

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 42 March 2012 No. 3



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*

# Guest Editorial

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

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

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

### THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

### SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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

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*"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."*

*Isaiah 55:6*

*"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation. . . ?"*

*Hebrews 2:3*

## Do Not Procrastinate

The Lord graciously gives every man and woman an allotted time to make his or her decision in preparation for eternity. Think about it. Eternity—it is time without end. Sad to say, many people put off the opportunities that God affords them. Through procrastination, multitudes allow redemption for their souls to slip away.

Time is a precious commodity that, when spent, can never be regained. God has given some people more time and opportunities than He has to others. Since no one knows how much time he or she will be given to make peace with God, it behooves every individual to act quickly.

Death comes to the very young as well as the middle aged and the elderly. It may come suddenly and without warning. On the other hand, death may come as a result of a prolonged illness that one suffers. The time of death is not the greatest issue, but rather it is the condition of the individual's soul when death comes.

The younger generation often entertains the thought that they have plenty of time to decide their eternal destiny because they are young. At present, their lives seem to be going well, not realizing that death could be very near. Middle-aged men and women are cumbered about with many things, and being in the prime of their lives, they are wrapped with getting and having. Their health may be good, they may be blessed with a good job, and they may be enjoying many of life's benefits and pleasures. Being actively engaged in the affairs of living, the thought of death never seems to cross their minds. Then there are the elderly who have wasted all their good

years on themselves and now feel that they have nothing to offer God but their wrecked and worn out bodies.

It is important to take advantage of the time while it is being offered to you. For this reason, those who are truly wise ought to be diligent and grasp God's offer to be delivered from sin and ruin. Procrastinating, or putting off one's salvation, is a serious matter, and it will end with disastrous consequences. Hebrews 4:7 tells us, "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." In 2 Corinthians 6:2 we read these words of admonition: "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Today millions are in a lost eternity simply because they put off giving heed to the need of God in their souls.

May we remind you that as we live in the midst of life, we also live in the midst of death? Just because all seems to be well and good today does not mean that it will always stay that way. Situations and circumstances can come about that can drastically change you in a very short period of time. Freak accidents often occur without any forewarning and take a person's life. It is possible that tragedy can leave you in a mentally incapable state where you cannot reason soundly. There are times when one may be stricken with a sudden illness that quickly leads him to the grave. These issues are not mentioned to try to scare you, but rather to awaken you to the realities that could face anyone at any time. Our adversary wants to do his best to blind the minds of men and women to their need of real salvation and the finality of death.

[continued on page 26]

Ezekiel 36:25 *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.*

26 *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an*

*heart of flesh.*

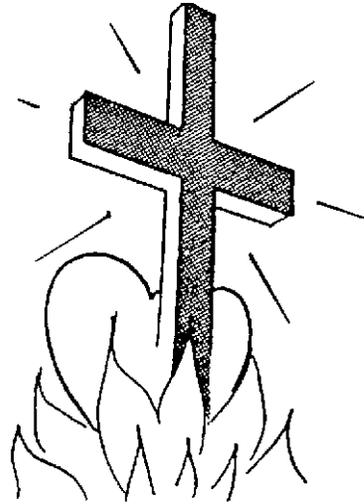
27 *And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

28 *And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.*

29 *I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you.*

30 *And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.*

# A New Heart



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

## **"The Washing of Regeneration"**

I thank the Lord for the prophesy in our Scripture text that has come to pass. Earlier in the chapter, you can see that the prophesy is concerning the house of Israel. Second Peter 1:21 says, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The Prophet Ezekiel said that God would sprinkle clean water upon you and you would be clean. The Prophet Ezekiel was not talking about water baptism. He used the expression, "sprinkle," and we know that water

baptism is by immersion. Also, water baptism is not always done in clean water. Sometimes people are baptized in a river, and that water may not necessarily be clean water.

What is it that God sprinkles on you to make you clean? He was not speaking of literal water. You are cleansed from all filthiness and all impurities by the Word, and then you are to walk in His statutes and keep His judgments. That is the change that took place when I was saved. When I came to the place of turning completely to the Lord, I received forgiveness for all my sins, I forsook all sin, and a definite

change took place in my heart and life. Clean water was sprinkled on me when I obeyed God's Word, and God gave me a new heart.

What is this water that is sprinkled on you? Titus 3:4-5 tells us: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Ephesians 5:25-26 says: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might

sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." John 15:3 states, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." First Peter 1:23 reads, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible [seed], by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

### **What Is the Heart Capable Of?**

What is this new heart, and when do you receive it? The heart of man is the real you. The literal heart keeps the natural man operating; it is the chief organ of physical life. Likewise, the spiritual heart keeps the spiritual man alive. There are many attributes of the heart. The heart can do many things. The heart is capable of thinking. Jesus said in Luke 24:38, "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?"

The heart is capable of being hardened. We read in Hebrews 3:15, "While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." The heart is capable of understanding. Proverbs 8:5 says, "O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart." Also, the heart is capable of rejoicing. We read in 1 Samuel 2:1, "And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation."

When you believe, you must believe from the heart. In Acts, Chapter 8, you can read that a great revival broke out down in Samaria, and an angel of the Lord told Philip to go down from Jerusalem to Gaza. In the desert he met an eunuch. Philip preached to him, and the eunuch asked in verse 36, "What doth hinder me from being baptized?" Verse 37 reads, "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." That was more than merely mouth confession;

it came from the heart.

In Acts, Chapter 7, when Stephen was being stoned, we see that the heart is capable of being very agitated and enraged. Verse 54 states, "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." I wanted you to read these few Scriptures to show you some of the things the heart is capable of. The heart is the man on the inside. When you get saved, that is where the change comes, and that is where the believing is done. The outward man makes a way for you to communicate with others, and it carries around the real heart of man. Again, the soul (the heart) of man is capable of thoughts, of anger, of rejoicing, and of being hardened.

### **The Condition of the Heart**

Proverbs 4:23 instructs, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." The wells of the east were watched over with special care. The heart is such a fountain, because out of it flows the issues of life, and you should never let those streams become tainted at the fountainhead. The condition of your heart reveals what you are. The condition of your heart determines whether or not you receive anything from the message.

It takes quite a bit to satisfy people today. Some people think that serving God is dull. Serving God is a simple life, but I cannot think of anything better than marrying in the Lord, raising a family, and going to church every Wednesday and twice on Sunday, in addition to revivals and camp meetings. That is a good life, and it will save you from lots of things. It is good to lie down at night with a conscience void of offense, knowing that if God were to call you home, you would not have a worry about where you would spend eternity.

I repeat, the condition of your heart reveals what you are, for out of it are the issues of life. Out of your heart come your actions, your

thinking, and your emotions. Out of your heart comes the real you. Consider the heart before conversion. Sin dwells in the heart. In Matthew, Chapter 15, they were arguing over the traditions of man, eating with unwashed hands, and other things.

Matthew 15:16-20 reads: "And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. 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 unwashed hands defileth not a man."

Jesus was talking about when sin gets in the heart. When sin gets in the heart, out flow things such as lying, cheating, stealing, and so on. When does a person receive a new heart? The Prophet Ezekiel said in Ezekiel, Chapter 36, that when this clean water is sprinkled on you, you will be clean. He said in verses 25-26 of our Scripture text: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

### **Quickened With Christ**

What kind of heart is a stony heart? The stony heart is an unregenerate heart that will not submit to God, His will, His commandments, His Spirit, or His Truth. That heart must be removed in order for you to serve God. When the stony heart is removed, the Bible says that God puts in a new heart, which the Prophet Ezekiel calls a heart of flesh. What is a heart of flesh? It is a heart that is soft and subject to the will of God; it is cleansed from all sin.

Ezekiel said after the water is sprinkled upon you, you will be cleansed from all your filthiness. When does this take place? It takes place when the clean water is sprinkled upon you. When is the stony heart removed? When there is faith in the water that is sprinkled upon you. Verse 27 of our Scripture text says, "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." This is done during conversion. All sin is removed when one repents and truly confesses and forsakes sin.

In Romans 6:5 the Apostle Paul said, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." When you die out to sin, just as Christ died on the Cross for our sins, you will also be raised up as He was raised up by the Spirit of God. When you come to an altar of prayer and confess and forsake sin, you will be raised up by the same Spirit that brought Jesus Christ from the tomb. There is Bible for it. There is only one Holy Spirit. As saints, we are planted together like seed that is sown in the earth, and we grow together. The Bible says we are raised up together.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:19-20 to the Ephesians, a Gentile congregation: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." Paul was speaking of the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:1-6: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the de-

sires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." I want you to think about that last verse.

Again, Ephesians 1:20 reads, "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." The same Spirit that resurrected Jesus Christ and set Him in the heavenly places raised us up and caused us to sit in heavenly places. Paul stated in Romans 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." What does the word *henceforth* mean? It means "from now on."

Paul said, "Henceforth we should not serve sin." According to the Scriptures, when the "old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth [from then on] we should not serve sin." When do you stop serving sin? When you receive the Holy Ghost, you stop serving sin; that is when you get real salvation. Do you have to continue to sin? No! You stop serving sin when the old man is crucified, when the body of sin is destroyed. I repeat, from that moment on, you stop serving sin. If the "old man" were alive and well after conversion, then you would still be a sinner. Friend, if you are doing the same sinful things that you did when you were living in sin, you still need to be converted.

### **Purifying Our Hearts by Faith**

Acts 15:8-9 reads: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by

faith." Those two Scriptures are used to show that when you get the Holy Ghost, the heart is purified.

Acts 15:1-5: "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

"And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses."

Some men came down from Judaea to teach the brethren. The Jews told the brethren if they were not circumcised according to the practice of Moses, they could not be saved. The Scripture says that when Paul and Barnabas disputed with them, they arranged for Paul and Barnabas and some others to go up to Jerusalem to the Apostles. That was to get the question settled once and for all. They were sent on their way by the church. They passed through Phenice and Samaria, and as they passed through, they told the story of the conversion of the Gentiles, and that brought great joy amongst the brethren.

When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church, the Apostles, and the elders. They told the story of all that God had done, but some men of the Pharisees, who were converts, rose up and, in essence, said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command

them to keep the law of Moses."

Verses 6-12 read: "And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us [he was referring to what had happened at Cornelius's house and how the Holy Ghost was poured out on the Gentiles]; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

"Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them."

The Apostles and the elders met to investigate this question. After a great deal of discussion, Peter stood up and said, in essence: "You know that in the early days God made His choice among us so that through my mouth the Gentiles should hear the Gospel and believe. God, who knows men's hearts, bare His own witness to them by giving them the Holy Spirit just as He had done for us. There was Pentecost, and there was also the pouring out of the Holy Ghost Cornelius's house."

"He made no distinction between us and them, for He purified their hearts by faith. So why do you now tempt God by placing on the necks of the disciples the yokes, which neither our fathers nor we had the strength to bear? It is through the grace of Jesus Christ that we believe we have been saved in exactly the same way as they have been saved." The whole assem-

bly fell silent. They listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told the story of all the signs and wonders God had done among the heathen through them.

Going back to verses 8-9, we read: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost [He was talking about the Gentiles], even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

How were their hearts purified? Were they purified by the Holy Ghost or by faith? Again, verse 9 states, "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." That is how you and I were converted. When the Gospel sprinkled clean water upon us, or on the inner man, we gave obedience to that water that was sprinkled. God gave us conversion and purified our hearts by faith. God could not give the Holy Ghost to anyone who did not have faith.

#### **Do You Have a Pure Heart?**

Psalm 24:1-4 reads: "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."

That is an Old Testament prophecy concerning the church. The question was asked, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?" What is the hill of the Lord? Psalm 2:6 tells us, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Zion is a type that represents the Church of God, so the Church of God is the holy hill – Mount Zion is the Church of God. If you say there is still sin in the heart when one is born into the church, then the message of holiness would be a farce. When you are converted, you ascend into the hill

of the Lord; in other words, you enter the church. If you were to say there is still sin in the heart, then the message would be against holiness. The message of holiness is not a fairy tale.

In order for sin to be laid to one's account, two things must be present. This is how you can know whether something is sin or not: you must have knowledge and will. Sin can be committed in two forms: the sin of omission and the sin of commission. First, let us read about the sin of omission. James 4:17 tells us, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." I want you to notice two words in that Scripture: "knoweth" and "doeth," which take in your knowledge and your will.

Next, there is a sin of commission. First John 3:4 reads, "Who-soever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." God gives you the right to choose, just as He did Adam and Eve. Are not all souls the Lord's? Is it not God who gives a soul? Inheriting a sinful soul would mean that God gives you a defiled soul; therefore, one could come back and charge God. However, we know that is not true.

When one is saved, he receives a clean heart. He receives a heart of flesh that is receptive to God's laws, His commandments, and His will. You receive a new heart in conversion. As the Lord looks upon you right now, how does He see your heart? Does He see defilement or does He see a pure heart?

*(Compact Disc TR-765E)*

**The path of the world may seem pleasant enough if you don't stop to think where you are going.**

John 10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and

know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast

of the dedication, and it was winter.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

30 I and my Father are one.

# WAYS THAT PEOPLE CUT THEMSELVES OFF FROM THE FOLD



*Brother Paul Prinkey*

## **Benefits of Being in the Fold**

I want to share a few thoughts concerning why the fold is a good place to be. The first good reason to

be in His fold is, Jesus said in our Scripture text in verse 9, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved. . . ." That is a good reason to be in the fold. He does not

merely save you from sin and give you salvation. Salvation is more than that. He will save you from all your troubles. David said in Psalm 34:4, "I sought the LORD, and He

heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Today we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. Thank God! Why? Christ is our Savior, and He will save us. If you are going through a hardship or if you are afflicted, God will save you from that.

The second good reason to be in the fold is, you will find satisfaction. In the latter part of verse 9 of our Scripture text Jesus said, ". . . he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." I have watched people take care of their flocks and herds. As they take care of them, they work for the well-being of the animals. They switch them from one pasture to another for them to eat. Those animals stay satisfied.

If you are satisfied in your experience, you will not search any place other than the Church of God. God has everything that you need in the pasture of the Church of God. You will not try to fill up on something else. You will put your legs under the Father's table and begin to feast.

The third good reason to be in the fold of the Lord is, you will find more abundant life. Jesus said in verse 10 of our Scripture text, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." I am glad there is more abundant life through Jesus Christ! Before I was saved, I was alive, but not to God. I had a physical existence, but I was dead spiritually. The day that God saved me, He delivered me from sin and gave me new life through the Spirit of the Lord. I experienced abundant life, which goes far beyond a physical existence. I have life whenever it does not seem there is any reason to live.

You may become discouraged and feel that there is just no use in being here. You can pray to God, just as Elijah talked to Him and said: "You might as well take me on to be with my fathers. There is no use in

my staying down here." You may feel that way, but abundant life will still carry you through, and it will give you a reason for living.

The fourth good reason to be in the fold of the Lord is, we will have eternal life, not just abundant life. I am not living merely for this temporal, physical world. There is something beyond this world that I am living for, and it is eternal life. Jesus told us in verse 28 of our Scripture text, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Eternal life can only come through Jesus Christ. You cannot have it any other way.

Last, a good reason to be in the fold is, we are under His protection. You would not be able to last a day as a Christian without the protection of our Heavenly Father. First John 4:4 tells us, "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." The one in the world is greater than any of us. The only reason we are able to live and to be victorious is that our Heavenly Father holds us in His hands. He has the biggest hands of any person I know of, and He can fit all of us in the palms of His hands and keep us safe. He can shelter us whenever the storms come, and He will keep us safe from all harm.

### **Divine Protection**

God told Israel in Exodus 19:4, "I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." They thought there was no hope, so they cried out to God for mercy. What did God do? He sent Moses to bring them out of Egypt on eagles' wings to Himself; in other words, under His protection. Today we have that same protection. Jesus said in John 10:29, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." I thank God that we can have this security. Friend, as long as you want to be kept, God will keep you.

Jesus spoke to Jerusalem in His day and said in Matthew 23:37,

"How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Jesus longed to be a protector to the Jews and to have them as a part of His fold, but they rejected Him, and ultimately, Jesus rejected them. Jesus gave a revelation in verse 16 of our Scripture text when He said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

The Jews were selfish people, as a whole, and they did not want to share Jesus with anyone. They did not want to believe that He was the Messiah, and they got themselves in a place where Jesus was striving to draw them in under His protection, but they kept pushing Him away. It was not always that way in Jesus' ministry, you will find in His early days that the Jews held Him in high esteem.

In John 3:2 Nicodemus paid Jesus a visit one night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know [Who was Nicodemus talking about when he said *we*? He was talking about the scribes, the Pharisees, and the religious hierarchy of that day.] that thou art a teacher come from God."

The Jews esteemed Christ as a good teacher, but He started getting into trouble when He began to deal with some of their traditions and told them how they ought to live, who they ought to love, and the way they ought to conduct their lives. When He got to the heart of the matter, they started to reject Him and said: "Who is this man? Who does He think He is? He cannot tell us to lay aside our traditions because we are making the Word of God of none affect. He healed on the Sabbath day, yet we have a law that you are not supposed to do that on the Sabbath."

Therefore, the Jews began to reject Him. They turned from their support of Christ to working against Him. Jesus finally had to say: "You are either for Me or against Me, one

or the other. There is no middle ground. You must make your choice."

God gives each of us a choice. Every day you make the choice, "Am I going to be God's today?" Even as the Jews in Jesus' day took steps that effectively separated them from Jesus' care, people in our day do things that separate them from the fold of Christ. It is not by chance or by accident that people quit serving God. It is a result of conscious decisions and actions when they end up leaving the fold.

### Blaming Others

I want to deal with a few ways that people cut themselves off from the fold. Too many people like to blame others for their problems. They like to say that the pastor made them give up on the Lord or that some hypocrite in the congregation drove them away. Some people blame their failure on problems at work from a harsh boss or a wife who does not understand or a husband who gives them a hard time about going to church. People have a host of excuses when they want to turn their backs on God.

I ask you to give serious consideration to the ways that people cut themselves off. No one else can cut you off from a spiritual experience with God. If you are not living for the Lord today, if you once knew the Lord and have left the church, you cannot blame anyone but the person you look at in the mirror every morning. You are the one who is at fault. No one can make you give up on God.

In the Scripture text you read that no man can pluck you out of the Father's hand. Your wife or your husband cannot do it, your children cannot do it, and your pastor cannot do it. You have to remove yourself if you quit living for God.

You may say: "You don't understand what I have to deal with. I have an unsaved companion." No, I might not understand everything about that, because I

have never had to experience it; but I do understand my Heavenly Father, and He has broad hands. My hands are large, but they are no where near the size of God's hands. He has broad hands to keep you in. No man, no woman, and no creature can pluck you out. You may say, "But that person is evil." Nevertheless, that person cannot pluck you out of God's hand. We have the Word of Jesus Christ, and I have confidence in His Word.

### Disregarding God's Word

The first way that people cut themselves off from the fold of Christ is by disregarding God's Word. Second Corinthians 13:1-3 says: "This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare: Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you."

Paul made full proof of his ministry. He said when he went to them, he did not go in words of man's wisdom, but he went preaching Christ and Him crucified. Signs and works followed his preaching. Paul had to write to them a third time. He said some had sinned, but all the others needed to listen too. He included everyone. So when your pastor is preaching, you should not feel that he is picking on you. He is preaching the message to the whole congregation, whether you are guilty or not. If your face gets red and your heart gets heavy, maybe you need to pray. Your countenance tells on you many times. Sometimes people have heard it, and they have heard it again, and then the pastor tells them a third time. Researchers say that people only get one third of what they hear, so maybe that is the reason the preacher has to repeat himself two

or three times. That way people will get 100 percent of what he says.

Some people say they believe the Bible, but they have trouble obeying the message that the pastor preaches under the anointing of the Spirit of God. Are you living what is preached? You may say, "Well, now, he is just a man." Yes, but he is God's man. I always liked John 1:6, which says, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." Today God still sends men, and they have the authority to wield the Word. They are able to exhort and exert the authority that God has given them. If you make concessions on God's Word, you are heading for trouble. The process of cutting yourself off has already begun.

You must remember that much of the Word of God was given through a man, so you still have to listen to a man if you are going to believe the Bible. The Word of God was sanctified by God and it was given through holy men of God anointed by the Holy Ghost. The Word of God must be accepted as the final authority for rules and guidelines and for the standard of living for our lives. God's Word is not a suggestion to the child of God. God's Word is the final authority. If you begin to wrest the Scriptures, resist them, and resist what the pastor is saying, you are setting yourself up for a fall. Then it will not be long until the spiritual life you have will be snuffed out.

God still means what He says through the pastor, and God has designed for every one of us to be pastored, or ruled. People do not like the word *ruled*. It goes against the grain of some people, but God intended His people to be ruled. Believe it or not, you need to be told what you ought to do. You may say, "I am an adult now; I make my own way in life." You are heading for trouble, if you are not already there. I do not know of anyone who is a self-made man or a self-made woman.

God's Word must be accepted as the final authority. Do you listen to

your pastor? Does your life testify to the message that he is preaching when you go out into the world? Are you tearing down the congregation and the message by the life you are living?

### **Having an Independent Spirit**

The second way that people separate themselves from the fold is, they get an independent spirit. In 2 Corinthians 3:5 Paul said, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." He said in 2 Corinthians 4:7, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

Thinking that you can make it on your own and do all right is a mistake. You need help from God, you need the help of your godly pastor, and you need help from the congregation. There is something else that God has put in each of us that causes us to be a people who need to associate with others of like precious faith. When you get saved, something automatically happens, and that is, God will cause you to want to be with His people. You will want to attend church.

Before I got saved, I did not even want to meet the pastor at the door when the service was over. I did not want to be at the house of God in the first place, and the pastor probably noticed it. Sometimes I would leave by the side door so I could avoid him, because he always stood at the back doors to shake people's hands when the service was over. I was living wrong and feeling condemned and convicted, so I did not want to meet him or to be around him. The closer I got to God's people, the worse I felt, so when the services were over, I tried to get out of there as quickly as I could.

Something happened after I gave my life to God. January 1, 1986, a message was preached, and the Spirit of God got hold of my heart that night, and I did not get away. I knelt down at an altar of prayer and

prayed through, and God saved me. Next, I stood to my feet and made a confession to the congregation. When the service ended, I did not have any desire to run for the side door anymore. I wanted to keep company with the people of God, shake their hands, and hug their necks. It has been that way ever since. I do not have to run away from God's people. I want to be around them.

There is a sense of fellowship and a desire for unity that I have now that I did not have before I was saved. Where did it come from? It came from salvation through the Spirit of God. However, you have to take care, lest an independent spirit try to take hold of you.

Sometimes you may be tempted to keep to yourself. The devil troubles every one of us; no one is exempt. The devil will come around, and you may be in the midst of a trial or a battle and you do not want anyone to know what you are going through. When you hang on by your own strength, or if you think you can, you become weak. You cannot stand on your own. You do not have any sufficiency of yourself. Paul told us that our sufficiency is of God. The Christian needs to pray and lay their troubles on the altar. You may need to counsel with the pastor. If you try to bear the battle in your own strength, you will get weak, and the devil will get his foot in the door. The next thing you know, you will begin to miss the church services and make excuses about why you do not go.

A person with an independent spirit is most susceptible to being devoured by the devil. In John 15:5 Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing." You cannot live a successful life without God. God will not support, promote, or back a self-sufficient attitude. You have to give up self and allow God to take control. Your pastor can be one of the best persons to help you in your hardest battles. Sometimes we each need help.

You may say, "But Paul told the

Galatians to bear their own burdens." However, he said in verse 2 of the same chapter, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Sometimes you may go through troubles and come through victorious, but other times you might have to seek help. One way you can receive help is to talk to your pastor. God gives a pastor broad shoulders to bear your troubles too.

Do not let the devil get the advantage of you. Do not be ignorant of his devices. He wants to get you off by yourself and get you to rely on your own strength, your own knowledge, and your own understanding. If you are not leaning on someone when you need to, the devil will take advantage of you every time.

### **Having a Love for Worldly Things**

The third way that people cut themselves off from the fold is by loving worldly things. Paul spoke about his helper Demas in 2 Timothy 4:10 and said, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." This has gotten hold of more people than not. Probably more than half of the people who have ceased to follow God have done so because they lusted after the world; they lusted after worldly things. Demas effectively cut himself off from the fold by his love for worldly things. People try to place the blame for their downfalls and shortcomings on other people or situations, but the blame falls on the individuals themselves.

Second Peter 2:20 says, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." Sadly, I have watched this happen to many people. They are in worse shape today than ever before. It would have been better for them to have never known the Lord than to have turned their

backs on Him.

How do people become entangled again with the world? They get too close to the world. You must put a separation between you and the world and keep your distance. Why? If you get too close to the things of the world, you will end up being snared by them. Certain temptations may be greater than you can bear; therefore, if you put yourself in a compromising position, you may give in.

In the Old Testament Joseph knew how to keep himself pure, and it required him to run in the face of temptation. Some people need to run, because they are just too close to being ensnared again and entangled in the things of the world. They are toying with what the world has to offer, paying more attention to the bright lights than to the church sign. In just a matter of time, if they do not get close to God where they ought to be, their spiritual lives will be snuffed out. You cannot toy with the things of the world and get by. Some people have stumbled, and then they have gotten down to business with God and straightened out their lives. God will tarry for a while with you, but He will not wait forever. In the days of Noah God tarried, but He did not wait forever. God still deals the same way today. The Spirit of God is still speaking. You need to listen. He is speaking for your own good; it is for our own benefit. You will end up cutting yourself off from the fold if you lust after worldly things.

I have hunted a lot in the mountains of Pennsylvania, and we have green briars in the woods that stay green even in the wintertime. The animals like to hide in those briars because predators cannot easily get into those thick briar bushes. In order for me to get them out of there, I would go in there and stomp the bushes and spook them out so I could get a good shot at them. I have gotten myself so entangled in those green briars that I could hardly get loose. I would have to set my gun down and start pick-

ing off the briars to make a path to get out because I had become so entangled. Sometimes that is what happens to people spiritually. They get into the devil's briar patch where they do not belong. They get so tangled in the thorns and the briars that they are held captive. If you get into the devil's briar patch, you cannot blame anyone else.

When I hunted and got into those briars, more times than not, I did not get what I was after. That is just what the devil does to people. He sets up something that seems so good, saying: "Ah, wouldn't you like to do this? Doesn't that look entertaining and good?" About the time you set foot in it, you are ensnared and you never do get what you are after. What are people after today? They are trying to find fulfillment, pleasure, satisfaction, and happiness. What do they get out of sin? They reap death, misery, grief, loss, regrets, depression, discouragement, and despair. Nothing good comes out of the world.

James 4:4 tells us, "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." That should stand as enough of a warning to every one of us as children of God. We must stay away from questionable things, things that would cause us to compromise our stand for God.

Jesus said in Revelation 2:4, "Thou hast left thy first love." If you have left your love for Christ, you have developed a love for worldly things. I can guarantee you that you are in love with something. If you do not love Jesus, you love something else. Maybe it is the boat that you have in the garage that you have only used once. It is said there are only two good days in owning a boat: the day you buy it and the day you sell it. People spend hours on their boats to keep them clean and to keep a tarp over them, but often they never leave the driveway.

One fellow was so in love with fishing. He was a professed Christian, and one Sunday morning he called his buddy and asked if he

wanted to go fishing. His buddy said: "I have never fished with you on Sunday. I thought you always went to church."

The man said, "Well, my wife is sick this morning, so I couldn't go anyway."

Have you left your first love? If you do not love Jesus, what do you love?

### **Lacking Earnest Endeavor**

The fourth way that people separate themselves from the fold of Christ is, they lack earnest endeavor. They do not put their whole hearts into serving God. Hebrews 11:6 speaks of God being a "rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Second Timothy 2:15 says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Many people have cut themselves off by lacking the spiritual drive and the motivation they need. They have allowed the laziness of the flesh to take over. Some people have become lazy.

One man spoke these words: "I have very little sympathy for any man who has been redeemed by the precious blood of the Son of God and who has not got the spirit of work." If you are a child of God, you should not have one lazy drop of blood in your veins. If a man tells me that he has been saved and does not desire to work for the glory of God, I doubt his salvation. Laziness belongs to the old man, not the new man.

D. L. Moody said: "In all my experience, I never knew a lazy man to be converted, never. I have more hope for the salvation of drunkards, thieves, and harlots than a lazy man." Again, some people lack the motivation, or the earnest endeavor, of putting their whole hearts into the work of God.

The faithful Christian wants to be at church and wants to see if the pastor needs a helping hand. He wants to be there listening whenever the prayer requests are going forth to bear the burdens of those in

need. He wants to help where he can. Some people get to the point where apathy and laziness of the flesh sets in, and they begin to lay back.

As young people come along and grow up, we need to make a place for them. It is time for them to start to bear the yoke of the church. My father always taught me that I needed to learn to bear the yoke in my youth, and that is good. We need more youth bearing the yoke in the church, not just leaving it up to a few people to play musical instruments, sing, and testify.

Young person, this is a common salvation. If others can do it, you can do it as well. You need to pray about it and ask God to burden your heart with a testimony, a song, or a gift. I wonder sometimes what the future of the church is going to be if people keep laying back and letting other people do the work. You need to put your heart into the work of God.

We need to have the spirit of work and the spirit of earnest endeavor. If you become lazy on God, you will end up losing your experience over it. The laziness of the flesh begins to take over when people quit seeking God's help in their battles. In Psalm 63:1 David said, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee." You should not wait until you are just hanging by a thread; you must seek Him early. As soon as I know I have a problem, I begin to pray and take my burden before the Lord. His Word instructs me that I can cast all my cares on Him, because He cares for me; and that is what I am doing. Jesus said in Matthew 21:22, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

The laziness of the flesh begins to take over when people quit putting forth effort to be in church. Often when you ask them about it, they give the halfhearted reply, "Well, I just did not feel up to going that night." What if every time the preacher did not quite feel up to preaching he just sat there? What would you think of him? People

think it is all right for them because they are just laity. They may say: "Don't count on me too much, preacher. I might be there and I might not." They need an old-fashioned spiritual pitch fork to help them along.

One time when my parents asked me, "Are you ready for church?" I said, "I don't want to go." Their reply was: "That's too bad. It's time to leave. You have three minutes to get ready." I knew what would happen after three minutes if I was not ready. The board of education would have been applied to the seat of knowledge. You may say, "Well, I'm an adult now." Then you ought to be more responsible. You should get your dress clothes on and get to church. Sometimes I marvel at how easily people put off going to church. If the smallest thing happens, they are ready to stay home. One brother said, "Christians are just like cars: they start missing before they quit." That is exactly what happens.

Some people get lazy when it comes to studying the Bible. How can you learn more about Christ and God's ways and how you ought to live unless you study the Book? In Psalm 119:11 David said, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." I do not want to be caught unawares and end up doing something that displeases God. I want to learn more about His Word. Psalm 119:9 says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."

Some people get lazy and do not want to study the Bible to get guidance from God. Sometimes people get to the point where they do not

want to seek council from the pastor whenever they need it. If you have a godly pastor, he can be one of your greatest helps in your time of need. Sometimes you have to motivate yourself. Perhaps you have prayed and asked God to help you, but you are not getting the help you need. What do you need to do? You should go talk to your pastor about it and council with him. You might be amazed at how quickly you can get the victory once you talk to your pastor. He is the watchman on the wall.

Are you cutting yourself off from the fold? Maybe you have already cut yourself off from the fold. There is hope in the Lord. Jesus Christ will receive you if you will seek Him. The Holy Scriptures promise that in the day that you seek Him with all your heart, you will find Him. There could come a time in your experience when you cool off or drift away from God. You need to draw close to Him again.

Friend, you need to get down to business with God and lay your life wide open before Him. You may say, "I did that when I got saved." Sometimes you need to do it again. You need to let God search your heart and life. Where do you stand with Him today. Is everything clear before God? Have you let something drive a wedge between you and God? Isaiah 55:6 instructs, "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." He is near. His ear has not become deaf. He can still hear, and He can still reach out and deliver. Won't you let God have His way in your heart and life?

*(Compact Disc TR-450M)*

**The world doesn't need a  
definition of religion as badly as  
it needs a demonstration.**

# Does Christ Feel at Home in Your Heart?

The Apostle Paul prayed for his fellow Christians at Ephesus on his knees, saying to them: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith . . ." (Ephesians 3:14, 17).

There is a great difference between visiting a place and living there. To have a snapshot memory of a beautiful experience is quite different from enjoying it perpetually. The Lord does not desire an occasional entry into our hearts or a weekend visit from Saturday night to Monday morning. He wants to live in our hearts every day and night—continuously; yet how many people simply entertain Him over Sunday, and when Monday morning comes and they must be about their usual work, they go on their way without Him! They no longer have room for Him. They do not arrange for Him to settle down and live with them permanently. What a pity!

Some people often treat Jesus as a virtual stranger. Their conversation with Him is very limited. It is so much like the language of speaking to someone in the hallway. It does not breathe the loving atmosphere of living together in the whole house.

In years gone by, the Lord raised prophets and apostles for a special task. Today He uses His called ministers of the Gospel, pastors, teachers, and others in the church with their gifts and talents. What better inspiration can there be for such grateful service than to experience Christ living in your heart, making His dwelling and home within you by faith. May you always let Him feel at home in your heart, thoughts, attitudes, disposition, conversation, play, and leisure. Then your

service for Him will be real, joyous, and fruitful.

The Psalmist said in Psalm 143:5-6: I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands. I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah." Today one wonders if a far deeper and more blessed connection with Heaven in the form of prayer were visible, how many hands of communication we would see reaching up to Heaven? How many persons would bow their knees before God's throne? God sees. He knows if your life is marked by the up reach of prayer.

In the hectic hurry and rush of our present time, many people have lost much of that leisurely communion with God that marked the like of our spiritual ancestors. In the beautiful language of the psalm, we have a glimpse of the indwelling of Christ in us. David said: "I remember . . . I meditate . . . I muse on the works of thy hands . . . I stretch forth my hands unto thee."

Today so much of people's time is spent relaxing. The sweet hours of prayer that used to call people from a world of care have shrunk to minutes and even seconds. Short sermons, short meditations, short prayers are preferred and demanded. There is not much time left for God and His program.

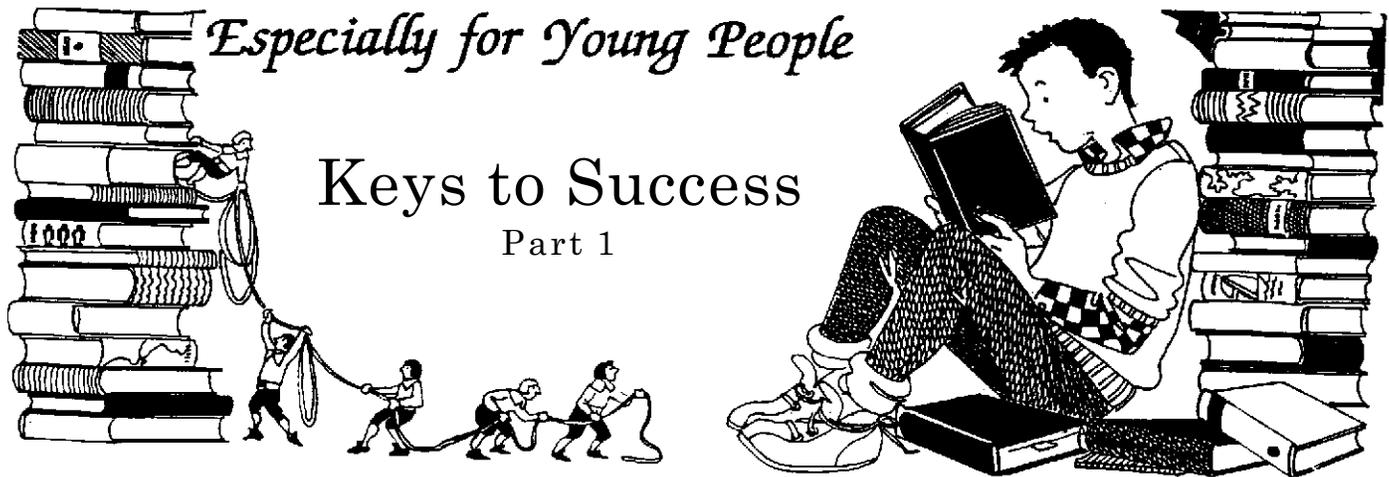
Sadly, there is no room in the inn for the Christ, but there is room for everything else under the sun. How spiritually impoverished are many people's homes and hearts!

The greatest need to Christendom today is the need of a dynamic, magnetic power of the Holy Spirit to cleanse and purify and strengthen people and to draw them closer to Him so that they may have the faith and the power and the wisdom to defy Satan and overcome sin.

Selected

## The Great Deliverer

There is no sickness but there is a balm;  
There is no storm but soon must come a calm;  
There is no broken heart but can be healed;  
No harsh earth noise but can in peace be stilled;  
No deep bereavement but shall find relief  
Deeper and greater than was ere the grief;  
No bitter wail but shall give way to song;  
No sufferer whose sufferings may not cease;  
No prisoner who may not find release;  
No earthly sorrow but hath its reward—  
If only we will wait and trust in the Lord.



## *Especially for Young People*

# Keys to Success

## Part 1

The word youth is defined as "a time of life when one is young; an early period of growth and development." Even if you have walked with the Lord for many years, it is still "an early period of growth and development" in the light of eternity. As a Christian, you want to continually be in a period of growth and development. If you are not growing in the Lord, you are shrinking. If you are not increasing in your love for God, His Word, and for one another, then you are decreasing and falling short. You are either hot or cold, a saint or a sinner.

If you become stagnant, you become like an old puddle of water. No life can be supported in a stagnant pool. Have you ever walked by a pool of water that has been sitting for a long time? It does not smell good, it does not look good, and it is not appealing to anyone. Likewise, if you stand around and do not put yourself into serving God, you will not be appealing to anyone. There is absolute beauty and value in youth. Young people are very special in the eyes of God, and they were special in the eyes of Christ when He was here.

At one time in my life I believed that life was not worth living. I had turned my back on God and the people whom I loved and cared about. I honestly thought the world would be a better place without me. The devil had convinced me of that.

One afternoon in the spring-

time, I stopped by the homes of old friends, places of work, and places of business to say goodbye to people. As I was driving home, I drove by the Stegmeier's house (pastor of the Church of God in Canby, Oregon). I had not seen any of them for quite some time, and I thought, "I am going to stop by and say goodbye." I was friends with many of the children. I walked in and sat down and said, "Hey, how are you all doing?"

Sister Stegmeier was teaching piano in another room, and suddenly she walked over to me and pulled me up out of the chair, grabbed my hand, and said, "Chris, we really love you." I looked at her and started to cry. She started to cry and said, "Chris, you need to make things right." She was very in tune with me as a young person, and I thank God for that. She saw in me the value of an eternity bound soul. She perceived that I needed a little encouragement and help in the place that I was in. She understands that youth can be a very difficult time in life.

There are many challenges in youth that are not found in any other time in life. There are difficult decisions, difficult changes, and trying to understand exactly what your place in the world is. If you are saved, you have the God of all creation who can give you those answers. The God who created the entire universe and each of us is so interested in you that He will take the time to show you exactly what

you should be, who you should marry, and what you should do in life in the work of the church.

Some people pay big money to sit in the presence of what they consider greatness, whether it is a sporting event, a political dinner, or to hear a prominent politician speak; yet the God of all creation is ready to speak to people as soon as they will submit to Him, but people let that go as though it does not matter. There is amazing potential in youth. God has pastors, evangelists, song leaders, and preachers. Young person, He could call you to one of these positions as easily as it could be the next person, but God wants willing young people.

Sometimes it is difficult as a young person. Do you ever feel that you are hard to be understood? I know I did. Sometimes it seemed that my mother did not understand me, and that is natural. God understands you, and though sometimes it may seem that an older person may not understand, believe me, they do. They understand what you are going through, and they want you to be successful in your spiritual life.

I want to talk to you about the meaning of success from a spiritual perspective and the differences between godly success and worldly success, as well as some similar characteristics that all successful people share.

If I could speak to you and ask you, "Do you want to be successful

as a Christian?" if you were honest, you would say, "Yes, I want to be a successful Christian." One of the greatest things about serving God is that we each have the exact same opportunity to be as successful as the next. We all start at the exact same place in our walk with God, which is at an altar of prayer. It all starts exactly the same for a child of God, and there is no reason for anyone to be unsuccessful. We all have the same exact means and ways to be successful in the eyes of God. The thing that is beautiful about this is that life turns out differently for every Christian. Though we each can be equally successful in serving God, it does not mean that we will turn out just alike.

Young person, you have an opportunity to become hugely successful in the service of God. God can use you in your youth, He can use you in your middle age, and He can use you as you get older. Just like there is beauty and value to youth, there is also real beauty and value to an elderly person.

As I talk about success, I want you to keep an open mind about what success is as it is defined by the world and as seen in the eyes of God and godly individuals. I want you to determine in your heart that you are going to be a successful Christian, no matter what.

The definition of success is "the achievement of intention; the achievement of something planned or attempted; attainment of fame, wealth, or power; impressive achievement, especially the attainment of fame, wealth or power; something that turns out well; something that turns out as planned or intended; or somebody successful, often defined as someone who is wealthy, famous, or powerful because of a record of achievement."

In simply reading this definition, you can plainly see that the world's view of success is perverted and out of line with what God's view of success is. How important is it in the ladder of success to God, to your pastor, and to your parents

that you attain worldly fame, wealth, or power? It is not even on that ladder at all. The things that the world defines as success are vain, empty, fleeting, and in many cases, sinful. As the people of this world look on success, they are looking at it from their own perspective; and that has nothing to do with God.

Godly success has nothing to do with societal stature, affluence, wealth, or popularity. None of that matters when it comes to godly success. Unfortunately, it is that worldly view of success that permeates young people today. You get it in school, over the radio, from other young people, and on your job. What they consider to be success is so far removed from what God wants in your life. The sad thing is that being around this worldly view and hearing it, you might soak it in. You cannot jump into a muddy pool and get out clean.

I understand that you have to be in school, go to work, and be around people who look at success totally backward from what God considers to be success. You have to be careful that you do not let other people's views of success cause you to think, "That would make me successful." You have to guard against that kind of attitude. Those who hold a worldly opinion of what success is do not understand that God has a level of success that is so much higher than any of that, and it is so easy to attain; they just cannot see it.

A study was done that asked young people as they graduated from high school and college and entered the workforce what they considered to be the most important thing in life. The overwhelming majority of them replied that the most important thing in life was money or the potential to become wealthy. That is extremely sad. Even if you are unsaved, you know that money cannot buy happiness, bring satisfaction, or make you successful in the eyes of God. There are lots of rich people who are the

furthest thing from success that you could ever see. Yet young people hear people say, "You have to be wealthy to be successful."

In the eyes of the world, money, prestige, fame, and power are the most important things that are needed to be successful. This drives people to obtain the things they want in life, but what did Jesus say? He said in Luke 12:15, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." It does not matter what you have.

Almost every person, young or old, remembers that sometime in his life when he received something that he thought was very special. It might have been your first bike or your first car. Do you remember as a child wanting something so badly that you asked your parents for it repeatedly? As a child, I wanted a blue bicycle that I thought was the coolest bicycle I had ever seen. I wanted it so much that I could hardly wait for it. Now I think it was the goofiest looking bicycle. Today I have no idea where that bicycle is. It does not mean anything to me now.

No doubt, you have been excited about something in your life in the past. There is not necessarily anything wrong with being excited about something. As excited as you might have been about that one thing that meant so much, where is that thing now? The point is, most material things eventually lose their luster and value.

Material things are so unimportant in life, young person. They seem very important when you are young. For example, you may be very proud of your vehicle. There is nothing wrong with that as long as you keep it in proper perspective. You have to understand that what Jesus said way back then is just as applicable today as it was then. Your life does not consist of what you possess. In other words, what you possess is not important.

[continued on page 24]

*Leviticus 11:44 For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

*45 For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.*

*46 This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature*

*that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth:*

*47 To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.*

# Holiness



*Brother David Watson*

## **Perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God**

We are serving a holy God. Certainly God revealed Himself to the people who came out of Egypt. Those people lived in Egypt for four hundred years, generation after generation, among all sorts of pagan gods in Egypt. God revealed some of this in Ezekiel, Chapter 29, when He called Pharaoh the dragon and his people the fish. The Israelites had come in contact with many gods and many natures in Egypt. God spoke to His people about a different nature, a nature that was different from any nature they knew. God has a nature far different from any god on this earth. There are all kinds of gods. There are all kinds of religions

in our world, but there is only one true God. He can only be known through a divine revelation. No other god is esteemed and lifted as high as our God. The Word of the Lord speaks of the difference between the clean and the unclean.

In 2 Corinthians, Chapter 7, the Apostle Paul wrote to the brethren at Corinth. The Church of God at Corinth had some heathens mixed in the congregation, such as the Greeks and others. In the first letter written to the Church of God at Corinth, you will find divers problems in that congregation. The Apostle Paul wanted the people to understand the revelation of God, so he said in 2 Corinthians 7:1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all fil-

thiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Paul admonished the saints at Corinth in 2 Corinthians 6:14, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" You must have a clean fellowship. Your righteousness must not be unrighteousness, as their righteousness was. Light cannot have communion with darkness. There must be a total separation between the true God and the gods of the infidels. There is nothing else in this world like the God whom we serve and God's church.

We know there are all kinds of

religions in our world and all kinds of beliefs among people. However, there is only one divine nature, and it is a holy nature. When you become God's child, you separate from all filthiness of the flesh, fleshly spirits, and the gods of this world. You become holy. The Bible teaches that God's people are a peculiar people, a people who are a treasure to God, a people who are proudly owned by Him. You see, we do not own ourselves. God owns us. We have sold out to the Lord, and we belong to Him. We have died to our will and to our own way, and we are guided and directed by the Spirit of God.

The fellowship of Jesus forbids that we have fellowship with unrighteousness. The Spirit of God does not agree with the temple of idols and uncleanness. God forbids that His people are an unclean people, but we must be a holy people. Sometimes people think that the Church of God is just another denomination and that we just call it a holiness church, but that is not true. You can write holiness on the outside of the building and call people holy, but the people are not holy until they know the divine nature of Jesus Christ by revelation of the Holy Ghost.

### **Becoming a New Creature**

It is the power of God that brings you from your own nature to the nature of God. It is the power of God that changes you from what you were to what He wants you to be. It is the power and the Spirit of God that cleanses you from all filthiness of the flesh. This is something that you cannot do on your own. Many times, no doubt, you have found yourself as I have found myself, saying, "I will quit this" or "I will quit that," but I could not help myself. However, when God moved in, all of that moved out. I have come to know that is a nature that I never had until I met the holy God.

Holiness is not just holiness by name. It is something that you can-

not join. You cannot be literally baptized into holiness. You cannot just turn over a new leaf and say, "I am going to be holy." Holiness is not something that man can set up. Holiness has to come through and by Jesus Christ and the power of the Living God. It changes you from the top of your head to the soles of your feet. It moves out the old things in you and makes you a new creature in Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. Holiness means more than what people sometimes want to think it is. I thank God for holiness.

I think sometimes when people get saved that it takes a while to learn some things. We are always learning, and we are always moving to perfection toward God. I knew the very moment that God saved me, and so did you if you are truly saved. Something happened that changed me from what I was to something different in my soul. It made the difference between the life that I used to live and what I used to do. All things became new when God revealed Himself to me and saved my soul from sin.

Paul, talking to a young congregation at Ephesus, said in Ephesians 4:24, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." The righteousness of God is a different righteousness than I had ever known until I knew God. In Isaiah, Chapter 55, God let us know that His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. His ways are as high as the heavens are above the earth, and so are His thoughts and His righteousness.

In the beginning I did not understand His righteousness. I heard preachers talk about righteousness and holiness, and I wondered what they meant when they talked about holiness. The very moment God saved me, He made me a new creature. There is a difference in making me over and creating me. When He created me, He brought me to a place spiritually where I had never been. I had experienced a lot of things in life, but I had never experi-

enced being created a brand-new person in the Lord. When the Holy Ghost got hold of my soul, He did not just work me over. He did not break me down and recreate me in the clay. He created me in His righteous image through the holy power of Jesus Christ. I became a new creature from the top of my head to the soles of my feet. My conversation, my spirit, and my will all came to be created through His righteousness and the power of the Holy Ghost. This is what holiness is.

### **God Gives You a Place**

Ephesians 4:25-26 reads: "Wherefore putting away lying, [If you have a habit of telling lies and cannot quit lying, when God makes you a new creature, you will quit lying. You will not do that any more. When God moves in, the lying will go. You will not tell a lie or live a lie; you will be a reality in Jesus Christ.] speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. [When you get saved, you do not have to learn to love others, but you will automatically love others. Salvation automatically fits you together in God's great church. That is the reason the Church of God does not have a membership book or letters. No man opens the door of the church. No man baptizes you into the church or turns you out of it. When God places you in the body, you will automatically love your brothers and sisters in the Lord.] Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

Psalm 84:11 states, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." You should not let anger cause you to lose that marvelous light, that marvelous grace, and that marvelous illumination that illuminates your path when you are a new creature in Jesus Christ.

The devil will try to make you take back everything that you

profess. He will jump on you and try to make you angry. You need to hold onto God. He has given you a new life, whereby as a new creature, you can see righteousness and true holiness in Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:27 says, "Neither give place to the devil." When God saves you, He gives you a place, and that place belongs to you. It is a holy place where you live with God. In John, Chapter 14, when Jesus was going to the Cross, He said He was going to prepare a place for you in the Father's house. When He saved you, He raised you up. Ephesians 2:6 reads, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." I have a place, and you have a place. In 1 Corinthians 12:18 Paul said that God sets the members in the body as it pleases Him.

I have a place in the body of holiness, and I am holy because God is holy. If the root is holy, the branches are holy. If God is holy, then His people are holy. Therefore, I have a holy place with God, and the devil wants to take that place. If you yield your place, it will produce great evil in your life. What must you do? You must stand by the grace that God has given you and say: "By His grace I am in the nature of God, a holy person, and I refuse to give up my holy place to evil. I refuse to join the evil force." God's people are a holy people.

### **The Holy Spirit Bears Witness**

Ephesians 4:28 states, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." God did not save you just to take you to Heaven. He saved you to work for Him, to edify the body of Christ, and to glorify Him. He did not save you just to be a bench warmer. There is much work to do. The Bible teaches in the Book of Ecclesiastes to work while it is day, for the night is coming when no man can work.

Some day this body, this tabernacle that is God's, is going to die. You are heading toward your final destination, and you must lay up treasures in Heaven, not on earth, "where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal" (Matthew 6:19). Everything in this life is temporary, but the things that you lay up with God and the work that you do for Him are eternal. God has saved you to work for the church, to be a good laborer for Him, to plow in His field, and to take hold of life and endure the things that come against you so that you may prove to the world that you are holy since Jesus moved in.

Ephesians 4:29 reads, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." You must be keenly aware that someone is listening to what you say. Someone hears your talk, and it must not be the talk of the flesh. It must be words that minister grace to the hearers. The people who are listening need to get the message from God that His people are a holy people and that we have something different in our hearts.

If you look at Jesus Christ, the Son of God, you will see that He is your pattern. What a conversation Jesus had with those who listened to Him! They said, in essence, "We have never heard a man speak like this man." People are listening as you talk. The Christian ought to have talk that he is not ashamed of—no vile words, no words that cause him to look back across his shoulder to see if somebody heard. The people who listen ought to hear Jesus. I am speaking about the grace of God. After God saves us, He gives us plenty to talk about.

Ephesians 4:30 reads, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." That seal covers a lot; it brands you. When you are saved, you do not have to wear a golden chain around your neck to

prove to people that you are holy. You do not have to put bumper stickers on your car to say that you are a child of God. You do not have to jump up and down to show people that you are saved. It is the Holy Spirit of God that witnesses that you are a child of God.

Paul said in Romans 8:16, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." If you have the Spirit of God and I have the Spirit of God, our spirits will blend and witness that we have been with Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the witness that we have been with God. There are many things in life that people use to try to prove to the world that they have been changed; but there is only one true Witness, and that is the Holy Spirit of God.

### **Be Followers of God**

Ephesians 4:31 reads, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." People who are holy have a good, kind, loving, meek spirit that you will not find in the world. Holy people are not bitter. They are not involved in wrath or maliciousness. Sometimes people move in among the church and their spirits and their attitudes are not holy. Romans, Chapter 16, says to avoid them. Paul said to mark those who cause division.

God intends you to separate yourself from all evil spirits of the flesh and to be clean, lovely, and kind, not toting things that are unjust. The Bible says to have no unjust weight. Proverbs 20:10 says, "Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord." You cannot live two lives at once. You are either holy or unholy. You have to be on one side or the other.

Ephesians 4:32 states, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." You need to look to Je-

sus as an example. After going to the judgment hall and enduring the whip, being hit in His face, suffering the crown of thorns being put on His head, suffering the mockery, and being spat upon, then they took Him to the Cross and drove the nails in His hands and in His feet. He suffered all of that at Calvary. Jesus looked at the crowd that walked around the Cross mocking Him and saying, "If You are the Son of God, come down and save Yourself." What did He do? He looked at them and said in Luke 23:34, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." The flesh does not want you to forgive, and the spirit of evil does not want you to forgive. However, the real blessing of holiness will cause you to forgive, and when you forgive, how free and good is that righteousness of God that you will feel within you! God's people are tenderhearted and moved with compassion.

I remember when I worked as a salesman. When I went to school, all I wanted to do was fight. After I got saved and started in sales, personalities affected me. One day God spoke to me and said, "If you are going to let personalities affect you, you are going to lose a lot of sales." I knelt and prayed and asked for God's help, and I overcame it. Everyone, regardless of what his personality is, is the offspring of God. We are not to deal treacherously with others. We all came from God. Each of us may be molded a little differently, but God saved us and created us to be new creatures. We became tenderhearted and compassionate. We have love and possess a right spirit toward others. God helps us in ways that we cannot help ourselves.

Paul said in Ephesians 5:1, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." As you follow God and walk with Him, you learn of His holiness, His meekness, and His righteousness. The more you know, the more you will realize what you do not know. The more you see, the more you will see that you do not see. The more you understand, the

more you will understand that you do not understand. It just keeps getting greater and deeper, and God keeps leading His church home. He is leading you on the upward way. You need to be a good follower of Him.

Numbers 23:10b says, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" It pleases the Father for His children to look like Him. I remember when my oldest son was born. The nurse brought him out of the delivery room, and I looked at him and said, "He's a good-looking boy; he looks like me." I was so proud of him. God wants to be proud of you. God wants you to be like Him and to look like Him. The more you look like Him in your daily living, the more holiness people can see. Paul said to the Hebrew brethren in Hebrews 12:14, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." If you will follow God and follow His righteousness, other people will see that you are living for Him.

### **Walk as Children of Light**

Ephesians 5:2 reads, "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." Nothing in this life of holiness is spoiled. Everything about it smells good. That is one of the senses in holiness. We have a sweet-smelling savor. What do you do before you eat something? You smell it. Your smell has everything to do with what you eat. Also, your smell has much to do with what you associate with. You do not hang around anything that smells bad. Holiness does not smell bad. There is no spoilage in holiness. The old tabernacle smelled good. The manna in the golden pot smelled good. God is a good God, and He is a holy God.

Verse 3 says, "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints." When you

are saved, you belong to God. You are not a fornicator, spiritually speaking. You do not flirt with other religions in the world. Church, you have no business flirting with Babylon. Have you ever read the letter to the church at Thyatira in the Book of Revelation? Jezebel was cast in a bed, as well as those who committed fornication with her.

If you commit fornication with false religion, you will find your children killed with spiritual death. Holiness does not tolerate other gods. In Deuteronomy 6:4 God told Israel, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." Paul said in Ephesians 4:6, "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." There is one God and one true salvation. So, if you want to be a saint of God, you must come out from among false religion and be separate. You can be His son or His daughter.

Ephesians 5:4 reads, "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks." Holiness is not a joke. You cannot make a joke out of real salvation. Living holy is not a joke. You must be sober minded. We would be better off to have more sobering thoughts according to the nature of God and what God would really have you to be.

Verse 5 tells us, "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." I think Paul was pointing to that Scripture in Revelation 17:5 where John wrote, "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." Isaiah 4:1 says, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." The latter part of Ezekiel 16:44 says, "As is the mother, so is her daughter." Wheth-

er it is the mother or her daughters, He is telling you not to go down to Babylon and mingle among the fleshy people and yet think you can enter the Kingdom of God. You must separate from every spirit that is not God's Spirit.

Ephesians 5:6-8 reads: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." God wants you to be a light to this lost and dying world. He wants men and women to see Jesus in you. He wants you to be separated and to prove to the world that you are peculiar and that you are God's treasure. He wants you to walk according to the nature of God so the world can say, "There is something different about that person."

I remember my former pastor telling about a fellow who had been drinking, but one night he stepped up to the door of the church and put his hands on each side of the door. He stood there and listened to the preacher until he had finished preaching. Although he did not get saved that night, he made the statement, "If I ever get saved, I want what that man was talking about." Being true to God proves to other people that you have been changed from the old man to the new man. There is a difference in your life.

### **Possess Your Vessel in Sanctification and Honor**

Paul told the Thessalonian church in 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13: "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." Paul, who had a compassionate, loving heart toward others, wanted them to have a compassionate, lov-

ing heart and to be established in the good things of God. Friend, God wants you to be unblameable so that when the world brings accusations against you, you can say, "I am free, and I am blameless." There is a difference in being accused and being blameless. People can say what they want to, but if you are free in the eyes of God, you are unblameable as to what you are being accused of. God wants you to live a holy life.

Paul also told the Thessalonian church in 1 Thessalonians 4:4, "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour." If you are saved, you are God's vessel. You should always present yourself before the Lord so that you are always honorable before Him. If you are found honorable with God, then the Holy Spirit can work in your life. The Lord wants your vessel sanctified and honorable.

What is sanctification? That is when you walk in all the Truth and light that you have received from God. You are not sanctified just because you bowed at an altar and prayed. Now that is good to do, but sanctification is being set apart for the Lord's use by Truth. When Truth is lived and practiced, it brings honor and a blessing, and it makes you more like Jesus Christ. It keeps your vessel as it ought to be.

Paul continued in verses 5-7: "Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." In 1 Corinthians,

Chapter 10, Paul warned the people concerning fornication, worshipping with those who offered their sacrifices to idols, to esteem themselves to be holier and cleaner. You are to separate yourself from such and to walk as God has called you to holiness. God called you to live a righteous, clean, holy life and to be a peculiar treasure among this unfriendly world.

First Thessalonians 4:8 states: "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit." You do not have to handle snakes, jump over pews, roll on the floor, or speak in an unknown tongue (language) to be holy. A deputy sheriff down in the county where I was raised was called out to a church where people were handling copperhead snakes and rattlesnakes, and he was sent to put a stop to it before somebody got bit and died. When he got there, he called back to the station and asked, "Do you have anybody out there who has faith to handle a snake?"

He was told, "That is the reason we sent you."

He replied, "I don't have any faith; I can't handle snakes. You have to find somebody to come who can handle them." They did not have anyone who could handle the snakes. You do not have to handle snakes to prove that you have holiness. God is holy. If you are His child, He lives in you and walks with you. You are His child. You must live a holy life.

*(Compact Disc TR-502E)*

The measure of truly great  
people is the courtesy  
with which they treat others.

*Genesis 25:29 And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint:*

*30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom.*

*31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.*

*32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?*

*33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold*

*his birthright unto Jacob.*

*34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.*

# The Bad Bargain of Esau



*Brother Larry Dishman*

## **Selling the Birthright**

Esau is one of the saddest figures in the Bible. He was the firstborn son of Isaac and Rebekah, and the twin brother of Jacob, according to Genesis 25:21-26. He was loved by his father Isaac, and he was a skillful hunter, according to Genesis 25:27-28. Esau was a man who had a good side. He showed kindness to his brother who had deceived him (Genesis 33:1-16). You can read that he helped bury his father in Genesis 35:29. Yet on two occasions, he was manipulated by his brother Jacob: first, when Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of pottage; second, when Jacob stole the blessing designed for Esau,

which the Bible talks about in Genesis 27:1-41.

In this study I would like for you to focus your attention on the first occasion and the lessons that you might glean from this unfortunate circumstance in Esau's life. Esau sold his birthright. The physical advantages of the birthright in that day contained a double portion of the father's inheritances, according to Deuteronomy 21:17. The amount would have been very, very great, for what he eventually received was also great, according to Genesis 36:6-7. The birthright offered rule and authority over the members of the family, according to Genesis 27:29.

The spiritual advantages of this

particular birthright were that he would become the patriarch and the priest of the house upon the death of his father, chief of the chosen family, and the heir of the promised blessings. This threefold promise was the issue at stake when Jacob and Esau bartered over the birthright. Esau's bad bargain was that he chose the essential over the spiritual, and that is a picture of what many people are doing today. Just as Esau made a bad bargain many years ago, so it is with lots of people today. They are making a very, very bad bargain because they are choosing the temporal over the spiritual. What happened to Esau? He gave in to the craving of his hunger. He valued the red pottage more highly than his

birthright. For this reason, Hebrews 12:16 calls him a profane person. Esau chose the present over the future. Oh, how many are doing that today! Oh, what a bad bargain! When we think about Esau, he tossed away future rewards for present gratification.

If you will look at sinners and backsliders today, that is the exact same thing they are doing. They are tossing away future rewards for present gratification. No doubt, that pottage fulfilled Esau's hunger for that day, but what about the future? You may say, "I am having pleasure in sin." Friend, the Bible tells us there is pleasure in sin for a season; but sin does not have a pleasant ending. The pleasure that you might find in sin will never make up for the wages of sin and the price that you will pay in this life and in the life to come for the bad bargain that you are making.

### **Are You Forfeiting a Great Inheritance?**

I want you to think about what Esau did for temporary, physical pleasure. Esau sold his birthright, and essentially that is what all sinners are doing. They do not want to get saved because of some type of pleasure that they are having in the world, so they hold on to that pleasure in sin and lose their souls for eternity. In Matthew 16:26 Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

As you think about this sad story, undoubtedly you would not consider making the type of bargain that Esau made, not with an earthly inheritance that you might receive from your parents. However, what about your spiritual inheritance? According to Galatians 3:29, you are an heir according to the promise. According to Romans 8:17, you are a joint heir with Christ.

Someone may say, "Well, I'm not a Christian." You can be! You can be a joint heir with Christ. As the

people of God, we are heirs according to the hope of eternal life, according to Titus 3:7. We are heirs of the kingdom, and those of us who are saved are in the kingdom now. This is not a kingdom to be set up later in the future, but we are enjoying it now. One song says: "*Tis the kingdom of peace, it is reigning within. It shall ever increase in my soul; We possess it right here when he saves from all sin, And it twill last while the ages shall roll.*"

First Corinthians 3:21-23 lets you know that all things are yours in Christ, if you are saved. Someone may say, "I do not have a part in this," but you *can* have a part in it. When you go the way of the world and turn away from salvation, you are forfeiting this great inheritance. The Bible lets us know in 1 Peter 1:4 that this inheritance is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." What a wonderful birthright! It is not limited to the things hereafter, or to Heaven. He gives us heaven to go to Heaven in.

Are you making a bad bargain? If you have been drifting along, if you are in the process of backsliding, if you are turning your back on God, you are making a bad bargain. If you do not know whether you are saved or if you know that you are living in sin, I tell you on the authority of God's Eternal Word, you are making a very, very bad bargain.

The best trade that I ever made was the night I got saved. I traded my sins for salvation. That was a very good bargain. I did not have anything to bring to God. I traded hate for love, bitterness for peace, and hell for Heaven. Just as surely as an individual makes a good bargain by getting saved, the trade of losing his soul by not getting saved is a very bad bargain.

### **Choosing Temporary Pleasures Over Future Rewards**

Our spiritual birthright is far more valuable than Esau's literal birthright. You may ask, "How might

I sell my birthright?" Friend, you sell your birthright by succumbing to the passing, present pleasures of sin, lusting after the things of this world, and walking after the flesh rather than the Spirit. The Bible makes it plain in Romans 8:13, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

The Apostle Paul stated clearly in 1 Corinthians 9:27, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Oh, may you hold on to your spiritual birthright! Saint of God, you must pursue peace and holiness and be careful that you do not fail of the grace of God, as Hebrews 12:15 speaks of as being a possibility. You must exercise discipline and godliness, and then you will not have to worry about this bad bargain.

Esau made the mistake of depreciating the value of his inheritance. If you could only see what God has in store for you, even in this life, you would get saved and stay in the center of His will. God has great things in store for you now, not to mention what is in store on the other side of this life. Oh, the things that God has in store for His people!

It is possible to make the similar mistake that Esau made by not appreciating the value of your inheritance in Jesus Christ. That takes place by giving in to the allurements of the immediate gratification of the flesh. That is exactly what happened to Esau. He gave in to the immediate gratification of the flesh. This is the very thing that is causing many people today to lose their souls. Giving in to sin brings self-gratification, but oh, what a reaping comes! The price that you will pay for the bad bargain of selling your spiritual birthright is not worth the high cost that you will have to pay. If you are not careful, the time will come when it will be too late. No matter how many tears you may shed, it will be too late to change God's mind. That

is the reason you need to heed the warnings in the Word of God, and there are many, many warnings.

Each of us has a danger set before us, and that danger is selling our birthright. Esau's bad bargain was that he chose the temporal over the spiritual. He chose the present over the future. Is that what you are doing? Are you choosing the present over the future? He tossed away future rewards for present gratification. I want you to think about that, friend. Esau sold his birthright for temporary physical pleasure. What a bad bargain!

You may say: "How foolish Esau was! What a bad bargain! What got into his mind that would have caused him to sell his birthright for a little bowl of pottage?" Some people are selling their birthright for bitterness in their hearts, and they will not give it up. That bitterness is going to cost them their spiritual birthright. Others compromise, and that will cost them their spiritual birthright. Others have allowed jealousy to overtake them. Song of Solomon 8:6 says that jealousy is cruel as the grave; yet some folks hold on to it rather than come clean with God.

Many people are selling their birthright for tobacco, or cigarettes. Some people have said, "I would get saved, but I would have to give up my tobacco." Friend, is tobacco worth losing your soul? Is it worth being lost forever? Others sell their birthright because they are not willing to give up the alcohol. Oh, how the bottle has hold of them! They feel there is no way that they could ever lay it aside; but the truth is, God has the power to break that habit. God has the power to save you and change you and cause you to hate the things that you once loved and to love the things that you once hated. He can break the chains that have you bound, even the chains of marijuana and other drugs. These things that I mentioned are causing people to lose their spiritual birthright, just as Esau did.

Some people are selling their

birthright for popularity. They are not willing to suffer affliction with the people of God, but they would rather enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Some people are bound with illicit sex, fornication, adultery, and the love of this world. We have examples in the Bible of those who sold their birthright, such as Balaam. Balaam sold his birthright for popularity. King Saul sold his birthright, Solomon sold his birthright, Judas sold his birthright, and Demas sold his birthright. In 2 Timothy 4:10 Paul said, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."

### **Seeking a Place of Repentance**

We read in Hebrews 12:15-17: "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

Esau was not nonchalant or careless about trying to regain his blessing. He cried about it and tried to think of some way to get the selling of his birthright reversed. He sought it carefully with tears, but he found no place for repentance. How sad it is when an individual is seeking a place of repentance but cannot find it! You may be active in your church and a good moral person, but if you are unsaved, you are making a bad bargain. Perhaps God once spoke to your heart and dealt with you and showed you your need of salvation, but for years you have said no to God.

The hardening of your heart is becoming stronger, and your heart is becoming more calloused. If the Spirit is still dealing with your heart, you are a blessed individual, because the Bible says that the Spirit of God will not always strive with

man. I have witnessed this. When I was still a sinner, I thought about a man that God quit speaking to, and that caused me to fear, lest one day I should end up in that shape. You see, if the Spirit does not speak to you, you cannot be saved. Except the Holy Spirit draws you, you cannot come. Sinner friend, you should not live with the selfish attitude, "I'll get right when I get ready." You cannot get saved on your own terms; you must get saved on God's terms. Today is the day of salvation; now is the appointed time. Our Scripture lesson tells of one of the saddest Scriptures in the Word of God. Esau sought for repentance carefully with tears, but he found no place for repentance.

I can imagine in my mind millions of people in a lost eternity, lamenting over the bad bargain they made in this life. I can imagine sinner after sinner, throughout the ceaseless age of eternity, lamenting over the fact that they allowed the devil to slip one over on them, and they made a terrible bargain. Many people are in the process of making the bad bargain that Esau made. Dear one, will this be your cry down in hell? Will this be your lamentation in a lost eternity: "Oh, what a bad bargain! I only looked at the present. I partook of those sinful pleasures, and now it is costing me my soul. What a fool I have been! I made the same bad bargain that Esau made, and I have lost my soul for all eternity"? Oh, how sad! Esau "found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

Today you can find a place for repentance. If God is dealing with your heart, you can come to Jesus Christ while the Spirit is dealing with you. There is a place at the Cross for you. You can repent now. If you reject His offer of mercy, the day will come when it will be too late for you to change your mind. You may search for mercy but not find any.

*(Compact Disc TR-715E)*

*[Especially for Young People— from page 15]*

You might have the fanciest car in the county where you live. If you were to take me for a ride in your car, but you were not a very nice person, do you think that car or the car ride would mean anything to me? How you treat others leaves the most lasting impression, not what you have. It does not matter what brand shirts you wear or what brand shoes you wear. Do you know what means a lot to me? It is your smile, your attitude, your love for God, and your obedience to your pastor. Those are things that leave a mark on people.

What is godly success? It is being able to be a good influence on people. What you possess will not do that. Some of the most beautiful people that I have ever met in life have had the very least.

Conversely, I have been around very successful people in the world who have gotten more than they know what to do with. They showed me things that made my head spin; but I can hardly remember anything those people said to me. Do you know why? They were too busy showing me their stuff, and the stuff they showed me a long time ago is not worth much anymore. They were proud of their material possessions; yet they were as empty shells, because they did not have God in their lives.

A person is really an empty shell when he does not have God in his life. What do they do? They try to fill that empty shell with material goods. They buy everything they can and think it will get them something, but at the end of the day, they still have an empty shell. Their lives are so filled with stuff that they do not have room for God. That is what happens when people have a strong desire to become successful. They say, "I'm going to be something, and I'm going to make something." They do all of that and push things into the room of their hearts that was originally designed for God. If you push God out, what do you have left? You

have nothing but stuff.

Sometimes I look back at the people who have meant the most to me in life, such as my pastor and my pastor's wife. I had teachers in my life who were very influential in helping me to understand that life was worth living. I am thankful for the people who cared enough about me to take time to talk to me honestly and openly, who required me to look introspectively, and who caused me to realize that I needed to make a change in my life. Those people are giants in my life. Those are people in life who help to make a difference in others. God makes the change, but often He uses human instrumentality to help accommodate those changes.

You need to understand that you have an opportunity to be hugely successful in the Kingdom of God, and it has nothing to do with material things or money. You need to understand that God has a level of success that is so far above what the world has. Have you ever heard that saying, "You can be anything you want to be?" We all have heard that. In the Church of God, when you are submissive and God uses you, He will enable you to be a stable Christian and whatever He has called you to be. You will have more satisfaction in doing the perfect will of God than anything else you could ever do.

One of the greatest joys in my life is being a husband and a father. As a child, I came from a broken home, and I saw some ugly things. It is an ugly world out there, but God has a much better way. You do not have to be part of that. If you will seek the Lord and be obedient to Him, you do not have to be stuck in those types of situations. According to the world, I did not have a chance. I came from a broken home with alcoholic parents. No one ever watched me, and I did my own thing. As an eighth grader, I remember lying in bed and crying myself to sleep, saying, "I just want a family" because of the things that I had seen.

Other boys my age were saying, "I want to be quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys" or "I want to be a policeman." Do you know what I wanted to be? I wanted to be a father and give some child an opportunity to have a father who loved him. Beyond a shadow of doubt, I believe that even as a confused, mixed-up, unsaved child, God saw a heart that He could do something with. He saw someone who could become spiritually successful if he did what God wanted. One thing that I enjoy in life more than anything is being a husband and a father to my wife and my four children. One of my greatest joys is going home and seeing my companion and my children and spending time with them. God has given me something that I really wanted. He has made me into something that I enjoy more than anything that I ever thought I could, and that is something very simple. God will give you what you want, if you will learn to become successful in His eyes.

We must not measure ourselves by anything other than the Word of God. This is paramount if you want to be successful as a Christian. Isaiah 55:8-9 says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." What you want and what you think would enable you to be successful are not necessarily what God thinks will make you successful in His kingdom.

If someone were to ask you, "Do you want to be successful?" you would not say, "No, I don't want to be successful." People would think you were crazy. We all want to be successful and good at something. What we have to understand is that we need to see what God's thoughts are and understand what His ways are. We must put our thoughts, our desires, and our wishes behind us and say, "God, what would make me truly successful in Your eyes?"

What can be defined as godly success? I would say that godly success can be a life of service to God, a life of service to others, and a life of stability to those around us. Some key elements would include being consistent in reading and studying God's Word, being consistent in your prayer life, and being consistent in attending the house of worship. When the doors of the house of worship are open, you ought to be there, if at all possible. I understand that things may come up, but again, what does Isaiah 55:8 say? "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD." Unless it is absolutely impossible for you to be at the house of worship, you need to be there. Are there things more important in your life than the service of God? You ought to be consistent in attending the house of worship if you are going to be successful as a Christian. It is very important.

Another key element in the life of service to God is daily meditation. You need to stop, put things aside, and meditate on the Word of God. I understand that it is easy to get busy. I once read a study that said, "Children under the age of eighteen spend an average of nine hours of screen time a day." The nine hours of screen time a day is spent on the computer, text messaging on a cell phone, and sitting in front of a television screen. That does not leave much time for God, does it?

People are so busy that they cannot meditate daily on what God has for them. Young person, I understand that you want to keep in touch with your friends. There is nothing wrong with that, but it can be used as a tool for the devil, so you need to be very careful. Also, if you would not say something to a friend of yours in the congregation with your pastor sitting right there, you should not say it in a text message, an e-mail, or on a social networking site.

I receive on average about seventy e-mails a day from the business that I do, from people

inquiring about things and communicating back and forth. Some of them I need to answer and some of them I do not. The point is, I get busy too; nevertheless, I must take time for daily meditation. I have to set aside time for God. I must get rid of all the clutter in my mind and talk to God, read the Bible, and meditate upon it.

In considering a life of service to others, a key element would include having a thankful attitude. Being thankful can be a real service to others. Also, having a willingness to work together. How willing are you to work together with a brother or a sister? You should have a humble attitude and be available to help when called upon; that is important as well. These are attributes that will contribute to your success as God looks down upon your life.

The Christian life is a life of service to God. If you are going to be considered successful by God, you must serve Him. If you are not, you are failing. You are not a success in God's eyes if you are not serving Him. God wants to see His people work together. He wants to see us down at one another's feet, not at one another's throats.

You are not called to keep salvation to yourself. You are called to be saved, to spread the Gospel, and to make a brother's or a sister's way a little easier. God requires it.

Another key element in living a successful life for God is having a life of stability to those around you. In the Evening Light Songs book is a song entitled "Like a Rock in the Billows" by Barney E. Warren. It reads:

*Like a rock in the billows I would  
stable be,  
Till the storm is overpast;  
Then I long to harbor, Lord, with Thee,  
In my heav'nly home at last.*

*Like a rock in the billows, I would  
never yield  
To the angry tossing wave;  
I would cling to Christ, my sun  
and shield,  
For his pow'r alone can save.*

*Like a rock in the billows of a  
boiling sea,  
When its waters leap and foam,  
I would rest secure, my Lord, in Thee.  
Till the trumpet calls me home.*

*Like a rock in the billows I would  
fearless stand,  
And defy the threat'ning blast;  
For the Savior holds me by the hand,  
Till the raging storm is past.*

That song portrays a beautiful picture of stability, and that ought to be something that you desire to be like. Jesus Christ was like that. What did Jesus do in the face of adversity when men were spitting on Him, striking Him, and mocking Him? Did He say anything or did He rest in God? He did not say a word; He just rested in His Father. He knew that God had control of it all. It is beautiful to be a stable Christian. That makes you successful.

If you are stable, you are not thrown about to and fro every time someone says something negative. That would not make for a very successful individual. You need to be stable, to stand firm, to be strong, and to rest in God.

The refrain for the song above reads:

*If I trust in Jesus and obey His word.  
If I lean upon his breast;  
If I keep low down at his feet, I know  
He will give me peace and rest.*

Those are successful attributes of a Christian. I want to mention a few quotes of someone who was a very charismatic speaker and an excellent football coach. His name was Vince Lombardi. By many people, he is considered to be one of the greatest football coaches the world has ever known. He had a lot to say, not only about football but about life. He said some very interesting things about success. Once he said, "Success demands singleness of purpose." If you are going to be successful in the eyes of God, you must have singleness of purpose about serving Him.

I like this beautiful statement that Vince Lombardi made: "The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual." Young person, the success of a congregation is not just left to the pastor and his wife, the song leader, or the choir. The achievement of the church can be the results of the combined effort of every single member of the body of Christ. You can play a very important part in the Kingdom of God. If you do your important part as God would have you to do, you can be exactly what someone else needs.

Vince Lombardi also said, "The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of

strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack of will." Some people do not want to give up anything to be successful. Mr. Lombardi said, "The harder you work, the harder it is to surrender." Likewise, the more you put into the service of God, the harder it will be for you to give up. One last quote by Mr. Lombardi that I think is really good is this: "The only place that success comes before work is in the dictionary."

I want you to be aware that when I encourage you to be successful, you need to realize that in success, even in God's eyes, you must stay humble. If God makes you anything, it is only because He has

chosen to do so and you have been willing and obedient to be used in His kingdom. You need to stay humble and understand that God can take away that which He has given you.

Another good quote says, "There is no failure more disastrous than the success that leaves God out." Remember, the most important thing in your life is to be successful in your service to God. Far above anything else is your success in the service of God. How successful in God's kingdom does your Heavenly Father see you? You need to think about that.

*Brother Chris Wakefield*

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*[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]*

Satan effectively uses two devices on men and women in preventing them from becoming Christians. These deceitful mechanisms are procrastination and neglect. He knows that if he can convince souls to be dilatory regarding their souls, eventually it will be too late. Therefore, he strives to occupy their minds with a conglomeration of things so that they do not give attention to spiritual needs. Even when a soul begins to consider his need of God, Satan is there to try to get the individual to put it off until some other time.

Neglecting to humble your heart before God and repent of sin and take faith in the shed blood of Christ is a very

serious matter. Refusing to receive Jesus Christ and His pardoning love is to commit a grave injustice against the remedy. Our Savior came to earth, lived a righteous example, and willingly gave His life to save us from sin's awful bondage and consequences. It is man's responsibility to come to Christ when He calls and not just when he gets ready or feels like it.

Our Scripture text states that we are to seek the Lord while He may be found and to call upon Him while He is near. The admonition is to seek Him while He is speaking to you. Too often many people have felt that they can be saved when they get ready. This thinking is surely unwise. John 6:44 tells us, "No man can

come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." It is the Lord who invites men and women to come to Him and be saved. It is His Holy Spirit who calls you to forsake the life of sin and ruin and to walk with Him in holiness and victory. If His Spirit does not speak and bring conviction and awakening, then your own efforts will be futile.

Dear reader, do you feel the precious Spirit of God working with you, striving to draw you to Him? Do you long for real peace of mind and soul? God has just what you desire and what you are looking for, but you must not procrastinate or refuse His invitation.

Selected

We have no right to sing:  
"In the Cross of Christ I glory"  
unless we are willing to add,  
"by whom the world is crucified  
unto me and I unto the world."

# Upcoming Meetings

## **Kensett, AR**

March 9-11

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

## **Newton, KS**

March 14-18

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

## **Medina, OH**

March 23-27

### **DATE CHANGE**

(Extended 2 days)

**REVIVAL:** Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, Ohio 44256  
Evangelist: Brother David Stegmeier, Canby, Oregon  
Service times: 7:00 p.m. nightly; Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.  
For further information contact: Brother Roger L. Decker, 83 DeCrow Ave., Newark, OH 43025  
Telephone: 740-344-2543

## **Newark, OH**

March 26-April 1

### **CANCELED**

**REVIVAL:** Church of God, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, Ohio 43025  
Evangelist: Brother David Stegmeier, Canby, Oregon  
Service times: Friday-Saturday 7:00 p.m., Sunday 10:45 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.  
For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker, 83 DeCrow Ave., Newark, OH 43025  
Telephone: 740-344-2543

## **Phoenix, AZ**

April 1-5

**REVIVAL:** Church of God, 3450 West Grover Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85053  
Evangelist: Brother Allen Polston, New Castle, Indiana  
Service times: Sunday 10:15 a.m. & 5:00 p.m. and Monday-Thursday 7:00 p.m.

April 6-8

Evangelist: Brother Adam Wolf, New Florence, Pennsylvania  
Service times: Friday-Saturday 7:00 p.m. and Sunday 10:15 & 5:00 p.m.  
For further information contact: Pastor C. H. Ferguson, 19237 N. 21<sup>st</sup> Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85027  
Telephone: 623-516-0836 (Home) or 623-640-7679 (Cell)

## **Mt. Pleasant, PA**

April 21

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

## **Summersville, WV**

April 30-May 6

**REVIVAL:** Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd., Summersville, West Virginia 26651  
Evangelist: Brother Allen Polston, New Castle, Indiana  
Service times: Monday-Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday 6:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.  
Visit our website @ [www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com](http://www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com)  
For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders @ 304-872-4047

**Important Notice**  
**Date Change for Canby, Oregon Camp Meeting**  
**The new date will be July 9-15, 2012**

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