

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 42 December 2012 No. 12



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*

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"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.

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

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**THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:**

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS**

**PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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for any reason. We are not responsible for unsolicited  
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# Guest Editorial

"And the people spake against God, and against Moses,  
Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the  
wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any  
water; and our soul loatheth this light bread."

Numbers 21:5

## Murmuring Is Dangerous

Time after time throughout their journey, the children of Israel encountered many hardships and trials. During those times, the Lord always proved Himself to be faithful to their needs. Over and over, He brought miraculous deliverance from the hand of oppression and bondage they suffered. When at the Red Sea, He gloriously made a way to cross, escaping the Egyptian army. Traveling through the wilderness, God provided manna for them to eat and water to drink. Each time impossible situations arose, the people would only look at the hopelessness of the situation instead of trusting in God. Then when help was not readily made available, they began to murmur and complain against God and Moses.

Israel's distrust and unbelief lead to unmerited accusations toward God and His purpose. Repeatedly, Israel blamed God for bringing them out of Egypt to kill them in the wilderness. One would have thought that they would have been thankful, having seen the many miracles He had performed. Witnessing God's mighty working power should have inspired their faith to trust Him in a greater way. However, unbelief blinded their eyes and caused them to doubt each negative condition they encountered.

The Lord had no intention of destroying His people in the wilderness. He had good things in store for them just ahead. His promise was given to Abraham of inheriting a good land filled with

milk and honey. God had a reason for leading the Israelites in the way He did. Those trials were only to be used as a vehicle to prove the people. God wanted to know what was in their hearts and if they would truly appreciate His marvelous works and serve Him. In Deuteronomy 8:2 we read, "And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no."

Many things can be said regarding the trials that Israel faced and the numerous times they murmured against God's leading. Further in this chapter, we find that the Lord was greatly displeased with their actions and complaints. His anger was kindled to the place that He sent fiery serpents to bite the offenders. This sinful murmuring and complaining caused many to die. When the people realized their actions angered God, they repented and sought for mercy. Thank God, He turned from His fierce anger and showed undeserved favor to them.

History has a way of repeating itself, and conditions have certainly never changed through the ages. As Israel irreverently voiced their objections against God and His chosen leaders in their day, we find it the same today as multitudes repeat the same actions. God does not

[continued on page 19]

*Luke 8:43 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,*

*44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchèd.*

*45 And Jesus said, Who touched*

*me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?*

*46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.*

*47 And when the woman saw that*

*she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.*

*48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.*

# Touching Jesus Makes All the Difference



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

## **Christ Gave of Himself**

We have before us the story of a woman who had an issue of blood reaching out by faith and touching the hem of Jesus' garment. In this story some things stand out: first, this woman was desperate; second, she was determined. Because of that, she received deliverance and declaration. The Scripture does not go into a lot of detail, but it says that she had the issue of blood for twelve years.

The Scriptures also mention that she had spent all she had on physicians and still was not any better.

The Scripture implies that they did not know what her problem was, and all they did was take her money, because she was none the better. She was physically desperate, because her health was gone. She was financially desperate, because her money was gone. Also, she was spiritually destitute, because she could not enter the temple in her condition. This was undoubtedly the reason she went behind Jesus to try to be as unnoticed as possible. She probably felt as low as a person could feel. Have you ever felt really low? She probably thought that no one cared about her

condition and that no one cared whether she lived or died.

One day she heard about Jesus, and the lovely thing about this story is that from the moment Jesus was face to face with the woman, there seemed to be nobody there but the two of them. There was a crowd around Him, but the crowd was forgotten, and Jesus spoke to that woman as if she was the only person in the world. She was poor, unimportant, and suffering with her trouble, which made her unclean, yet Jesus gave all of Himself.

We are very apt to attach labels to people and to treat them accord-

ing to their relative importance, but to Jesus a person has none of these manmade labels. He or she is simply a human soul in need. Love never thinks of people in terms of human importance. Romans 2:11 says, "For there is no respect of persons with God."

I read a story about a man named Thomas Carlyle, and the story goes something like this. A distinguished visitor came to visit him, but he was working and could not be disturbed. However, his wife Jane agreed to take the visitor up and open the door just a little so that he might at least see this wise man at work. His work was known all over the world. She did so, and as they looked in, Mr. Carlyle was immersed in his work, and he was oblivious to everything else but penning the words that made him so famous. His wife said, "This is Thomas Carlyle about whom all the world is talking, and he's my man." She did not speak of him in terms of the world's labels, but in terms of love.

Going back to our Scripture text, almost everybody would have regarded that woman in the crowd as totally unimportant. No doubt, if she had asked the men who thronged Jesus to let her in, they would have pushed her away. She was unclean. To Jesus, though, she was someone in need, and He, as it were, withdrew from the crowd and gave Himself to her. God loves each of us as if there is only one of us to love.

### **The Love of God**

In Acts, Chapter 8, we read that a great revival broke out in the city of Samaria. Phillip spoke the Word, and unclean spirits came out of those possessed with devils, and many who suffered with palsy or who were lame were healed. Verse 8 says, "And there was great joy in that city." As there was joy in that city, there was also a man in the desert, and he needed a man to teach him the Scriptures; so the

angel of the Lord spoke to Phillip and told him to go there.

In Acts 8:27-31 we read: "And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him." What do we see in these Scriptures? We see the love of God.

Ezekiel 18:32 says, "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." John 3:16 states, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Whether a woman has an issue of blood, a man in the desert needs instruction, or a soul is bound with the fetters of sin, whatever the condition might be, if that soul is honest and truly wants help, God will see to it that he or she receives help.

In my own life the last thing on my mind was moving to Newark, Ohio. I was satisfied living in Upstate New York. I grew up there. I went to school there, played sports there, and really liked the country there. However, the providence of God turned that around. What happened? How did I move to Newark, Ohio? I joined the Marine Corps, came home on leave, and got married.

After I got out of the military, I needed work, so I began to work for my father-in-law in the construction business in several states. Eventually I came to Newark, Ohio, and a neighbor told me that Rockwell was hiring, so I went to work at Rock-

well in 1962, at twenty-two years of age. There at Rockwell International I ran into a man affiliated with the Church of God. I asked Brother Emerson Wilson about that one time, and he said, "Brother Decker, it was the providence of God."

When I first attended the services, I had never in my life been in a service like that. I was raised in the Methodist Church, and my wife tried many churches. She had attended the Lutheran Church, the Catholic Church, the Baptist Church, and the Presbyterian Church. Again, I had never in my life felt anything like I felt in that service. The love of God can work things out in your life. If you are honest-hearted and truly want to serve God, He will make a way. No matter what your circumstances are or what dilemma you are in, if you truly want out, God will make a way. He said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

### **A Result of Faith**

The woman in our Scripture text was not only desperate but also determined. Verse 44 says she "Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch[ed] [or stopped]." Many things could have discouraged her from going to Jesus. One thing that could have discouraged her was the large crowd of people that surrounded Him. They were pressing against Him, or tight around Him. Another reason that she could have been discouraged was the importance of His mission. A third reason was her appearance. No doubt, she looked pale and poor.

Mark 5:28 says, "For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." Several people there were touching Jesus, but only one person was touching Him in faith. Immediately, Jesus knew that virtue had gone out of Him. Jesus said, "Who touched me?" No doubt, the disciples were scratching their heads and, in essence, said: "What do You mean, who touched Your clothes? A

multitude is thronging You, and You are wondering who touched Your clothes?" With all the different things the woman faced, she could have been discouraged to quit trying, but she pressed on until her faith brought her the connection she needed.

The woman's deliverance came as a result of touching Jesus. Her touch was a result of her faith. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." She exercised more faith than she thought she could, and she received more than she had hoped for. She was healed of her issue, and Jesus said she was a daughter. Jesus said in Luke 8:48, "Daughter, [Oh, that must have been comforting to her!] be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." Church, when we come to Jesus in faith believing, whether for the body or the soul, we will get more than we hope for.

Those of you who have had sickness in your body or in your soul, come to Jesus, and when you come to Him, believe Him. You must come to Jesus believing, and you will get what you come for. If you are still living in sin, you need to bring it to Jesus. Do not just try to see if salvation works, because many people can witness to you that it does work.

If you really want to be saved, you can be saved. The thing that you need to ask yourself is, "Do I really want to give up those things that are sinful?" You cannot serve two masters, and when you sin, sin becomes your master. Romans 6:12 reads, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

Verse 16 says, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" All it takes is a touch from Jesus and your sin will be gone. Whatever your condition may be, remember Who you are

dealing with. It may be difficult for you, but it is not hard for the Lord. If you humanize things, you will say: "That's too tough for God to take care of. I need to straighten this out myself, and then I will go to God." God is God. Nothing is too hard for the Lord. No matter what your habit is, it can be broken through the power of God.

I began to smoke cigarettes at the age of 14. I wish I had never done it, but I smoked cigarettes until I was 27 years of age. I thought I would never be free from that filthy habit. I thought, "I just can't do it." I laid them down many times and was so embarrassed to go back and pick them up again. Just a touch accompanied by faith is all it took, and I was able to lay down the filthy habit of smoking, which was something that I thought I would never be able to do.

Let me warn you, young person, do not start the tobacco habit. If you do, eventually you will regret that you ever started it. Once nicotine gets into your bloodstream, you will become addicted to it. The next thing you know, you are going to become a chain-smoker. Once that gets in your bloodstream, your body demands it. Without the power of God in your life you will become a captive to it.

### **Touching Jesus**

There are ones in the Bible who were never the same when they were touched by Jesus Christ. In John, Chapter 4, a Samaritan woman at a well came face to face with the Messiah, and she became a changed woman.

In Luke, Chapter 19, a little man by the name of Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree to get a glimpse of Jesus as He passed by, but Zacchaeus got more than a glimpse. He also received a divine touch from the Lord, and he was never the same after that.

In Acts, Chapter 9, you can read about the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul was a real enemy and a threat

to the church, but he was converted and used the rest of his life to spread the Gospel through the written Word. He preached on missionary journeys throughout the then-known world. The Apostle Paul has been acclaimed to have written about fourteen books of the New Testament. Why was he so versed in the Law? He sat at the feet of Gamaliel, who was a teacher of the Law, plus he had God's Holy Spirit.

When the woman with the issue of blood came to Jesus, she did not yank on His garment or try to hold Him, but she merely touched the hem. You see, it does not take much of a touch, just so you are touching Jesus. Touching Jesus is all that really matters. The touch she made, she made in faith, believing that she would receive that which she had need of.

In 1 Corinthians 6:9 we have a picture of some very vile sins. The Apostle Paul mentioned fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners. He went on to say they would not inherit the Kingdom of God; in other words, such individuals are not going to make it into Heaven in that condition. Next, he told the church that such were some of them at one time.

What was Paul talking about? At Corinth, some of those people had once taken part in those vile sins. Some of them had been adulterers, idolaters, effeminate, thieves, covetous, extortioners, and revilers, but then what happened? They were washed in the blood of Jesus, and then they became sanctified and justified. How? In the name of the Lord Jesus, they were set apart for the Master's use and declared righteous. Church of God, that is quite a transformation to make, and only Jesus can do that.

You can go to all the Alcoholics Anonymous meetings or substance clinics you want to go to, but nothing can change you like a touch from Jesus. His touch is simply amazing! God can do wondrous

works for an individual if he will put his faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

### **God Is No Respector of Persons**

The woman with the issue of blood was not disappointed. I read that this woman made a monument of Jesus Christ because of her healing and placed it for all to see. She was a Gentile woman. Jesus' last words to her, as she was trembling before Him are found in Luke 8:48. No better words could have been spoken to comfort someone than what Jesus said. Remember, she was a Gentile, and she was unclean. She had no business being out in the public. No doubt, she was fretting for her life, and she probably had the thought in her mind, "These men are going to kill me if they find me!" When she was exposed by Jesus for touching Him, the whole crowd could see this woman, and she was afraid and trembling, so she fell down before Him, and He said to her, "Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." That is just what a little

touch from Jesus will do for you!

I had never experienced the peace of God in my life until I knelt at an altar of prayer. My mind was full of turmoil, happenings, things of yesterday, things of the present, and things of the future. My mind was a conglomeration of thoughts, and I had no peace. The Bible says in Isaiah 57:21, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Verse 20 states, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea."

Once I had a little talk with Jesus and experienced His divine touch, I walked away from that altar knowing peace as I had never known it in my whole life. Friend, God is no respector of persons. What He did for me, He will do for you, and what He does for you, He will do for me. Do you need a touch from Jesus physically or spiritually? Whatever your need might be, you can bring it to Jesus. You will be amazed at what He can do for you. Before I was saved, I did not realize that I could feel so good.

When I pulled into the church parking lot the night I got saved, I had a pack of cigarettes that I put up

over the sun visor. That was my big hang-up. Oh, I had other things besides those cigarettes, but those stood out to me. Do you know why they stood out to me? I had never tried God before. I tried to quit smoking several times by myself, and I failed every time. Those cigarettes were still there after the service ended that night, but not one of them ever touched my mouth again, only by the grace of God. When you get saved, there is power that comes into your life like you have never experienced. God is God. Do not try to bring Him down to a human level in your thinking. He is above all, through all, and in us all.

If you have a need, won't you listen to the Spirit of God? God's Holy Spirit can still direct you. If you have a need, God's Holy Spirit is going to point it out to you. Moreover, He will tell you what you need to do to get rid of it. If God has shown you something, you need to measure up.

*(Compact Disc TR-961E)*

## **The Appeal of Old Faithful**

Old faithful is not the largest geyser in Yellowstone National Park. Other geysers have taller eruptions. Nevertheless, it is by far the most popular geyser. Its popularity and dependability. You can count on Old Faithful. Every sixty-five minutes, give or take a few seconds, it erupts with a stream of water and steam that lasts precisely four minutes. During the more than eighty years that people have been watching Old Faithful, it has not missed a single eruption on the schedule.

This geyser has a profound message for churchgoers. Nothing takes the place of faithfulness and dependability when it comes to church. You need to determine today that you will be faithful and loyal to the cause of Jesus Christ.

*Acts 9:1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,*

*2 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.*

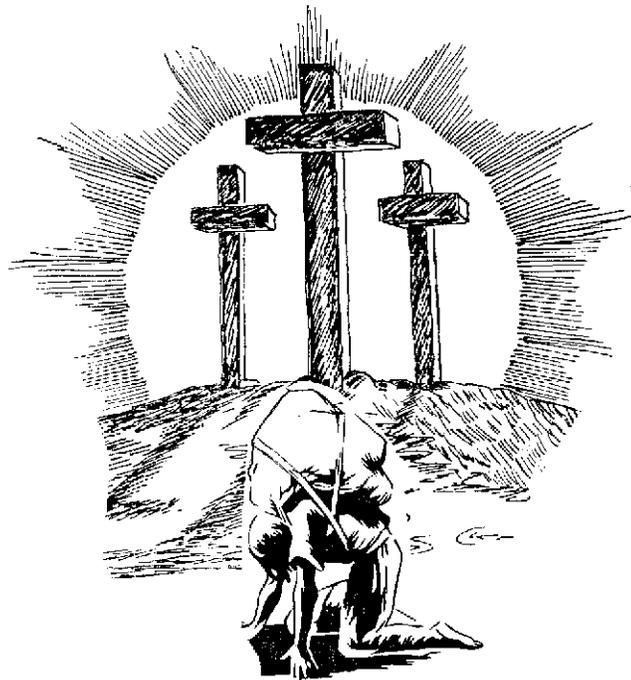
*3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:*

*4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

*5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

*Acts 13:9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him.*

# Never Underestimate What God Can Do



*Brother Calvin Foster*

## **Getting Saul's Attention**

Saul was heading to Damascus to persecute the saints. He was "breathing out words of threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." He was stirred against this new sect of religion. He went to the high priest and requested that letters be sent to Damascus to the synagogues so that if he found anybody in this way, men or women, he could bind them and take them back to Jerusalem. As he went on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven shined around him. He fell to the

earth and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" I love the song that talks about that still small voice, the voice of God. When God speaks, you had better sit up straight and listen. God has a way of getting people's attention. Saul spoke to the Lord and said, "Who art thou, Lord?" He said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

When Saul heard that voice, he knew Jesus was talking to him. Acts 9:6 says, "And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt

thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." God had a messenger to send to him. In essence, He said, "You arise and go to the city, and there you will be told what to do." We are living in a time when some people do not want the man of God to tell them anything. They do not want to hear words of wisdom from anyone. They think they know everything.

Acts 9:7-8 tells us: "And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but

seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus." His eyes were open but he could not see, and so it is spiritually with some people. They are walking around with their physical eyes open, but they cannot see spiritual things. If you are not saved, you cannot see spiritual things. If you are saved, you know what I am talking about. You can see spiritual things. You might be playing around with God, but I hope that some day before you die that you will allow God to open your spiritual eyes.

Saul's eyes were open, but he could not see any man. They had to lead him by the hand to Damascus. If you mess around with God, you are going to get yourself in big trouble. In essence, Saul started out saying: "I am going to Damascus with threatening words, and I am going to get some letters and go against the saints of God. I am going to crush this religion." Jesus did not do anything but speak to him.

### **Saul's Conversion**

We read in Acts 9:9-10: "And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord." I like how Ananias answered. The Lord called upon him, and in essence, he said: "Lord, I am here. I cannot hide or run from You." If you are a sinner, you need to think about where you are going, who woke you up this morning, who started you on your way, and whose air you are breathing. We should say, "Lord, I am here."

Ananias was a servant of the Lord. Acts 9:11 says, "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth." This was the same man

who was threatening and going to get the saints, but he was praying. Let us never underestimate what God can do in a person's life. God can change a person in a moment of time. He can change that disobedient child or that unsaved husband or wife. Do not underestimate what God can do, because God hears your prayers. This man had his mind fixed. He had his heart set on stamping out this religion.

God told Ananias in Acts 9:12-14: "And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name." It is all right to communicate with the Lord. In essence, Ananias said to the Lord, "If You think to send me, and Saul thinks to arrest me, let me get ready, Lord."

Verses 15-18 continue: "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."

Paul was ready to do whatever the Lord told him to do. You should not have to argue with people to get saved. They know what the Lord has told them to do. When people get saved, they just want to know, "Lord, what would You have me to do?" We cannot make them love God or keep pushing them to make sure they keep coming. They will come because they love the Lord. As

saints of God, we come because we want to and because we enjoy coming. Jesus is all in my life. I want Jesus to be in every part of my life. He just does not want to visit as your friend every Sunday in church, but every part of your life should be wrapped up in Jesus.

Saul wanted to do what the Lord told him to do. The scales fell from his eyes, and then he arose and said, in essence: "Okay, it is time to be baptized. I am going to let you baptize me just as Jesus taught His disciples: in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

### **A Great Change Takes Place**

Acts 9:19-20 reads: "And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." I call that a great change. That is what you call repentance. That is not just a confession.

When you start serving God, if you are going to get right, you are going to have to turn around. You are going to have to repent. We are not talking about church joining. We do not preach that you should sign up for something. You have to repent and turn from your wicked ways. Saul repented. He started preaching Christ right away. Why? Because he knew that Christ had revealed Himself to him. There is no guesswork in this. If you do not know you are saved, you are not saved. If a person gets saved, he knows it.

Saul knew that Christ had revealed Himself to him. He was baptized, he turned his life around, and he started preaching Christ. He started telling people, "Jesus is the Son of God!" That is what happened to me when I got saved. This salvation is real! God is real! How wonderful this is!

Acts 9:21 says, "But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them

which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?" The people were amazed at Saul. When a person gets saved, his life changes so much that people are amazed.

Verse 22 reads, "But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ." Saul knew the Law. He was a very intelligent, educated man. When God opened up the Truth to him, he was proving it to them. So it is with each of us. If you say you are saved, you have to prove to people that you have changed. Sometimes you might have to go and make restitution or straighten out a lie. Sometimes you might have to go pay a debt. You have to prove to people that you mean to do what is right.

### **Helping a Brother**

Acts 9:23-25 states: "And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket." The disciples helped Paul. They took him under their wing, so to speak, and said, "Brother, the Jews are trying to kill you. We have to help you to get out of town." They put him in a basket and let him down by the wall.

We should help one another, saints, not crush or beat down or disrespect one another. We are the saints of God. We ought to defend, respect, and have proper love among ourselves. We have to seek to protect and help one another. You should not believe every negative thing that you hear about somebody. You might have known a person for years, worshiped with him, and had fellowship with him, and then you hear something that he might have done or what somebody said about him. You should not run

off with that and tell others. You ought to be man or woman enough to go and talk to that person face to face and find out for yourself. That is your brother or your sister in Christ, not just a friend. We are the family of God. We are the body of Christ. God brought us together. Without God none of us would be here.

Verses 26-27 read: "And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus." Thank God for Barnabas. Barnabas' name means "son of prophecy" or "son of encouragement."

Sometimes a pastor needs somebody with a "Barnabas" spirit. Pastors know what I am talking about. A Barnabas will come and say, "Pastor, I know you do not feel well. I have been praying for you. I understand what you are going through. I know the heavy load that is upon you, but remember, I am here for you."

The saints want the pastor to preach the Word of God. It is easy to preach to people who want to hear the Word of God. God put the watchman on the wall. When some start going the wrong direction, the pastor has to tell them about it. If he warns you and you do not listen, the blood is not on his hands. He has done his job. The blood is on your hands. If he preaches against backsliding, and you go out and backslide, your blood is not on his hands.

### **Being Found in Christ**

Philippians 3:1-5 says: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of

evil workers, beware of the circumcision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee." He was a Pharisee, and that was one of the strictest religious sects of that day.

Verses 6-8 tell us: "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." In order for some people to get right with God, they are going to have to be willing to lose their reputation, just as Paul lost his reputation.

Verses 9-14 continue: "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, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 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.

"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, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." God loves us. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begot-

ten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Let us never underestimate what God can do.

### "Let No Man Deceive You"

Paul, writing in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, said: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." The Scriptures are very important to us. Paul knew the Old Testament Scriptures well, and God was able to use him. He could explain the Scriptures really well.

The purpose of Jesus Christ coming into the world was to save men and women *from* their sins, not to leave them in their sins. John 1:28-29 reads: "These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." I thank God for Jesus! Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:3, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."

Matthew 1:21 says, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Where does false religion get this "sin religion?" Christ came to save us *from* our sins. I knew a wicked man, and the worst part about it was that he was tied up in false religion. He thought he was doing God a favor. That is the worst kind of religion and the worst kind of evil. Jesus warned His disciples of that. In essence, He said, "The day is coming when men will kill you and think they are doing God a service."

As Christians, we are in something good. We had better dig deep and get well rooted in God with the way this wicked world is going. I thank God for the freedoms and the blessings that we have, but

we need to take advantage of every opportunity to get in church and to sit under the Word of God. You can play around like a grasshopper does all summer, but sometime in the fall or the winter, you will find that grasshopper stuck somewhere frozen because he is not like the ant. You will never see a lazy ant. He is always piling up food and taking it deep down into the ground.

When you get your soul fed with the Word of God, you should go and tell somebody else. On the other hand, you might be hungry, and you might be in a place where you are not getting your soul fed. In that case, you can follow me, and I will take you where you can get your soul fed. True Christianity will put sin out of work. It will put sin out of your heart. It will put sin out of your home and out of your reading material. It will put sin out of our institutions. The Word of God will put sin out of our government. Christ came to put away sin from the world.

First John 3:7-8 says: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." I thank God that He destroyed the works of the devil in my life.

### Christ Gave Himself for You

Matthew 15:19-20 reads: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man." Sin comes from the heart. Many people have heart trouble, spiritually speaking. That is the reason they do not want to get saved. The Great Healer can heal heart trouble.

Paul let us know in Galatians that when sin is put away, all evil is

put away. People need to get back to the Word of God and take what He says. God knew what He was saying when He said not to change the Word of God, add to it, or take away from it. God knew that some men would try to do that. I am afraid to do that, so I leave it as it is.

Galatians 2:17 says, "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid." Christ is not the minister of sin. He came to take away sin. He does not preach, "Sin you must and sin you will." God forbid.

Paul said in verses 18-20: "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

When we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. He cared about you so much when you were deep in sin and way out there. Do you not think He still cares about you now? He has not changed. When I think of my wife's cousin, I remember how years ago she was running a bar. I used to look at her get in her car to go to that bar, and I used to say to myself, "I don't think she'll ever get saved." Well, God saved her soul, and now she is one of the main backbones of our congregation in Arkansas. I depend on her. Never underestimate the power of God. Do not hang your head and say, "They are not going to make it." You should try to help them make it. God looks beyond our faults and sees our need.

I am reminded of when the church was praying for Peter. Peter knocked on the door and spoke, and little Rhoda answered the door. She told the saints, "Peter is at the door." They said, in essence: "Girl, you're crazy; that's not Peter. That can't be Peter." God had answered prayer.

You must keep on praying saints. The prayers of the righteous avail much. We are praying, and we will keep praying.

John 8:21-24 tells us: "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And

he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." If you do not believe in Jesus, if you do not turn your life around, you are going to die in your sins. I hope and pray that you do not, but you will be a sorry soul in hell after

hearing the Truth and refusing to believe it. Some people in the religious world believe nobody dies in their sins and that nobody goes to hell. They just cut hell out of the Bible, and they do not preach it. May God bless you.

*(Compact Disc TR-664M)*

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No one can possibly go forward in the strength of the Lord until he has first learned to stand still in his own helplessness.

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# 2012 Winter Bible School

Please Join Us

games      Date: December 27 - 29, 2012      singing  
Time: 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.  
Ages: K - 12

story      Church of God, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055      crafts  
www.GodsAcres.org

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

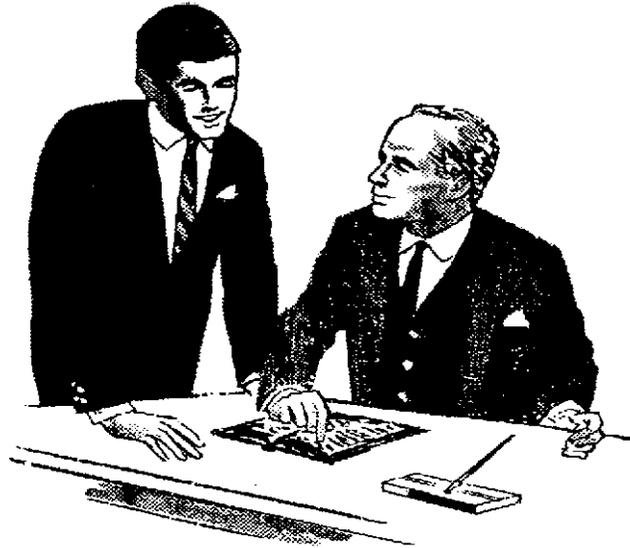
*2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech*

*Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.*

*3 And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with*

*Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.*

# Being a Help



*Brother Allen Polston*

## **Where Much Is Given, Much Is Required**

Luke 12:48b reads, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required. . . ." I believe there are going to be some things required of us as a result of the good things that God has given us. As we receive good things from God, it makes us more responsible. I believe there is one thing we can do. We can be helpers. As we read the text of Scripture in Philippians, we can see that God really needs people who are willing to help. To be a helper and to know that you have done something to help in the great work of God is very reward-

ing. Sometimes when I am cleaning the garage or straightening up the yard, one of my children will come outside and begin to help me. They feel so good in knowing that they are helping me. Likewise, helping in the things of God can be a real blessing.

I believe all of us can be helpers. We can help God by taking the things that we have learned and helping others in the world. It is easier to tear something down than to build something up. Having been a builder, I have learned this first hand. I have built things, but sometimes I have had to demolish things. You can demolish a building much easier than you can build a building.

Let us apply that to people and to the things of God. You can tear someone apart much easier than you can build a person up. In fact, sometimes insinuations can be all you need. When somebody says, "I really like that brother. He is a good brother," all you have to do is say, "Really?" Sometimes just the tone of a person's voice or the body language that he uses can be enough to tear someone down. The flesh likes the easy way, which would be not to worry about building things up but to be tearing things down.

If you really want to, you can find fault with another person. You can pick another person apart. People need to put away the magni-

fying glass, so to speak, and get a mirror instead. We all could find something to pick at another person. I want to offer you a better solution, and that is to be a helper and a builder who is working to encourage others and to expand the good things of God.

In our Scripture lesson we begin to realize there was some kind of complication. The Bible lets us know in verse 3 there was a need. The Apostle Paul said, "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life." Some kind of situation was taking place. I do not know what the details were, but one thing I do know is that Paul was writing this letter because God instructed him to tell them to lend a helping hand. That is really good admonition, because when there is a problem, the devil likes to elevate it and try to use it against the work of God. We are working to build up the Truth and to build up the church. We are laboring to encourage others and to inspire them. In 2 Corinthians 5:11 Paul said, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

At times, we have a difficult task as we work to persuade others that the Christian way is the right way to live. When there is a little problem or conflict, God needs people who are willing to help, not people who are willing to throw fuel on the fire.

### **"Be of the Same Mind in the Lord"**

In our Scripture lesson we read that a little quarrel took place. Do not be surprised that the Bible mentions something like this, because wherever there are people from different backgrounds, they have learned to address problems differently. When many cultures come together, people have many ways to solve problems. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that disagree-

ments will arise. That does not mean that someone has lost out with God or has backslidden. That does not mean someone is no longer saved. When someone does not see things exactly as we do, the devil would like to get you to believe that person is no longer saved, because he does not see it as you do.

In our Scripture text were two women in the Philippian congregation who had been used in the work of the Gospel. They had worked along with the Apostle Paul and others in carrying forth the Gospel. However, there was a conflict. That did not mean they were not saved or that they had gotten away from God. It is just normal that from time to time these kinds of things happen. I have learned from pastoring for several years that a whole lot of the work I do is helping people with problems. I like it when problems can be resolved instantly, but that is not always the case. Many times it is over the process of time that we are able to help individuals to overcome things and march on to victory.

I want to tell you the definition of these names. In verse 2 the Bible says, "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord." The name *Euodias* means "prosperous journey." In other words, this was a person whose name was defined as someone who had been prosperous or who had arrived at some success. There may be prosperous people like that in congregations. Maybe some have earned college degrees and their educational level is far beyond others. The name *Syntyche* means "a pleasant acquaintance." You could refer to such a person as someone who is pleasant and makes people feel welcome. In every congregation there are people who are more likely to greet visitors and make them feel very warm and welcome.

We have two very different kinds of people here. According to the definition of the name, one was a successful person, and the other was a friendly face, one who could

be counted on to make people feel welcome. Although they were quite different, they both were needed. You cannot say: "Well, that person has achieved much and is successful. That person is not like me. I am just friendly and outgoing, so that person must be wrong." Is that not what the flesh is sometimes tempted to do? The other person, a more prosperous person, may look at the other fellow and say: "He has struggled all his life. He cannot get ahead financially, and physically he has one problem after another."

When someone is different from you, you might see his faults, and you might think he is making mistakes. It would be easy in the flesh to write that person off, but we need every individual who is saved and what he can contribute. No one is unimportant when he is saved and living for God. Whoever he or she is, especially in a congregation where people love God, that person is important. Everybody can contribute. When people use what God has given them, everyone can be a help. There are times when the greeter with the warm, friendly welcome is really needed. As new people come in, we want them to feel welcome. We need those people. There are others who, when faced with some kind of task, are more able to help because of their life experiences. It is not that either one of them is wrong. God makes each of us a little different.

We need all kinds of people, people with many talents. No one is unimportant or should be disregarded, even if there is a disagreement. There are going to be times when differences of opinion and disagreements arise.

In our Scripture text we find that Paul did not just blame it all on the congregation. No, he addressed Euodias and Syntyche and said, "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord." In other words,

[continued on page 26]



## Susie's Prayer



The children were gathered on the green, and a right merry time they were having.

"Come, girls and boys," called out Ned Graham, "let's play hunt the squirrel."

They were all eager for the game, and a large circle was formed.

"Come, Susie," said one of the boys, to a little girl who stood on one side and seemed to shrink from joining them.

"Oh, never mind *her!*" said Ned, with a little toss of his head, "she's nobody, anyhow. Her father drinks."

A quick flush crept over the child's pale face as she heard the cruel, thoughtless words.

She was very sensitive, and the arrow had touched her heart in its tenderest place.

Her father was a drunkard, she knew, but to be taunted with it before so many was more than she could bear; and with great sobs heaving her bosom, and hot tears filling her eyes, she turned and ran away from the playground.

Her mother was sitting by the window when she reached home, and the tearful face of the little girl told that something had happened to disturb her.

"What is the matter, Susie?" she asked, kindly.

"Oh, mother," said Susie, with the tears dropping down her cheeks, as she hid her face in her mother's lap, "Ned Graham said such a cruel thing about me," and the sobs choked her voice so that she could hardly speak; "He said that I wasn't anybody, and that father drinks."

"My poor little girl," Mrs. Ellet said, very sadly. There were tears in her eyes, too.

"Oh, mother," Susie said, as she

lifted her face, wet with tears, from her mother's lap, "I can't bear to have them say so, and act just as if I had done something wicked. I wish father wouldn't drink! Do you suppose he'll ever leave it off?"

"I hope so," Mrs. Ellet answered, as she kissed Susie's face where the tears clung like drops of dew on a rose. "I pray that he may break off the habit, and I can do nothing but pray, and leave the rest to God."

That night Mr. Ellet came home to supper, as usual. He was a hard-working man and a good neighbor. So everybody said, but he had the habit of intemperance so firmly fixed upon him that everybody thought he would end his days in the drunkard's grave. Susie kissed him when he came through the gate, as she always did, but there was something in her face that went to his heart. A look so sad, and full of touching sorrow for one so young as she!

"What ails my little girl?" he asked as he patted her curly head.

"I can't tell you, father," she answered, slowly, "because it would make you feel bad," Susie replied.

As they walked up to the door together, he asked, "What is it, Susie?"

"Oh, father," and Susie burst into tears again as the memory of Ned Graham's words came up freshly in her mind, "I wish you wouldn't drink any more, for the boys and girls don't like to play with me, 'cause you do."

Mr. Ellet made no reply, but something stirred in his head that made him ashamed of himself; ashamed that he was the cause of so much sorrow.

After supper he took his hat, and Mr. Ellet knew only too well where he was

going.

At first he had resolved to stay at home that evening, but the force of habit was so strong that he could not resist; so he yielded.

Susie had left the table before he finished his supper, and as he passed the great clump of lilacs by the path, he heard a voice and stopped to listen to what she was saying.

"Oh, good Jesus, please don't let father drink any more. Make him just as he used to be when I was a baby, and then the boys and girls can't call me a drunkard's child or say such bad things about me. Please, dear Jesus, for mother's sake and mine."

Susie's father listened to her simple prayer with a great lump swelling in his throat. When her prayer was ended, he went and knelt down by her side and put his arm around her.

"God in heaven," he said very solemnly, "I promise tonight, never to touch another drop of liquor as long as I live. Give me strength to keep my pledge, and help me to be a better man."

"Oh, Father," Susie cried, her arms about his neck, and her head upon his breast, "I'm so glad! I shall not care about anything they say to me now. I know you won't be a drunkard any more."

"God helping me, I will be a *man!*" he answered, as taking Susie by the hand he went back into the house where his wife was sitting with the old patient look of sorrow on her face, the look that so often rested there.

I cannot tell you of the joy and thanksgiving that went up from that hearthstone that night. I wish I could, but it was too deep a joy which filled the hearts of Susie and her mother to be described.

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

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

*and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;*

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

*him;*

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

# How Shall We Escape?



*Brother E. David Stegmeier*

## **Horrific Times**

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

*The Oregonian*, the leading news-

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

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

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

In an English class that I once taught, we studied the Holocaust. Prior to World War II and in that horrific day of time, it is estimated that the Nazi's exterminated more than six million Jews. Many were

gassed in gas chambers, and great numbers were burned alive in large ovens. All over Europe, the Jews were rounded up like livestock and were taken to concentration camps in crowded cattle cars on the railroad. Survivors of the Holocaust have come to the school where I once taught and have spoken to the student body about their experiences during that time. Multitudes tried to escape the hatred of the Nazis by hiding, by moving, and by physically resisting.

I heard a story told of a young Jewish mother who arrived at a concentration camp with her two little children, a three-year-old girl and an eight-year-old boy. The Nazis told that young Jewish mother, "You must make a choice. We will allow you to keep one child with you in the camp, but you will have to allow one to go with the rest of the children to the gas chamber."

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

It is unbelievable what people suffered in the Holocaust. I believe the Jews have suffered more than any other people down through the annals of history. I believe these people suffered such a fate because they rejected the Messiah, the Christ. People are asking for trouble when they reject the Messiah. They are inviting horrific problems into their lives. When Jesus was on His

way to the Cross, a great company of women followed Him, bewailing and lamenting Him. In Luke 23:28 you can read that Jesus turned around and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

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

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

Once my wife received a call from someone in this country who knew her years ago and who was thinking of going to God's Acres. That person asked my wife if she felt that she had made the right choices, and she replied, "Without a doubt I know I have." You can know that you are in the right way. I weigh my decisions in life and consider how they will affect my wife, my seven children, my grandchildren, my congregation, and the thousands of young people that I have taught in the public schools over the years. I weigh my decisions because they will affect their lives.

We read in Romans 14:7, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." We are affecting someone either for the good or for the bad. Ministers are extremely responsible. I believe too many people, even in the ministry, make decisions too flippantly and lightly. Friend, when you make a decision, you need to weigh it, deliberate, and look to God before you take a step. One of the first Scriptures that I was taught in the Church of God when I was about five or six years of age is Proverbs 3:6, which states, "In all thy ways acknowledge

him, and he shall direct thy paths."

I have had to seek God alone concerning some decisions. I have a wonderful wife, but sometimes she has said, "Honey, you have to make the decision." It is my greatest desire to build a wholesome, God-fearing, Bible-oriented Church of God. I am not endeavoring to win a popularity contest. I know what the Church of God is, and I know what it should be, and my desire is to build up the body of Christ.

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

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

### **Focus on Your Soul**

I want you to think very seriously. I have gone into hospitals where people have been in the Intensive Care Unit. It is a very quiet, serious place. When doctors are

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

Verses 3-4 of our Scripture text say: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"

Verses 1-3 in our Scripture text in the Children's International Bible read: "So we must be more careful to follow what we were taught. Then we will not be pulled away from the truth. The teaching that God spoke through angels was shown to be true. And anyone who did not follow it or obey it received the punishment he earned. The salvation that was given us is very great. So surely we also will be punished if we live as if this salvation were not important." Dear one, this is important!

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

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

What is the condition of your soul? Are you more spiritual today than you were a week ago, a month ago, or a year ago? The word *neglect* means "to give too little care or attention to; to leave undone, not attend to, to fail to do, or to disregard." God has given you only one soul, and it is eternal. You need to keep it with great care; be conscientious and attentive to the needs of your soul. Most people spend more time maintaining their homes, their cars, their boats, their clothing, their personal appearance, and their funds than their souls.

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

### **Give God Your Best**

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

Years ago I heard the story of an old fire buggy horse. They retired the old horse to the pasture, but every time the fire bell rang, it would get excited and want to run as fast as it could toward the fire house until the day it died. The

moral of the story is, once a preacher, always a preacher. Too many people treat the service of God and the things of God as fun and games or as a form of entertainment.

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

Dear one, while you have the right use of your mind and you are healthy, you ought to give God your best. He is worthy of it. You can avoid some disasters and calamities by seeking the Lord early in life and living for Him. God is in control. In all the years that I have been in the Church of God, I have never seen anyone leave a thriving Church of God congregation and prosper.

In Luke 21:34 Jesus said, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." We are living in that kind of day. If you listen to people's conversation, most of what they talk about is what pleases the flesh and relates to the cares of this life.

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

avoid my children going down the broad way and being involved in drunkenness or drug addiction. These calamities are coming upon some people when it would not have to be that way. The Scripture says, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." I have heard ministers who were way up in years say they were tempted. When I am tempted, I think of my companion, my children, and my congregation.

The Children's International Bible in Luke 2:34-36 says: "Be careful [You need to be careful to whom you talk. If you are going to sidle up to someone and have a conversation, you should sidle up to someone who is deeply spiritual. Do not sidle up to someone who talks against the pastor or someone who has a bad attitude. If you want to get close to someone, you should get close to an older saint in the congregation who has been a real pillar.] Don't spend your time feasting and drinking. Or don't be too busy with worldly things. If you do that, you will not be able to think straight. And then that day might come when you are not ready. It will close like a trap on all the people on earth. [I realize that Christ was speaking to the literal Jews about some of these things, but the underlying principle is that we are to live right because the day of the appearing of Christ is imminent.] So be ready all the time. Pray that you will be strong enough to escape all these things that will happen. And pray that you will be able to stand before the Son of man."

You need to be careful of being carnally secure and sensual. You need to be spiritual, living cautiously in spiritual things. You do not want to be caught unawares. Sometimes it is possible for good saints to be caught up in temporal affairs of life. In the days of prosperity it is easy to forget the source of your help. You need to be wary of becoming secure in a land of plenty. You must become mindful of the

source of your gifts. First and foremost, you need to acknowledge God.

### **Diligently Keep the Word of God**

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

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

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

How spiritual are you, really? I think most people have heard this adage: "Seven days without reading the Word of God, praying, and attending the house of worship makes

one weak." The Living Bible says in 1 Corinthians 2:15 that "the spiritual man has insight into everything." As Christians, God gives us the wisdom we need to live right. We should strive to escape the pending judgments of God that have come upon this world because of sin. You may disagree with me, but I believe that what happened on September 11, 2001, was a wake-up call for our country. God was trying to get people's attention. I repeat, God is in control. I have read reports that after that event, churches were inundated by thousands of people, but today they are back as they were.

No doubt, most of us are acquainted with the account of Lazarus and the rich man. Lazarus was the beggar who often laid at the gate of the rich man's house. The Bible tells us that both of them died, but Lazarus was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom, while the rich man landed in hell. In hell the rich man cried out to Abraham and requested that Abraham send Lazarus from the dead to testify to his brothers on earth. In essence, Abraham said, "They have Moses and the prophets; they should hear them."

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

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

God has given each of us the prerogative and the power of choice. The destiny of your life will be determined by the choices you make and the purpose of your life. Young person, I was young once, and I was

a Christian. I want to admonish you to live for a high purpose. In Philippians 1:21 Paul said, "For to me to live is Christ." If you will live for God, you will have real meaning in your life. If you ever take anything seriously, I hope you will take this message seriously. Do not throw your life away. God created you to bring glory to Him. It was once

written that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

Suicide has become an epidemic in the high schools and even the grade schools in our land. I heard about a boy whose family got upset with their pastor and left that congregation. The mother came home, prepared to fix supper, and

called her children, but one boy did not come. She walked in his bedroom only to see that he had hung himself. How are you going to escape when you go through life neglecting your soul?

(Cassette C-5600E)

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[Guest Editorial—contin. from p. 2]  
approve of this behavior, and He will not tolerate individuals questioning His way, His commandments, or His authority indefinitely. Trials, problems, irritations, and frustrations come to all, but each person must be careful never to allow a spirit of murmuring and complaining to overrule. The misfortunes that come into life are never sent to destroy or to drive a man or a woman away from God. Instead, their purpose is to draw ones closer to Him.

We may not understand all the ways that God leads us through in this troublesome life. However, one thing we can be assured of, and that is, He has our best interests in mind. Man's greatest challenge is to lean upon and trust the Lord in every situation. We can safely rest in His divine hand of providence. Sometimes God allows death to come at an inopportune time. This misfortune can cause us to question God's action. We can become irritated at God for allowing this grievous heartache. If we do not bring

our hurt under control quickly, we can charge God foolishly. This action is not wise or profitable to us spiritually.

There are times in life when everything just seems to go sour. This may break down or that may go wrong, and problems may keep piling up on every side. Possibly a loss of job comes at no fault of your own. The list of upsetting circumstances goes on and on, and no help seems to be in sight. God has a plan and a purpose in view for everything that comes into each individual's pathway. Whatever the dark cloud may be that comes to obscure our blue skies, we should never arrogantly question or accuse God of failing. The Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:7 referred to these misfortunes as "a thorn in the flesh." The Lord encouraged him in verse 9 when He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Finally, we are reminded that these undesirable situations are only a channel through which God

purposes to prune us, proving and perfecting us. If we will graciously submit ourselves to His plan, these things will work for our good even though it may seem otherwise. Hebrews 10:36 tells us that we "have need of patience." It is extremely important to allow patience to do its perfect work. First Peter 5:10 tells us, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

You should never allow yourself to fall into this condition. Murmuring is a very dangerous condition to get in. It will wreck your soul and your relationship with God. On the other hand, you can truly profit spiritually if you will ask God to help you through these trying circumstances of life. He wants all His children to grow and mature in spiritual things, and He will help each one in every phase of life.

Selected

**A TREMENDOUS STUMBLINGBLOCK IN THE WAY OF MANY TODAY THAT KEEPS THEM FROM TAKING A STAND FOR THE LORD JESUS CHRIST ARE THOSE PROFESSING CHRISTIANS WHO SAY AND DO NOT.**

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 [world] we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

6 Therefore we are always confi-

dent, 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:)

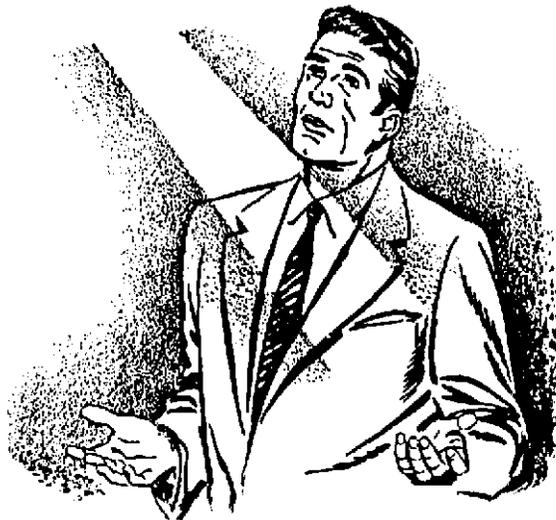
8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, wheth-

er 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.

# The Final Judgment



*Brother Richard Talbot*

## **A Day of Justice Is Coming**

I want to ask you this question: If you were to die now, where would you spend eternity? I mean right now, without another prayer, without another opportunity to talk to God, without another opportunity to make anything right with anybody. Would it be all right with you? Would you be able to say like John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus; I am ready to go"?

I want to focus on verse 10 of our Scripture text, which reads, "For we must all appear before the judg-

ment 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." From this verse we want to look at several things regarding this coming event, or this time of awesome judgment. We want to look, first of all, at the Judgment. Second, we want to consider who will be judged. Third, we want to identify who the judge will be. Fourth, we want to consider what is going to be examined.

When we think about the Judgment, the fact is, there will be a final judgment, as taught throughout the

Word of God. When you die, you will not go to the final Judgment immediately upon your death, but you will go to a place awaiting the Judgment, either Paradise or Hades (or chains of darkness). You will be held there until the Judgment of all the earth, because when you die, you have an influence that lives on. You have a reputation that lives on, and people will make decisions in their lives depending upon the influence you had over them.

There may be people who will be saved perhaps because of Grandpa who lived the life before them.

Grandchildren and great-grandchildren may come upon a people that remember their grandpa, and tell them of what a saintly grandpa they had. It may get hold of their hearts, and they may get convicted of their sins and get saved. God will give that grandpa some credit. The man who has been wicked and ungodly, his reputation lives on. People may be influenced to live wicked and ungodly lives because of his influence. He, too, deserves some recognition. The final Judgment is going to balance everything out.

Just as earthly governments must have courts and judges in order to have any form of civil order, so the eternal Godhead has established its court of judgment. The natural order of things requires it. There must be restitution for all those precious souls who have suffered unjustly down through the ages of time. We find in life that often the best of men were driven to the worst of straits because they were God's servants. God is not going to let the world go by without their seeing those precious saints of God recognized for what they were.

### **The Faithful Witness**

We find in Hebrews 11:34, 36-38 the list of all those saints who "Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. . . . And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."

Yes, there must be a day of justice or God would not be a fair God, and it is right out ahead of us. Do not get all torn up because you

are mistreated and you cannot do anything about it. God has a day of justice coming. He will take care of that.

The words of our Savior recorded in Matthew 25:31-34 are as follows: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Verse 41 states, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Verse 46 says, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." The final Day of Judgment is out in the future, but it is coming.

In Revelation 1:5 Jesus Christ is recorded as "the faithful witness." The Proverb writer tells us in Proverbs 14:5 that "a faithful witness will not lie." The Word of God is true. God cannot lie; He is God. He is the faithful witness, and He is going to be a witness either for you or against you on that day. When the Lord and Master says He will gather all nations before Him and divide them one from another as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. That is just the way it will appear. He gives us this illustration to present the idea to our minds that there will be a judgment and a final separation for all eternity.

You may inquire: "How can all of this take place? Billions and billions of people have lived since God created the earth. How is God going to do all of this?" I do not have any idea, but He is going to do it in a moment of time. Judgment will be instantaneous. God can do it

because He is God.

I want you to read one final Scripture on this question of the Judgment. Hebrews 9:27 states, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Yes, there is going to be a judgment. We are going to stand or bow before the Judge.

### **Who Will Be Judged?**

Question number two is, Who will be judged? Our Scripture text makes this clear, stating in verse 10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Everyone in the entire human race will appear before Christ. The godly will not be exempt from this judgment. The Christian is going to make an appearance before this Judge. Every pastor is going to be there to be judged. Every Sunday school teacher and every worker in the Church of God is going to be there. They each will be judged on this final day. Nobody will escape it!

You may say: "I don't know why I have to be judged. I know I'm right with God." You are still going to be judged on that day. The Apostle Paul makes this very plain. He wrote 2 Corinthians to the church at Corinth and to all of the saints at Asia. He wrote this letter to the church to inform them that all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Those who make up the Church of God will appear before the judgment seat, as will all the wicked and the ungodly.

We must remember what Jesus said in Matthew, Chapter 25, regarding the sheep being summoned to the judgment seat just as the goats are. Why must the sheep appear if all their sins have been forgiven and covered by the blood? First of all, the church, or the saints of God, have to be judged to show that God is fair. The Christian should have no fear of being judged. Perfect love casts out all fear.

If you have things right with God as they should be, you should not be afraid of being judged. On

that day the saints should have no fear of the eternal Judge. The saint of God should be on very personal terms with the Judge. We should desire the Judgment, saying: "Lord, You will not be able to find anything wrong with me. I am clear before You." Can you testify to that? Is your life clear? Is your record clear?

Do you know the Judge personally? That is what counts. You would not want to be smuggled into Heaven under a cover of darkness, would you? No, you will not be ashamed of going to Heaven. You will want the whole world to know: "I made it! I made it into God's Glory!" You will not have any shame, because you do not need to hide under something. We each are going to have to go through the Judgment where every deed will be made known and every secret will be exposed that is not covered by the blood. If you have everything covered by the blood, you will have nothing to worry about.

Just as the children of Israel back in Egypt put the blood on the doorposts and went to sleep comfortably that night, knowing they were protected by the blood, we can also rest comfortably, knowing we are protected by the blood of Christ. If a father would have said, "I'm not putting any blood on my doorpost; that is foolish," he would have lost his eldest born son. When he put the blood there in obedience to Moses' command, his eldest child was spared.

The process of the Judgment removes any accusation by the lost that the saints were never tried, that they never had it hard, or that they were never under any pressure or they might have been condemned. No, God is going to remove all excuses from the unsaved. We are going to be there shoulder to shoulder, facing the same Judge, facing the same scrutiny, facing those piercing eyes. There is going to be eye contact with the Judge that will bring the guilty down in a wailing mass of gnashing about. Those eyes are going to find the eyes of the

saints rejoicing and praising God. Oh, dear one, it is going to be an awesome sight!

### **Full Vindication on That Day**

The righteous must be there on Judgment Day so that no partiality will be shown in the matter. The verdicts will be clear and straight. The rewards of the righteous will be seen and given without any violation of the most rigorous justice. What a day this will be for the righteous! On this day the righteous will be cleared of all charges that they have lived under on earth by false accusers.

Have you ever had anybody falsely accuse you, find fault with you, criticize you, or tear you down? On that day you are going to be cleared in their eyes. They are going to see you received and accepted at the right hand of God. They are going to see you receive the words of the Lord, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, and enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

The unrighteous that mistreated you are going to stand and watch you step over. You are going to be vindicated, cleared, and all those that criticized you and found fault with you falsely will stand back with their mouths and their eyes wide open. The saints are going to go right on in. God is going to vindicate His children.

On Judgment Day reputations will be reestablished. Those who have brought blemishes on other people's character will be there. The saints' heads will be held up, and they will receive from the great Judge more honor than all the world had attempted to withhold from them. I thought about Noah. On that day those eight million souls who ridiculed him and mocked him and made his life miserable while he was building the ark are going to stand there on that day as God calls Noah and says, "Enter into the joys of the Lord." They are going to realize that Noah was right after all, and Noah will be vindicated and

brought through to the glory of God.

Those of old Israel who tormented the Prophets and put Jeremiah into the dungeon will see those Prophets, along with Jeremiah, march fully vindicated into the glories of God. Yes, dear one, God is going to balance all things out on that day.

According to my understanding of what I have read in history about Isaiah, while still alive, he was stuffed into a hollow log and sawed in half, but on that day he will march right on in. Those people who were in authority and power who did that to him are going to stand aside and watch that man receive his full reward. Church, do not be discouraged because you are being put through the wringer here on earth. A day is coming when God will balance everything out.

King Ahab and his wicked wife will stand back while Naboth walks in. She had Naboth hung, but one day God is going to justify and vindicate Naboth in the eyes of Ahab and his wife. Naboth is going to step across while they stand aside for the final, eternal separation. It is coming! Nero will be forced to witness the Apostle Paul, whom he beheaded, being ushered into the glories of the Lord. All those saints whom he burned as torches in his gardens and who gave their lives for Christ will be honored on that day in front of Nero, and all his Roman powers will be as nothing. Not one soul that has ever died for the Lord will go in without recognition. God will vindicate them.

Pilate will be there. The chief priests and the elders of Israel who gave false witness against Christ will receive their final reward from Him whom they crucified. On this day all the earth will acknowledge the true nobility, the clearing of the righteous, and the vindication of their names. It will be done openly for every eye to behold.

Every pastor whose name has been dragged down into the dirt and stepped on and ruined by false accusations and evil reports will

march into Heaven with their heads held high and the glory of God upon them while their false accusers will be separated forever. There is a great day coming, church, when God is going to balance everything out.

What a day that will be to see the masses of the human race. It is quite certain that the call will go forth one day that all will be brought in to stand before this great judgment seat. Every one before the flood, from the days of the patriarchs to the times of David, from the Babylonian kingdom, all the legions of Syria, the host of Persia, the troops of Greece, the vast armies of Rome, the barbarian, the scythian, the bond, the free, men and women of every color, race, nationality, and tongue will all stand in that last day before the judgment seat of Christ. On that day the kings and the masters will be no greater than the subjects or the slaves.

The princes and nobles will be there without their crowns and their gaudy robes. The judges will be judged themselves on that day. No one will be able to claim immunity or hide behind titles or privileges. The world will be on one common level, standing together to be tried before that last tremendous tribunal. The wicked and the proud will be there. Herod who tried to slay the Christ child will be judged by the very Christ whom he tried to slay. Judas, who sold his Master, will be there to be judged by Him whom he betrayed. Demas, who deserted his Christ for the world, will be there to receive his just reward.

Next will come the long line of the infallibles: the whole line of popes of Rome that held their people in such blackness and darkness are going to take their turn marching up, stripped of their rich robes, their golden mitres, and all their wealth. They will be there just like you and me, without prestige, immunity, or protection, to be judged. They will have their turn to receive the judgment that awaits them.

Hitler and his men of destruc-

tion, along with all other heads of states, such as presidents and prime ministers will be there. No one will miss the Judgment Day. It is right out ahead of us. What a scene it will be! The groups of people who seemed so large and domineering will shrink to the size of a drop in a bucket on Judgment Day.

### **Dealing With the Ungodly in This Life**

God also has a way of dealing with people even before the Judgment Day. Do you remember the Beatles rock band from back in the sixties? One member of that band by the name of John Lennon made the statement that Christianity would end and disappear from the earth. He said, "Jesus was okay, but His subjects were too simple, and today we Beatles are more famous than Jesus Christ!" After saying that, it was not long until he was shot six times and died. God brought him to task for that bold statement.

From Brazil, a bisexual composer, singer, and poet, during a show, while smoking his cigarette, puffed out some smoke into the air and said, "God, that's for You." At the age of thirty-two, he died a most horrible death of lung cancer. You cannot mess around with God and get by. A reporter asked the man who built the Titanic how safe the Titanic was. With an ironic tone he said, "Not even God can sink her." We all know what happened to the Titanic on her maiden voyage.

Marilyn Monroe was visited by Billy Graham during a presentation of a show. He said, "The Spirit of God sent me to preach to her." After hearing what Billy Graham had to say, she said to him, "I don't need your Jesus." A week later at the age of thirty-six, on August 5, 1962, she was found dead in her apartment.

Another story from Brazil, involved a group of friends who were drunk. They went to pick up a girlfriend. The mother accompanied her daughter to the car and was so worried about the drunkenness of

her friends. She said to her daughter, holding her hand after she was already seated in the car, "My daughter, go with God and may He protect you."

She responded, "Only if God goes in the trunk, cause inside here it's already full."

Hours later, news came that they had been involved in a fatal accident, and everyone in the car had died. The car could not be recognized as to what type it had been, but surprisingly the trunk was intact. Police said there was no way the trunk could have remained intact, and to their surprise inside the trunk was a crate of eggs, and none of them were broken.

Christine Hewett, a Jamaican journalist and entertainer, said, "The Bible is the worst Book ever written." In June of 2006 she was found burned beyond recognition in her motor vehicle. These people are still awaiting a final judgment. Marilyn Monroe is going to be there and those others are going to be there to be judged finally and separated forever from the righteous. You cannot do wrong and get by.

Ecclesiastes 3:17 states, "I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked." I will be there, my wife will be there, my children will be there, and my grandchildren will be there. No matter how much I love each of them, there will not be a thing I can do for them on that day. I will not be able to plead with the Judge: "Have mercy. My grandchild did not really mean to ignore You and get into sin. My grandchild did not really mean to live as he was living." There will be no pleading on that day. You cannot do anything to help your children or your companion on that day.

Each of us will stand and take our judgment. Nobody will be able to interfere. No plea bargaining, no tears, and no story of hardship will sway the Judge. Pure justice will be meted out. The elderly will be there. The rich without their finery and the poor without their poverty will be

standing side by side on that day. Those who are so bashful that they always hang back in the crowds will be pulled out from their hiding place to stand just as everybody else on that day. Off will come the garments that have hidden the real person from the eyes of others. No disguise will be possible on that day.

### **Who Will Be the Judge of All?**

The third question is, Who is the Judge? The courts of law in the United States offer an opportunity to be judged by your peers, a group of twelve men and women as close to the same position in life as the one on trial so that they can issue a fair judgment.

Christ left the glory of the Father and came to earth, taking upon Himself the seed of Abraham, becoming one of us. He was human, and He suffered all manner of temptations, yet without sin. His feelings were hurt, and He suffered rejection of those He came to help. He was laughed at, ridiculed, mocked, beaten, and shamed. He suffered judgment of false accusers, and He died a shameful death, all without sin. All of this makes Him a qualified Judge to judge all mankind. He tasted life and death just as we experience it. He suffered temptation. He was tried and pressed beyond measure, ridiculed, scorned, and rejected; but He never sinned, proving that you and I have no excuse to sin. In doing that, He took away our excuses.

If you were to say at the Judgment, "They did not treat me right," He will say, "People did not treat Me right either, but I lived so that I could show you how to live and survive the evils of this world." Not one young person, middle-aged person, young adult, married person, married person with children, older couple, grandparent, great-grandparent, or great, great-grandparent is going to have an excuse that will survive the Judgment on that day.

We find that this is the will of the Father. John 5:22 reads, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Romans 2:16 says, "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." Acts 10:42 states, "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." He is fully qualified to deal justly with us all.

### **What Will Be Judged in the Final Judgment?**

The fourth question is, What exactly is to be judged? Our Scripture text says that everyone may receive of the things done in his body according to all that he hath done, whether it is good or bad. We are going to be judged according to what we have done while in this physical body, whether it is good or bad. We all are doing something, and those doings are going to be judged one day as being good or bad. It is not going to be, "Well, he was very good" or "He wasn't really all that bad"; but it is going to be good or bad. Nothing will be judged as neutral; your works are going to be judged as either right or wrong.

Every day we are involved in doing things and thinking thoughts. We have meditations, and we have motivations of the heart. We talk to people, we make decisions, and we make moves in life. God is going to judge everything as to whether it is good or bad. It is either according to God's will or against God's will.

You may say, "You are making this thing so tight that I am even afraid to breathe." Friend, the Judgment is going to be tight, because it is hard for us to imagine pure judgment. We are not used to real judgment. You see, sometimes people talk their way out of things or slip around things. People can pay lawyers to plead their cases or even bribe a judge. Therefore, they escape just punishment. They may get by

with things in this world because they know somebody. A person may talk his way out of a ticket for a traffic violation. The officer may say, "I'll just give you a warning this time."

Nothing like that will occur on the Judgment Day. It will be pure, clear-cut justice. It is not really all that difficult if you live right. I have not found it hard living for the Lord. If I should stumble or say something wrong or make a wrong move, my loving Savior is right there to help me, forgive me, and restore me if I but ask Him. He is not there to push me down and kick me aside. As long as time stands, mercy is available. However, one of these days, Jesus is going to take His seat beside the Father and deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and He is going to submit Himself to the Father. When Jesus submits Himself to the Father, mercy's door will be shut forever. There will be no mercy on the Judgment Day. Mercy will be over, and it will be pure judgment.

You need to understand that it is not what you profess or what you boast that matters, but it is the actual facts of your life, both secret and public. All will be revealed on that day. It is already recorded, but it will be brought to light so that every eye can see. Every secret sin will be published. Things done in private or things that have been hidden from view will be revealed. Those things that with great care and planning and effort people have concealed will be exposed.

My mind went to September 11, 2001, that horrible Tuesday when those planes crashed into the twin towers, the Pentagon, and the Pennsylvania hillside. All of a sudden, death came to thousands of people. In my mind I thought: "I wonder what people will find when they start closing down the desks or the offices of those people. When they start going through their clothing, their mail, and their desk drawers. I wonder if any spouses found out things were going on that they did not know anything about, things

that people had kept hidden. Some people think, "I'm going to take care of this tomorrow" or "I'm going to straighten that up tomorrow" or "I'm going to stop this today," but death interfered and the record remained.

A man or a woman might have thought, "I'm going to clean out this desk and destroy these love letters." They might have been from a secret lover. It goes on all the time in the world. I cannot imagine in those thousands that died that day how many companions were devastated, not only by the loss of their loved one but also by the loss of what they *thought* was a faithful companion. How sad to also learn of unfaithfulness as well!

### Unprepared to Meet God

One day the secrets are all going to come out. The Judgment is going to equal and balance the whole picture. The hypocritical lives will be laid at the Judgment. The Pharisee who devoured the widow's house will find the widow will be there as a witness against him. His long prayers will be shown to have been nothing but vain repetition. The varnish and the veneer will come off, and the real substance will then be seen.

Let us remember that in the account of the separation of the sheep and the goats, the goats were not condemned for what they did, but they were condemned for what they did not do. They failed to recognize their sin and accept Christ as their Savior. How sad that many on that day will stand condemned, not because of great sins, but merely because they neglected righteousness, holiness, and faith. The world has many excellent, good, moral, honest people, but they just will not accept Christ. Unbelief is going to flood the boundaries in eternal damnation. Without Christ you have no hope of being received on the right hand of the Father.

Many people will stand condemned because they had trouble denying themselves. Some people

who attend congregations across the country are merely hanging around the edges. They say they love the saints, and they like the church, but they just cannot deny themselves of those pet things they want to do and really get saved. Such people are going to pay an awesome price for a few years of fleshly living. It would be best to bring yourself to reality now. If you have been living for yourself, do not push the issue too far. It is going to catch you unprepared to meet God.

Many people love their own lives and love themselves too much to surrender to Christ. Jesus told us in Matthew 12:37, "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Another thing that is going to be judged is your words, both what you speak and how you speak. Let us be faithful to Truth and righteousness. If you are no better than others in your conduct and in your character, you will stand no better than others on Judgment Day. You must have with you in death evidence of your faith in God. You must have all sin covered by the blood. Suppose some dear soul has slipped into wrongdoing on the side, dabbling in a few things he should not have been. Do you really think God will not require justice for those things?

Did the Lord not tell Ezekiel that He was fair in all His judgment? If a man should live many years and in his last years get right with God, God would forget all those years of wickedness, and he would die justified with God. On the other hand, if a man should live an exemplary, holy life and in his last year he sins and loses out with God, God would forget all those good years and he

would die lost.

God is going to deal with a fair hand, a just hand. Sin, in its natural order, always ripens into sorrow and death. Sin will cause a soul to end up in eternal separation from God. Sin will always bring your life down in ruin. There is nothing good about sin. No matter how slight it may be, there is nothing good or justifiable in allowing sin to exist in your life. If it is there, you need to get it covered by the blood. You need to own up to it, confess it, and get it out of the way because Judgment Day is coming. You may suffer judgment with this world as well as in eternity, but be sure of this: you are going to face God's judgment. I want to be right with God, don't you? I want to be ready to meet the Lord. I want to live so that at any moment if God should call me home, I could say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

If you were to die today, where would eternity find you? You are going to face eternity, and you are going to face an eternal judgment. It is going to seal your destiny for time and eternity. I ask you to listen to the Spirit of God. I want you to listen to what God is talking to you about. If you have known sin in your life, you need to own up to it before God, confess it, get it out of the way, and you can rejoice with the saints. Do not play around with your soul. Do not play around with your eternal destiny. I plead with you to take this seriously, because you are just one heartbeat away from it. Won't you let God have His way?

(Compact Disc TR-594E)

**Failure is not falling down.  
It is remaining there when  
you have fallen.**

*[Being a Help—continued from page 13]*

he was saying: "Listen, I want you to get along and be of the same mind. I want you to realize that you need to work through this issue. Do not let it get blown out of proportion and become something that begins to bring harm to the congregation. Do not let it become something that affects the outreach to win souls. You need to work on that."

### **Working With Issues**

God has the grace that can help a person find a way to work on difficult issues. You may not always come to see it exactly the same, and maybe the problem will have to be put on the shelf for a while.

There have been some things in my life and in my marriage that my wife and I have disagreed about. While we have had some differences of opinion, we have talked about them. We still did not always see things the same. I have learned that in a marriage, there are times when you just have to put some things on the shelf and agree not to allow them to work negatively in the marriage.

Sometimes in a congregation, people will not see things exactly alike. They might have disagreements, but in essence, Paul said, "I encourage you to be of the same mind in the Lord." Sometimes people try to go beyond that. They want to make people of the same mind in everything, whether it is in the Lord or not. Paul said to be of the same mind in the Lord.

In essence, Paul said in verse 3 of our Scripture text: "I have addressed those who have the little issue. Now I want to talk to those who are truly the church." He said in Philippians 4:3, "I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life." He did not say, "The rest of you choose a side and try to find out all the information you can about the

quarrel." He said to the rest of the congregation, "I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women." God wants us to help others, not hinder them. He wants us to do our very best to help in the things of God.

The flesh likes to take the easy route. Sometimes if we are a little more acquainted with someone, it is easier to see it their way. The Philippian writer was concerned about souls, and that is what we should be concerned with also. In the Book of Isaiah, the Prophet wrote that for Zion's sake and for Jerusalem's sake, we should be concerned about the image of the church, the congregation, and the salvation of souls. That should be the motivator in causing us to want to work together.

Just because there is a disagreement or because a person has a problem, that does not mean he has lost out with God. Dear one, I have been saved long enough to know that when you run into problems, the devil is right there to tell you that you are no longer saved. He may say, "If you were saved, this would not be happening." If you should get sick or have physical problems, the devil will say, "If you were where you really ought to be with God, this would not be happening." Just because you have a problem or find that you have made a mistake, that does not mean that God has given up on you. That does not mean that God has decided to push you aside.

### **Getting Established in Your Christian Experience**

In 1 John 2:1a we read, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." He would not have written that if it was not possible. Many religious people say, "Well, I know that is in the Bible, but it is not possible." God did not put something in His Word in vain. This Scripture tells us that by His help and grace, we can resist the enemy, we can resist temptation and sin not.

Friend, if you commit sin, God is not finished with you. He is not ready to abandon you or forsake you. He loves you.

It takes time to get established in the things of God. Sometimes there are failures that you must deal with in getting established in your Christian experience. As a pastor, I have worked with young people, and I have learned there are many different situations that people come from after having lived in sin and getting saved.

I took a strong stand against certain things the night God saved me, things that I knew were wrong, and things that I knew I would never go back to with His help. Some really clear-cut boundaries were drawn the night God saved me. However, for young people who have not been raised in the church around the Truth, sometimes it takes time to begin to discern where those boundaries really are. In the day in which we are living, the religious world has gotten so loose. Society has accepted so many things that when people come in to a house of God, it takes more work to get them to understand and see the Truth.

God is not through with a person because he has made a mistake. If we are not careful, we can make people think that one mistake causes them to be doomed; then the devil will be there to cause them to stop trying. If you have made a mistake or committed sin, do not let that be your ruin. It is better if you do not do things that are wrong or fail God; but if you do, do not give up serving God. You need to bring it to God as soon as you understand that it has occurred.

The devil will say, "You messed up, so you might as well not even try." You need to take it to God. Our job as the church is what Paul said in Philippians. Again, he said in verse 3 of our Scripture text, "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow. . . ." Those who are truly saved, who are truly a part of the church, and who truly love God should help others with their problems. How-

ever, that does not mean you should run around trying to get into everybody's business, but when you know there is a problem, you can try to help. It may be that the help you give comes in the form of praying about the matter.

### Offering Help

Both of the individuals in our Scripture lesson were important to the congregation. Everyone who gets saved is important and can contribute and be a benefit to the work of the Lord. Suppose you were asked what part of your body you would want to surrender. What part would you be willing to give up? Would you say, "You can take my little finger"? In reality, you would not even want to give up that. You would not want to give up one toe, because each member of your body plays a part and is important. Likewise, every individual is important in the work of God. You may not preach or teach or sing, but you are valuable to the work of God.

It probably would have been easy for the Philippian people to look at the situation and say, "If they cannot get this straightened out, they can just go down the road." Sometimes it may seem easier to push things aside and let them go, but God wants us to help. What

most situations really need are some good helpers. Every congregation, large or small, needs those who will truly help in the work of God. Every pastor is so thankful for those whom he knows are his helpers. I thought about this even in the sense of family and children. For example, with six children I do not have to get my own coffee very often. I can ask one of my children to do it for me. It is nice to have helpers.

I believe that every pastor enjoys those upon whom he can count to help. As soon as you feel that you can, perhaps you could drop a note or a card to your pastor and say: "Pastor, is there anything I can do to help you? I do not want to get in the way, but if there is anything you need, I am willing to help." That is a blessing to a pastor. In our congregation there are quite a few children and young couples. Lately it seems that they have been increasingly offering help, and that has been a blessing. We live in a busy time, and it is so nice when people are there to offer a helping hand. Sometimes your children may come and say, "Dad, do you want me to mow the yard today?" That is a blessing.

Paul wanted the saints in the Philippian congregation to work together. We are not going to stop problems from coming. As long as we are in this flesh, some things are

going to come up from time to time. God wants us to be helpers. You can be a helper in spreading the Gospel by applying what you have learned.

When I was in school, sometimes between classes a fight would break out in the hallway. Soon a circle would begin to form. Some students would support this one, and others would support that one. Right away, they would start dividing and supporting one or the other in the quarrel. That is not what God wants His people to do. He wants people to help resolve situations and to be helpers. God wants you to be a helper in the great work of God. If you do all you can to help, it will be rewarding to you, and it will be rewarding to others. It is a much better path to take. Who will suffer for the Gospel? If you are not sure what you can do, then you can ask God. The Bible says if you lack wisdom, ask God. I am sure God has something for everyone to do. Everyone is valuable to God. God wants to use you. No doubt, you could be a help to your pastor and the congregation. You can help take the Gospel message to others. I want to encourage you to be all that you can be for God. May God bless you.

*(Compact Disc TR-824M)*

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# Announcements

## NEWARK, OH

December 26-30

**CAMP MEETING:** The Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055

Three services daily: 10:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. The first service begins Wednesday evening. The afternoon service will be a teaching service.

For lodging reservation, please call Bro. or Sis. Dave Bush at 740-345-1213

For further information contact: Pastor Roger Decker, 87 Decrow Ave., Newark, OH 43055

Telephone: 740-344-2543

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## 2013 Camp Meeting Dates

June 16-23 August 4-11 December 26-29

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See Bible School announcement on page 11.

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## Winter Camp Meeting

December 26-30, 2012

*Make your reservations now to come and worship  
the Lord with us in an old-fashioned  
camp meeting at God's Acres, Newark, Ohio.*

*(See page 27 inside for more information.)*