

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

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished. Rev. 10:7 Matt. 24:31

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SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

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Vol. 42 November 2012 No. 11



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

*Psalms 122:1*

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

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

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

**THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:**

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS  
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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**CONTENTS**

A Costly Decision ..... 3  
Walking With Christ ..... 9  
Especially for Young People .... 13  
The Mark of The Beast ..... 14  
Statement of Ownership ..... 21  
Christ Gives Newness of Life .... 22  
Announcements ..... 26

Vol. 42 November 2012 No. 11

# Guest Editorial

*"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."*

2 Timothy 3:13-14

## Beware of Seducing Spirits

Most Christians will agree that we live in a perilous time today. As wickedness and rebellion continue, it presents great danger for the church, and it is producing a worsening effect in our society. Your only hope of making it through with victory is to diligently draw closer to God.

Regardless of what scoffers say, we live in the last days of time. Satan has been turned loose as never before, and he seeks every means possible to destroy the souls of men and women. There are many ways that seducing spirits can make inroads into the hearts of men and women.

First Peter 5:8 informs us that "your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." When a lion roars in the jungle, it petrifies its prey. The victim freezes with fear, unable to move. With resistance diminished the attacker soon moves in on the prey and overcomes it. Unless something interrupts this petrifying condition, the intended victim stands no chance of survival.

This is much like the adversary of men's souls. Satan uses many deceitful tactics to overcome unsuspecting souls. His continual roaring brings undue fear, creating turmoil and confusion. He deceives ones by causing them to feel they will be unable to live victoriously over sin. Others, he torments with the fear of dying and not being right with God.

This is only a trick of the enemy, but it robs Christians of the peace and the joy that God wants them to enjoy. Saints do not have to fall captive to Satan's false fears and lies. Remember, Satan is a defeated devil because Jesus overcame him; and because Christ overcame, we can also overcome.

There are many perils facing the children of God today. If saints are not careful and prayerful, Satan will worry them over things that may never come to pass. Fear is a terrible thing, and it causes men and women to get their eyes off the Savior. When ones take their eyes off Him, they get switched over to looking at the surrounding circumstances. Doing this will hinder faith and allow the enemy to gloat with victory.

Satan is at work using various means to deceive and to lead souls away from the Truth. These devilish spirits always operate in deceptive ways. They often come in the bodily form of ungodly individuals. They may work through some disgruntles who balk at the message, finding fault with God's way and His man. Jude 4 said, "For there are certain men crept in unawares . . . ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God." Such individuals may look and talk as real saints do; however, underneath the entire masquer-

*[continued on page 21]*

*Matthew 27:11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.*

*12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.*

*13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearst thou not how many things they witness against thee?*

*14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.*

*15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.*

*16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.*

*17 Therefore when they were*

*gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?*

*18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.*

*19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.*

*20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.*

*21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.*

*22 Pilate saith unto them, What*

*shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.*

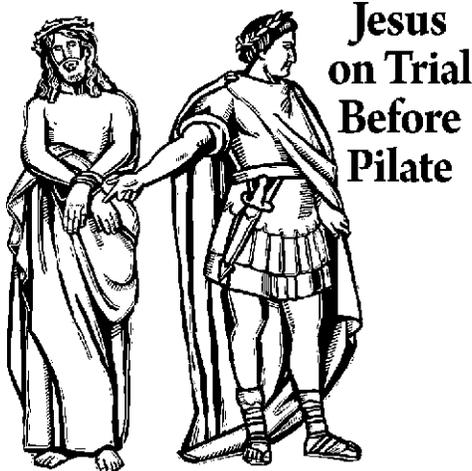
*23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.*

*24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.*

*25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.*

*26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.*

## A Costly Decision



**Jesus  
on Trial  
Before  
Pilate**

*Brother Roger L. Decker*

### **Pilate's Judgment Hall**

The setting in this particular chapter is Pilate's judgment hall. He was an earthly judge standing before the Judge of all the earth. Pilate had Jesus before him, and he had also heard the advice of his wife,

plus a multitude of angry Jews. He was faced with the greatest decision that he would ever make: what was he going to do with Jesus? It was a decision that Pilate would rather have avoided making. He had to weigh the pressure of the mob, the warning of his wife, and the side of

Jesus. No doubt, he tried to stall and did not know what to say next. He was hoping that the Jews' anger would subside.

The first two verses of Matthew, Chapter 27, describe a meeting of the Sanhedrin. Verses 1-2 say: "When the morning was come, all

the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor." It must have been a very brief meeting, which was very unusual for the Sanhedrin. It was held early in the morning, and the purpose was to formulate an official charge against Jesus. The necessity for this lay in the fact that while the Jews themselves could deal with an ordinary charge, they could not inflict the death penalty. This was a sentence that could be pronounced only by a Roman governor and carried out by the Roman authorities. Therefore, the Sanhedrin had to formulate a charge so they could go to Pilate and demand the death of Jesus.

Matthew does not tell us what the charge was, but Luke tells us in Luke 23:2, "And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King."

Matthew 26:65-66 reads: "Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death." Before the Sanhedrin, the charge leveled against Jesus was a charge of blasphemy. No one knew better than the Jewish nation and the authorities that this was a charge to which Pilate would not listen. Pilate would have told them: "Go away and settle your own religious quarrel. As civil authorities, we do not have anything to do with you. You must go and settle this matter among yourselves."

As Luke tells us, they appeared before Pilate with a three-fold charge, and every count was a deliberate lie. First, they charged Jesus with being a revolutionary. Second, they charged Him with inciting the people not to pay their taxes. Third, they charged Him with claiming to

be a king. They fabricated three political charges. They knew that only on such charges could they get Pilate to really act on the case. Three times Pilate let the Jews know that he found no fault in Jesus, thinking that would persuade the Jews to release Him. He thought it would calm the Jews and settle their anger.

We read in John 18:38, "Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all." John 19:4 reads, "Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him." That was the second time.

John 19:6 tells us, "When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him." Pilate tried to subside the anger of the Jews three times. He let them know as governor that Jesus was not guilty.

### **The Hatred of the Jews**

Let us look for a moment at the anger and the hatred of the Jews. This is one of the most severe settings of anger that you will see in your life. This was an anger that would not be subsided; it grew stronger and stronger. They began by hating Jesus, but they finished in a hysteria of hatred, howling like wolves, completely out of order. Their faces were twisted in bitterness, yelling, "Crucify him, crucify him."

In the end they had reached such an insanity of hatred that they were impervious to reason, to mercy, and to the claims of common humanity. Those religious people were acting like animals that have their prey cornered, gnashing with their teeth, waiting for the kill. Nothing in this world warps a man's judgment as much as hatred does. Once a man allows himself to hate,

he cannot think or see straight or listen without distorting the facts. Hatred is a terrible thing! It takes away man's common sense.

The hatred of the Jews made them lose all sense of proportion. They were so careful of ceremonial and ritual cleansings that they were not allowed in Pilate's headquarters. Why? That was a place for the Gentiles, but they had lost all sense of proportion. They were very particular about the ceremonial part of the Law. They kept every jot and tittle of the Law. They were doing everything possible to crucify the Son of God. This was the time of the Passover feast, and to eat it a Jew had to be ceremonially clean. Had they gone into Pilate's headquarters, they would have incurred uncleanness in a double way. First, the scribal law said the dwelling place of Gentiles was unclean. Second, the Passover was a feast of unleavened bread. Part of that preparation was a ceremonial search for leaven and the banishing of every particle of leaven from every house because it was a symbol of evil.

In every house that they entered, they were to cast out every sign of leaven. Leaven was a type of sin. Going into Pilate's headquarters would have been entering a place where leaven might have been found, and to enter such a place when the Passover was being prepared would have rendered them unclean. If the Jews had entered a Gentile's house that contained leaven, they would have been unclean only until evening. They would have had to undergo ceremonial bathing, after which they would have been clean.

The Jews were carrying out the details of the ceremonial law with meticulous care. At the same time, they were hounding to put the Son of God on the Cross. Many professed Christians today fuss about the smallest, trivial things. They get upset about lots of things, and they want to attend to them with the most detailed care. One of the most

tragic things in the world is how the human mind can lose its sense of proportion and its ability to put first things first.

People get so caught up in meticulous things that they lose the love of God out of their souls. This is what happened to these Jews. The Jews were so used to ceremonial cleansings and ordinances that they ended up standing in a Gentile's house, demanding that he crucify Jesus Christ. This is how astonishing they got. They made a statement that must have astonished Pilate. When the Jewish leader said, "We have no king but Caesar," even Pilate must have been shocked!

These were supposed to be God's people, and for them to say they had no king but Caesar was totally out of character for the Jews. Why did they say that? They wanted to gain the influence of Pilate. They wanted to separate themselves from the religious aspect and make it a civil matter, where they knew that Pilate had power to act. The statement must have taken Pilate's breath away. He was hearing this out of the mouths of God's people. Had they switched their loyalty to kings? What is that reminiscent of? It reminds me of Israel of old when they wanted Saul to rule over them instead of God.

Pilate must have looked at them half-bewildered, half-cynical, and in amusement. The Jews were prepared at that moment to abandon every principle that they had in order to eliminate Jesus. This was a terrible picture! I cannot make it as terrible as it really was. The hatred of the Jews turned them into a maddened mob of shrieking, frenzied fanatics. No doubt, the screams were drowning out the soft voices. At one point, all that Pilate could hear was the crowd yelling, "Crucify him, crucify him." Pilate probably had to rap a gavel many times to silence them so that he could speak. In their hatred, the Jews forgot all about mercy, their sense of proportion, their principles, justice, and even God.

## How God Worked With Pilate

It has been said that never in history was the insanity of hatred so vividly shown. This was hatred at its worst. They had one thing in mind, and they were not going to be content until the death of Jesus Christ. Pilate finally gave in to the mob, ignoring the plea of his wife. He was amazed by the silence of Jesus, but he gave way to the angry mob's request.

I want you to see how God worked with Pilate. First of all, his wife had a dream, not Pilate. We read in Matthew 27:19, "When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." Also, something else was present: the silence of Jesus. Did that affect him? Oh, yes, it did.

Matthew 27:12-14 reads: "And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him to never a word; inasmuch that the governor marvelled greatly."

Pilate was astonished at the fact that Jesus did not try to defend Himself. Even Pilate knew that it was for envy that the Jews delivered Him. He knew the charges were false, yet Jesus did not try to defend Himself. It has been said there is a time when silence is more eloquent than words, for silence can say things that words can never say. That was the reason Jesus was silent. He knew there could be no bridge between Himself and the Jewish leaders. He knew it would do no good. Jesus knew there was nothing in Pilate to which He could audibly appeal. Jesus could not appeal to Pilate. He could already see Pilate being persuaded. He could see Pilate's courage melting down to the lowest level. Jesus knew that the lines of communication between Pilate and Him and between the angry mob and Him

were severed.

The hatred of the Jews was as an iron curtain, which no words could penetrate. The cowardice of Pilate in the face of the mob was a barrier that no words could pierce. He could not appeal to Caesar; he could not settle the mob. All communications were severed. They were not about to listen to the accused. It was a kangaroo court, so to speak. The sentence was already in their minds. They did not ask Pilate what to sentence Him to. They were the ones who hollered out "Crucify." It has been said that it is a terrible thing when a man's heart is such that even Jesus knows it is hopeless to speak. I want you to think about that. In other words, it would do no good, because He has no communication with them.

## Crucifying the Son of God Afresh

Now I want to leave this scene of the judgment hall and Pilate and come up to the day and age in which we are living today. It was a terrible thing that happened back then. No doubt, some people would say if they had been there, they would have stood up for Jesus. They think they would have said: "I believe that Jesus is the Messiah. You need to take your hands off Him and let Him go. Do not crucify Him. He did not do anything wrong." I believe some people might have done that very thing, but we are more than two thousand years past that. We are two thousand years down the road from Pilate's judgment hall. What about today?

Hebrews 6:4-6 reads: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

What was the writer of the

Hebrew letter saying? In verse 4 he pointed out the fact that the Christian has been enlightened. The Christian has tasted the free gift that comes from Heaven. The Christian is a sharer in God's Holy Spirit. The Christian has tasted the good Word of God. The Christian has tasted of the powers of the world to come. Yet the Hebrew writer said if they fall away, it is impossible for them to be renewed. What was he talking about? God says through His Word, time after time, "Return unto me."

I have heard that Scripture in Hebrews misapplied. You need to understand what the Hebrew writer was talking about. The prodigal son went out and wasted his substance on worldly, riotous living, but he returned to his father's house; yet the Hebrew writer said it was impossible to be renewed. For every event recorded in the Bible, there first had to be a turning by the repentant one before he could receive the promise.

The key to Hebrews 6:6 is seeing that they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh. Let me make that a little clearer. Another translation says, "And then they fall away from Christ, it is not possible to keep on bringing them back to a changed life again, for they are nailing the Son of God to a Cross again and are shaming Him in front of others."

Once you have been enlightened, have tasted the free gift, have been a partaker of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted of the Word of God and the powers of the world to come, if you turn back to sinful things after being set free, then you cannot be recovered as long as you keep sinning. That is the key to this verse. What was he saying? You can be recovered if you are willing to quit sinning and become sick enough of your sins to lay them at the Savior's feet. The Holy Spirit is available to you so that you do not have to get caught up in such a thing. Some people who have heard the Gospel preached repeatedly still have not done anything about it. When you refuse Him repeatedly,

you are no better than that angry mob that hollered "Crucify him," because you are crucifying the Son of God afresh every day.

### Count the Cost

The decision that Pilate made to give in to the angry mob was costly. Pilate did that for political gain and for fear of his position. People have joined hands today over the same thing. They stand to gain from their position. Imagine standing before an angry mob, knowing there is nothing that you can say to defend yourself. You know you cannot appeal to the judge. You cannot ask the people to settle down, because the people have one thing on their minds, and that is what they want carried out. What were they doing? They were fulfilling God's plan.

Today many people make costly decisions. Some people hang on to attitudes, and all it is doing is making them sicker and sicker. All it is doing is destroying their common sense. Some people have gotten switched over to hatred. You would never hear that out of their mouths, but the hatred is tearing them apart. The hatred is on their minds all the time. They cannot think straight, they cannot do their work right, and it is destroying their health.

Some people hang on to worldly habits. It would be a terrible thing to have a worldly habit that God pointed out to you to get rid of and to come up before the Judgment short, where the Bible says the

worm dies not. What worm is the Bible talking about? It is not talking about literal worms; it is talking about things that you would not give up for Christ. It is going to trouble you throughout all eternity. You will still have the desire, but you will not have the ability to satisfy those worldly habits or the worldly adornment.

Sister, if you want to get a good Church of God husband who is spiritual, then you need to be spiritual. You need to get as close to God as you can and get God's direction. God is not going to lead you against His Word. The Church of God is clean. We do not need worldly adornment to be attractive. The saints' beauty is in salvation. Our spirit is right. Some people who are all decked out with earrings and rings have an old nasty spirit in back of it. They may act nice, but just bring up the Word of God about certain things and watch their spirits change. If they love the Word of God so much, why do they live contrary to the Word? What did Jesus say in John 14:15? "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

Like the Jews in Jesus' day, some people are hanging on to hatred. That is terrible! Hatred will destroy you. As I close, I leave you with a decision, and it is very simple: you must either accept Jesus as your Savior or put Him back on the Cross.

*(Compact Disc TR-960M)*

**A knowledge of the Bible without a college education is more valuable than a college education without a knowledge of the Bible.**

Luke 25:13 *And, behold, two of them [speaking of two disciples] went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs [approximately seven miles].*

14 *And they talked together of all these things which had happened.*

15 *And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.*

16 *But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.*

17 *And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?*

18 *And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?*

19 *And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before*

*God and all the people:*

20 *And how the chief priests and our [own] rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.*

21 *But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.*

22 *Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;*

23 *And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.*

24 *And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.*

25 *Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:*

26 *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?*

27 *And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them*

*in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.*

28 *And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.*

29 *But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.*

30 *And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.*

31 *And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.*

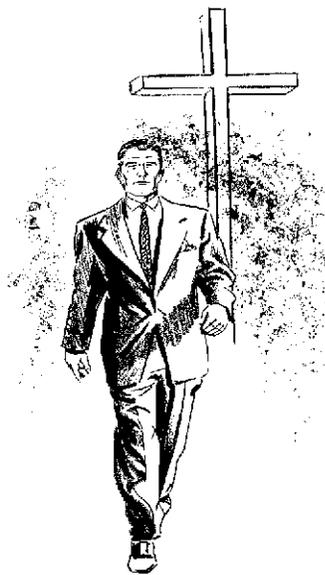
32 *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*

33 *And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,*

34 *Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.*

35 *And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.*

# Walking With Christ



*Brother E. David Stegmeier*

## **The True Essence of Religion**

In these verses of Scripture, Christ appeared to two of His disciples who were traveling to a little village called Emmaus. I believe this happened on Sunday, the same day

Christ was resurrected. We do not know who the one disciple was, but we know one was Cleopas. As they walked and talked with the Master, the Bible says their hearts burned within them. Commentators tell us this seven-mile trip took approxi-

mately two hours. What had happened in Jerusalem that morning seemed to these two disciples as idle tales. Christ began to speak to them, but verse 16 says "their eyes were holden that they should not know Him."

The Living Bible says they did not recognize Him, for God kept them from it. Christ questioned these two disciples as to their sadness. If they had known it was Christ, I am sure they would have been elated to have the privilege to walk with Him. Jesus said in verse 17 of our Scripture text, "What manner of communication are these that ye have one to another as ye walk?" The reason for their despondency was, they had lost their precious Master. They were somewhat disappointed in the recent happenings. It looked as though Christ had failed to accomplish what they thought He should have accomplished. They could not believe this stranger knew nothing about what had happened in Jerusalem, and the report that Christ had arisen was just beyond them. They could not fathom it. Christ reproved them for their lack of faith and hesitancy to believe the Scriptures.

The verse I want to focus on in our Scripture reading is verse 32, which states, "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" Another translation says that they began to tell each other of how their hearts had felt strangely warmed as He talked with them, explaining the Scriptures as they walked down the road. They felt a warm sensation. It is real favor to have the privilege of walking and talking with Christ. Young person, your greatest privilege in life, your greatest opportunity above all opportunities, is to have the privilege of walking with Jesus Christ.

A song called "In the Garden" by Charles A. Miles reads:

*I come to the garden alone,  
While the dew is still on the roses,  
And the voice I hear falling on my ear  
The Son of God discloses [or reveals].*

*He speaks, and the sound of His voice  
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,  
And the melody that He gave to me  
Within my heart is ringing.*

*I'd stay in the garden with Him,  
Though the night around me be falling,  
But He bids me go; through the voice  
of woe  
His voice to me is calling.*

*And He walks with me, and He talks  
with me,  
And He tells me I am His own;  
And the joy we share as we tarry there,  
None other has ever known.*

There is a work for you and me to do. The greatest privilege afforded to us in life is to walk with God. What an opportunity! The songwriter said, "And He tells me I am His own." What great consolation to have the Lord speak to you and say: "You are My own. Son, I love you. You are My child!"

The songwriter went on to say, "And the joy we share as we tarry there, None other has ever known." There is no greater joy! Psalm 16:11 says, "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy. . . ." There is nothing out in the world that even tempts me. I have temptations, but it is not in the world. This is the very best life. It is an exciting and enjoyable life. In His presence is fullness of joy. Verse 11 goes on to say, ". . . at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

You cannot tell me of a greater joy than the joy of walking with God. Genesis 5:22 and 24 state: "Enoch walked with God." Not much is said about Enoch in the Bible. In fact, between Adam and Enoch, there were seven generations, and nothing is said about any of the men between Adam and Enoch until we read that "Enoch walked with God." He stands out above all those before him in that he walked with God.

The essence of true religion is the privilege of walking with God. Your privilege and opportunity of walking with God should be your top priority. You need to keep it first and foremost in your mind. When you make choices in life, or when you put together your priorities, how will they affect your walk with

God? The greatest privilege that can be afforded to anyone is the privilege of walking with God.

### **The Steps of a Good Man Are Ordered by the Lord**

The Bible lets us know that we have to enter into an agreement to walk with God. Amos said in Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" No! You have to agree with Jesus 100 percent because He knows what is best. I have been serving the Lord for more than sixty years, and it has been the best decision that I have ever made in my life. Ones have asked me, "Have you ever had any regrets, Brother Stegmeier?" Never! This is an awesome way to live. Walking with God infers the keeping of God foremost in our minds and right before our eyes.

The Psalmist David said in Psalm 16:8, "I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." You need to keep Christ always before you. Walking with God is an awesome thought. It includes everything that pertains to our living here on earth. Jeremiah 10:23 states, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." You need help, and I need help. Life is very complex. I tell God all the time, "God, I need You!" We are unable to order our own steps. It is imperative that we look to God every day for divine direction.

Psalm 37:23 tells us, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way." God directs you and me into paths where He will get the most glory from our lives. We should live so that our lives bring glory to Him. When you live a life directed by God, even though some things appear to be bad, they will work for good. Maybe at the time you will not realize it, but eventually you will see that it was for your good. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that all things work together for

good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." God will speak and say, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

Isaiah 30:21 says, "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Sometimes it is just a step at a time. Sometimes we can walk rapidly, but sometimes He has us to go very slowly and very cautiously.

I thought of the song that says: "Each step I take my Savior goes before me, And with His loving hand He leads the way, And with each breath I whisper I adore Thee; Oh, what joy to walk with Him each day. Each step I take I know that He will guide me; To higher ground He ever leads me on. Until some day the last step will be taken. Each step I take just leads me closer home."

### "This One Thing I Do"

Psalms 143:8 says, "Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee." We need to be careful of our priorities. Sometimes people get their priorities all mixed up.

I heard about a young couple that was going on a trip to a fancy place in a foreign country for a vacation. They packed their bags with all kinds of things, and when they got to the airport, the husband said, "Honey, we should have brought my piano."

"What?" she said, "your piano?"

He said, "Yes, honey, we should have brought my piano."

"Oh, dear, look at all these bags we have. How could we carry anything more?"

He said, "Yes, we should have brought my piano, because our airplane tickets are on the piano." Talk about people majoring in minor things and forgetting major things! You must be careful of your priorities and accept God's priorities.

In Matthew 6:33 Jesus said, "But

seek ye first [that is what He meant] the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

You should put your greatest effort into the furtherance of the cause of God. I went to college, became a teacher, and taught school for many years. In fact, I am still teaching, but I put God's kingdom first. We should walk after things that pertain to the Kingdom of God. Work in the church will further the cause of God. God must come first before family, husband or wife, children, your friends, yourself, your job, and everything else.

Paul wrote to the Philippians in Philippians 3:13-14: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Paul said, "This one thing I do." Every one of us should put God first.

The Word of God gives much instruction about walking with God. Romans 13:13 says, "Let us walk honestly, as in the day." We ought to be honest in everything. If you were to buy some groceries, and the clerk were to give you back too much change, that is not yours. I have had that happen. You may ask, "Did you give it back?" Yes, I did. I have a God that I have to answer to.

### "Walk Worthy of the Lord"

The Bible says we should walk by faith. Second Corinthians 5:7 says, "For we walk by faith." Sometimes we do not know where the money will come from or how we are going to make it, but we must go by faith. Sometimes I go to church and I do not feel well, but I go by faith. I believe if you go right on, God will bless you and help you. You must walk by faith, and God will supply all your needs. The Bible also speaks about walking in love. Ephesians 5:2 says, "And walk in

love. . . ." Your life should emit the love of Jesus Christ. People should see that you are unusual in the love that you manifest to others, even your enemies.

The Bible says to walk worthy. This is the highest calling. I may never get a phone call from the President or from the governor of the state where I live, but it really does not matter to me. It really feels good to have the privilege of walking with Jesus Christ. Church of God, I believe we have the ultimate Truth. We are blessed above all people in the world. We should walk worthy of what God has invested in us. In this tremendous world of religion, to know the Truth is such a privilege.

Colossians 1:10 says, "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. . . ." As a Christian, you should be a credit to your local congregation, a credit to the Church of God, and a credit to your country. We stand for the finest cause in the world.

There is a song entitled "Are You Adorning the Doctrine?" by C. W. Naylor. The words are:

*Are you adorning the doctrine –  
The glorious doctrine of God?  
Walking so holy before Him,  
Following where He hath trod?  
So when the world looks upon you,  
Nothing but Christ is in view?  
So when the world looks upon you,  
Nothing but Christ is in view?*

*Are you adorning the doctrine,  
And making attractive the way?  
Honoring Christ by your actions,  
And by the words that you say?  
Are you, my brother and sister,  
Proving the Bible is true?  
Are you, my brother and sister,  
Proving the Bible is true?*

*Are you adorning the doctrine,  
By meekness, and love, and goodwill?  
Gentleness, patience, and truthness,  
Liberty's law to fulfill?  
Jesus will shine if within you,  
Showing these graces divine;  
Jesus will shine if within you,  
Showing these graces divine.*

*If you're adorning the doctrine,  
Its beauties your soul will array;  
Showers of grace will be given –  
Strength from the Lord as your day.  
Light from on high will be streaming  
Over the pathway you tread;  
Light from on high will be streaming  
Over the pathway you tread.*

### **Making Wise Choices**

You need to make wise choices. As you attempt to make decisions, you ought to consider the consequences that will come to your soul and to those to whom you have a responsibility. First of all, you need to consider this: How will this affect my walk with God? How will this affect my precious companion? How will this affect my children? How will this affect my grandchildren? The choices that you make will set the course of your life and undoubtedly determine your success and eternal destination.

Lot made some poor choices. He made a worldly choice, and the consequences were astronomical. He lost his godly influence. He lost his wife and his sons-in-law, and then he was involved in the sin of incest with his daughters. Do you remember Lot's wife? In his book, *Feminine Faces*, Clovis Chapel wrote that when the Roman city of Pompeii was being excavated, the body of a woman was found mummified by the volcanic ashes of Mount Vesuvius. Her position told a tragic story. Her feet pointed toward the city gate, but her outstretched arms and fingers were straining for something that lay behind her. The treasure for which she was grasping was a bag of pearls. Chapel said, "Though death was hard at her heels and life was beckoning to her beyond the city gates, she could not shake off their spell." It was not the eruption of Vesuvius that made her love pearls more than life; it only froze her in the attitude of greed.

Many years ago, a poll was taken of graduating seniors, asking them what was foremost in their lives and what they wanted to ac-

complish in their lives. What were they going to pursue? Number one was money. Money cannot buy happiness, contentment, or eternal life. When you make the right choices, you will reap great blessings.

Because of Joseph's wise choices, he rescued his entire family. Because of his choices, Moses became a great tool in the hand of God. You need to be careful in choosing your friends. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:33, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."

In the writings of Solomon in Proverbs 13:20, we have this godly advice: "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Many choices that people make need much prayer and consideration.

You should choose a college near a thriving, healthy Church of God congregation. A healthy Church of God congregation should be a growing congregation. I read a short article in a *Gospel Trumpet* magazine, probably dated about 1930, that said, "The Church of God congregation should not encumber the ground unless they are bringing forth new converts." First and foremost when making decisions, you must think of your soul. If you go to a school that takes you across the United States, where will you get your soul fed? Some professors may try to destroy your faith.

Once a professor of Philosophy at the University of California tried to destroy the faith in every professing Christian who went into his class. One young boy prayed: "I have to take this class; it's a requirement. God, help me!"

There came a test one day to this young boy. This college professor held up a chart, and he had a piece of chalk. He said, "If there is a God, when I drop this piece of chalk, He can keep it from splitting into a bunch of pieces when it hits the floor in this lecture hall. I am going to drop this piece of chalk." He put up his hand and the chalk just happened to roll down the sleeve of his coat, down his trousers and rolled

out the bottom onto his shoe. There was a full piece of chalk that rolled onto the floor. He tore out of the lecture hall as fast as he could, and the young boy said, "Now is my chance." He walked up to the podium and said, "I'm a Christian; there is a God," and he gave his testimony. Young person, you should pray about where you go to school. You are not smarter than the professors right in your little area. You should go to a college near a good congregation that has a faithful pastor and forfeit a job that will pay you greater wages in a distant city.

### **Be Faithful in Your Commitments**

Another major choice in life is whom you will marry. Your success in life is often affected by your choice of a marriage partner. Also, the souls of your children are at stake. You ought to choose a marriage partner who is spiritual. I will testify for myself. When I saw my future wife Millie at the piano, I appreciated her talent, but what really spoke to me was her fervency for God. We talked a lot about Scriptures and spiritual things, and we saw eye-to-eye. We were twenty-five hundred miles apart and raised in two different Church of God congregations, yet we saw alike. Furthermore, it was her desire and my desire to be used of God.

Young person, you need to be careful in choosing a marriage partner. You ought to wait on God. I was twenty-six years of age when I married. You need to pray much, accept godly counsel from your pastor, your godly parents, and your Sunday school teacher. They are older and they have been down the way a lot longer. They have more experience and more wisdom.

In Deuteronomy 30:19 Moses wrote, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." You will love your children, and you will want the best

for them, so see that you choose what is best.

You need to be faithful in your commitments. If you are in the choir, you should be there for every rehearsal and every time the choir sings. If you teach a Sunday school class, you should be there. You ought to be faithful in your commitments. I was taught to keep my commitments. We should be dedicated, consecrated, and committed. I told my wife when I married her more than forty years ago that I would be faithful to her, and I have been 100 percent faithful to her. God can help you.

I was frightened the day I got married. I remember a young man in our congregation, when I married him, someone wrote "H E" on one shoe and "L P" on the other. As he knelt at the altar, the audience read, "HELP!" That is the way I felt. Marriage is a tremendous commitment. Some people fall in and out of marriage like they change clothes. It is tragic for the children especially. You ought to be faithful in your commitments.

Jesus said in Luke 9:62, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." If you look back, it infers that down in your heart you want to go back. Nothing back there appeals to me. I told my wife, "I would not want to start our forty years of ministering again." Little did I know of the pain and the suffering we would have to go through, but thank God, God brought us through. We are standing together for the greatest cause there is.

### Faithfulness

I want you to consider Lot's wife. She looked back and froze into a pillar of salt. The woman in Pompeii who looked back and reached for those pearls was mummified in that ash because of her desire for those pearls.

Jesus said in Matthew 10:22, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." I know there are times that

you cannot be at work, at school, or even at church; I understand that. I have done my best to push on. First of all, I am a leader, and I must be an example. You must be faithful to God, be faithful to your marriage, be faithful in church attendance, be faithful in all your responsible commitments around the church, and be faithful to your job. You should live a life of high principles. In other words, you should do everything according to the precepts contained in the Word of God. When you do these things, you can really enjoy life.

In John 10:10 Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." As God's people, we have an abundant, wonderful life. You should not wish your life away. Some people say, "I wish, I wish." You should enjoy life and enjoy where you are, because it goes by so quickly. The song "Sunrise, Sunset" asks, "*Is this the little girl I carried? Is this the little boy at play? Sunrise, Sunset, swiftly flow the days.*" Young person, you should enjoy being young. One saying goes like this, "Enjoy being single, because then your pockets will jingle." Another song says, "We Have This Moment to Enjoy." An old saying says, "Opportunity knocks but once." You should take advantage of every opportunity to work around the church. God will bless you for it.

In Galatians 6:10 Paul said, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." During the early years of the Salvation Army, William Booth and his associates were bitterly attacked and oppressed by religious leaders and government leaders alike. Whenever his son, Bramwell, showed Booth a newspaper attack, the general would reply, "Bramwell, fifty years hence it will matter very little indeed how these people treated us. It will matter a great deal how we dealt with the work of God."

Your walk with God will deter-

mine and set the tenor of your entire life. David wrote in Psalm 37:25, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Psalm 71:17 reads, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth." Ecclesiastes 12:1 says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

Walking with God requires daily Bible reading and daily Bible study. Some time during the day, you must read your Bible. I have a stack of old Bibles that I have read and read. I put things inside the front and back covers, things I have gleaned. I keep those Bibles because they might have something I would like to use some time. Reading the Bible should be a pleasure. It is a privilege! Walking with God requires daily Bible reading, daily fervent prayer, and faithful church attendance. I do not attend church because I want to impress others. I attend church because I enjoy going to church. God's people are the cream of the crop. They are the finest people on earth. It will take daily Bible reading, fervent prayer, faithful church attendance, and then, above everything else, wholehearted submission to the will of God. God is going to speak to you through your pastor, and you need to submit.

### "Walk in All the Ways"

In Job 7:1 Job said, "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling?" I do not know how long I am going to live, and you do not know how long you are going to live; but during that appointed time, to borrow a modern expression, "You should give it your best." You ought to give God your best and use your allotted time to serve the Lord.

I think this is very profound. Moses said in Deuteronomy 5:33, "Ye shall walk in all the ways. . . ." It says *all*. What is important about dressing modestly? What is

important about attending an ordinance service? Who wants to wash feet? What is important about having the correct hair length? What is so important about those things? God is particular about His people. In the Old Testament, He had a fine line. He had all these requirements, and He has requirements for His people today.

Verse 33 continues, ". . . which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess." I want things to go well with me and my children. I want to live as long as God intends for me to live, and that is the reason I am very careful to be obedient to Him. I care about my children and my grandchildren. I care about my congregation. We are all working together, so we want to be obedient for the sake of our souls and those who are trusting in us.

Pertaining to our walk with God, He is able to keep us steady, true, and faithful. You may say, "I cannot do it." Oh, yes, you can! He will supply the grace and the ability that you need to live a life that is true.

In Jude, verses 24-25, Jude wrote, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen."

When I was a little boy, when

I first went to the altar to get saved, I remember thinking as I watched the older saints, "When I get saved, I don't want to have yo-yo religion." Yo-yo religion is being up and down, in and out in your Christian experience. I did not want that. When I got saved, I wanted to be up and stay up. You need to allow your life to be used to bring glory to God. That is the reason you were created. In Revelation 4:11 John wrote, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Many years ago, in the 1930s and the 1940s, the Anderson Press, Gospel Trumpet Company, printed slogans that were put on walls. I remember one of them said, "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last." Someone has written a beautiful poem taken from that slogan. The title is, "Only One Life," by C. T. Studd. It says:

*Two little lines I heard one day,  
Traveling along life's busy way;  
Bringing conviction to my heart,  
And from my mind would not depart;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

*Only one life, yes only one,  
Soon will its fleeting hours be done;  
Then, in "that day" my Lord to meet,  
And stand before His Judgment seat;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

*Only one life, the still small voice,*

*Gently pleads for a better choice;  
Bidding me selfish aims to leave,  
And to God's holy will to cleave;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

*Only one life, a few brief years,  
Each with its burdens, hopes, and fears;  
Each with its clays I must fulfill,  
Living for self or in His will;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

*When this bright world would tempt  
me sore,  
When Satan would a victory score;  
When self would seek to have its way,  
Then help me Lord with joy to say;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

*Give me Father, a purpose deep,  
In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep;  
Faithful and true what e'er the strife,  
Pleasing Thee in my daily life;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

*Oh let my love with fervor burn,  
And from the world now let me turn;  
Living for Thee, and Thee alone,  
Bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

*Only one life, yes only one,  
Now let me say, "Thy will be done";  
And when at last I'll hear the call,  
I know I'll say "twas worth it all";  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

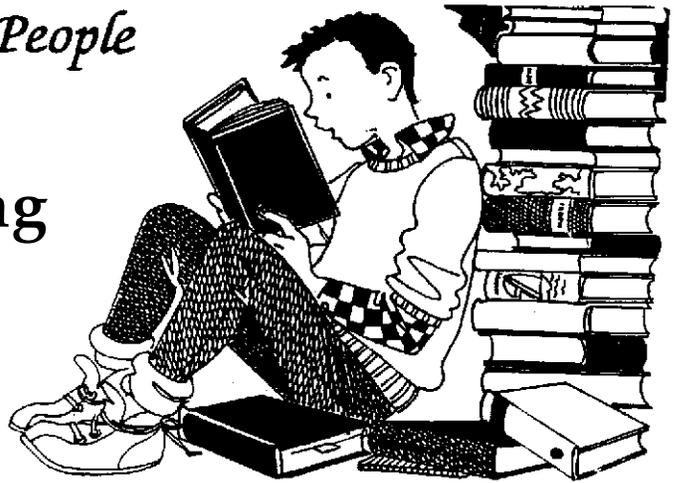
(Compact Disc TR-614E)

**The art of Thanksgiving is "thanksgiving." It is thanking God for each new day by living it the way He would have you to live.**

*Especially for Young People*



## A Girl's Song



At the time of the terrible accident many years ago at the coal mines near Scranton, Pennsylvania, several men were buried for three days, and all efforts to rescue them proved unsuccessful.

The majority of the miners were Germans. They were in a state of intense excitement. Sympathy for the wives and children of the buried men and despair at their own fruitless efforts had rendered them almost frantic.

A great mob of ignorant men and women assembled at the mouth of the mine on the evening of the third day, in a condition of high nervous tension which fitted them for any mad act. A sullen murmur arose that it was folly to dig farther—that the men were dead. And this was followed by cries of rage at the rich mine owners.

A hasty word or gesture might have produced an outbreak of fury. Standing near me was a little German girl, perhaps eleven years old. Her pale face and frightened glances from side to side showed that she fully understood the danger of the moment.

Suddenly, with a great effort, she began to sing in a hoarse whisper which could not be heard. Then she gained courage, and her sweet, childish voice rang out in Luther's grand old hymn, familiar to every German from his cradle, "A mighty fortress is our God."

There was silence like death. Then one voice joined the girl's, and

presently another and another, until from the whole great multitude rose the solemn cry—

*A mighty fortress is our God,  
A bulwark never failing;  
Our helper he amid the flood of  
mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe doth seek  
to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great,  
And armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.*

*Did we in our own strength  
confide,  
Our striving would be losing,  
Were not the right man on our  
side,  
The man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is he;  
Lord Sabaoth, his name,  
From age to age the same,  
And he must win the battle.*

*And though this world, with devils  
filled,  
Should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear, for God hath willed  
His truth to triumph through us.  
The Prince of Darkness grim,  
We tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure,  
For lo, his doom is sure;  
One little word shall fell him.*

*That word above all earthly powers,  
No thanks to them, abideth;  
The Spirit and the gifts are ours,  
Thru him who with us sideth.*

*Let goods and kindred go,  
This mortal life also;  
The body they may kill;  
God's truth abideth still;  
His kingdom is forever.*

A great quiet seemed to fall upon their hearts. They resumed their work with fresh zeal, and before morning, the joyful cry came up from the pit that the men were found—alive. Never was a word more in season than that hymn.

Selected

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*A safe stronghold our God is  
still,  
A trusty shield and weapon;  
He'll keep us clear from all the ill  
That hath us now o'ertaken.  
The ancient prince of hell  
Hath risen with purpose fell;  
Strong mail of craft and power  
He weareth in this hour;  
On earth is not his fellow.*

*With force of arms we nothing can,  
Full soon are we o'erridden.  
But for us fights the godly Man,  
Whom God Himself hath bidden.  
Ask ye, who is this same?  
Christ Jesus is His name.*

Martin Luther

*Revelation 13:16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their*

*right hand, or in their foreheads:  
17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the*

*name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

# The Mark of the Beast



*Brother Earl R. Borders*

## **Figurative Language**

Our Scripture text is one of the many misunderstood portions of the Book of the Revelation. Perhaps no other portion of John's apocalyptic vision has people so fearful, and no other has been the subject of so much surmise and speculation as these verses. Revelation 16:2 uses the same expression. It reads, "And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast."

As we begin to examine this Scripture text, I want you to notice that it was written in continuity with the previous verses. I am

breaking into the midst of a much larger passage. The first word in verse 16 is the conjunction "And," which lets you know that it is a continuation of the previous thought. The next word incorporated in that verse is the word "he," which is a pronoun, and it lets you know there is a corresponding antecedent. First, we must identify to whom this passage is referring. It says, "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark." Identifying who is being spoken of in this text gives great insight concerning where the mark originates and reveals the one who is placing this mark.

Revelation 9:17 tells us that John received a vision. God used the pan-

orama of the skies, as it were, to give John an apocalyptic vision. Verse 17 states, "And thus I saw the horses in the vision. . . ." We must never lose sight of the fact that the language of a vision is figurative. This is portrayed throughout the Scriptures. For example, you can read in the Old Testament that when Joseph had his dream, he saw the sun, the moon, and the stars bow down before him. He was not speaking of the literal sun, moon, and stars, but rather he was speaking of his parents and his family.

Also, Pharaoh had a dream and saw seven fat kine and seven lean kine. He saw the seven lean kine eat the seven fat kine, yet they remained lean. This dream was not

about cattle at all, but it was a vehicle to give a prophecy concerning the seven years of plenty followed by the seven years of famine. The language employed in visions is spiritual, or figurative language.

In Acts, Chapter 10, the Apostle Peter was on the rooftop in Joppa, and a sheet with all manner of unclean animals was let down three times. He was told to arise and eat. Everything on that sheet was unclean, according to the old levitical law. God said, in so many words, "Do not call what I have cleansed unclean." Not long after the sheet went up the third time, the Spirit said, "Behold, three men seek thee." They were Gentile men, and Peter was told to go with them, nothing doubting. Again, bear in mind that the language of a vision does not lend itself to literalism, but rather to figurative expression.

Revelation 1:1 tells us, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." The word "signified" in the Greek is the word **semaino**, which means "revealed by signs." *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines the word *sign* as "a symbol." Therefore, these are symbolic expressions. On the Isle of Patmos, John received a vision that God painted on the panorama of the skies, that it might render a lesson of symbolism. He used these symbols to convey Truth.

In Revelation 13:11 the scene changes. It says, "I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." Verse 12 reads, "And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast." Verse 13 tells us, "And he doeth great wonders." Verse 15 says, "And he had power to give life." Verse 16 states, "And he causeth. . . ." Who is the antecedent *he* spoken of in these verses? He is the beast coming up out of the earth. He is the pronoun, reverting back to the antecedent in verse 11, the word *beast*.

## A False System of Worship

First, we must identify who this beast is or what it represents. Revelation 13:12 reads, "He [again, the pronoun *he* reverts back to the beast in verse 11] exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship." This beast is a system of worship. Verse 15 tells us, "And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Again, this beast is spoken of as a system of worship. Verse 14 says, "And deceiveth them." This system deceives its followers; therefore, it is representative of a false system of worship.

Can this beast be identified more closely? Verse 11 reads, "I beheld another beast." Many Scriptures show you what the word "beast" means and how it is used, but let us read one. In 2 Peter 2:1 Peter cautioned and prophesied of false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among us. Verse 12 reads, "But these [false prophets and false teachers], as natural brute beasts. . . ." Friend, these beasts are nothing more than religious individuals who formulate a system of worship that has no basis in Truth, but rather it is motivated by a spirit of the enemy with the sole purpose of deceiving the hearts of men and women.

Revelation 13:11 tells you that this beast is coming up out of the earth. Remember, we are dealing with symbolic expressions. What does the earth represent? Jeremiah 17:13 says, "O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth [Why?], because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters." Those spoken of as being written in the earth have departed and defected from Truth.

Jeremiah 22:29 tells us, "O earth,

earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD." Certainly, he was not talking about this terrestrial earth that we walk on; he was speaking of man. Ecclesiastes 12:7 reads, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was." Man is made from the dust of the earth. Second Corinthians 4:7 states, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." Second Corinthians 5:1 says, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle. . . ." What tabernacle was he talking about? Verse 4 tells us, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality. . . ." The tabernacle is our mortal person that came out of the dust of the earth.

This beast coming up out of the earth is a false system of worship that came from the minds of men who forsook the Truth that God had entrusted to them. These men were moved over to the flesh, and from their minds came this system. According to Revelation 13:11, this beast had two horns. Daniel said the horns represent kingdoms. Daniel 8:20 says, "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings," or another rendering says "kingdoms."

Two primary kingdoms gave rise to this system of worship: Germany and England. The system of worship that arose subsequent to Roman Catholicism was nothing more than the religious system of Protestantism, which began to rise in the proximity of A.D. 1530, when at the Diet of Augsburg in Augsburg, Germany, the Augsburg Confession was drafted and signed. Thus, the first creed of a Protestant sect was brought into focus, ending the exclusive papal night.

It is needful that you understand this, because we live in a world void of the Spirit of God. The things of God are foolishness to the natural man. He cannot receive them. This is the reason that many people who do not possess the Spirit of God look into the Scriptures and make all kinds of erroneous applications.

Some men advocate the position that a time is coming when everyone is going to have a mark on his forehead or his hand. They use this Scripture, found in our Scripture text in verse 16, which states, "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark." That is very true. However, you need to identify who is placing this mark. Verse 16 speaks of it as nothing more than the beast. Verse 11 introduces us to this beast coming out of the earth. Again, the beast is a false religious system of worship coming out of the minds of men. By A.D. 1530 it was firmly ensconced and was ratified at the Diet of Augsburg.

### The Protestant Era

In considering verse 16 of our Scripture text, we must first recognize that "he" that places this mark is the system of Protestantism. Therefore, this Scripture is speaking of the period of time that commenced in A.D. 1530 and went to A.D. 1880. In Revelation 14:1 we read, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion." We find here that the church came back into visible view in A.D. 1880 when Brother D. S. Warner and other evening-time brethren began to preach the evening-time message. The Scripture says *all* will receive this mark, but when did they receive it? Everyone from A.D. 1530 to A.D. 1880 had this mark. It was during the Protestant era and has nothing at all to do with the future. It has its historical time placement. The prophetic setting was contextually in the Protestant era.

Consider the word "all" from a temporal standpoint. It reads, "He causes all, both small and great." In other words, social status did not exempt one from receiving this mark. The words "rich and poor" in verse 16 mean that financial status did not exempt one from this mark. The words, "free and bond," mean that civil position did not exempt one from this mark. Nothing of a

human level, societal level, natural level, or temporal level could insulate one from this mark. The verse says "he causes all . . . to receive." Again, you must remember the time of which he was speaking. I repeat, this beast that causes all to receive this mark is the religious system of Protestantism. This event occurred during the Protestant era from A.D. 1530 to A.D. 1880. In that period of time, that cloudy day, all were impacted by this beast, or by this system of worship.

Let us view these words in a scriptural, or spiritual, sense. Again, verse 16 of our Scripture text says, "And causes all, both small and great . . . to receive a mark. . . ." In other words, men who were of small consequence spiritually and those who were great men of God were marked during this period. If you were to read their writings, you would find that their minds were marked with the teachings of that period. It was because the Truth of our day was not available in their day. They were good men of God, and God used many of them in a great and marvelous manner in that era. Similarly speaking, Noah was perfect in his generation, but he also became drunk and got naked. He did not have all the light in his generation. These were good men, and they were used of God in their day, but their light was less than perfect. Because of that, they suffered at the hands of this beast to the extent that all were marked to some extent.

Verse 16 goes on to mention "rich and poor, free and bond." It did not matter whether they were spiritually rich or impoverished, whether they were free or bond, or whether they were saved or unsaved. They all were affected in this era by this mark. It was not until A.D. 1880, when Brother D. S. Warner and other brethren came forth heralding the Truth that people were, as Revelation 14:1 says, "having his Father's name written in their foreheads." That light was not available until the evening time.

### The Mark of Indoctrination

Now let us look more closely at this mark. I want you to notice that our Scripture text says in verse 16, "And he causeth all, both small and great . . . to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads [not on but *in*]." Let us look at some other passages where this expression was used. Revelation 14:9 states, "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand."

Revelation 20:4 says, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands. . . ." This says "upon their foreheads," but the Greek word is **epi**, which means "in."

Our Scripture text states in verse 16 that they had "a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads." What does this expression "in their right hand" portray? In Galatians 2:1 Paul said, "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also." Verse 9 says, "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship." When the Scriptures speak of a mark in the right hand, they are talking about fellowship, or about being in fellowship.

Consider another Scripture found in 2 Kings 10:15-16, which gives the account concerning Jehu and Jehonadab. It reads: "And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it

be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot." He extended the hand of fellowship and came into the common chariot. The right hand represents fellowship.

Our Scripture text goes on to say this mark was also "in their foreheads." Now, stop and think about this. What is in your forehead? Your mind is in your forehead. That is where your thoughts are. What is the picture being drawn before us? Remember, this is the Protestant beast, marking people during this Protestant era. What did this beast mark? He marked their minds, their thinking, and indoctrinated them.

Ezekiel 3:4-10 reads: "And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel; Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee.

"But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted. Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears."

Again, verse 8 says, "Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads." Obviously, he was not going to have a literal head butting contest. He was talking about his mind, his resolve, his

thinking being so strong that he would not be moved. He would have more resolve than they had. He would not change his mind or allow them or any circumstances to change his mind.

Again, our Scripture text in verse 16 tells us they would "receive a mark (singular) in their right hand or in their foreheads." There was only one mark, but the same mark was in both places—in their right hand and in their foreheads. What does this tell you? This mark they had in their minds was the same mark that produced their fellowship. This mark is not something looming on the horizon, or in the future, but rather it was something that has marked the minds of people since the Protestant era.

### **The Avenue to Your Heart**

Let us consider the expression in our Scripture text in verse 16 where it speaks of a mark. How is that word used throughout the Scriptures? Does it lend itself to literalism? Psalm 37:37 states, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright." Are we supposed to stamp men with a number? That is what literalists would say the word *mark* means. Certainly the phrase "Mark the perfect man" does not lend itself to literalism. Psalm 48:12-13, talking about Zion reads: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks." Is that verse to be taken literally? Certainly not. The word "*mark*" as used in these verses means "to identify, to place in your mind, to give specific notice and attention to."

Ezekiel 44:5 says, "And the LORD said unto me, Son of man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the LORD, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary." This was not a literal mark, so why do people struggle with the

mark in Revelation 13:16? One is no more literal than the other. In the New Testament, Romans 16:17 reads, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary [putting a literal stamp on their heads was not what Paul was talking about] to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Clearly, this is not a literal mark that Paul was speaking of. He was saying to identify them, to give them specific notice and attention in your mind.

A mark can be negative or positive. In Revelation 13:16 the mark is negative, but in Revelation 14:1, speaking of those who have "his Father's name written in their foreheads," the mark is positive. Whether the mark is negative or positive is determined by what the mark is for. In Philippians 3:17, Paul used it in a positive sense when he said, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." This admonition from the Apostle Paul was positive. The meaning of mark, regardless of the application, is the same.

In the Protestant era, men's minds were marked with the teachings of the Protestant systems of religion. What are false religions marking? They are marking men's minds with their deceptive teachings. Even today, the battle is for the mind. This is the reason you need to be careful of what you allow to come into your home. The best place for some literature that may come into the home is in the trash. You need to be *very* careful of what you allow to come into your home. Why? Because behind the men who write some of these articles are spirits that want to take hold of you. The ultimate goal of those spirits is to deceive your soul and to impair your spiritual welfare. You need to be careful of what you read and of what you listen to. Some people say, "I just love Christian radio." Ninety-nine percent of it is nothing but Babylonian business. If you listen to that all day, you will be so confused that

you will not know which end is up.

The Bible says to abstain from all appearance of evil, and evil takes on many appearances. The goal is to gain access to your mind, because that is the avenue to your heart. Proverbs 23:7 states, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." It becomes self-fulfilling prophesy. Your thinking changes, your mind changes, and then your living changes. So what you believe is absolutely crucial. If you believe wrong, you will live wrong, because how you believe governs your actions.

### **The Battle for the Mind**

The battle is for the mind. Second Corinthians 10:4-5 says: "For the weapons of our warfare [we are in a warfare] are not carnal, [The Greek says fleshly. We do not take up literal weapons and march around on the Mall in front of the Capitol with placards or signs.] but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) [What are these strongholds?] Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." We are in a battle for the mind.

Ephesians, Chapter 6, talks about the fiery darts of the wicked, and many times those darts are the thoughts that dart into your mind through the course of the day. You cannot keep a thought from darting into your mind. Just as the old adage says, "You cannot keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair." When a thought darts through your mind, one of two things is going to occur: either you are going to captivate it and bring it into the obedience of Christ or it is going to start to captivate you. If it starts to captivate you, as Romans, Chapter 7, says, it will get into your members. Once that occurs, you will be doing what you are thinking. This is the reason false religion is

working so hard to mark the minds of men. The enemy of souls is behind it; a spirit wants to mark the minds of men.

First Peter 1:13 says, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind." What is a girdle for? One thing it does is hold things in place. That is what you need to do with your mind. You should not just let it run loose. Do not believe everything you read. The devil inspires men to write books too. It is amazing how many people think that if they read something in the newspaper, it has to be true. Then when they listen to someone preach, they act as though it is a newspaper. You need to gird up your mind. The Scripture says to "mark them that cause division." Why should you mark them? If you do not mark them, they are going to mark you.

The Apostle Paul admonished in Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly [or their own flesh]; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Again, if you do not mark them, they are going to mark you. They are out to deceive. False doctrines and false teachings mark the mind with false thinking, which leads to wrong living.

Proverbs 23:7 reads, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." What you think is crucial. What you believe is absolutely vital, because wrong thinking leads to wrong living. What your mind embraces dictates what you are, what you believe, and how you behave. We read in 2 John, verse 10, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." When the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Mormons come to your house spreading their doctrines, you should not let them in. Why? They want to do one thing. They want to mark your mind and get into your

thinking. They may say, "Will you at least take my literature?" That is like saying, "Here, since I cannot stay, I will leave my snake behind." I repeat, when people come to your door and bring false doctrine, the Bible says not to receive them. They want to indoctrinate you with falsity. Remember, this is not a literal mark, but a spiritual mark, a spiritual indoctrination of the mind. Every sectarian organization has a mark, and behind the mark is a spirit.

First John 2:26 reads, "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you." What causes them to seduce people? First Timothy 4:1 says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits." These seducers are out there because they are possessed with a seducing spirit.

### **Buying and Selling**

I want you to notice our Scripture text says in verse 17, "And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." What is this referring to when it speaks of no man buying or selling? Remember, we are dealing with spiritual indoctrination and fellowship. Proverbs 23:23 tells us, "Buy the truth, and sell it not."

In Matthew, Chapter 13, Jesus gave seven prophetic parables. In verses 44-46 He talked about buying and selling. He said: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

Notice the buying and selling here had nothing to do with literalism. He was talking about spiritual qualities, spiritual truths, and

spiritual realities. These verses are dealing with the spiritual realm. Therefore, our Scripture text is stating that unless you have their mark, or their indoctrination, in your mind, or unless you are accepted into their fellowship, you cannot conduct business in their congregations or fill their pulpits. Remember, prophetically, the time setting of this text is A.D. 1530 to A.D. 1880, the Protestant era. In that era, if you wanted to minister in a particular sectarian Protestant church, only one thing mattered: they required you to have their mark, or their doctrine, in your mind. In other words, you had to be a graduate of their colleges, be taught their doctrines, and be taken into their fellowship before you could fill their pulpits. Man thinks you have to go through their programs before you are qualified to preach. They even regarded Jesus this way. This spirit has worked throughout the ages.

In John 7:14-15 we read: "Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Many people think that you have to be so educated to understand the Revelation. I remind people that Acts 4:13 says, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men. . . ." These men of God were unlearned. Truth does not come by education; it comes by revelation.

Here is an excerpt from *The Christian Church, Its Rise and Progress* by H. M. Riggle, pages 341 and 342. I think this illustrates the point well.

A man must have the doctrines of Babylon and belong to one of the various Protestant sects or he will not be allowed to preach in their houses of worship. A few years ago a brother of the ministry went into a certain town to find a place to conduct a series of holiness meetings. He was directed by a Presbyterian lady to their pastor whom she said

was a believer in the doctrine of holiness. When the brother called on the minister and made known his errand, the first question asked him was this: "Are you a member of the Presbyterian church?" The brother answered in the negative. (He did not have the name of the beast.) The next question that greeted him was this: "Do you believe in the Westminster confession of faith to be orthodox?"

He answered, "No, sir." (He did not have the mark of the beast.)

The last question was, "Do you belong to any of the various Protestant denominations?" The brother said, "No." (He did not have the number of his name.)

The answer was, "You cannot have our house."

This explains what is meant by not allowing anyone to buy and sell, or to preach the Gospel except those who have the mark, the number, and the name of the beast. This has real fulfillment in Protestantism today.

I can update this for you. Some people from out of the state where I am pastoring in were driving a van, bringing about sixteen or seventeen people every week to our Saturday night services. For weeks, those people feasted on the messages and received a great benefit from our services. Some of the people who came were starting to make moves to get help and some got saved. This went on for about two months, until finally their pastor came.

One night after the service, he asked me about a certain teaching. I told him how I understood it, but unfortunately it was not how he understood it. He walked out, and that stopped all those people from coming. They said they could not fellowship with us anymore. Why? I did not have their mark, or their indoctrinations, in my mind, so they quit giving me the right hand of fellowship. Before this, they came and testified about how blessed they were. The pastor even considered inviting me to hold a meeting for

them. However, as soon as he learned that I did not have his mark, there was no buying or selling there. Those people never attended our services again.

### Practices Foreign to the Truth

Now let us examine verse 17 of our Scripture text a little further to dispel some falsity associated with it. It says that "no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." This reveals that the mark and the number are two totally separate things. In the realms of false religion, they tell you that you are going to get a mark, and it is going to be the number 666. However, in this Scripture, the mark has nothing at all to do with the number, and the number has nothing to do with the mark.

As you look at the closing verses of Revelation 13:16-18, it reveals how foreign the practices of Babylon are to the Truth. It closes out this segment of John's vision. If you study, you will find that the Revelation is broken down into seven distinct series. Revelation 12:1 begins series number five, and it commences with the inception of the Gospel Day, describing the woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet. As soon as Revelation 12:1 introduces you to the institution of the New Testament church, Revelation 12:3 lets you know there was another wonder (the Greek word says sign, or symbol), and it was a great red dragon. In Revelation 12:7, the next thing you see is war. Revelation 12:11 reveals that the saints overcame that dragon. They cast down that system, which was the first opposing force—paganism.

Friend, just because the enemy is defeated in one form does not mean that he stops working. He merely changes his tactics. In Revelation 13:1 you see that a beast came up out of the sea, which is nothing more than the religious system of Roman Catholicism. (I am not

speaking against people, but I am against false systems of worship, which are contrary to the eternal welfare of men's and women's souls.) In Revelation 2:16 Jesus told the Pergamos era, which was in the same time period as the rule of papalism, if they did not repent, He would fight against them with the sword of His mouth. They did not repent, and they have never repented. They still do not teach repentance, so they turned the sword of His mouth loose. What is the sword of His mouth? Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword."

Martin Luther and others in the sixteenth century reformation took the sword of Truth and laid a deadly wound to the papal beast, and thereby forever broke the exclusive night of Romanism. However, it is sad to say that the followers of those reformers did not stay true. They did not continue to walk in the light as Jesus is in the light. They turned aside and made an image to the beast and became just like the very thing that they protested against.

It was this image, the system of Protestantism, that began to formulate various doctrines and teachings that have risen out of the minds of men, such as shaking a preacher's hand, being baptized into the church, church joining, being confirmed, and so on. This is the kind of mark that is in each of those religious systems of Protestantism. Each particular denomination or order, each sectarian body has its own particular doctrine, its own teachings, its own mark, and behind it is its own spirit. Revelation, Chapter 13, closes out by revealing how foreign the practices of Babylon are to the Truth. It portrays how false religion is dominated by man with man-made teachings, men who are usurpers and who are out to dupe and deceive by indoctrination.

Sad to say, there were three hundred fifty years of Protestantism, and twelve hundred sixty years of papalism. God's people had to labor

under the dark night of Roman Catholicism and the cloudy day of Protestantism. Thank God, when God's children, the Israelites, were held in Egyptian bondage (a type of Babylon), God heard the cry of His people and raised up Moses, a deliverer, to bring them to Canaan land. Likewise, in A.D. 1880 God raised up a brother to herald essentially the same message as Moses, and he brought a people out of spiritual bondage.

Egypt is a type of spiritual Babylon. Revelation 11:8 says, "And their dead bodies [speaking of the two witnesses, which you can read about in verse 3, the Word and the Spirit] shall lie in the street of the great city [Revelation 14:8 states that the great city is Babylon] which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt." What does the verse mean by "spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt"? Sodom refers to wickedness, and Egypt refers to bondage. That is exactly what Babylon is—spiritual bondage and a place of wickedness. Throughout the dark and cloudy day, God's people were held in bondage.

### **The Truth Will Make You Free**

Exodus 2:23-25 lets you know that the children of Israel groaned when they were under Egyptian bondage. They groaned under those labors. Revelation 6:9-11 talks about those in the fifth-seal age who were in the latter portion of the Protestant era. Those souls under the altar were groaning, praying, and crying out for the same thing that those back in Egypt were crying for. What was it? They needed someone to deliver them from Egyptian bondage. In the Exodus account, God raised up a man named Moses, and according to Exodus 8:1, his message was, "Let my people go that they may serve me." Then in A.D. 1880, God raised up Daniel Sidney Warner and other brethren to herald the message of Revelation 18:4, which reads, "Come out of her, my people." Essentially, it was the same

message.

Friend, it is very clear that just as God raised up Moses and he began to pour out plagues on Egypt, God also raised up a ministry at the beginning of the sixth seal, when the evening time commenced. Revelation 15:1 lets you know that John saw a ministry having the seven last plagues, and they began to pour out plagues, and people became free, just as they were in Moses' day. They led a people out.

The next scene is in Revelation 14:1 where we read, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion." Glory be to God! When those brethren started pouring out the vials, pouring out the plagues, thank God, the church came back into visible view. Then Christ was back into His rightful position as Head of the church, and now men do not have to receive a mark. We can have the Father's name in our foreheads. We do not have to have the mark of the beast. Those poor brethren in that cloudy day did not have the choice, but we have a choice. Zechariah 14:7 says, "At evening time it shall be light." The Scripture text says, "And he causeth all . . . to receive a mark." He was talking about the Protestant era of time. It is not in the future; it was back then. Thank God, we do not have to receive that mark.

As Revelation 14:1 says, we can have the Father's name (God, Church of God), in whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named, written in our foreheads. We can have a knowledge of the Truth in our minds. I once was in Egypt's bondage, or in sectarian bondage, but thank God, I heard the message of Truth, and I am glad that I came leaping and shouting home to Zion. God still has a people today who will hear the message. There are still sheep out there that God wants to gather and bring into this one fold. Glory be to God for this evening time and the precious Truth being loosed that we can enjoy!

I trust that you can see the Truth right in the midst of all the false

conceptions concerning the mark of the beast. It was for the past. Now we can have another mark—the Father's name. I thank God for Truth! Jesus said in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The Truth will make you free from every

falsity. It does not make you free from sin; the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses you from all sin, but Truth makes you free from error and falsity. I thank God that I know the Truth, and I am glad that He desires everyone to know the Truth. I believe that brighter days are sweetly

dawning and that God has more on the horizon for us. I do not believe that we have seen all that God has in store for us yet. God still wants to do a work.

(Compact Disc TR-668A)

[Guest Editorial— continued from p. 2]

ade you will find that they harbor things that are not Christlike. They are discontented and sneak around, working undercover to pull the unsuspecting soul away from what is right. From all appearance these have much in common with Balaam who refused to obey God's command. They could also be likened to Diotrefes who loved and desired to have the preeminence over others.

Saint, you need to beware and to be awake when anyone tries to impose some new idea or thought that is contrary to sound Bible Truth. There can be things that may look and sound good at the first, but they will lead to shame, disgrace, and

defeat. You must beware of anyone who begins in some subtle way to discredit or degrade a proven man of God. There are those who have entered a congregation and begun divisive works that have led or swayed souls into error. Their cunning and divisive work also brought upon themselves total destruction when it was finished. God is displeased with those who think and feel they know how to direct the affairs of a congregation better than anyone else does, even the pastor.

What about you, dear reader? Are you keeping company with people that God would prefer that you would not? Are you becoming influenced by some disgruntle who is unhappy with God's way and

man? Are there things in God's Word that He has asked you to do or not to do? Do you feel that your spirituality is strong enough that you can handle life's situations on your own? If this is your case, then you need to realize that you are getting close to a place of being overtaken by a seducing spirit. If you fall under a seducing spirit, the devil will deceive you into thinking and believing that all is well and right between you and the Lord. You must beware of seducing spirits. Your only hope of overcoming is to stay humble before God, pray, and continue to walk in the things you have learned.

Selected

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*Psalm 75:1 Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.*

# Christ Gives Newness of Life



*Brother Irwin Seshier*

## **The Working of God's Mighty Power**

Through His marvelous Word, the Lord will do miraculous works if you allow Him to do so. There is a great work to do today, and the enemy would like for you to become complacent and to be satisfied with the prayers that have already been answered. However, there is more work to be done, there is more ground to be covered, there are more victories ahead that the Lord wants us to be a part of.

We should not be satisfied with what God has already done. We should be hungry and desire more. There are more souls out there who need to be saved. More battles need to be fought. There are ones out in this old world who need to hear the

Truth of the Gospel, and they need to see consistent Christian living. The reason a lot of people are so down on religion is that they do not see any consistency in people's lives.

We do not want to be categorized as merely being religious. We want people to see that we have something that they need. We have salvation, and we have joy unspeakable that is full of glory down deep in our souls. We have something that the world desires. It is not found in a bottle or in the pleasures of this old world, but it is found in living for Christ. The power of our dear Savior Jesus Christ is what gives us the desire to go on. I am thankful for that.

It is only through Christ that people are saved. It is through Him that they can break the habits of life.

Friend, if you are battling the habits of life, you are going to have a struggle, but you can fight those battles with the help of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit can come in and give you the power to break those habits. You know that the Lord did not put a cigarette in your mouth. He did not put the liquor in the glass and make you drink it. You did those things, but the Lord can help you to break the power of those sinful habits. You have to seek the Lord's face for the strength and the power to do so. The devil will come to you, saying, "You can't do that." Well, he is right. You cannot do it in your own strength. You need the power of God to break those habits of life. There is power in the name of Jesus. Ephesians 1:19 says, "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward

who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." There is power in His name. If you are going through a struggle, the Word of God is accessible to you. You can fight the devil.

We need to show compassion and let others know that we are concerned about them. They need our prayers, and they need to be encouraged. They may be going through severe battles. Some were out in sin for many years, and the devil is not ready to give them up. They are going to be battled, but we need to help and encourage them. The enemy led them around and exposed their minds and bodies to some very ugly things. The devil will try to lure them back into those things. They need our concern and compassion. A lot of this battling goes on in people's minds. They think: "The devil is doing this. I cannot do this or that; no one cares for me." That is the typical line of the devil: "No one cares about you, and no one really cares about your problem." Well, the church cares. Those who are saved are concerned about your problem. They want to see you do well. They want to see you in the services. That is where you are going to gain strength. You are not going to gain it out in the world.

### God-Given Abilities

People hear a lot of negative remarks from people out in the world, but there is newness of life in Christ Jesus. New life in Christ brings new ideas. New life in Christ brings new goals in your life. Newness of life in Christ brings a different outlook on things that you did not have before. Newness of life in Christ can put your home back together. It will give you things that the Lord desires for you to have in your life. You must not forget that the most important thing is placing the Lord first in your life.

Some people may say, "I cannot do anything for the Lord." The brain is a remarkable thing that God created. All of our abilities come from

God. Anything that we do comes from God. Our reasoning skills, our understanding, the things that we can do come from God.

Our natural abilities are just as important as our spiritual gifts. Some people make statements such as, "Well, I do not have any abilities to offer." They do not realize the type of statement that they are making. They probably have many untapped, unrecognized, and unused abilities in their brain. People do not use all of the brain; I have read that. Studies have revealed that the average person possesses five hundred to seven hundred different skills and abilities. Think of that! You see, the devil will try to convince you by telling you that you cannot do anything. We have many abilities through Christ.

Did you know that your brain can store approximately one hundred trillion facts? Also, your mind can handle fifteen thousand decisions a second. That is amazing! Your nose can smell up to ten thousand different odors. Your touch can detect an item one twenty-five thousandths of an inch thick. Your tongue can taste one part of quinine in two million parts of water. Think of that! God has given us wonderful abilities at our disposal. Some people say, "I don't think I can do anything for God." Well, look at some of the abilities that He has given us.

We have amazing abilities. You need to ask God to direct you to the ability that He wants you to focus on. Your prayer should be: "Lord, direct me. Tell me what You want me to do, not what I want to do. Tell me how You want me to live my life. Where do You want me to go? What do You want me to say?"

Some people want to tell others off. You should ask the Lord: "How do You want me to say this? I want to go about it in the right Spirit." We are living in such perilous times. We do not know what is going to happen. First Peter 4:17-18 says: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end

be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" That does not leave much room for error if the righteous scarcely be saved. There are a lot of close calls that people have.

### The Importance of Little Things

Sometimes you have to make a decision in a fraction of a second, and if you choose the wrong way, you will miss the whole thing. Baseball players try to hit a one-hundred-mile-an-hour fast ball. The batter has .380 seconds to make a decision of what he wants to do; that is less than half a second to decide what he needs to do. In that time he has to determine what kind of pitch is coming at him. He has to decide whether that ball is going to be a strike or a ball. Also, he has to try to determine the speed of the pitch of the ball and see how far the pitcher strides off the mound. It is only 60.5 feet from the pitcher's mound to the home plate. That is only .380 seconds in 60.5 feet. That does not give him much time. If he makes a connection, he is a hero.

You probably thought, "All he has to do is start swinging." No, there is more to it than that. Likewise, there is more to living for Christ than just going to the house of God. There is a work to be done and a world to be won, but it is more than just filling a seat. It is going to be too late to do anything one of these days.

A couple of years ago, there was a cruise ship that tried to go under a bridge in Denmark. The name of the ship was *Allure of the Seas*, and it is a cruise ship that is the length of four football fields. It can accommodate more than sixty-three hundred passengers. It measures twelve hundred feet from bow to stern, and the height is two hundred thirty-six feet. It cost 1.5 billion dollars to build. It was trying to go under a bridge in Denmark. It had to go under the bridge in order to get back to its

home port. There was only a twenty-inch clearance between the bridge and the top of the ship. The captain of that boat only had mere inches to get that ship under the bridge. I can imagine that he was very concerned. Furthermore, because of the swell of the water and the swell of the ocean in certain weather conditions, that brought it down to only five inches from the bottom of the bridge to the top of the deck of the ship. It was so close that they had telescopic smoke stacks, which they had to reel in. These are the things out here in the world that we use as examples and people say, "Whew! That was close!" What about your soul? Think how close it is living for God. Is your heart right with God? That is the most important consideration.

We all are familiar with the space shuttle. When it was out in space, it came down to the earth's atmosphere and had to slow down. As it was traveling in orbit, it traveled seventeen thousand, five hundred miles an hour. It was faster than a speeding bullet. Imagine driving down a highway for five minutes, passing landmark after landmark. The space shuttle would pass it all in one second. Think of that! Where it would take you five minutes to drive through, it only took the space shuttle one second. It had to slow down in order to reenter the earth's atmosphere. Too steep of a descent would have caused it to burn up with extreme heat. At an extreme angle, it would have skipped off deeper into space. That is very close. Their computers were working all the time to make sure they were coming in at just the right angle.

Can you see how important it is to live for Jesus? Can you see how much more important it is to make sure that you make Heaven your home one of these days? I am thankful that there is newness of life in Jesus Christ. I am thankful that I do not have to lean upon this old world's treasures. I do not have to lean upon its habits of life. I am

thankful that Jesus Christ brings new life, a new walk, a new talk, and new desires. You do not have to do those old things any more.

### **Lining Up With God's Word**

When you are born again, you do not have to worry about what church to join. It was very simple when I got saved. I was born into the Church of God. The Church of God is it. I appreciate the Truth!

When you go out some place to buy a car or an appliance, you want somebody to tell you the truth about it, don't you? How much more important would it be to let you know about eternal Truth? Would it not be a shame to go through your whole life thinking: "Maybe I am getting the Truth." I am thankful that the true Church of God preaches the Truth.

The Truth is something that you put on, something that you take with you. This is something not just for Sunday. It is something that you live three hundred sixty-five days a year. The reason some people go to other places to worship is that they do not want to line up with the Truth of God's Word. The Word of God gets sweeter as the days go by to the saints of God. I do not want to change it or rearrange it. I love it just the way it is! Too many people want to change it or rearrange it. You cannot pick and choose from the Word of God what you want to do and still make Heaven your home. You have to take the whole Book.

The Bible is what you are going to be judged by—the whole Book, not by what you want or by what you desire. You are going to be judged by the Word of God. Friend, it is only going to work if you line up with God's Word. A lot of people have problems because they fail to forsake the world. Friend, in order for you to gain strength and follow God, you have to forsake the world. You have to live in the world, but the world does not have to be in you. If you are true Church of God,

the world will know it.

John 16:33 says, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace [I thank God that I met the Peacemaker one day]. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." If Jesus Christ can overcome the world, you can overcome the world too. There is power in His name. You can have power to live above this old world's sin. The world is the ruination of a lot of people. Friend, the world will ruin you. The world will take you down the wrong path. The world will lead you to places that you thought you would never go. It will lead you to spend your money on things you thought you would never spend it on. The world wants to reel you in. There is a spirit behind worldliness, and that spirit can be easily attained today.

### **God Does a Complete Work**

Often people try to do this or that to try to whip up some true joy in Jesus. You do not have to pick out one day of the year to have this joy. Jesus can be that joy throughout the whole year. Then you can say: "He gave me deliverance and helped me with this situation. He healed my body. He helped me with my problems. He gave me finances when I was out of money. He protected me on the highway." That is how good God is!

Sinner friend, if you truly want Jesus Christ, you can have Him. However, you must forsake all sin. If you will do that, you will get the best of the trade. All you have to do is give up your desires and your wants. Jesus has much more in store for you. Sinner friend, God truly loves and cares for you.

We read in Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Did you know that He was concerned about you and He loved you when you were living in sin? He cares about you so much that He died for you.

He does not want you to go another day living in sin. Sin will cost you, and it will cause you to become wrapped up in bondage. There is bondage in sin. Do not think that you can go into sin and do the things that you want to do and not be penalized or that it will not cost you anything.

When you are living in sin, it will tear down your physical health and your mental health. Eventually, sin will destroy you physically, mentally, and spiritually. Sin wants to take over the whole man, but thank God, you do not have to stay in that condition. I am thankful that I got sick of sin. You can find deliverance too. You must become sick enough of sin to want to get free from your sins. You can get delivered from your sins. First John 1:9 reads, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [there is a promise], and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Jesus Christ is in the business of cleaning up *all* unrighteousness. He does not do haphazard work; He does a complete work.

When you have a complete work, you become a complete man or woman for Jesus. Think of that, sinner friend! This is what Jesus wants to do in your life. He does not do a halfway job. He wants you to be cleansed from *all* sin.

I am thankful that He spoke to my heart one day. Christian friend, where do you think you would be if Jesus Christ had not spoken to your heart? You could be in jail or you could be in hell. You do not know where you might have ended up. It is the mercy of God that saved you, keeps you, and protects you. People do not give God enough praise for what He does. You ought to let Him know that you are thankful for what He has done for your life. There is victory in Jesus. It is complete victory!

Sin will demoralize a man, but the Lord specializes in doing a full and complete work. Romans 10:9 says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt

believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." You can be saved now.

### **Do You Have Newness of Life?**

Sometimes I think about where I was and how I lived before I was saved. I did not have Jesus in my life. I knew I was not doing the things of God, although I was raised in a Christian home. My mom and dad brought me up the right way, but just being brought up the right way will not save you. Just because you do not indulge in the habits of life, that will not save you. I did not get myself involved in all those things. I never smoked a cigarette or drank a drop of alcohol in my life, and I am thankful for that.

The devil will cause you to think, "Well, I do not do those bad things, so I will be all right." No, you must have a personal salvation. I did not have Christ in my heart. You see, that is where nominal religion will come in and say, "Well, you are a pretty good person. You can come into our congregation, and we will make you a Sunday school teacher or a youth director." They will make you feel good outwardly, yet you lack salvation down deep in your heart. You still lack that cleansing of the heart.

When you have a cleansing of the heart, then you know that your heart is right with God and you will do the things that you need to do to follow Christ. There is a lot of church joining, shaking the preacher's hand, and signing of pledge cards, but that is not going to help you until you get your heart right with God. You may be able to quote the Bible frontward and backward, but if you have not been born again, your life is being lived in vain. Christ brings newness of life.

The best thing you could ever do would be to accept the Lord as your Savior. Things go better with Christ. Christ will help you through the hard times. You will go through some trials and some persecutions, but it is much better to go through

those and have Jesus. You see, sin will take you down the wrong road, and things will not normally work themselves out. They progressively get worse. The enemy wants you to think: "Well, you are just a little down on your luck. Things will get better." That is a lie from the enemy of souls.

John 14:6 reads, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." There is so much anger and hostility in people's hearts. That makes me more determined to live for Jesus. That just fuels my desire to be more like Christ each and every day. I do not want to slip back into the things of this old world. I am thankful that we can have peace and joy when we have Jesus Christ in our hearts.

It is evident by the many things that we have seen and heard that our world is waxing worse and worse. It is so sad how things have been torn down, little by little in our nation. Our ancestors fought for this great nation. The documents that they wrote and put God in and used God as their cornerstone in are being discarded. That is sad! In the end Jesus will still come out on top. When the world goes the other way, we can still say that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

If you are struggling spiritually, now would be a good time to get a tighter grip on Jesus. The enemy wants you to start moving your grip away from God. Now is when you need a tighter grip on the things of God. We are going to go through some shaking times if the Lord tarries. We are going to see things that we have never seen before. It is going to take the grace of God to protect us and to keep us.

You need to have that light in your life and say: "Lord, I am going to follow You no matter what. I am going to trust in You regardless of what the world does, regardless of what my relatives do, or regardless of what they say about me on the job. I am going to trust You." This is

a time when you need more of the Lord in your life. It is not the time to quit God. It is not the time to give up on Jesus Christ. He did not quit on you when you were out in sin. He sought you and went after you. He wanted you to be in the fold.

Psalm 84:11-12 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. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." Do you have that newness of life? Friend, do not think that you can find it in property, land, houses, or money. The only way that you are going to find newness of life is to be deeply anchored in the things of God. Do you want more of Jesus and less of yourself? Do you want to be used of God? A true saint

of God would answer yes to all of these questions. There is newness in living this way. There is a newness of life in Christ that people out in the world wish for. There is not enough money to buy this newness of life. Sinner friend, if you have a need, won't you come to Jesus Christ?

(Compact Disc TR-734)

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# Announcements

## **Newton, KS**

Nov. 5-11

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

Evangelist: Bro. Earl R. Borders, Heath, Ohio

Service times: Mon.-Sat. 7:00 p.m.; Sun. School 9:45 a.m.; Sun. Worship 10:45 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Sandy Killfoil @ 316-842-5127

## **Canby, OR**

Nov. 20-25

**FELLOWSHIP MEETING & REVIVAL:** Church of God, 522 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Canby, OR 97013

Service times: Tuesday - Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.;

Thursday - Saturday @ 10:30 & 7:00 p.m.; Sunday: 10:40 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor E. David Stegmeier, 552 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Canby, OR 97013

Telephone: 503-266-9297

## **Phoenix, AZ**

Nov. 20-25

**REVIVAL:** Church of God, 3450 West Grover Street, Phoenix, AZ

Evangelist: Brother Leamon Whitehead, Minerva, Ohio

Service times: Tuesday-Saturday 6:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:15 a.m. & 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)

## **Summersville, WV**

Nov. 30 - Dec. 2

**REVIVAL:** Church of God, 74 Armstrong Road, Summersville, WV 26651

Evangelist: Brother Jerry Miller, Comstock, Michigan

Service times: Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday - Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders. Telephone: 304-872-4047

Visit our website at: [www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com](http://www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com)

## How Is Your Lantern?

One night a motorist was run down by a train at a grade crossing. The old signalman in charge of the crossing had to appear in court. After a severe cross examination, he was still unshaken. He said he had waved his lantern frantically, but all to no avail.

The following day the superintendent of the line called him into his office. "You did wonderfully well yesterday, Tom," he said. "I was afraid at first that you might waver."

"No, sir," replied Tom, "but I was afraid that old lawyer was going to ask me whether or not my lantern was lit!"



*W*inter 2012

*Camp Meeting*

December 26-30

*Make your reservations now to come and  
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Newark, Ohio*

*The first service begins Wednesday  
at 7:00 p.m.*

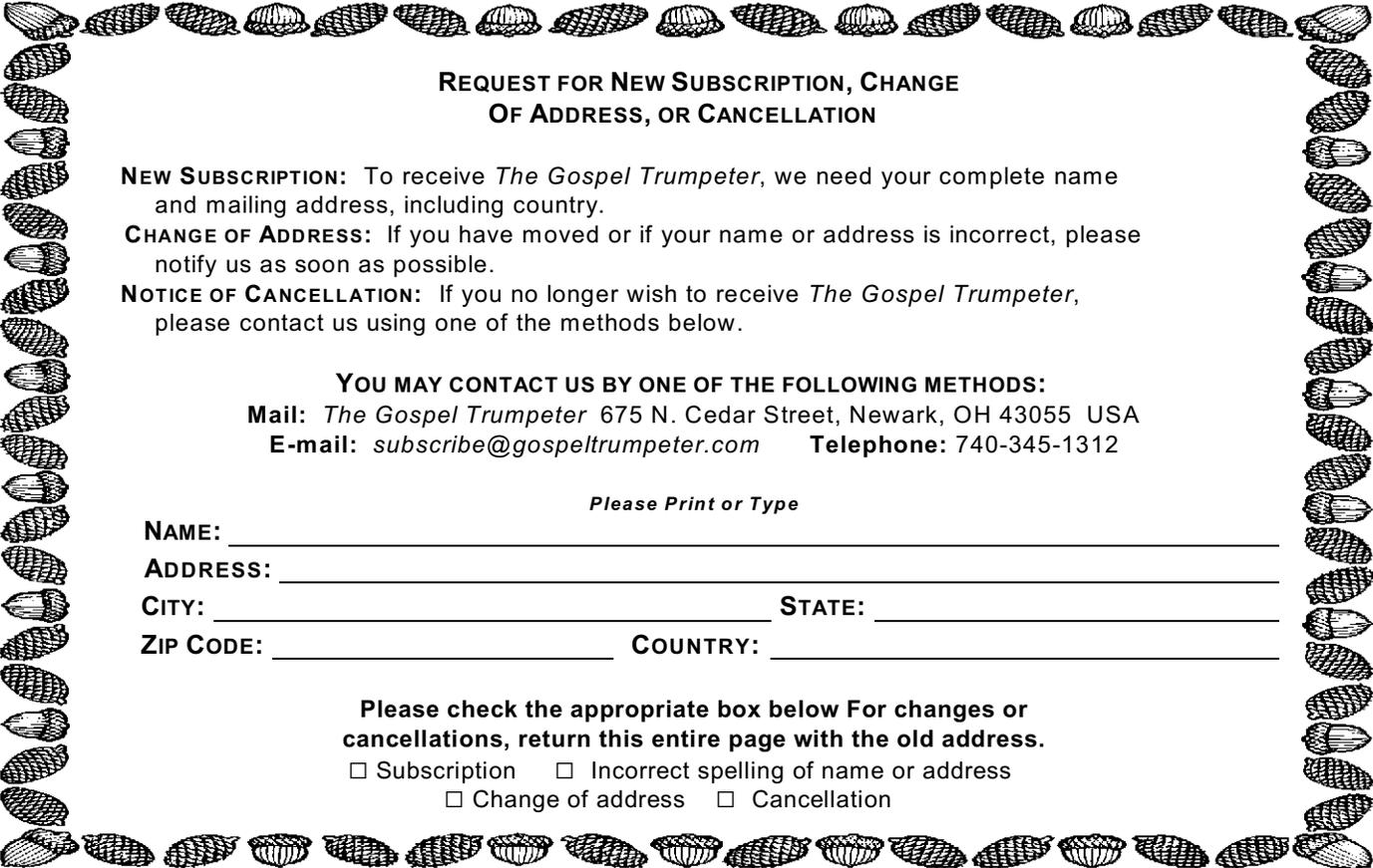


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