Oh, that I could hear Him saying,
"I am satisfied with thee."*

*I am satisfied, I am satisfied,
I am satisfied with Jesus,
But the question comes to me,
As I think of Calvary,
Is my Master satisfied with me?*

Having Strong Confidence in God

If you are living to please God, you will have a very strong confidence in God. You will not be egotistical or arrogant, but you will be confident. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:1, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

First Timothy 4:6-8 reads: "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith

and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. [This is a day when everyone is exercising their physical bodies. They are so concerned about the physical body, but we need to exercise ourselves unto godliness. Things we have learned, we need to put them into practice.] For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

In studying the seven letters to the seven churches of Asia, we see within those churches a number of things that displeased God. One had left its first love, which is Christ, God, and everything that pertains to the Kingdom of God. Are they first in your life? It makes no difference what your position is in the congregation. No matter what you are doing, are you doing it because you love God?

One congregation had the fault of compromising. They had let down on that which they once stood for. Some congregations are tolerating wrongdoing. One congregation was guilty of lukewarmness. Your aim and my aim in life should be to please God above everyone else.

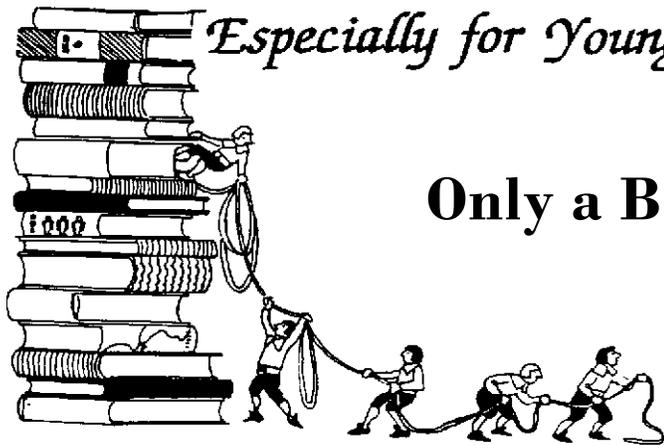
Church of God songs have beautiful, profound messages that only the Church of God can sing. The last verse of the song *In the Light of God* says this:

*All glory to my Savior's name!
To do thy will my highest aim;
Thy favor's more than earthly fame.
Thy smile is my constant light.*

Is that song your testimony? Are you laboring to win the approval of God? Is your goal in life to please God in everything that you do? I want to remind you that we are to please God. We are to win His approval wherever we are and wherever we go. The earnest prayer of my heart is that God will bless you in an abundant way.

(Cassette C-4568M)

Especially for Young People



Only a Boy



More than half a century ago, a faithful minister coming early to the church, met one of his deacons, whose face wore a very resolute expression.

"I came early to meet you," he said. "I have something on my conscience to say to you. Pastor, there must be something radically wrong in your preaching and work. There has been only one person added to the church in a whole year, and he is only a boy."

The old minister listened. His eyes moistened, and his thin hand trembled on his broad-headed cane.

"I feel it all," he said. "I feel it, but God knows that I have done my duty and preached the Word of God, and I can trust Him for the results."

"Yes, yes," said the deacon, "but 'by their fruits ye shall know them,' and one new member, and he, too, only a boy, seems to me rather a slight evidence of true faith and zeal. I don't want to be hard, but I have this matter on my conscience, and I have done but my duty to speak plainly."

"True," said the old minister, "but 'charity suffereth long and is kind; beareth all things, hopeth all things.' Ay, there you have it; 'hopeth all things!' I have great hopes of that one boy, Robert. Some seed that we sow bears fruit late, but that fruit is generally the most precious of all."

The old minister went to the pulpit that day with a grieved and heavy heart. He closed his discourse with dim and tearful eyes. He wished that his work was done forever, and

that he was at rest among the graves under the blossoming trees in the old churchyard.

He lingered in the dear old church after the rest were gone. The place was sacred and inexpressibly dear to him. It had been his spiritual home from his youth. Before this altar he had prayed for the families of the dead forms of a bygone generation and had welcomed the children of a new generation, and here, yes, here, he had been told at last that his work was no longer owned and blessed!

No one remained—no one?—"Only a boy."

The boy was Robert Moffat. He watched the trembling old man. His soul was filled with loving sympathy. He went to him and laid his hand on his shoulder.

"Well, Robert," said the minister.

"Do you think if I were willing to work hard that I could ever become a preacher?"

"A preacher?"

"Perhaps a missionary."

There was a long pause. Tears filled the eyes of the old minister. At length he said: "This heals the ache in my heart, Robert. I see God's divine hand now. May God bless you, my boy. Yes, I believe God will call you to become a preacher."

Some few years ago, there returned to London from Africa an aged missionary. When he went into an assembly, the people rose. When he spoke in public, there was a deep silence.

He had added a province to the

church on earth, had brought under the Gospel influence the most savage of African chiefs, and had given the translated Bible to strange tribes.

It is hard to trust when little evidence of fruit appears, but the harvests of righteousness are sure. The old minister sleeps under the trees in the humble place of his labors, but men remember his work because of what he was to one boy and what that one boy was to the work of God.

*"Do thou thy work; it shall succeed
In thine or in another's day;
And if denied the victor's meed,
Thou shalt not miss the toiler's pay."*

Selected

*If you were busy being good,
And doing just the best you could,
You'd not have time to blame some
man
Who's doing just the best he can.*

*If you were busy being true
To what you know you ought to do,
You'd be so busy you'd forget
The blunders of the folks you've met.*

*If you were busy being right,
You'd find yourself too busy quite,
To criticize your neighbor,
And gossip you'd not savor.*

Selected

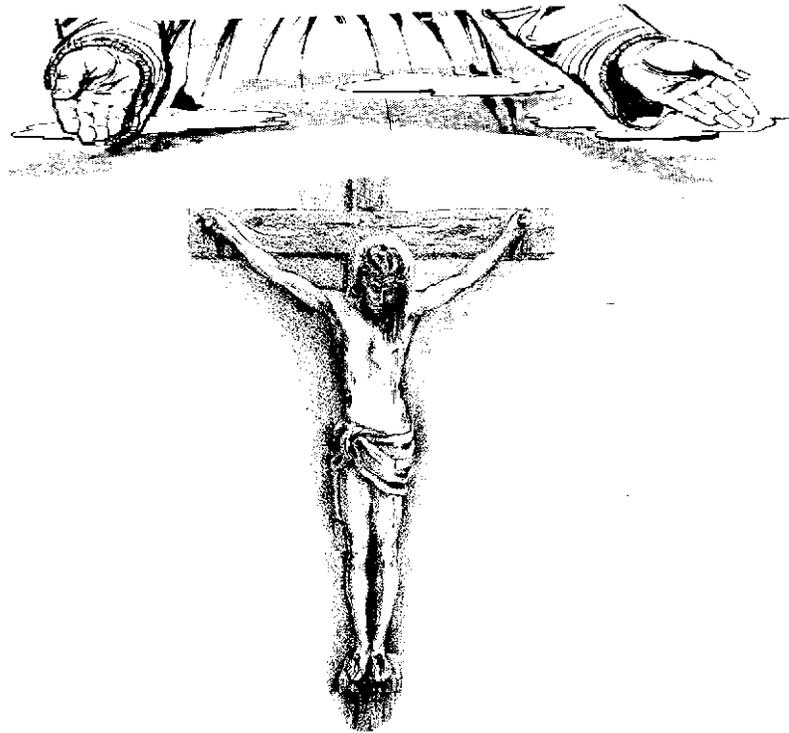
Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship,

created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

A Costly Gift



Brother Calvin Foster

A Treasure in Earthen Vessels

We have many blessings that the Lord has given us, but the greatest blessing of all is salvation. We have received many gifts in our lives, but most of them were not costly. When I lived in Chicago, there was a marketplace in the downtown area. Lots of street vendors would go there to sell their goods, and you could bargain with them. Sometimes they would walk up to people and try to sell counterfeit merchandise.

Things of great value are very expensive, and valuable things are almost never free. The most valuable gift that we can obtain is salvation, and it is free. Salvation has unlimited value, and its value is immeasurable for time and eternity. I thank God for salvation.

You cannot earn salvation; it is the gift of God. When you have salvation, you have a valuable possession. All you have to do to obtain this valuable possession is believe and receive the gift of God's salvation. It is wonderful to be saved!

Romans 6:22-23 reads: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Although salvation is free, the cost of salvation was great. Christ paid for us to have this salvation. He suffered and died on the Cross so that we could have this great salvation. We can enjoy our lives as God ordained. As Christians, we

must live a spiritual life.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:5-7: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

We have this treasure in earthen vessels. Our salvation is a costly gift, and it is worth more to us than anything we could possess in this world. Therefore, we must be concerned about keeping it. We must stay with God because this treasure is such a costly gift. We are living in a time when people are falling away. Much confusion is in the

land, and Satan's goal is to take away our salvation. He wants God out of our hearts, and He wants to take peace from the earth, as mentioned in the Book of Revelation.

A Light in Darkness

Romans 2:19-20 states: "And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law."

As saints of God, we are a light to those who are in darkness. The children sing a song that says, "*This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.*" We are to be a light to others. Christian friend, someone is watching your life. You are a light to those who are walking in darkness. You are a guide to the foolish and a teacher of babes. As a saint of God, you have something to treasure. As I preach the Gospel, I cannot even express how wonderful and how precious it is to be saved! God reached down into the miry clay and brought me out and set me on the Solid Rock.

As Paul said, we must not be ignorant of Satan's devices, lest Satan should take advantage of us. The devil does not care how long you have been saved. He is out to take peace from your life and from your home and cause you to turn your back on God. Satan is working in every way he can to cause you to lose your soul. He will use temptations of every kind against you. No matter how old you are, if you are saved, you are going to be tempted. The Bible tells us that Christ was tempted in all points. The Bible depicts Satan as a roaring lion; therefore, Peter stated in 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

The times that we come together to worship God and have fellowship are precious to us. We should treasure them and thank

God for them. We can get together to pray and have fellowship with one another. The devil is as a roaring lion, and he is on the prowl, seeking whom he may devour. He is clever and cruel, and he wants to take peace from the earth. He devours his victims. We should never take Satan lightly.

We need to be thankful for the precious gift of salvation that we have. If you were to lose something of great value, such as your wallet, your first thought would probably be, "Oh, no! I lost my wallet!" No doubt, you would feel a little frantic. Let us not take salvation lightly, because it is more precious than anything that we have in this life.

Having Victory Over Satan's Power

The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:24-26: "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

Many people have been taken captive by the snares of the devil. The more you give in to temptation, the more you will become ensnared, and the harder it will be to get away from it. You need to guard your soul. You may be alone when Satan brings temptation upon you. You need to hold on to God and realize that you have something precious, and you do not want to lose it. Satan is real. He has intellect and will, and he has taken men captive by his will. Jesus said in John 10:10, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." God wants us to enjoy the abundance of life. Deuteronomy 8:3 says, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that

proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." The greatest enjoyment in life is to live for God. Paul said in Ephesians, Chapter 1, that we, as saints, do not have to worry about Satan's power. We can keep Satan under our feet as long as we stay with God. We have victory over Satan's power.

In Ephesians 1:19-23 we read: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:11, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." We need to put on the whole armor of God and be watchful. We need one another. Ephesians 6:14-18 states: "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication for all saints."

Someone is praying for you. You might be going through a difficult situation, a severe trial, or a hard test, but someone is praying for you. Remember, God answers prayer. Saint, you must be careful, because Satan is leading souls astray. Many people who used to attend worship services and were saved have lost out with God. Where are they now?

Living in Perilous Times

Second Peter 2:21-22 reads: "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

Perhaps you have seen a dog get sick and vomit and walk away, and then go back and lick it up. The Scripture likens that to one whom God has delivered from sin and then returns to sin. I want you to think about that. You may go to church and have a good time and rejoice, but what about the evil that is lurking in the darkness in your life? Revelation 16:13 says, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." Those spirits went out into all the world to deceive people. The devil is throwing all kinds of evil spirits at people today. He is throwing them at the church as well. If you are a Christian, you are in a war, and you must have on the whole armor of God. We are living in perilous times.

I am concerned about some people who once stood and testified and sang and ministers who once stood behind the sacred desk and preached. Now they are in a backslidden condition. We each need to take this seriously! Salvation is precious! Words cannot express how precious it is! We each are supposed to be a light to those who are in darkness. The Bible says in Proverbs 14:14, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself." A backslider is filled with his own ways. You can sit in the church services and be backslidden in your heart. A backslider will say: "I'm not going to listen to those preachers. I'm going

to live the way I want to live. I'm going to do things my way. I'm not going to obey that part of the Word of God."

You can sit in a church pew and backslide and be filled with your own ways. You will not backslide if you maintain a fervent love for God. As long as you live for God, He will not fail you. I do not want to go back and live in sin. I have that all settled in my heart. I do not play around with the things of God. The church services are not a place to show off that you can sing. This is serious! Your soul is at stake. Satan is always thinking about those whom he may devour. This is the reason that you must have your armor on.

Jesus said in Matthew 24:11-12: "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." You must not let your love for God wax cold. You need to keep your love hot. Sunday school, revivals, and camp meetings will help to keep your love for God hot. When you stand where the fire of God is and the saints are, it will keep the fire of God hot in your soul.

I cannot express how precious it is in my own individual life for me to attend the camp meetings. They revive my soul, enlighten my heart, and challenge my spirit. They make me want to do more for God, to live better, and to love my family and my congregation more. They make me want to reach out to my fellow man in a greater way. I want to live for God, but some people's love is waxing cold.

Guard Your Soul

Hebrews 10:24-25 states: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." When you forsake assembling yourself with the

saints at the house of God, your love has started to get cold. Then you will feel that you do not need to go to church as much as you should. When your love begins to get cold for God, your love for your fellow man starts to get cold.

Next, you will start to find fault with the saints. What is happening? Your love for God is waxing cold. You must guard yourself against this. We are going to face wickedness, but we still have to let our light shine. In John 8:31 Jesus told His disciples, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed."

James 1:12-14 states: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

Your natural desires can lead you to temptation, and that temptation can lead you into sin. Everyone is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust. The devil makes the forbidden things of sin look enticing. You have to bring the body under and bring it into subjection to the will of God. You must learn to avoid temptation. If you sleep and fail to listen to the warnings, it will be just a matter of time, and Satan will start to work. He will say, "Give me time, and I will get him [or her]." Satan looks at the minister and says, "I'm going to break up that congregation."

Yielding to temptation will lead you into sin. However, it is not a sin to be tempted. Do not deceive yourself. Do not just be a hearer of the Word. You must also be a doer of the Word of God. Now is the time to live what you have learned and to put it into practice in your life.

In Matthew 7:21-23 Jesus said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the

kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Jesus was saying that not everyone who says he is saved is going to make it in. Some people are saying, "Lord, Lord," but they are going to come before Him on that day and say: "Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not do many wonderful works in your name?" Then Jesus will say, "I do not know you." I do not want to be in that number!

Submit Yourself to God

We are living in a time when many people are creating their own god. This is very popular, but Jesus said in His prayer in John 17:3, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." You can make up your own god if you want to, but I am not accepting any false god. The Bible tells us in John 4:24, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must

worship him in spirit and in truth."

Saint, you need to dig in, get closer to God, and treasure what you have. If you have a good pastor who watches for your soul, one who labors, studies, and prays to feed your soul, he is a man of God. A true man of God preaches the Truth and loves your soul. You need to dig in and search the Scriptures, for in them you have eternal life. Through studying the Scriptures, you will find out what the true God is like and what He requires.

James 4:7-10 reads: "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." If you are a sinner, you must first admit that you are a sinner, and then God will cleanse you. If you will humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, He will lift you up.

Some people believe many things, but this Scripture lets us know that God is not going to change His Word for you or me or anyone else. Do not let anyone fool

you. God is having mercy on people right now. There is no sense in your thinking that after a person dies, God will then have mercy on his or her soul. If a person dies without Christ, he or she will not receive mercy.

Jesus said in John 8:21, "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come." Jesus said if you die in a sinful state, where He goes you cannot come. That is not going to change. You might have been involved in a community workshop, you might have been a good person, and you might have loved your spouse and your children; but if you die in your sins, Jesus said where He is you cannot come. That is what the Word of God says. Your ideas and your opinions are not in the Word of God.

I want you to know that the wages of sin is death. If you let sin come into your life, you may try to hide it, but sin will take you further than you want to go. You may play around with sin, but sin will keep you longer than you want to stay. You will want to get free from it, but sin has you bound. Sin will cost you more than you want to pay; it will cost you your never-dying soul.

(Compact Disc TR-455E)

Better Than Losing It

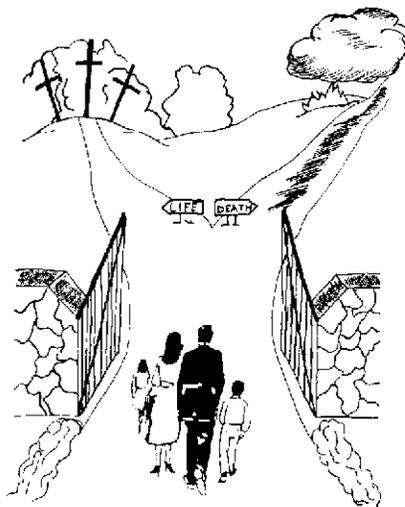
A chaplain was speaking to a soldier on a cot in a hospital. "You have lost an arm in a great cause," said the chaplain. "No," said the soldier with a smile, "I didn't lose it—I gave it." In the same way, Jesus did not lose His life; He gave it. It reminds us of His purpose. He died that we might be forgiven and go at last to Heaven.

Matthew 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Isaiah 35:8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

How to Get to the Highway of Holiness



Brother Larry Dishman

The Way of Salvation

In the Book of Matthew, Chapter 7, Jesus spoke of the broad way that leads to destruction. Isaiah spoke about "The way of holiness," a highway. I am glad that an individual who is traveling the broad way that leads to destruction can get on the highway of holiness. It is a miracle when people on the road to destruction make their way to an altar of prayer, meet God's conditions, and then get up from an altar of prayer on the highway of holiness.

Thirty-three years ago I was on the road that leads to destruction. I was traveling the broad way, but at an altar of prayer all of that got turned around, and God put me on the highway of holiness. In Acts 16:30 you can read that the

Philippian jailer asked the question: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

In Job 25:4 we read, "How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" We all are on one of these highways. We are traveling either the broad way that leads to destruction or the strait and narrow way, which is the highway of holiness. The broad road is the way that seems right to man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. It is a part of the broad way. There are just two roads that we can travel: the strait and narrow road or the broad way.

How do we get from the broad way that leads to destruction to the highway of holiness? Friend, this is a question that is foremost in the mind of every sinner who has been awakened by the hearing of the

Word of God. The good news is, no one will be lost because the way of salvation is too complicated. Of all the millions of people who will be in hell, not one of those people will be there because the way of salvation was too complicated. The Prophet Isaiah said in Isaiah 35:8, ". . . the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

Dear one, it is certainly not enough to be religious. Lots of religious people are on the way that seems right. Nicodemus was a man who had a profession of religion, but he had not yet experienced the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said to this very religious man, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). I believe that if Jesus were here today, He would say to many, many religious people, "Ye must be born again."

In John 10:9 Jesus did not say, "I am one of the doors." He said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." There is no other way to get in but to come through Him. Acts 4:12 states: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

God knows where I am, and God knows where you are. God knows what road I am traveling, and He knows what road you are traveling. God knows where I am heading, and He knows where you are heading. His eyes go to and fro throughout the whole earth, beholding the good and the evil. We cannot hide anything from God, because as one sister used to sing, "There's an eye watching you." God knows all about us.

Hearing the Word of God

How can you get to the highway of holiness? The first thing you have to do is turn right on "Hearing Road." We read in Romans 10:13-17: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

An individual must start by turning right on Hearing Road. Friend, if you want to get your loved ones saved, you need to get them under the sound of the Gospel, because the Word of God has a softening effect upon a heart that is honest before God. Romans 1:16 reads, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power

of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." This is God's plan. He chose through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe according to 1 Corinthians 1:21.

James 1:18 lets us know the importance of turning on "Hearing Road." It reads, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." Then in verse 21 he said, ". . . and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."

Peter said in 1 Peter 1:23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." The eunuch had to find "Hearing Road," and he found it in the desert. In Acts 8:29 you can read that Philip joined himself to his chariot and said in verse 30, "Understandest what thou readest?" In verse 31 the eunuch replied, "How can I, except some man should guide me?"

So it was with another man named Cornelius. He had to find "Hearing Road." In Acts 10:44 we find that "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." The Philippian jailer had to go to "Hearing Road," and there in Acts 16:30 he asked the question, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

The sinners on the Day of Pentecost did not know what to do, and they had to find "Hearing Road." Acts 2:37 tells us, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" In verse 38 Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you."

The eunuch did not know what to do, Cornelius did not know what to do, and the Philippian jailer did not know what to do. That is the reason God chose the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. My friend, that is the first road that the sinner must take.

The Road to Repentance

The next road that the sinner must take is "Acknowledge Avenue." In Psalm 32:5 David said, "I acknowledged my sin." True repentance presupposes a frank and brokenhearted acknowledgment of one's wicked failure to keep God's righteous law. First, you need to know that you are utterly lost.

Friend, if you are not saved, that means you are utterly lost. If you have never been born again, you are utterly lost without God, without hope and without spiritual strength. You are absolutely bankrupt spiritually and without any goodness of your own that could entitle you to salvation. I like what the Word of God has to say in Mark 2:17, which reads, "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Thank God, every one who realizes his hopeless, helpless condition and is willing to break with sin and the devil can be set free by God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The third street that you have to take is "Confession Circle." Psalm 32:5 reads, "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." David had to get to Confession Circle. John said 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." In the Scriptures pardon always presupposes that there is a complete confession. There is no promise of any forgiveness until there is a confession of sin.

If a man is not willing to confess and forsake sin, he has not taken one step toward Heaven. Friend, until you are ready to confess *and* forsake sin, you have not taken one step toward Heaven. Proverbs 28:13 says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have

mercy." In Isaiah 55:7 the Prophet Isaiah said, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Friend, you have to turn right, not left. You have to turn right on "Repentance Road." In Luke 13:3 Jesus said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Jesus preached that it is essential that you go down "Repentance Road." Peter preached that the only way a person can have his or her sins blotted out is to turn right on "Repentance Road." Acts 3:19 reads, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Friend, that is the only way your sins can be blotted out. The Bible lets us know that God has commanded all men everywhere to turn right on "Repentance Road."

In Acts 17:30 we read, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." Do you know what that is? That is a universal command that takes in everybody. Friend, God has commanded you to repent. There is no way to get on the highway of holiness if you do not repent.

The reason there are so many religious people today in Christendom is that people have made professions of religion, yet they have never repented. It is no longer popular to preach on repentance. The world does not want to hear that they must repent. Therefore, people are joining churches, being baptized in water, and putting their names on a church book when they have never truly repented of their sins.

Counting the Cost

You cannot repent of your sins if you do not count the cost. The old saying "You get what you pay for" holds true in religion the same as it does in other things. Good religion is not cheap, and cheap religion is

not good. There is a lot of cheap religion in our world today, but cheap religion will fail you in the end. Many people fail to go through because they do not count the cost before they start. You have to count the cost.

We read in Luke 14:26-33: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

We must be willing to give up the world. Some people say, "Salvation is free." That is right, but discipleship costs. However, it pays to serve Jesus. You may inquire, "What is repentance?" It is more than a change of mind or a change of heart; it is a change of action. When a person truly repents, there is going to be a heart change as well as a change in their actions. They are going to start living differently. They are going to start doing differently. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

In 2 Corinthians 7:10, what did Paul say about repentance? "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but

the sorrow of the world worketh death." Godly sorrow will lead to a change, or a reformation. Godly sorrow will be followed by putting away the evils of your life. You must feel the guilt of your sins. Jesus bore your agony in your stead.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost is interested in your repentance. According to Luke 15:7, the angels in Heaven are interested in your repentance. Moreover, according to God's Word in Revelation 22:17, the Bride, or the church, is interested in your repentance. This verse reads, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

My friend, even the lost in hell are interested in your repentance. In Luke, Chapter 16, you can read that the rich man wanted Lazarus to warn his brothers, lest they go to that place of torments. You need to think about that! God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, the angels in Heaven, the church on earth, and people in hell are interested in your repentance. It is something that is so important that three worlds are interested in it. Sinner, I think it is time for you to become interested in repentance.

Repentance is man's part of salvation, and forgiveness is God's part. Dear one, when you do what you know that you need to do, God will do His part. God can and will, but He will only forgive to the extent of your repentance. There is no substitute for repentance. A shallow repentance will bring about a shallow religious experience. The reason so many people have a shallow religious experience is that they have had a shallow repentance. This modern theory of accepting Jesus, joining a church, and being baptized over unconfessed and unforgiven sin is nothing short of deception. There will be more genuine conversions when there is more genuine repentance, and there will be more genuine repentance when

preachers preach on it more.

Exercising Faith

My friend, the next thing you have to do is turn right on "Believing Boulevard." Every seeking sinner must turn right on "Believing Boulevard." Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." There is one thing God will not do: He will not believe for you. You can pray and ask God, and the saints can pray, the preacher can pray, the counselor can pray and ask God to help your unbelief; however, it is you, friend, who must take that step of faith. It is your heart that must exercise faith.

Many people base their salvation on feelings. They go to an altar of prayer and they think they are supposed to pray until they feel a certain way. I have prayed with many people over the years, and lots of people are waiting on some physical feeling. Feelings can let you down. We are not saved by feelings. According to Ephesians 2:8, we are "saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Thank God, there are feelings that come with salvation, but that is not what you are to count on. The Bible lets you know that "whosoever believes will be saved." You are saved by repenting and believing.

The writer of Hebrews made the promise, ". . . for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). The blood of Jesus Christ has been shed for everybody in the world, but that blood will never be applied except where it is accepted by faith. Though the blood of Jesus was shed for everyone, friend, it will be of no avail until you turn on "Believing Boulevard." Notice that he did not say, "With the head men believe," but it is with the heart that men believe unto salvation. Christ made an offering that is effective in putting away sin; but though that is

true, though His blood has already been shed for you, though He had you in mind when He died upon the Cross of Calvary, it will never produce reconciliation or pardon on your part until you accept it by faith.

Mark 16:16 states, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." The Philippian jailer had to turn right not only on "Repentance Road" but also on "Believing Boulevard." He really wanted to be saved, and he said to Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" In so many words, they said, "Just turn right on 'Believing Boulevard.'"

Many people try to complicate salvation, but it is not complicated. If it were complicated, I could have never obtained it. It is so simple that anyone can figure it out. Just do what God says to do, and He will save you.

When you meet the conditions of God's Word, God will save you. God always keeps His Word. Paul and Silas gave the Philippian jailer a plain, simple, effectual direction. They did not encourage him to wait for the mercy of God. They advised him to believe at once. In dozens of Scriptures in the Word of God, salvation is promised to the person who will turn right on "Believing Boulevard," and that includes you, my friend.

Which Road Will You Take?

There is another step that a person must take. In Romans 10:9-10 we read: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." When people get saved, it is good to confess it with the mouth publicly. They do not have to give a long testimony, but they should at least make a brief public confession, such as, "God has

saved me."

Once a person does that, he turns right on the highway of holiness; if he stays on that highway, it will lead him straight to Heaven. Many folks get on the highway of holiness, but they do not stay on the highway. Dear one, you have to stay on the highway of holiness. Again, our Scripture text states in Isaiah, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Jesus said in Matthew 7:13, "Enter ye in at the strait gate. . . ." That is the highway of holiness.

We read in Proverbs 4:27, "Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil." That is what gets folks in trouble. They turn one way or another. They need to get on the highway of holiness. Friend, the highway of holiness is a straight street all the way to Glory. That is all you have to do. If you are saved, you need to stay on the highway of holiness and you will hear Him say, "Well done." Many roads veer off to the left or to the right. If you are not careful, you will be tempted to take one of those roads; but you must stay on the highway of holiness. You must not turn to the right hand or to the left.

If you are traveling the broad way that leads to destruction, all you have to do is surrender to Christ, and then you can begin your journey on the highway of holiness. That is a miracle! You do not know how near you are to destruction. Destruction may be much closer than you think. We have gone through the steps of how you can get on the highway of holiness and be on your way to Heaven instead of on your way to hell. Friend, do not keep traveling the road that leads to destruction. You need to get off that road and get on the highway of holiness. Let us go to Heaven together.

(Compact Disc TR-644E)

Philippians 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already

attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye

have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Philippians 4:1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

The Power of the Resurrection



Brother Richard Talbot

Realizing a Higher Power

Masses of people flock to churches across our country who are wrapped up in false religion, false teachings, and ideologies that can never change the heart of man. They go to church and exit their church buildings no better off than they were when they went in. God is good to those who have honest hearts and desire to seek Him and to know His Truth. You should never

take this for granted.

When Paul wrote his testimony, he was talking about his education sitting at the feet of Gamaliel, raised a Hebrew of the Hebrews, the strictest of the Pharisee sect (the most rigorous religious teaching in that day). He spoke of how he gave himself entirely to the persecution of the Church of God; then one day God spoke to him and struck him down. On the Damascus Road, as soon as his knees hit that old dusty

road, he realized that a higher power was talking to him, Someone greater than he had ever heard in his life, and he admitted it. He said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

The Lord said, in essence, "It is hard for you to kick against the pricks, isn't it?"

Paul got hold of something that day. I do not know how it all took place, but he was a beaten man then. The Lord instructed him to go to Ananias' house where he talked to

him. Ananias was afraid of him. In so many words, he said, "Lord, he is like a roaring lion, seeking to destroy us."

The Lord told Ananias: "Don't worry about it; I have tamed him and brought him under control. He is My child now. I want you to explain to him how to get saved; lead him to salvation. Pray for him and open his eyes. He is one of us today."

As Paul was writing, he said he counted those things that he once thought were profitable to him but dung. He counted his past as a lost cause. Everything that he thought was important to him was not important at all. Sinner friend, if you will surrender your heart to God, you can come to understand these Truths the moment that you are saved. The second that God breaks through to your soul, everything you thought was important to you will cease to have a hold upon your soul.

Paul said in verses 8-11 of our Scripture text: "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered [or allowed] the loss of all things, and do count them but dung [useless waste, rubbish, or trash], that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings . . . If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Crying Out for More of Jesus

It is interesting to note Paul's sincere desire to experience whatever the resurrection had to offer him. I want to open my heart and my life to the Lord in a far greater way than I have ever done yet. I want to know more about the power of His resurrection and more about the saving grace of God. I want to know more of Jesus my Savior as I

go through life. It is an endless well that we draw from. Christ is ever real and ever new to us. He is fresh and reviving every day. He is the living source of all our strength. He is our hope, our Savior, our God; He is the power of our lives.

Without Him (I am talking about a living reality of Christ alive in your soul) you are uselessly, hopelessly lost. It amazes me to think of what a great man the Apostle Paul was, how greatly he was used of God, yet he desired to know Jesus Christ more fully. He wanted to know all about Him, which I dare say needs to be a longing felt by every one of us in our day and time. How earnestly is your heart crying out for more of Jesus? Do you want to know more about your loving Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

Paul knew that in order to know the power of His resurrection and to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings, he must know Christ more and more. All of this was so that he could be sure of attaining the resurrection of the dead. It would do us good to enter that same mind-set that Paul expressed. We must be willing to share in His sufferings to know the quickening power of His resurrection. The child of God meditating in loving thought on the sufferings of Christ will always be led to feel an even deeper and more awful sympathy with the suffering Savior.

When we are called to suffer, if we take it patiently, looking to Jesus, then our sufferings become united with His sufferings. We suffer with Him, and He who has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows feels for us in His sacred heart, being touched with the feelings of our infirmities. What a Savior who has opened Himself up to be so effected by His subjects!

I want you to think about what Christ has done. He is not only Christ but also Lord. Many people like to take Jesus as a Savior, but they do not want Him as Lord. They picture the loving Jesus in their minds. They say, "Oh, what a wonderful thing it is to see and feel

and teach and talk about the loving Jesus!"

Allowing Christ to Reign in Your Life

Today many religious systems promote the love of Jesus and do not do anything else. They say you do not need to do anything else but love Jesus, and everybody does their own thing, has their own way, and expresses their love for Jesus in their own method. They dance, they play "gospel rock," and they have their huge churches, where thousands gather together. Some fall on the floor. Some speak in jibberish, and others do different things, but it is all just "loving Jesus."

There is more to living for God than just loving Jesus. He must become Lord of your life; He must become the King of your heart. You must allow Him to rule, reign, and possess you and your soul. Many people are like Old Testament Balaam who was bribed by Balak to curse the children of Israel. However, God would not allow Balaam to do so. Balaam said in Numbers 23:10, "Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

The Amplified Bible brings out the meaning of that verse a little clearer. It reads, "Who can count the dust [the descendants] of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous [those who are upright and in right standing with God], and let my last end be like his!"

In making this statement, Balaam was painting a picture of his own life. Like many people today, he lived without any anxiety about how he was living, while hoping that when death came everything would be right with God, yet living heedless of the present time of opportunity. Many people do not want to die in sin, but they do not want to get rid of the sin in their lives. No doubt, you want to die right, but if

you want to die right, you have to live right and be right. You have to be true to God and to live honestly before the Lord.

Thousands and thousands of religious people have no real desire to live right. They do not want to do away with their religion altogether because they want to hold onto something that they think will help them in death. Friend, if you do not live right, nothing will help you in death.

Balaam knew he was wrong. He was out of sorts with God, yet he cried, "Let me die the death of the righteous," even though he was making wrong moves. In the depths of your heart, you might have an understanding of what is right, but you are unsaved. You have an understanding of what you need to do, but the temptations of selfish living are so powerful that they are pulling you away. If you have that knowledge and that understanding, something is working in the depths of your being, and you need to take hold of that and let that knowledge lead you to Christ.

Newness of Life

As we consider the power of this resurrection and how it works in us, we read in Romans 6:1-4: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

I am thankful for newness of life. I am glad that one day I got tired of sin, tired of myself, and tired of living for myself. I knew what was right. I was raised in the Truth, and it was a hard thing for me to die out to all of myself. The most difficult thing for anyone to come to task with is to die out to self.

I first went to the altar when I was five years of age. By the time I was almost sixteen, God got my attention in a dramatic way and really woke me up. I was sick of struggling. I was at a crossroad in my life. I knew that I needed to settle things with God, because I was either going to go out into open sin or surrender to Christ. It was so real that I can still feel that as if it were yesterday. I know God got my attention with what He did.

I struggled with myself, blaming everything on others. I said that my mom and dad were too strict, my sister was too mean, and the church was too rigid. That is the reason I had such a trial and so much trouble. The Lord spoke to me one day, not in an audible voice, but through my mind. It was as though a lightbulb was turned on. I was in the tenth grade of high school, getting ready for school that morning when this was taking place. I looked in the mirror, and the Lord spoke through my mind and said, "You are your own biggest problem." My father had tried to tell me that for years, but God said it to me that morning, and it hit me.

That realization caused me to go to the side of my bed and get on my knees, weeping and praying. I prayed through to victory that day. I got hold of God that morning, and He has never left me since. He brought the reality of Heaven into my soul. I know it was God. He saved me and took the desire for the world away. He changed my mind, my attitudes, and my spirit. I was truly born again! I was finally resurrected to newness of life.

Young person, you can get hold of an experience with God. You do not have to go out in the depths of sin. You can get saved and get a real experience with God right in the church setting. Do not let the devil tell you, "You will never really know what it is to be saved unless you go out in the world and smoke, drink, take drugs, and go to the honky-tonks of sin." You do not need that kind of life.

When God saved me, it was such a living reality; it was a real experience. I became happy in the Lord! I told my dad a day or so later, "Dad, do you know my sister Barbara has changed? She's sweeter than she's ever been."

He looked at me and said, "Son, she hasn't changed one bit. You are the guy who's changed."

There is still power in the resurrection, and there is power in salvation. It is something to be born again; that is a miracle of all miracles! How can you describe it? How can you explain it? God can get hold of a rotten, sinful person with raunchy attitudes, nasty ways, propelled by evil desires, and bring him to his knees, and in a moment of time, reach down and remove that stony heart and put in a heart of flesh. He will put a new spirit in him and cause him to walk in newness of life. The past is gone! Sin is forever gone! He does not understand it himself. After one fellow got saved, he said, "Why, when I drove home from church that morning and looked up on the hillside, even those old hogs were grinning at me. The trees were clapping, the sun was shining, and everything was changed!"

Being Born Again

What holds the saints together? In the Church of God, there is no membership to join, no club, and nothing to sign. You do not pledge years of your life to a congregation. What keeps the saints coming back? It is the love of God that holds them together. When people love God, they need nothing else to hold them. They are held by their love for God's Word and their love for God. Fellowship is between you and Christ and back to the saints. Our fellowship is centered in the Father.

Jesus told Nicodemus, that great scholar in the Sanhedrin court, who had knowledge of all the Old Testament Scriptures, a Truth that he did not understand and could not comprehend. In John 3:7 Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I

said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Great knowledge and understanding is not going to bring Christ to you. Reading self-help books that you find in the marketplace cannot bring Christ to you. It takes acknowledging your lost condition. In essence, Jesus was telling Nicodemus, "You cannot understand the Kingdom of God or receive any enlightenment to these Truths until you are born again."

No doubt, Nicodemus was scratching his head, thinking, "Be born again? How can this be? I am an old man. How can I get into my mother's womb again and be re-born?" You may think that was foolishness, but Nicodemus was serious. He did not understand. Jesus went on to explain to him that he had to be born of water and of the Spirit. He told him that a change had to come in his life from the inside out. Friend, something has to get hold of you down inside to be born again.

Many movie actors, politicians, and sports players claim to have been born again. If your life has not been changed on the inside, your claim is a false claim. Being born again will dramatically change you. It will change your desires and your attitudes. It will change your hatred into love and your malice into good works. It will change everything about you. You will become a new creature.

You will not be able to go back to school or go back on the job and be the same person that you were before. You cannot do it and still be saved. When I was born into this world, I was born a new person in the flesh as a little baby. Likewise, when you are born as a child of God, you come out from that birth experience a new creature in Christ Jesus. You are no longer as you once were. You have been changed altogether. Now, your physical features will not change when you get saved. Salvation will not necessarily make you handsome or pretty. You will still have the same face and the same shape, but from the inside out you

are going to know that you are different. When you go back on the job, go back to school, or go back to your home, everyone who knows you will see a change in you. If they do not see a change, then something is wrong with your experience. You cannot hide the divine work of salvation. You cannot camouflage it and let it blend you into the background. No, it will set you apart. Everyone is going to know that you are different.

After a while they will begin to connect you with having found Jesus Christ. They will know. Salvation is a definite and powerful experience. When you step from one life into another, your mind, your attitudes, your outlook on life, and your purposes and motives for doing things become changed. Truly you become as the Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "a new creature" in Christ Jesus our Lord. Before that time you could not discern these things. The Apostle Paul let you know that in the natural sense, a person without the reality of Christ cannot understand spiritual things. You cannot discern them because these things are spiritually discerned. You cannot get saved by merely changing your mind.

Seeking Salvation

Salvation is more than attending church services. Salvation is more than acting right and trying to do what others are doing that is right. Salvation is something that takes place inside you, in the depths of your being; that is what changes you. Some people say when they are unsaved: "There is no way that I can live that way. I don't have any desire to live like that. I just don't know if I could do all that stuff." Well, you have to get into church or somewhere under the Word of God so that the Spirit of God can reason with you. You must pull the plugs out of your ears, turn off the iPod, and put away the cell phone. You must still your mind for a while.

The devil uses many devices to keep people from thinking about

their souls. Their minds are constantly filled with unwholesome things and worldly songs bombard their brains. If you get into the house of God or in a family setting where God's presence is and let your mind become stilled, God will be able to reason with you and talk to you. When God is speaking to you, you will begin to get some understanding. Your mind will become alerted to your need, and you will begin thinking, "I need that."

Down inside every heart that is out of order with God is a desire down deep that would like to be right with God again. Friend, do not build a wall against that. You ought to let the love of God penetrate your heart, and then open your mind to the Spirit of God. No matter how long you have been lost or backslidden, no matter how deep in sin you have gone, God's love can change your soul and make you a new creature this very day. You do not have to go on unsaved. There is power in the resurrection to lift you out of the dead state of sin and deliver you into the kingdom of God's righteousness.

I ask you to let the Spirit of God have His way. You must yield to the Holy Spirit. You should not put on an act or put on a front. Do not act as though God is not talking to you. If you really want help, unlock your heart, open your mind, and say, "Lord Jesus, I need You." Then you can repent and seek salvation. Yes, it is hard sometimes to own your condition. Sometimes it is hard to admit that you need something that you should have had. The devil will try to keep you from making that first move. If you can break that chain, you can be saved, but you have to meet God's conditions.

Has the Spirit of God brought your attention to focus upon Him? I want to encourage you. Friend, newness of life awaits you. The reality of salvation is available for you. You do not have to go on dragging an old load of sin. You can leave it at the foot of the Cross and become a new person in Jesus Christ. Won't you let God have His way?

(Compact Disc TR-596M)

Upcoming Meetings

Kensett, AR
April 15-17

REVIVAL: Kensett Church of God, 409 Southeast 2nd Street, Kensett, AR 72082
Evangelist: Brother Roger L. Decker, Newark, Ohio
Service times: Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday 6:00 p.m.; Sunday 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor Calvin Foster, Kensett, Arkansas
Telephone: (Church) 501-742-3006 or (Home) 501-742-3961

Mt. Pleasant, PA
April 16

FELLOWSHIP MEETING: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA15666. Service time: 10:30 a.m. A meal will be served by the local congregation.
MOTELS: *Holiday Inn Express*, 724-547-2095 (This is on the same road as the church. Please mention that you are there for the church meeting.); *Super 8 Motel in New Stanton*, 724-925-8915, on I-70W, (10 miles north of the church); *Melody Motor Lodge*, 724-628-9600 on 119N in Connellsville).
For further information contact: Pastor Paul W. Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666. Telephone: 724-547-2151

Summersville, WV
April 17-24

REVIVAL: Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd., Summersville, WV 26651
Evangelist: Brother Irwin Seshier, Heath, Ohio
Service times: Mon.-Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 6:00 p.m.; Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Visit our website @ www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com
For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders at telephone: 304-872-4047

Newton, KS
April 20-24

REVIVAL: Church of God, 400 N. Meridian, Newton, KS 67114
Evangelist: Brother Roger L. Decker, Newark, Ohio
Service times: Wednesday-Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday 10:00 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.; Sunday 10:45 a.m.
For further information contact: Pastor Sandy Killfoil @ 316-842-5127

Medina, OH
April 25 - May 1

REVIVAL: Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH 44256
Evangelist: Brother Earl R. Borders, Heath, Ohio
Service times: 7:00 p.m. nightly; Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor Daniel Webster, 92 W. Main St., Seville, OH 44273. Telephone: (Home) 330-435-6490 or (Church) 330-725-5993

Moss Point, MS
May 26-29

FELLOWSHIP MEETING: Pine Grove Church of God, 11629 Hwy 614, Moss Point, MS 39562. (Located 12 miles West of airport in Mobile, Alabama)
Service times: First service is Thursday at 7:00 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 10:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. A meal will be served after each service. MOTELS: *Motel 6*, Telephone 251-343-8448; *Fairfield Inn*, Telephone 251-316-0029; *Hampton Inn Suites*, Telephone 251-776-5866
Holy Ghost preaching and special singing. Everyone Welcome!
For further information contact: Pastor Larry Dishman, 11629 Hyway 614, Moss Point, MS 39562. Telephone: (Home) 228-588-6288; (Cell) 251-776-2100

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