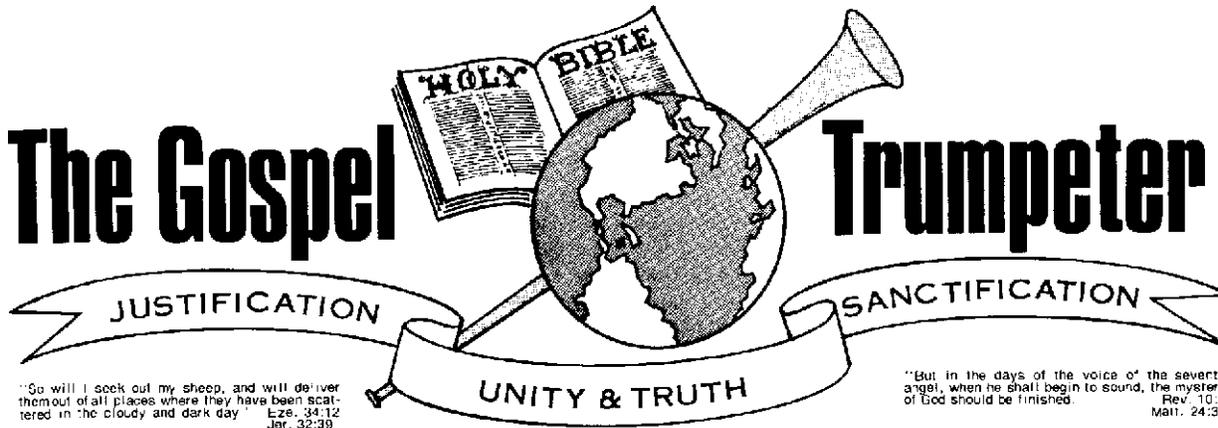


The Gospel Trumpeter



JUSTIFICATION

SANCTIFICATION

UNITY & TRUTH

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

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

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 43 April 2013 No. 4



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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

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Vol. 43 April 2013 No. 4

Annual Financial Report

The Psalmist David wrote in Psalm 26:7, "That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works." The burden of this publication over the years has been to herald the message of Truth. We consider ourselves extremely blessed to be put in trust with the Gospel, and we thank the Lord for this stewardship with which we have been entrusted. It is our earnest desire and burden to portray His wondrous works through the written page so that all men may see His wonderful works. It is our prayer that honest hearts will be led to repentance and that many will come the knowledge of the Truth. To this end, many saints work tirelessly to present you with this magazine every month. Only eternity will reveal the many hours expended and the benefits gained by this periodical.

Needless to say, the publication of this holiness journal is a large and expensive undertaking, as you can see from the financial statement below. *The Gospel Trumpeter* is not self-supporting. Rarely is any ministry self-sufficient. Therefore, that affords an opportunity for everyone to be a participant in the spreading of the Gospel. Though you may not have a call to preach or teach or compose an article, you may fill a very valuable role in the furtherance of the Gospel through your giving. If Jesus will reward a cup of water given in His name, how much more will He reward you when you provide funds for the distribution of His Gospel. We have never affixed a subscription price to this publication. It has always been our desire to place this magazine in every home possible, regardless of the subscriber's financial means. Nevertheless, the cost of supplies and postage continues to escalate. If you desire to make a donation to help defray these expenses, you may send a check or money order payable to *The Gospel Trumpeter*, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, Ohio 43055.

We trust that this periodical will continue to be a blessing to you and an enhancement to your spiritual growth as well as the means of salvation to many lost souls.

Statement of Condition for 12 months ending January 31, 2013

	Income	Expenses
Donations/Offerings	\$13,782.00	
Wages		48,097.00
Payroll Taxes/Insurance/Workers' Comp		17,186.00
Supplies		\$ 28,746.00
Equipment Purchased		7,789.00
Postage		68,437.00
Maintenance & Repairs		4,387.00
Miscellaneous Expenses		4,896.00
Subtotals	13,782.00	\$179,538.00
Balance paid out of the general fund of the Church of God congregation at Newark, OH		\$165,756.00

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

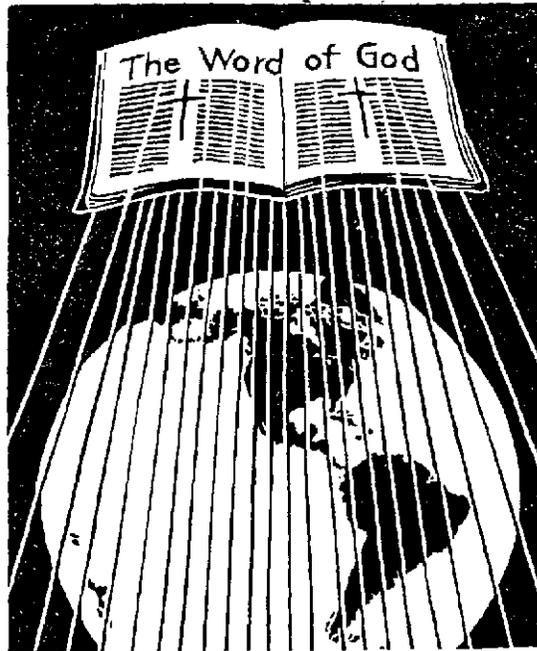
2 For if the word spoken by angels

was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first

began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.

The Greatness of Salvation



Brother Roger L. Decker

The Need of Salvation

The word *neglect* means "to ignore, to be careless, or to take lightly." Many severe accidents have resulted through neglect. Some of those accidents have caused serious injuries, even to the extent of death. Neglect caused many lives to be lost in A.D. 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed by Prince Titus. In Luke 21:20-22 Jesus warned: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

Jesus told the people to flee. Those who ignored the message suffered the most horrible deaths known to man. Our Scripture text says, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" I am not preaching on neglect, but neglect will drain the spiritual life out of you. If you start neglecting your soul, those things that you knew were wrong are going to seem right. If you want to start going down spiritually in your Christian experience, all you have to do is become neglectful in your prayer life, in your worship, and in reading God's Word. This is the reason some people struggle to stay in the Christian race.

I want to consider three thoughts concerning the greatness of salvation. The first one is, What is

salvation? The second is, What is so great about it? The third is, What do you escape? In dealing with the thought of what salvation is, there are some other words or synonyms that would help you to understand the meaning of salvation. Salvation means to be saved or rescued; it means to be safe and delivered. Every man and woman and those who are old enough to understand need salvation. No matter who you are, if you have never been saved, you need to be saved. Even if you have been raised with good morals in a Christian home, you still need your own personal experience with Jesus Christ. Every individual needs salvation.

Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Dear one, sin is coming

short of the glory of God. It is a lack of conformity to the glory, the honor, and the dignity of God. Sin is a life that glorifies lawlessness instead of God. When an individual receives salvation, a drastic change takes place in his or her life. That person is no longer the same. I have never seen a man or a woman who really got saved stay the same. In the Word of God we find example after example of the change that takes place in salvation. When Paul was converted on the Damascus road, a definite change took place in his life.

Now I want you to read some of the biography of the Apostle Paul before he was saved. Acts 8:3 says, "As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house [this was the man who later wrote about fourteen books of the New Testament], and haling men and women committed them to prison."

Acts 9:1-2 reads: "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." This individual was an enemy of the church. He was the one whom the Bible speaks of being born out of season. What does that tell you? It tells you that the church was not praying for him to get saved. They were praying against him, that God would take care of him. God took care of him the way He likes to take care of people, and that is through old-time salvation.

Salvation Brings a Change

I want you to read a little about Paul after he was saved. Acts 9:20-22 reads: "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God [this is the one that he was out to destroy]. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that

intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ."

This was the same man, but a change took place on the inside. Salvation changes you on the inside. You do not have the same old nasty spirit after salvation that you had before salvation. After you have gotten saved, you will not try to destroy, tear down, or wreck individual lives. You will work to build up, strengthen, and help one another. The Bible lets you know in 1 Corinthians 3:10 that Paul was a wise master builder. That was after salvation.

Salvation is deliverance from the penalty of all *past* sins, not future sins. Romans 3:25 reads, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, [Why not for the remission of sins that are future? You are supposed to stop the sin business.] through the forbearance of God." The penalty for sin is separation from God, from His people, and from His blessings with nothing to look forward to in the future but a lost eternity.

You may say, "I am still saved, even if I do commit sin." That is against the Word of God. Isaiah 59:1-2 says: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." When a person is saved, he quits sinning. Now, most religions teach otherwise, but I would rather go by what the Word of God says. When you are saved, you are saved from sin.

Do you think that God is going to smile upon someone sitting in a barroom who was once on fire for God but got away from Him? Do you think God is going to say, "This is My child sitting there in the

barroom drinking the booze and carousing around," and then condemn the man who is sitting beside him who was never saved, who maybe never heard the truth about salvation? When you are saved, you are saved from *all* sin. You are not saved to go on and commit sin.

All that some people see is the blood and forgiveness, but there is more to salvation than forgiveness. There are two witnesses: the Word and the Holy Spirit. You are not saved unless you have God's Holy Spirit within you. You may say, "I am saved, but I do not have the Spirit yet." Dear one, you do not have the life of Christ in you until you have the Spirit of God in you. You get the Spirit of God in you when the temple is cleaned up and all sin is gone; then God will move into your temple.

Deliverance From the Power of Sin

If you are not saved, each heartbeat brings you closer and closer to eternal separation from God and the Judgment. The deeper you go into sin, the stronger its grasp and the more helpless you will feel. Salvation is deliverance from the power of sin. If you are saved, you are no longer a slave to wrong, to uncontrollable lust, to ungodly habits, and to a disobedient spirit. Those who have salvation are free to follow the Lamb wherever He goes. John 8:36 says, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Dear one, you do not have to be led around by the devil any longer. You can be free to worship God in accordance with His Word.

Acts 22:25-28 reads: "And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou

a Roman? He said, Yea. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born."

The chief captain said to become a Roman citizen, he had to pay a great price, but Paul said he was free born. Let us value this great freedom that we have. Because of our Heavenly Father, we can say that we are free born. We have been born again. It makes no difference what your nationality or your race is when you are born into the Kingdom of God. When you are born again, you are born into the church.

Ephesians 2:19 says, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." We did not have to pay the price, for the price has already been paid. Second Corinthians 9:15 reads, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

Salvation is deliverance from the evil presence in the world around us. Jesus, praying in John 17:15, said, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Although sin is all around you, through the power of God, you do not have to partake of sin. Evil is present in the schools, in the government, and wherever man is, but salvation can keep you from the evil. You do not have to do as others do. You do not have to follow the crowd. You can be separate and live for Jesus Christ with evil all around you. In the factory, in the work place, or in school, God can keep you if you want to be kept.

What Is Great About Salvation?

What is so great about salvation? The Author, our God, is great. We serve a great God. He is great for every circumstance and in every situation. Our God is the Author of this salvation. Psalm 77:13 says, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?"

The price for salvation was

great. God gave Heaven's best. Jesus was One who knew no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. What Jesus did, He did not do for Himself; He did it for you and me. Isaiah 53:3-6 says: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

What a great price was paid so that you and I could go free! The fact that all can be saved is great. Is that not wonderful? God is no respecter of persons. He will save someone who is down and out just as the one who was raised in the Christian home. All can be saved—all nationalities, all diversities. Each and every one in this world can be saved. That is wonderful news!

Revelation 5:9 states, "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

What else is great about this salvation? The simplicity of the message is great. You do not need to have a college degree to tell people how to get saved. It is very clear in God's Book, from Genesis to Revelation, about what you have to do to be in compliance with God's Word. In 1 Corinthians 2:1-4 Paul wrote: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God."

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was

with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." You do not have to be a theologian and understand all the Hebrew and the Greek words to understand God's Word. It is translated into English, and the simplicity of the message is great. If you confess and forsake all sin, God will have mercy, and that takes in every individual in this world.

What else is great about salvation? The changed life is great. I have been on both sides of the fence, so to speak. I was worldly for twenty-seven years, and I was involved in vile sins such as alcohol, gambling, smoking, and fighting. Inside my heart were some things that motivated this: bitterness, unforgiveness, and meanness. I felt like the worst sinner in the whole world, but to Jesus all that mattered was that I would confess and forsake sin.

Becoming a New Creature

My wife and I came from Upstate New York, a place that was really barren when it comes to the Gospel. I think she attended about every church around: the Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Baptist Church, and I went to the Methodist Church. In all these different churches, I do not recall hearing about the message of being born again. I never heard the message about living free from sin.

My father-in-law lived in Newark, Ohio, and he had a construction business. I came down and helped him, but then he quit that business and went to work at Kaiser. I worked for the Railway Express for a while, and then got hired at Rockwell International. I was a bad guy at Rockwell. I was a union steward, and I had all that goes with being a union steward. I had a big mouth and thought I was always right, even when I was wrong.

At Rockwell, I met an individual who invited me to the Church of

God. I had watched his life. Several people talked to me about going to church, but I was never too impressed with the way they lived. This individual came to me and asked, "Why don't you come out to the services?" I told him that I just might do that. I attended a prayer service, and Brother Emerson Wilson talked to me, and when he did, I humbled my heart and prayed.

When I got home, my wife said, "What happened to you?"

I said, "I went to a prayer service this morning and got saved."

She said: "Saved? What's that?"

I could not explain it to her. All I knew was that I was different. So she went to church and got saved too.

We went back to Upstate New York to visit, and I thought surely my mother would be thrilled about what had happened to me, since I was considered to be the rebel rouser in the family. As the youngest one, I was the baby of the family who always got my way. So I said, "Mom, I got saved."

She said: "What do you mean you got saved? I've got your old baptism certificate."

I said, "No, Mom, I got saved; I repented," and I told her what I knew of it.

While we were there, some of the old life began to be displayed in front of me. The next thing I knew, the alcohol was brought out, and I gave in to temptation. When we came back home, things got worse. Once you have tasted the good things of God and go back, nothing satisfies. There is always going to be a restlessness in your soul for what you have tasted.

My wife got back to the Lord before I did, and she had to overcome a lot of bitterness when she got saved. She served notice on me and said: "You know, Roger, I love you very much, but I love God more. I am going to do my very best to go to Heaven, and I am going to take every one of these children with me that I can." That did something to me. It showed me that I was not on

the throne of her heart like God was. She kept going to the services, and soon, with God working on me, I decided that I would go to the services too.

I can remember sitting in the back, and Brother Emerson Wilson preached a fiery message. It seemed that I was the worst sinner in the house, and I probably was. During the invitation, Brother Wilson came straight back to me, put his hand on my shoulder, and said, "Brother Decker, is God dealing with you?"

I said, "Yes, but I'm not ready yet." I wanted to pick my own time.

He said, "Well, you never will be ready; it is when God is ready."

It was at that moment that I stepped out and went to the altar of prayer. From that moment to this, it has been a great life. No one can try to lift up the worldly life to me and tell me how great it is. When you lie down at night and there is sin in your life, there is always that awareness that you might not wake up in the morning. Thank God, when you have salvation, you can pillow your head at night and know that all is well with your soul. The day I got back to God, in the automobile that I was driving, above the sun visor was a pack of cigarettes, but I have not had one since the day I got saved. I had that habit very strong. I had smoked from fourteen years of age to about twenty-seven when I got saved. Often the more you drink, the more you smoke; they go together.

A tremendous change takes place when an individual comes to Jesus Christ. That person is not the same anymore. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Why do all things become new? You begin to look at things through the eyes of Jesus Christ. One thing that I had that God blessed us with in our home, and that was the desire to go to the house of God. I did not have to be coaxed to go to church. Why would you not want to go to the

house of God if you are a child of God? Why would you not want to see your brothers and sisters in Christ? When we got saved, we had a television set that was not even paid for. We got rid of it and paid the payments on it. When you are living for God, you do not need a television.

It is amazing what God can do. I made good money at Rockwell International, but I spent a lot of money before I was saved. It would be nothing for me to come home with an empty wallet. When I got saved and tithed our money, God blessed us over and over. The Bible says the tithe is the Lord's. Some people will not do well until they start giving the tithe to God.

A New Spirit and a New Life

The changed life is great. The Prophet Ezekiel wrote in Ezekiel 36:25-28: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, [He was not talking about water baptism. The clean water that he was speaking of is the Word of God. Water baptism does not change you. It is an outward expression of a work that has already been done on the inside. In water baptism you do not sprinkle; in water baptism you immerse.] and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

Verses 33-36 read: "Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay

desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it."

The first thing God will do for a person whose life has become overgrown with nettles and thorns and sin is come and till that land. He will sprinkle clean water upon it, and He will plant the seed of the Gospel in his heart. The next thing you know, things will begin to sprout. The fruit of the Spirit will sprout up, and that which was desolate will be called inhabited. There is actually a life dwelling there, but before it was a dead city; now it is full of life.

What else about salvation is great? The fellowship with God and the saints of God is great. It is nice to be able to gather where people are like-minded and where you see a smile. First John 1:3-7 says: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we

unto you, that your joy may be full.

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Fellowship is based on light and the blood. John taught that the fellowship was in the blood of Jesus Christ. Second Corinthians 6:14 says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" Friend, you do not have time to play church. You do not have time to mess around with the world and then come back to God. You must stay with God. Why? If you go out there and mess with the world, your life might end at that time. Why spend your life in church work, giving money, and working for the Lord and then end up being lost? This is serious! Salvation is great.

Fellowship with the saints is precious. The faithfulness of God is great. God is faithful to your soul. Psalm 119:90 says, "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou

hast established the earth, and it abideth." Lamentations 3:22-23 reads: "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." Isaiah 25:1 says, "O LORD, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth."

What else is great about salvation? The fact that the Word of God is something that you can rely on is great. Psalm 119:89 says, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." The fact that God has a true church is great. Do not try to bring the Church of God down to the level of Babylon. You might neglect your education, a job opportunity, the house that you have bought, or the car that you have purchased; but friend, do not be so neglectful that you neglect this great salvation. What will you escape? Standing at the Judgment, the man and the woman who did not neglect salvation will escape the guilt of the past and the fear of the future. They will escape hell, the lake of fire, eternal separation from God. They will be so glad that they did not neglect so great salvation.

(Compact Disc TR-980M)

THE EFFECTS OF SIN

The experience of Samson illustrates:

The binding effects of sin—Samson was bound.

The blinding effects of sin—the Philistines "put out his eyes."

The grinding effects of sin—"He did grind in the prison house."

Zechariah 13:1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

The Power of the Gospel



Brother Leaman Whitehead

Transforming Power

There was a time when each of us was lost. We did not have any hope, but God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever would believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. One day the Gospel came to our ears and awakened us from that lost condition. We thought we were having a good time, not really realizing that we were heading for hell with no way to escape. I praise God for the good news of the Gospel that let us know there is something much better than what we had. This does not get old, but it just gets better as we go along. Glory be to God!

The more we learn about God,

the more we can trust Him. He does not do any remodeling. We were not fit to be remodeled. We had to be transformed and made new. One day He washed us from our sins and cleansed us. We plunged into the fountain that washes whiter than snow. Our sins were washed away and the guilt was gone. Now we have the glory of God in our souls. He is still working on us. He wants to draw us closer to Him. He wants us to be more in His image so that people can see Jesus and not us.

In Mark 13:10 Jesus said, "And the gospel must first be published among all nations." The good news of the kingdom is that it has already come. The kingdom that we are rejoicing in is where peace and joy are. It is in His kingdom that we can have

liberty and unity and harmony. Praise God! We are in the world, but we are not of the world. Thank God, we are dwelling on Mount Zion, high above this old world of sin. Peace and joy and real salvation are not in the realms of man-made religion. Speaking of this kingdom, the songwriter said, "*We possess it right here when He saves from all sin, And 'twill last while the ages shall roll.*"

The Bible lets us know that the Gospel is a seed that is planted. It is not just something that you think about in your mind. I am so glad that when it reached me, I made a place for it in my heart, and it has ever been on the increase. It is growing, and it will crowd out everything unlike Christ. Glory be to God forever!

Another part of the Scripture teaches about how the things of the world can choke out Christ in our lives. The devil is trying to crowd Him out, but by the grace of God, I will not let him. I want the Kingdom of God, the Gospel, and the seed of the Word to be ever on the increase in my life and to crowd out everything unlike Him. That is the reason we need to sit in front of the mirror of God's Word, not to see how beautiful we are. The Lord wants to let us see if there is anything that needs to change in our lives.

The Apostle Paul said in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." You see, friend, the power is in the Gospel. This Gospel must be preached, but there are people who try to get around it. Some people try to get saved without it, but that is impossible. You must have the Gospel.

The Word of God brings conviction to hearts and lets people know what they need to do. It is the Word of God that convinces and lets us know what is right. It is through the power of the Word that souls are delivered. We are delivered from the old person that we used to be, the creature that lived after the flesh and for the lusts of the flesh. Thank God, we have been transformed and resurrected. We that are saved already have part in the resurrection. Praise God forever!

How to Become More Than a Conqueror

I am glad that we do not have to live in defeat, knowing what we ought to do but saying, "I cannot." In Philippians 4:13 Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." He said, "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). The Gospel has power to reach you. The Gospel has power to go where you are and say: You are the one I want

to talk to today. You are the one I want to straighten out and bring salvation to.

Paul boldly preached the Word. When the Gospel really reached me and pulled off the cloak of self-righteousness, I saw myself for what I really was for the first time. When that happens to you, it will cause you, like the woman who had the issue of blood when she finally touched Jesus, to be afraid of what was going to happen. When the woman saw Jesus, she fell at His feet, and He said in Luke 8:48, "Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." That is what the Gospel will cause the repentant sinner to do. It will cause him to melt right down at the feet of Jesus. That is what I did when the Gospel reached me. I was lost and undone. I did not know that I was so bad until I heard the Gospel. That is the reason there is no room for the old fellow; he was ugly. You see, some of us were real rascals, but many people do not know that.

If you turn the flesh loose, the old man that you have chained up will go back to acting ugly again. When you get saved, the Lord makes you a new creature. He makes you respectable and respectful. It would be a shame to see what the old man would do. God changes the old lion-like nature and makes us like sheep. He humbled us down, and we grow together, not fussing and feuding and fighting and carrying on. The old man wants to be first. He wants everybody else to be the ladder so that he can walk on them to climb up. Thank God, when we get saved, we do not need that ladder. Why? He lifts us up to heavenly places and joins us together in one body. He gives us some heaven to go to Heaven in.

Those in false religion are looking for everything to change at death, but nothing will change then. Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 11:3, "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." You see, you must have that change in this life, not

after death overtakes you. The world wonders and marvels at the change that has taken place in the hearts and lives of Christians. Sometimes I can hardly believe what He has done for me, how He brought me out and saved me and gave me a place in the family of God. I do not seek to be number one or to be up in the front, but I am just glad that I have a place in the family of God.

The Only Antidote for Sin

The Gospel has the power to transform lost and dying men and women. The enemy will try to get you to let down. Sometimes he will try to get the preacher to water it down just a little, but that kind of gospel will not do anything for people. Millions of people have that so-called gospel preached to them. They claim to have an experience of salvation, but their lives do not prove it to be true. You can tell that the flesh is still in control of their lives.

It takes the unadulterated Word of God, telling it like it is, to bring you out of sin and to keep you out. My friend, you still need to hear that precious Gospel of the Son of God just to remind you from time to time and so that it might mold you and make you into what you ought to be. You would not have liked me too much when I was out in sin. Is it not wonderful that God has taken us from all walks of life and saved us and brought us into the family of God? What a miracle He has wrought in our lives! He has brought us into one body and made us members of that one body. That is the reason we must endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, working with one another.

Paul said in Ephesians 5:29, "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." When you got saved, you became one member in the great body of Christ, and you are not to fight against the body. You are to endeavor to have

unity and harmony. If you see a brother or a sister in need, you ought to help that person. Perhaps you could hold the door for someone or help that person up the stairs. Why? We are members of that one body of Christ.

Some people like to be at the top, and until they are at the top, they will never stop. It is not who you are or where you have been like a lot of people say, but it is where you are going and whom you serve that will count on the Judgment Day. It was Christ who loved us and changed us. Before conversion, we were in love with ourselves. We thought that was the way to excel, but the way to excel is to be in love with Jesus. My friend, you need to turn your heart and life over to Him and let Him change you.

Sin and wickedness are like an infectious disease. Oh, what sin has done to our world! Since the Garden of Eden and the change that took place, it did not take long for man's sins to mount up. The imaginations of men's hearts are altogether wicked. The center for disease control is working all the time to try to find antidotes. Doctors are working frantically to try to keep down the diseases. Some diseases are very contagious; therefore, some people must be quarantined, or set apart, from others.

Sin is ruining our nation; it is touching every family. No doubt, you have family members who are unsaved. Sin is working on them, and their lives are getting more wrapped up in sin every day. Their lives are getting more bound by the things of the world every day. There is only one antidote for sin. The world has a lot of pills for this and that, but the only antidote for sin is the "Gos-pill." It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who will believe. It will do the work.

God Makes the Difference

Salvation will not just make you better; it will make you whole. It will clean you up on the inside and

go to work on the outside so that the glory of God can shine in your life. When people pat you on the back and speak of what a nice fellow you are or what a good job you are doing, do not forget that the Lord is the One who put that smile on your face. He is the One who put respect and love in your heart for others. It is the Lord who changes you.

When I was in the hospital in 2010, I had open-heart surgery. My heart stopped. The next day after I had surgery, the doctor came in and put a wire down in my neck into my heart. When he got done, I said, "Thank you, Doc, for what you are doing."

He said, "It was not I; it was the Lord." It made me feel good that someone knew that there was a God in Heaven, but I wanted to thank him for what he was doing. He quickly gave the honor to God. That is what we need to do—give the honor to God.

I heard it said one time that man is the only creature whose head swells when you pat him on the back. You have to watch that. Paul said in Romans 7:18, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." It is God that makes the difference. He is the One who causes us to be lovable, likeable, and able to help others along life's way. It is because of Him that a great change has been made in our lives.

The Gospel is the cure for sin. It will burn it out. The Gospel will locate you and get hold of you. I often think about the old song entitled "Something Got a Hold of Me." Part of the chorus says "*I went there to fight but on that night There's something got a hold of me.*" Praise God, something got hold of me! You will know when God is speaking to you directly.

The Lord wants everybody to be saved. I am so glad that He loved me and took time for me one day. I was raised in sectarian religion, and I am so glad the Lord got hold of me. The Lord caused me to put on holiness. He changed me from the old person that I used to be and showed me the

Truth. He showed me some things that I had to take off and some things that I had to put on. People could see what God had done in my life. I give Him the glory and the praise.

The Gospel must be published to all nations. The morning church was busy. They carried the Gospel to the then-known world, preaching, because it takes that precious seed to bear souls. I thank God for the seed of the Word. It is able to locate you and bring you out. Sometimes when the preacher gets to preaching, sinners think somebody has been talking to the preacher about them, but the Lord knows all about every individual. The preacher does not need to know anything about you. He just wants to speak "Thus saith the Lord." The Holy Spirit knows where you are. Saint, if it had not been for the Lord's desire to save you, you would still be lost.

God's Faithfulness

Have you ever thought about the faithfulness of God? It is due to the faithfulness of God that I am where I am. It is possible for you to get a little weary or a little sleepy spiritually. Sometimes you may drift and not know that you are drifting until God in His faithfulness lets you know. Oh, you might like to think that you have never missed a step since you got saved, but I do not believe it is that way. Sometimes the Lord has spoken to me and let me know that I needed to move up a little. This is just what God does in the preaching many times. Maybe you have grown a little weary in some areas and you are not up to date on some things. Sometimes the Lord may need to shake you a little. If God was not faithful, many of us would drift away. When God shows you something, you need to move right then, because you are apt to doze off again.

I appreciate how faithful God is. He wants you to make it. He is not working against you, even when He chastises you. He is working for

your good, because He wants to be able to say, "Well done, My good and faithful servant" at the end of your life's journey. I give Him the praise and the glory and the honor for all He does. Everything that is done in the Kingdom of God is inspired by the Holy Spirit to glorify God and to edify the body of Christ. It is not to bring any honor to us. All the glory and all the honor belongs to Him.

I hope that you have been encouraged by the power of the Gospel. If your loved ones are ever reached, it will be the Gospel that reaches them. The power of the Gospel transforms you and brings

you out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of His dear Son. How marvelous that is! I praise God for it! I am having the time of my life living for the Lord. Oh, how good God is! I am happy in the Savior. I have never been sorry for what He has done for me. I have never been sorry that He changed my life and gave me a new life. It has been a great journey, praise God!

I like the song that says, "*If I had a thousand lives to live, I'd give them all to my Lord.*" Even if there was not a Heaven to go to, I would still want to live this way. It is the best way! Oh, I know there are burdens and

tests and trials, but God has more joy than you know what to do with. He has more than your little container can hold. In so many words, God told old Israel, "If you would have hearkened to My voice and followed Me, your peace would have been as a river" (Isaiah 48:18). That is not a little stream. Salvation is better felt than told. I have found it to be that way. This is not something fictitious, friend. Salvation is real. You need to open up your heart wider to God and let more of Him in. How wonderful He is! We will never be able to get it all told.

(Compact Disc TR-1002M)

Meeting Announcements

Mechanicsburg, IN

April 11-14

Revival: Church of God, 9297 US 36, Mechanicsburg, Indiana

Evangelist: Brother Wayne Mikel, Plymouth, Indiana

Service times: Thur.-Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 11:00 a.m.; Sun. Morning 10:30 a.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Allen Polston, 2020 Ralph St., New Castle, IN 47362

Telephone: 765-521-8284

Mt. Pleasant, PA

April 20

Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania 15666

Service time: 10:30 a.m. A meal will be served by the local congregation.

Lodging: *Holiday Inn Express*, 724-547-2095 (This is on the same road as the church. Please mention that you are there for the church meeting for a discount.);

Super 8 Motel in New Stanton, 724-925-8915, on I-70W, (10 miles north of the church);

Melody Motor Lodge, 724-628-9600 on 119N in Connellsville).

For more information contact: Pastor Paul W. Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666

Telephone: 724-547-2151

Summersville, WV

April 29-May 5

Revival: The Church of God, 74 Armstrong Road, Summersville, WV 26651

Evangelist: Brother Leamon Whitehead, Minerva, Ohio

Service times: Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. 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

Newton, KS

May 13-19

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

Evangelist: Brother David Stegmeier, Canby Oregon

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. Telephone: 316-842-5127

Kensett, AR

May 24-26

Memorial Day Fellowship Meeting: Kensett Church of God, 409 Southeast 2nd St., Kensett, AR 72082.

Service times: Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat.—Dinner will be served at 3:00 p.m. & the service will be at 7:00 p.m.;

Sun. School 10:00-11:00 a.m.; Sun. Worship 11:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

Dinner will be served after the Sunday morning service.

For further information contact: Pastor Calvin L. Foster

Telephone: (Church) 501-742-3006 or 501-742-3961

John 4:1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.



THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

THE WELL OF LIVING WATER

Brother Irwin Seshier

Jesus Came to Change Lives

As we look at our Scripture reading, it shows a woman who was seeking something greater than what she possessed. It shows that if you are truly looking for peace and satisfaction, Jesus Christ will pro-

vide what you need. Many people are looking for something to make them happy, but they are not finding it. Thank God, when you get Jesus Christ, you will be content and happy in the Savior. Jesus Christ will provide peace, contentment, and satisfaction.

A lot of people go down many worldly avenues to try to find joy and contentment, but it cannot be found that way, friend. You will not find contentment and peace in this world. You will spend every bit of money you have in your bank account if you try to seek satisfaction

and peace in this old world.

The woman at the well could not understand what Jesus had to offer at first. Jesus made a point to be at the well at that particular time to meet this woman; it was not an accident. Jesus Christ is still in the saving business! He wants to change lives. He still wants to change your direction. Too many people think they know which way they need to go, but only God knows which way they should go. He knows exactly what they need to do.

When Jesus Christ went by this well, somebody there needed to meet Him. Somebody had a need. Wherever Jesus went, things changed. When Jesus walks by, there is a change. Jesus made a point to be there that particular day at that particular hour. The Jews normally did not travel on the Samaritan road, but Jesus chose to walk that way.

The Samaritans were a mixed race that had inner married with the Assyrians centuries before. They were hated by the Jews because of this. If you are a child of God, you are going to be despised by others. We are not in this world to win a popularity contest. We are here to please Jesus Christ. No matter what people think of us, no matter what people want to do to us, we still need to follow Jesus. As a child of God, you are going to be hated and looked down upon, but that should not alter your walk with God. No matter what others say or do, you need to follow Jesus.

Too many people give in to the spirits in the world, but they need to think about what Jesus Christ went through. Many spirits worked on Him, yet He uttered not a word. He never lashed back. He took it all for your sins and my sins. He bore it all on the Cross of Calvary. It should have been you and me nailed to the Cross. We should have suffered, but He took the pain for you and me. Saint of God, do not give up on Jesus, because He has never given up on you. No matter what people say or do, it is worth it to serve the Lord.

Christ Has a Plan for Your Life

Verse 6 of our Scripture lesson says, "Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour." A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and she came during the hottest time of the day. People normally did not draw water at that time of day. Why? It was very hot. They would have done it either in the morning or in the evening. Why did she come at that time? She did not want to be ridiculed and put down by other women because of her lifestyle. Saint of God, look at the lifestyle you used to live, but Jesus came to you one day. He did not have to, but He did.

Although this woman had a bad reputation, Jesus Christ loved her just as much as He loves you, sinner friend. She did not want to hear the conversations of the other women because of her immorality, but Jesus already knew her history. I am thankful that Jesus knows all about us. He knows our needs, and He knows our petitions before we even ask Him. I thank God for that! He knew all about the woman at the well, and He knew why she was there. He never gave up on her, and He will not give up on you. Sinner friend, He wants you in His kingdom; He wants you to be a child of God.

Too many people do not want to serve God because of their circumstances. They say, "Well, I would get saved, but . . ." You cannot give any valid excuse for why you will not serve God. There is nothing out in this world more important than serving Jesus Christ. Often people want to serve Jesus on their own terms. Friend, you have to give up all if you are going to serve Jesus. You have to get your ideas out of the picture.

Regardless of your circumstances or of how you feel, you need to cling to God's unchanging hand. God is good, and He loves you. He knows what you are going through. He cares, and He has a plan for your

life. Any time a builder begins to build a house, he has to have a blueprint, or a plan. If you construct a building, you must have a plan. You cannot go out with a couple of boards and some nails and a hammer and start building. You must have a plan in place and follow it. Jesus Christ has a plan for your life. He knows exactly what you need to do. You should not do what you think you want to do. Too many people say they are going to do this and that. Is it truly in the will of God? He cares.

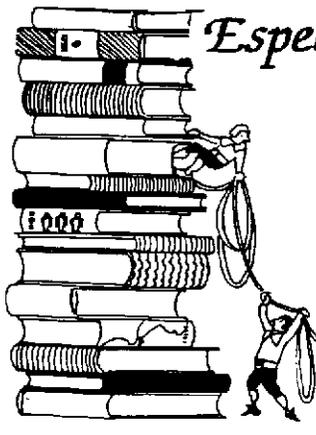
One man said, "Never doubt in the dark what God has told you in the light." People doubt God too much today. People have depression and discouragement, but thank God, we have One who can lift those clouds of depression and discouragement. Friend, life is too short to keep quiet about this. If Jesus Christ has saved you, you have a testimony. You have something to shout about! If you really love Jesus, you need to tell Him that you love Him. You need to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

Jesus Is the Answer

The woman at the well was bound up in sin. Her life was in turmoil. She really had no one else to turn to, and then Jesus appeared on the scene. When Jesus walks by, a change will take place. The presence of Jesus brings a change in people's lives. A change was about to happen in this woman's life. I thank God for the change in my life one day when I went from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of His marvelous light!

The woman in our Scripture lesson was bound by the fetters of sin. She did not know which way to turn. How many people do you know who do not know which way to turn? We know which way to go when we have Jesus Christ in our lives. The little conversation that you have with someone might be just what that person needs. You

[continued on the bottom of page 25]



Especially for Young People

The Skylark's Bargain



First John 2:15-17 reads: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Proverbs 22:3 states, "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished."

The word *prudent* means "wise or careful." Proverbs 22:3 could read, "A wise or careful man foresees the evil and hides himself. Those who do not care or who do not have any concern for their souls pass on and are punished." In the Bible Jesus used parables to teach lessons. This story that I want to tell you has a very good lesson in it, not only for the young person who is saved but also for the one who is unsaved.

Once a young skylark that was very fond of worms said that he would give anything to get all the worms he could eat. One day as he was flying up into the sky, he looked down and saw something rather unusual, which was his first mistake. Flying along a cart track that ran through the forest and feeling curious, the young skylark dropped lower and lower until at last he could see a queer sight indeed. He saw a tiny coach

painted black with red blinds and yellow wheels drawn by two magpies. Walking in front of the coach was an old man wearing a black coat with red trousers and yellow stockings. The man carried a bell, and as he walked, he kept swinging the bell and shouting: "Who will buy? Who will buy? I'm selling fine, fat, juicy worms in exchange for skylark feathers."

The skylark was attracted and flew down closer. "Good morning, my young friend," said the old man. "What can I do for you?"

"How much are they?" asked the skylark.

"Two for a feather, my friend, and the coach is full of them."

"Are they fresh?" asked the young bird.

"Yes, indeed! All of them were gathered fresh this morning, my pretty bird."

The skylark gave a painful little tug at his wing, and dropping a feather into the old man's hand, he said, "Two, please." As the coach passed on, the skylark felt a little guilty, but he enjoyed the feast and was pleased to find afterwards that no one noticed the one missing feather.

The next day the young skylark flew with his father. As they rose higher and higher, far above the tops of the tallest trees in the forest, the old skylark said: "My son, I think we skylarks should be the happiest of birds. We have such strong wings. Do you see how they lift us up into the sky nearer and

nearer to God?"

"Yes," said the young one. All the while, he was watching a tiny speck that crept like a black beetle far below on the forest path, and he thought, "I've missed the coach."

The following day he waited close to the cart-worn track. When he heard the bell ringing, he plucked out another feather. It came out so easily that he pulled out two more. Then he heard a hoarse voice shouting: "Who will buy? Who will buy? Surely we can come to terms. In exchange for skylark feathers, I am selling luscious worms."

"Three here," said the skylark. "Very good, son. Very good indeed! That will be six worms, and here is an extra one for luck," added the old man with a chuckle.

"My," thought the young skylark, "that is a bargain." So the young skylark became a regular customer. He found out after a while that he could not fly as high, but he did not mind greatly. He had more fear of the coach passing without being seen.

One day when his wings seemed thin, worn, and ragged, he suddenly felt that he had been making a terrible mistake. He tried to fly high into the warm sunshine, but he fell back to the earth like a stone. Then he had an idea. He thought: "Dear me, why did I not think of this before? I know what I will do. I will dig worms and trade them for feathers." Day and night,

he diligently searched and gathered and stored the worms. Then he hid himself in the tall grass, waiting for the coach to pass by. Soon he heard it, and he stepped in front of the coach, saying: "Please, sir, I want to know how many feathers you will trade me for all these worms?"

The coachman laughed and set off at once saying over his shoulder, "Worms for feathers is my business, not feathers for worms."

The young skylark died and was buried under the green grass. They say that every summer the older birds take their young birds and fly mournfully above the young skylark's grave, calling to one another as they fly: "Here lies a foolish skylark. Hush each bird that sings. Here lies a poor lost skylark, who for earthworms sold his wings."

The first mistake the skylark made was looking down. The lust of the eyes was the beginning of his downfall. This little cart was attractive to him. Is that not how the devil works? He puts something before you to attract your attention. The bird flew down to hear more about the worms. He had a craving, so he fulfilled the lust of the eyes. He took it little by little. That is the way the enemy works on your soul.

When you are saved and living for God and things are going well, if you are not careful, something will come along that will look attractive to you. You may say, "I'll give up my prayer time and read a book." Or you may say, "I want to go with some friends instead of going to church tonight." You will begin to pluck out things, one by one, and think, "That's just one little thing that I'm giving up," but soon all those little things will add up to a big thing, and then you will wake up and find that you can no longer fly above this world of sin, because you do not have God's strength any more.

There is a song entitled "I Have Wings." The song reflects

the way we ought to look at our lives. The chorus reads:

*I have wings, I have wings;
I can fly.
Wings of prayer, wings of praise,
but who am I?
I'm a child of the King, and my
heart gladly sings,
Through the Spirit of the Lord,
I have wings.*

When the young skylark realized the mistake that he had made, the pride of life stepped in. He thought, "I have a great idea." Young person, life does not work that way. Christian young people especially need to go to the Scripture about being prudent, careful, and foreseeing down the way.

One time as a young person, I asked my mother about something I wanted to do with other young people who were not Christians. I did not feel that what I wanted to do was sinful or wrong. My mother said, "Let me think about that and pray about it." After a while, she said, "What you want to do is not sinful, but I can see down the road where it could lead to something sinful."

You need to be careful, young person, as you are traveling the road of life. You need to look ahead a little to see where your decisions could lead you. Where might the people you keep company with lead you? It might not be sinful to do some things, but if you are not careful, down the road, those things could lead you down the path of sin.

Young person, if you are saved, you need to stay close to God. Do not give up anything that might take away your spiritual strength. You must keep walking with God, keep reading your Bible, keep praying, and keep doing the things that you know you should do. The devil likes to take young people far beyond where they think they will go, to where they will turn their backs on God. You may say, "I'm a good moral

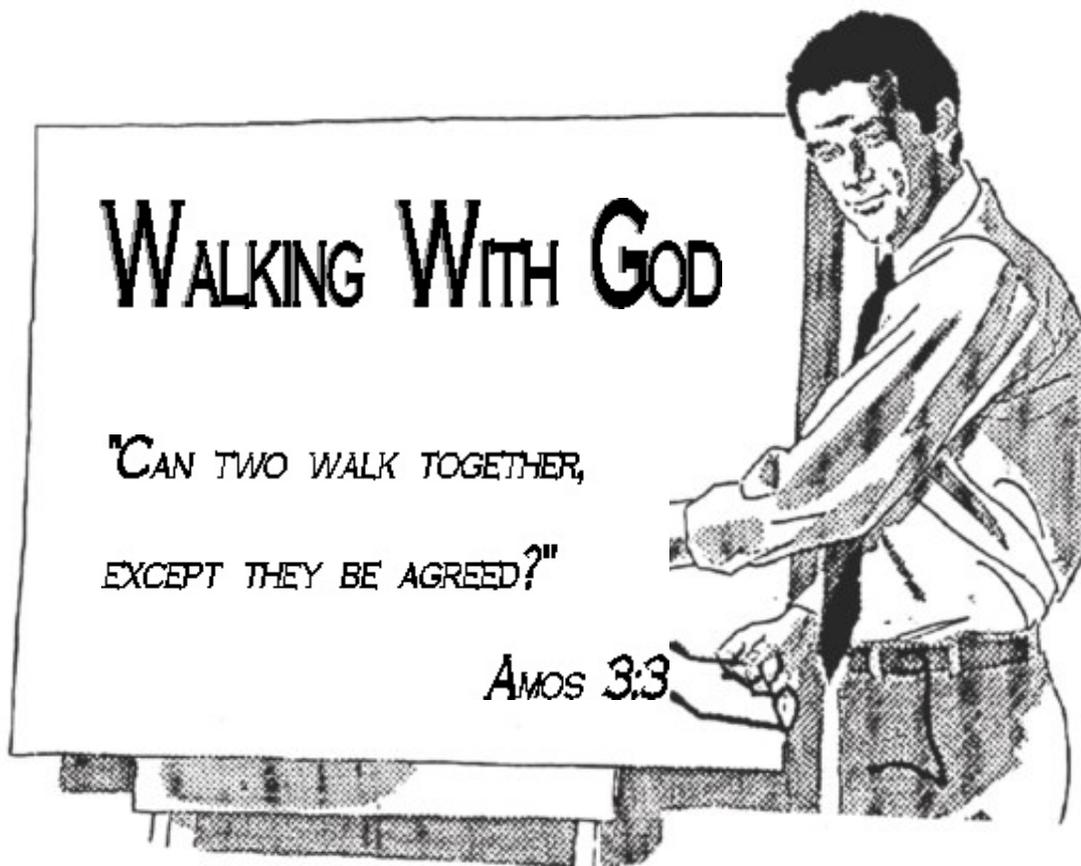
person." There are good moral people, but little by little, many of them have dropped their moral principles. The devil will try to convince you to drop your virtue, take on a foul tongue, and think about lustful thoughts. Without God in your life the devil will drag you down further and further. You do not know how far down you might go. One song says, "Sin will take you further than you want to go." That is very true.

Some young people have said: "I won't go far in sin. I won't stay in sin long," but they are still there. They have not turned away from sin, and it has been years since they made that choice. You need to get saved now. The devil does not want you to. Sometimes people have to get to the place where sin is not fun any more. Unfortunately, the skylark died. It is sad to realize that so many young people have gotten so far down and out that they became depressed and ended their own lives.

The devil does not care what happens to you. You need to look to God. If you are saved, you need to stand fast with God. Do not let things go that you need to hang on to. If you are not saved, you need to turn to God now. You must remember that whenever the devil comes around and tempts you to give things up or not to stay as spiritual as you should, you are not going to have the strength to withstand the enemy of your soul. Once you lose your spiritual strength, it is very hard to stand for what is right. I want you to read this poem entitled "Thine to Keep."

*The body, Lord, is ours to keep
In glowing health and strength
for Thee,
That through its life Thy life
may live,
Thy will move strong and swift
and free;
My body, Lord, is Thine to keep,
Strong and swift and free.*

[continued on page 20]



Brother Richard Talbot

Pleasing God

I want to ask you a question: Are you walking with God? I want you to realize that it is impossible to be a child of God unless you are walking with Him and unless you are in full agreement with Him. God may lead you in some way that your flesh does not really want to go, and then you might have a problem on your hands. You have to make some decisions every day to walk with God. You have to tell the flesh no and bring it under control. You have to bring your mind into subjection to the Spirit of the Lord and stay on top of things spiritually to keep walking with God.

In the Book of Genesis you can read about a man who walked with God. Genesis 5:18-24 reads: "And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: And

Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died. And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."

Jude, verses 14-15 state: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sin-

ners have spoken against him."

Hebrews 11:5 tells us, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." You may think you have trouble, but just think about living to be 365 years of age. Some people have trouble living twenty-five or fifty years. How would you like to live to be 365 years of age and please the Lord every day?

Enoch had something real that had gotten hold of his heart. Something had captured and locked him into God to the place where he so pleased God that God reached down and said, "Enoch, I want you to come home with Me." He was only one of two people who did not have to taste death. God took him straight to Glory, and no one could find him.

He was taken because he pleased God. Even though Enoch's walk with God was thousands of years ago, it holds a very appropriate meaning for us. In every generation of time, Enoch can be looked to as an example.

When wickedness prevails, God's power is never limited. No matter how bad the world gets, no matter how bad your environment is, no matter how wicked the situation is in which you are living, you can walk with God and please Him. In the darkness of the night, there is no darkness so great that it can put out God's light. Too many times people make excuses concerning why they cannot do this or that. There is no reason that a child of God cannot live for the Lord. It does not matter where he is working. Friend, if you are working in a place where you can take Christ, you can live for God. If you cannot take the Lord there, you had better get another job. God will go with you. You can keep Him, He will keep you, and you can walk together.

Keeping the Flesh Under Control

Evil was prevalent in Enoch's day. It was a wicked time. These were the years preceding the days of Noah. The world was on a downward slide, and wickedness was getting worse and worse. Still Enoch pleased the Lord every day of his life. Holiness will always prevail when a man will uphold it and live it. Holiness will win despite opposition. Holiness will survive. When a man fails God, he cannot justly blame the world around him. He must blame his own weakness. He must look at himself in the mirror and realize that if he cannot live for the Lord, he is the problem, not his wife or his children, not his financial situation, not the problems of society, not the wickedness of the day. Friend, if you want to live for God, you can do it.

Enoch did not have an easy life. He was not living in an easy day. I believe that he was living in a day

far worse than ours. First of all, he did not have a congregation to support him and help him along. He did not have a godly pastor to preach the Word of God to him. We have no record of his wife or family or other connections. He walked with God alone and pleased the Lord. Sometimes I do not know how I could do it if it was not for the other saints. I tell my congregation, "I need you." I need their fellowship. We cannot get along without other saints, but Enoch did. Enoch had an experience with God, and he walked with Him.

Even when things are going well, you still have evil to fight. We are never in a place without a fight against evil. Do not be deceived because everything is going well for you. That is not a sign that you have it made. You still have to walk with God, keep your prayer life up to date, keep your heart into the things of God, and stay spiritually minded at all times. If a man does not fight against evil, he will find himself drifting along with a current of his own selfish desires without strength to resist evil temptations, unless he stays in a spiritual state of mind.

The flesh will pull against you, so you have to bring the body under. If you are going to walk with God, you have to keep the flesh under control. You cannot play around when you come to a crossroad or it will kill you spiritually. Too many times when you get to that place, your spirituality is weak. Maybe you have not been praying as you should, maybe you have not been faithful in your church attendance, maybe you have wrong attitudes working on you. The devil knows that.

Many people's problems are attitude troubles, and then their problems become more serious than the original problem. Dear one, having a nasty attitude will separate you from God and send you to hell. I want to walk with God, and by God's help I intend to do that.

God will not let you get to a crossroad and not let you know

what is going on. God will alert you and give you an opportunity to call upon Him for help from Heaven. You might have to call your pastor or somebody who can pray for you.

Can God Count on You?

Everyone who testifies that he is walking with God is not really walking with God. Many religious people are religious in their minds or in their emotions, but their hearts are full of their own ways and their own desires. To walk with God, you have to come into agreement with Him in your heart and mind. Enoch lived in a very wicked time, yet he was a man of holiness. He delved into the things of God and walked with God for hundreds of years. His communion with God was continuous. He did not commune with God intermittently, but he abode with Him day by day in the conscious presence of the Lord. How is your record?

Many people start well only to fizzle out in a few month's time. You cannot walk successfully with God unless you sell out to Him completely. What kind of marriage would you have if your heart was not totally devoted to your companion? What kind of home would you have if you were not really committed to one another? True love pulls you in and locks you there.

Young person, you may be thinking about marriage or perhaps you have recently married. You have to realize that it is not all going to be peaches and cream, so to speak. You are going to have times of trouble; that is a part of marriage. I do not know of any husband who pleases his wife all the time. The only thing that holds a couple together is that sense of special commitment of love to each other. When things are rocky, a husband and wife must still keep that love working. Even with the Lord in their lives, everything is not going to go smoothly all the time.

The flesh is going to give you some struggles, so you have to get

locked in with God and love Him supremely every day of your life—when it is easy and when it is hard, when it seems as if God is disappointing you or when it seems as though God is not answering your prayers. You have to keep your love fervent and stay true to that love, and God will never fail you. If you break off that love for something else, you will separate yourself from the love of God.

It is most important that you realize those things that are essential in pleasing God. You must remain true and faithful, be consistent and dependable, and be fully reliable all the time so that God can count on you. Can God count on you? A good gauge of that is, can your pastor count on you? Can the saints count on you? Can the congregation count on you to always be faithful, true, and reliable? Are you a prayer warrior in the battle with the rest of the saints? What power there is in the prayers of the children of God!

Failure may occur, but let it be by far the exception and not the rule. You can stumble, but it does not mean that you have to. However, you should not stumble every day, every week, or even every month. A fellow asked me one day on the job, "Do you bow by your bed every night before you go to sleep and ask God to forgive you for the sins that you committed that day?"

I said, "No, I don't."

His mouth dropped open and he asked, "Why not?"

I said, "Because I have not committed any sin."

He replied: "Yea right! Who do you know that can live without committing sin?"

A child of God can live every day without committing sin with the power of God in his life. Sin is a willful intention of the heart. You may make mistakes or make some wrong moves without committing sin. Sin is a deliberate choice that you make to go against the will of God.

"Walk Before Me, and Be Thou Perfect"

As I was studying, I thought of the experience Abraham had one day. We read in Genesis 17:1, "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect."

Many people need a fresh vision of the One with whom they are dealing. They get weakened by the pressures of the flesh and forget to realize that Almighty God is talking to them. Have you ever had the experience in the depths of your heart of God speaking to you? Have you ever felt that impression upon your mind that God has spoken?

Sometimes I have felt that God was like my mother, who would get me by the ear, twist it sharply, and say, "Son, get yourself back in line; you're getting a little careless." God has spoken to my heart and said, "Son, you need to get in the Book more and pray more." When you get caught up in the things of life, God speaks, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." God identified Himself openly to Abraham, telling him who He was and what He expected of him. Think of how dear and precious Enoch must have been to the Lord. Do you desire that kind of relationship with God?

Would you like to throw overboard all those dried up years of spiritual languishing, spiritual indifference, and spiritual lukewarmness? Perhaps you have never really ignited in your soul a rich experience with God in a very personal way. Sometimes people just need to unload all the trash they have been hauling around in their souls. Do you need to empty out and plead with the Lord to fill you again with fresh oil from Heaven's throne? Many people are lacking spiritually. It may be time for you to put in for a fresh, vital relationship with the Lord. God can do something special for you.

I want you to think about

Enoch's life. His life was not easy. He lived in a downward swirl toward the evil that brought forth God's wrath and the flood of Noah's day. He was surrounded by evil, yet he brushed it aside and would not allow it to affect him. I believe Enoch's influence prevailed in the life of his son Methuselah and on down to Noah.

Somehow Noah got hold of God, and he found grace in His eyes. God spared Noah and his family the awful destruction that was to come. I cannot help but think that Enoch's life had a part to play in his great-grandson's experience. We do not read of Noah's mother or father or his brothers or sisters, but the seed took root in Noah's heart. God became something to Noah. Somehow it passed his father Lamech, who was accused of being the first man to violate the ordinance of marriage by marrying two wives. He set on course that evil spiral that fell down to the time when marriage was so intermingled and messed up in men's thoughts. Imaginations were evil continually, and finally God had all that He could take.

If you are a grandmother or a grandfather, do not take your influence lightly. You have an influence over your grandchildren. You need to walk closer to God than you have ever walked in your life. You need to leave something behind for your precious grandchildren to get hold of. The seeds of Truth can be established in their young hearts that they will remember when they grow older. I am not discounting the parents, but I am using that as an example. Everyone has his or her role. You must not become careless when you get older. You have to watch retirement. As you get older, you have to remember that you still have to walk with God. You have to stay with God.

People often blame their own failures on their environment. We are living in the Holy Spirit age, and in this age people have much liberty. Sometimes days go by without people even thinking of their eternal

destiny. Temptations come forcibly, and many people are swept away because they have not been taking care of their souls. Their problem is not the environment or surroundings. Enoch proved that, Abraham proved that, and Noah proved that. These were all people before the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, and they pleased God. Joseph went through much, yet he pleased God. Moses, Caleb, Joshua, and many others pleased the Lord. God worked miracles through their lives.

Fear God, and Keep His Commandments

Wickedness in the world, wickedness in the home, or wickedness in the work place cannot block the man or the woman who truly desires to walk with God. In fact, it can help serve as an incentive to walk closer to the Lord. The greater the battle you are fighting and the greater the wickedness you are surrounded with ought to cause you to want to walk with God that much closer.

Consider the words of David in Psalm 116:9, which reads, "I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living." People have told me that no one can live completely right with God until a supposed thousand-year reign comes. They say that you cannot live for God until you enter the "New Age." I have news for them. Calvary provided a way so that you can live for God right among wicked surroundings. Many people are missing the truth concerning God's kingdom altogether. God's kingdom has already been established in the heart of every believer. Saints of God are reigning now in this wicked and perverse generation. God still has holy men and women, proving to the world that the child of God can live a sinless life before Almighty God. God spoke His will to the children of Israel before the coming power of the Holy Ghost.

In Deuteronomy 13:4 we read, "Ye shall walk after the LORD your

God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him." In other words, you need to be glued to Him. Some people get their feelings hurt and quit serving God. Others do not get their way, so they quit. Are you to please God or self? You had better be careful of how you disagree. You can disagree, but you must keep the right spirit, a sweet spirit, and work together, even though you may not understand some moves that are made. That does not give you the right to kick up your heels and cause a ruckus. What should you do? You need to pray, knuckle down, and realize that some things are far more important than your own opinion. Souls are at stake. You need to walk with God.

Many people have lost their salvation through the increase of domestic cares, but a godly soul can walk with God even in troublesome family times. He must walk with God at all times, especially in the days of storm and trouble. The family needs a strong hand to guide them through stormy waters. Husband, you are responsible before God for the spirituality that prevails in your home. You set the stage for your children and your wife. Men really need to be the man of the house. There are too many weak-kneed, spongy-backed men around. They are cowards, afraid to oppose the wife if things are not going the way she thinks they should go. I am not talking about being possessive. The wife has a right to disagree with her husband. She has a right to her own opinion, but when it comes down to the final decision, who holds the responsibility? The man of the house does.

A Holy Walk

If you are going to walk with God, you have to walk soberly and have a positive influence in your home, even in the storms of life. They are going to come. Storms are

going to rock your marriage, and some things are going to upset you. You might have to go through financial trouble, sickness, or disease. Your children could cause you trouble. Things are going to test your resolve. What should you do? You need to walk with God. Why quit serving God because you are having a hard time? He is not causing your trouble. God is your only true refuge and your only true stability.

In all reality, Heaven is your eternal existence with Jesus Christ, and it is going to be the continuation of your walk of holiness on earth. When you take your last breath, you are going to Glory, but nothing is going to change. You will still be walking with the Lord. The only thing that will change is that you will be free from the flesh. Your spirit will be in perfect harmony with the Lord of Heaven, right on into Glory.

There are advantages to walking with God. If you will walk with God, you can have confidence in the time of difficulty. Proverbs 3:6 says, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Psalm 32:8 reads, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

You can have confidence in God in the midst of difficulties. You can have preservation from falling. Psalm 16:8 says, "I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." What a wonderful consolation! The Lord is at your right hand, and He will keep you from being moved. You can have help in the time of weakness. Isaiah 41:10 says, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." You can have comfort in afflictions. Psalm 46:1 states, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Psalm 94:19 reads, "In the multitude of my

thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul."

You can have piety and godliness always growing in your soul. Proverbs 4:18 says, "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." There is tremendous value in walking with God. No doubt, thousands of people would prefer to seek knowledge through the pursuit of books written by men rather than to seek the wisdom and the mind of Christ through a search of the Holy Scriptures. It is in the Word that we find life and hope and strength.

Masses of people have the idea of a forgiving Savior and a loving

Christ, but they are never able to come to terms with Him as Lord of their lives. He wants to be the Lord of your life, not just your forgiver and not just your Savior. Are you walking with God? Is there a lack in your soul that needs to be filled? Is there an emptiness that you cannot describe or put your finger on? Are things lacking in the depths of your inner being with which you have struggled? Living for God does not have to be a struggle. You can get past that and get an experience with the Lord that will lift you above that daily wrestling match with Satan. It is there for you.

Do you have a languishing spirit, a flame that is about to die

out? Has the spark of your soul burned down to an ember? Maybe you are like the reed that has been bruised and is almost broken. I want to encourage you that God can restore your soul. He will not put out the smoking flax, and He will not break the bruised reed. He will bring help to your soul if you will respond to His love. God has spoken. Will you walk with Him? You can get things in line and get things back under God's control in your life so that you can walk with the Lord.

(Compact Disc TR-459M)

[Especially for Young People—contin. from p. 15]
*The mind, O Lord, is ours to keep
In cleanliness and purity,
That every thought and word
and deed
May own itself akin to Thee;
My mind, O Lord, is Thine to
keep,
Clean and pure and free.*

*The soul, O Lord, is ours to keep
In close companionship with
Thee,
That soul is body, mind, and
heart,
And these are but a unity;
My soul, O Lord, is Thine to keep
In comradeship with Thee.*

When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, He said to His disciples in Mark 14:38, "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into

temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak." You need to remember to watch and pray so that you do not enter into temptation. It is possible for you to put yourself in the middle of temptation knowingly, and then ask for God's mercy, not because of the circumstance, but because you put yourself in the way of temptation. Therefore, you must be prudent, wise, and careful about where you go, with whom you go, and the decisions you make throughout your life. Some occupations are not befitting to a Christian.

You must be careful that you do not become like the young skylark and give in to the lust of the eyes. His first mistake was looking down. He saw just what he was looking for: yummy worms to

satisfy the lust of the flesh. Then with his pride he thought he could get out of the situation, but he could not. He was bound, and it took him down to his death. You must be careful that you do not die a spiritual death. If you are a saved young person, you need to make sure that the devil does not take you down. That is what he wants to do, and he takes down many young people, even to physical death. That is so sad!

I hope these thoughts will be a help and an encouragement to you. You must remember to watch and pray so that you do not enter into temptation. Do not take the first step downward. Do not give up any Christian attributes. You need to hang in there and stay with God.

Sister Judy Evans

Some people change jobs, mates, and friends—but they never think to allow God to change their lives.

Isaiah 56:1 Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

3 Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.

4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth

the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

8 The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.

AN EVERLASTING NAME



Brother Allen Polston

Weigh Things According to the Word of God

The proverb writer said in Proverbs 22:1, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." In the words of the Prophet Isaiah, we find that this man of God was called to a people to give them a message that still needs to be preached today. Verse 1 of our Scripture text reads, "Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment,

and do justice." I do not believe that God would send a message like that if there was no need for it. The very fact that God ordered these words to be spoken is proof that the people needed to hear them. We know that faith comes by hearing the Word of God. As God's people in this day of modern technology and advancement, we still need to hear similar things that they heard, even in a day of much technology. The message was, "Keep ye judgment, and do justice." I believe those two things go

hand in hand. It would be hard to do what is right and to do justice if you should fail to keep judgment. That is exactly where the enemy of your soul begins to work to get you at ease in your mind and to cause you to back off. The enemy is ever working to get you to back off, to distance yourself from that which God would have you to hold on to.

This divine message was dealing with something more important than anything else. God said, "Keep ye judgment." In other words, He

was saying, "You need to sort things out and weigh them according to the Word and the will of God." The devil would like you to have a mind to go with the crowd, to follow whatever the general consensus is. That is not the way to do it, according to the Word of God. You will get yourself in trouble if you follow the crowd. You need to keep judgment.

First Peter 4:17 says, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God." You need to keep judgment so that when thoughts and desires and suggestions come to you, you weigh those things to make a decision on them.

Sometimes we talk about judgment as laying out the truth and the law on situations, but what the Prophet Isaiah was talking about was keeping a mind to look into things, to weigh them out, and to be careful to move according to the Scriptures. He said, "Keep ye judgment," and then you can do justice. The devil is trying to get your mind in a confused state so that you do not judge things as you ought. The world's cry is, "Don't judge me!" I repeat, God wants you to judge things according to the Word of God. I am not talking about pointing your finger in somebody's face. You need to make godly determinations about things.

When James wrote about temptation, he said in James 1:16, "Do not err, my beloved brethren." In so many words, he was saying, "Do not make the mistake in your thinking that yielding to temptation is going to turn out all right." That is an error in judgment to think that you can sin, or yield to temptation, and not have serious consequences.

The devil tells people, "You can always repent later." That is not always possible. However, even if it should happen that way, there are going to be serious consequences. Often the devil comes along and says: "Nobody will ever know. This isn't any big deal. You can do it and then back out of it." He will try to get you to err in judgment. He wants you to think, "You can do this,

enjoy it, and it will kind of fizzle out," but it does not work that way.

God's Grace Is Sufficient

The devil offers some attractive packages. Temptations can be difficult. If they were not, you would not be tempted. If I were going down the road and the thought came to my mind to get out of the car and jump into a lake, that would not be much of a temptation to me. Temptations, by design, are difficult times. They are put together to appeal to the flesh, and if you go by what you feel, you will get in trouble. That is the reason you need to keep God's judgment on sin and things that are wrong. You need to hold God's judgment so that you can do justly.

When James wrote about temptation, he said, in so many words, "Don't make a mistake in your judgment or in your thinking and yield to temptation, because God is the One who gives things that are good and perfect." James 1:17 states, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variability, neither shadow of turning." Regardless of who you are, the best things that you can receive come from God.

The Prophet Isaiah said in verse 2 of our Scripture text, "Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it." When James wrote those words, he was lining up with Isaiah. The blessing that God pronounced and the state of being blessed are the results of those who keep judgment and do justice.

In this Scripture lesson there are conditions that need to be considered. These things sometimes try to work against you to keep you from judgment and from doing justice. Isaiah, under the inspiration of God, began to mention conditions in his day. They were conditions, or positions, of failure. He mentioned the son of the stranger and the eunuch.

He did this for a reason. We need to remember that God's focus and the effort of this lesson was to admonish people not to let down their guard, to keep judgment, and to do justice.

God wants people to live right. Things go better when you live right. Oh, you will be tried and challenged, but God wants you to live right. I am glad to report there are still people who are living right. Though you may be surrounded by people who are not, God's people are still living right. You do not have to lose out because people are not living right. You can stay on fire for God and stay encouraged. You can keep your focus on winning souls, helping the saints, and doing what God has called you to do. Even if some people will not do what is right and others fight it, you can still live right. The grace of God is sufficient. You can still do the right thing and march on with victory. Thank God, there is victory for the child of God! Even when you know some people are doing wrong and causing you problems, you can go on living right. I thank God for that!

Counting All Things But Loss for Christ

In Isaiah's day, the son of the stranger was a person who was lacking, and the eunuch was an individual who was lacking. First, let us consider the son of the stranger. The son of the stranger did not have the ability, as most Jews of that day did, to trace his roots back to somebody famous. A stranger was an outsider who had joined himself to the people of God. Compared to those of Israel, the son of the stranger had nothing to boast about.

In verse 3 of our Scripture text, God told Isaiah to say, "Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people." What kind of feeling do you get if God has distanced Himself from you? What kind of feeling do you get when things pile up and get complicated

and you are unsure of what move to make? The devil will come along and put thoughts in your mind, saying that you are not in touch with God any more and that you have backslidden. Is that not how he works? In hard trials he will cause you to feel like the son of the stranger. He will try to make you feel that things are hopeless and that you are a failure.

Philippians 3:4-8 reads: "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

What was Paul saying? He counted everything in his past but dung. He did not have anything to boast about, and neither do any of us. I like to read and hear stories of how God has delivered people, but all the glory belongs to God. Had it not been for God, people never would have made it out of those things.

Glory Not After the Flesh

When I look back on my life and think about the amazing grace of God, there have been times when I felt like the Psalmist David when he said in Psalm 73:2, "My feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped." The devil had his sights on me, and he was coming on strong. I thank God for the grace of God! It was not anything that I did that brought deliverance to me. It was the goodness of God.

You have nothing in your past to boast about. Even if you have had

some accomplishments to your credit, you are what you are only by the grace of God. You could not even tie your shoes if it was not for God. You cannot even walk without the Lord holding your hand.

Several years ago, I was down on my back for a few weeks. I could not even bend over and tie my shoes. My wife had to do that for me. If it was not for God, you could be flat on your back. You do not have anything to boast about.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11:17-23: "That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more."

What was Paul saying? It is foolish to boast about what you have experienced or witnessed in your life. Why? Had it not been for God, you would not have been able to accomplish anything. To God be the glory; to Him it is due. If you start lifting up the flesh and putting things to your account, you are doing as Paul said and talking as a fool. It is not due to your own name.

Even if I were able to trace my family tree back to Abraham Lincoln, I still would not have anything to boast about in the flesh. I would not have a name for myself. That is the position that Isaiah was dealing with when he dealt with the son of the stranger that had joined himself to the Lord. Here was a person who had joined himself to the Lord, but he was feeling unsuccessful.

What can cause you to feel unsuccessful? Well, setbacks in life

can come from time to time. Also, you may experience failures, such as financial failures or struggles. God's people may feel that they have not accomplished much or that they have not been able to do what they wished they could. Sometimes they might feel like failures when unsaved loved ones and relatives have not gotten saved. That can make you feel unsuccessful. You might have issues in your life, such as physical complications, and that can cause you to feel that you are not of any real benefit.

Sometimes disagreements are going to come up and seem insurmountable and hard to address. You may be at a loss concerning how to fix them or how to take care of them. That can make you feel somewhat of a failure. A lack of spiritual growth can make you feel unsuccessful, as well as making bad decisions. I am not talking about sinful things, but sometimes you can make unwise decisions. Such things can cause even God's people, those who have joined themselves to the Lord, to feel as though life is not of any real profit. I believe that is where you would have found the son of the stranger. He could not really trace his roots back and tie himself to someone of stature, or someone in a noble position.

Keeping Judgment

The Prophet Isaiah also mentioned the eunuch. A eunuch could be a eunuch by several different means. In Matthew 19:12a Jesus said, "For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake."

Many times in those days when war broke out, a neighboring country or king captured men of an opposing country to work as slaves, and they would surgically impair them and make them eunuchs;

therefore, they were unable to reproduce. The eunuch had nothing on the horizon that promised him any stature. He could not see any real level of success being obtained. No honor or real recognition was going to be given to him. Why? He was a eunuch. When he was gone, that was it for him. There was not going to be any more of his lineage.

Isaiah mentioned two kinds of people: those who could not pinpoint anything in their past and those who could not see anything down the road to elevate them to a level of success. There was not going to be anything they could accomplish that was going to cause their names to be lifted up and remembered. There was nothing they could do, try as they may. The son of the stranger could not put together a genealogy. He could not make a name for himself.

The eunuch did not feel successful either, because when his life was over, that was it for his family name. He did not expect any real success, fame, or fortune to come his way. In verse 3 of our Scripture text, Isaiah said, ". . . neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree." God, speaking through the prophet, was addressing the work of the enemy when he tries to work on God's people to make them feel unsuccessful. The Prophet Isaiah was addressing that and combating that. God's people have much to be thankful for. God has been good to us. We have so much to praise God for, but when it comes to worldly success, worldly honor, and achieving great things, many of us are in the same position as the son of the stranger and the eunuch.

When Paul was leaving the brethren at Ephesus, he said, in so many words: "I do not see anything but chains and afflictions awaiting me. I am getting ready to go up to Jerusalem bound." God's people, in most cases, are not at the top of the corporate ladder. Do not take me wrong. I am not preaching against achieving success. Many people in

this old world, not everybody, get where they are by ungodly means. There are many exceptions, but a lot of people get where they are dishonestly by cheating, lying, stealing, and stepping on other people on their way up. Some people get there by doing favors for the boss. Often those with immoral, ungodly conduct get rewarded. God's people will not compromise their values to attain worldly success. God's true people will not surrender the judgment that God has given to rise to the level of success in this old world.

When opportunities to be elevated in this world come, but it means having to compromise Truth, we will not do it. When it is difficult and the pressure mounts to try to cause us to compromise principles, we will not do it. We keep judgment. We stay where God would have us to be. We would rather be unsuccessful in the eyes of the world and be in touch with God. We would rather be unsuccessful, as far as man is concerned, and be saved. Many people in this old world are where they are because they have let down the standard of the Truth and have distanced themselves from what is right. When you turn away from keeping judgment, you are opening the door to a lot of evil.

The devil tries to make people feel that in small ways, it is all right to surrender judgment, or to sacrifice the judgment of God. The prophet said, "Keep ye judgment." When you open the door just a little, the trap is going to close. The devil will try to get you to let down on judgment just a little in order to accomplish something, to gain a little elevation, or to keep up with the neighbors, but it is a trap. You do not know what will happen to you when you give in. It is not easy to go in and partake of something and then get out. It does not work that way. God wants you to keep judgment.

Those people in Isaiah's day who did not have anything to their credit—the son of the stranger and the eunuch—even in their un-

successful state, as far as worldly affairs were concerned, God wanted them to keep judgment. Why? There is a blessing in it.

The Name of Jesus

Our Scripture text reads in verses 4-5: "For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off."

God said He would give them a name, even those who had nothing to their credit in this old world. They might have had one failure after another. I am not talking about living in sin. I am talking about things that might have gone wrong in their lives, such as disappointments or setbacks. There will be setbacks and disappointments to deal with. The whole world deals with those kinds of things. There will be some disappointments. Some people will not do as we hope they will. Sometimes loved ones will make unwise choices. You may try to work with them, teach them, and do everything you can for them, but still they may do something different. These can be difficult times. As far as this old world is concerned, you may not be able to claim much success.

It is natural to try to look for things that you can add to your credit. The Bible says that God would give them a name, and thank God He does! However, it is not the name "John Doe" that is going to be everlasting. Again, verse 5 says, "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off." That name is Jesus. It is an everlasting name that will not be cut off, thank God!

One of these days, my name

will be gone and forgotten about, but He has given me a name that will never be cut off. He has given me a name that is everlasting; it is from everlasting to everlasting, and nothing will defeat it. Friend, He will give you an everlasting name—the name of Jesus. One song says, "At the name of Jesus, hell trembles, and Satan must flee." Thank God!

You may not be successful in this old world, and your name may never be in marquee lights, but thank God, if you are saved, He has given you a name that will never be cut off, an everlasting name. You may not have anything to trace fame and fortune to, and you may not have anything on the horizon that looks like it is going to produce success, but you can have a name that goes back before any name. You can have a name that is still going to be here when every other name is gone—the name of Jesus.

One song entitled *Take the Name of Jesus With You* says: "Take the name of Jesus with you, Child of sorrow and of

woe; It will joy and comfort give you, Take it, then, where'er you go."

Even though you may never be successful in this old world and people may never speak of how mighty you were, you can have an everlasting name that will never be cut off—the name Jesus Christ. Saint of God, you can stand strong. You do not have to be bowed low in shame because you have not accomplished something specific. Sometimes people in the world who are living wickedly seem to be living it up. They have their finances in order and seem to be a picture of health. They seem to prosper on every side. David witnessed that, and it brought him to a place of discouragement. In Psalm 73:2 he said, "My feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped," and then he went into the sanctuary of God. I believe when he went into the sanctuary, he gained understanding about the everlasting name that would never be cut off, the name of Jesus Christ.

You can take the name of Jesus with you. You can go forward with

confidence in the Lord, not in the flesh. You can get down on your knees and pray with confidence. Someone may say, "I don't even know how to pray." You can take the name of Jesus with you. You might have nothing behind you to boast about and nothing on the horizon that promises any great position, but thank God, you can have an everlasting name, you can have hope, and you can have a treasure.

At the name of Jesus, sin chains are broken and the captive is set free. At the name of Jesus, hell trembles and Satan must flee. I thank God for an everlasting name that we can take with us. There is power in that name. I want to encourage you to go forward with confidence in that name. You may not have much to your credit, and there may be things in your life that the world considers lacking, but thank God, you have a name that will never be cut off and will never be defeated. May God bless you.

(Compact Disc TR-1008M)

[*The Well of Living Water—contin. from p. 13*] could say: "Look at what Jesus has done for me. I thank God for how Jesus saved my soul. He brought me out of the horrible pit of sin that I was once in. Now I can see the true Church of God. My feet are established in the Truth, and I am on my way to Heaven. I do not have to sin any longer."

Jesus asked the woman at the well to give Him something to drink. She was startled by His request. She could not quite understand why He was asking her for something. Verse 9 says, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." She knew that, but Jesus Christ knew that she was a soul in trouble.

Have you ever asked someone for something? Have you ever been startled by a request? Jesus came

back with an answer for this woman. Thank God, Jesus always has the answer. When you do not know which way to go, Jesus has an answer. If you do not know if you should take a certain job, you can pray about it and Jesus will give you an answer. He will never fail you or forsake you. He will always be on time.

In verse 10 Jesus said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Dear one, the Living Water is what you need, not that old stagnant water. You need something refreshing, something that will truly satisfy your soul. There is life, vitality, strength, and hope in Living Water. There is salvation in the Living Water. You will desire to walk closer to the Lord when you drink of it.

If more and more people could see that the answer to life's problems can be found in following Jesus, their problems would be less and less. Too many people want to serve Jesus on their own terms. You may say, "I will ask the Lord to help me when I get in trouble." Friend, that is the wrong time to ask the Lord to help you. You need to pray that you will stay out of trouble. He will keep you from sin. I am not going to say that you are not going to have problems, but if you follow Jesus Christ, some of your problems could be alleviated or they would not be as big as you think they are.

Focus on God's Plan for Your Life

You must realize that it is vitally important to stay focused on God's plan for your life. Jesus endured the pain of the Cross, and we are urged to follow His example. Hebrews 12:2

says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

We can have the unity of the Spirit because we are together with Jesus. We can have fellowship. Fellowship goes deeper than friendship. Too many people want friendship, but I am talking about divine fellowship. Salvation causes you to love your brothers and sisters in Christ. As Christians, we care when others are hurting. We care if they are unable to do the things they need to do. Why? We are the family of God.

The Samaritan woman did not understand what Jesus meant when He said to her in verse 10, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Jesus had to explain to her in detail what He meant about the water, just as He had to explain being born again to Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a very intelligent man, but he did not understand spiritual truths. The same is true today of many people. If you are saved, you need to let others know what God has done for you.

The Samaritan woman did not understand what Jesus was saying because her eyes were focused on the literal water. Jesus was trying to direct her another way. He wanted to get her eyes off the literal water because He had something spiritual to talk to her about. You can get your mind so focused on one thing that when Jesus wants you to go another way, you do not let Him deal with you.

Verses 13-14 of our Scripture text read: "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

You can tap into this well anytime, and it will start springing up. It will start to rejuvenate you, and you will have a testimony. There is something about this well that gets you excited. The preacher cannot preach it close enough. You will want the Holy Spirit to check you out. You want to make Heaven your home one of these days. Nothing in this world is worth going to hell over. There is life and vitality in this Living Water. I thank God that I found everlasting life when I found Jesus!

A Holy Calling

You have to watch that something does not get into your well and contaminate it. You must guard against having critical attitudes and fault finding spirits, backbiting, and false accusations. These spirits want to contaminate your well. If they contaminate it, it will no longer spring up. It will become dirty and stagnate. I would not want to partake of anything stagnate. Once your well becomes stagnate, the devil will let you go on thinking that you are all right. You may continue to go to church, pay your tithe, and read the Scriptures, but your well will be dried up. A preacher may preach his heart out, but you will think, "I'm glad that he is preaching that for them."

Many people know about the Living Water, but they fail to partake of it. They have heard message after message, but they refused to fully surrender to God. Jesus wants them to partake of the Living Water. Many people have been convinced by the enemy to wait until a more convenient time. Today is the day of salvation. You should not harden your heart. I am afraid that has happened to a lot of people. They have hardened their hearts to the message, to the singing, and to the Holy Spirit.

Friend, you need to be careful. If the Spirit of God is dealing with your heart, you are blessed. You

should not put off salvation. You need to serve God when He calls you. There has to be a desire in your heart to serve God.

Second Timothy 1:8-9 states: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

We need to remember that the Samaritan woman stood facing God's own Son. That was a powerful message. She stood there in the very presence of the One who could take care of every need she had. Today ones stand in the very presence of His Holy Spirit, yet they reject Him continually. Friend, there is going to be a day of reckoning.

You cannot stand at the Judgment and say, "I was not in a position to receive salvation." Jesus Christ wants to be your Savior. He wants to save you from your sins. He is offering you Living Water so that you can tap into that well. Today He is asking to be your Savior, but one of these days He is going to be your judge. Today there is time for mercy. There is time for you to make things right. There is time right now for you to say, "I am sick of the sin business" and turn to Jesus Christ. One of these days it will be too late. He is going to move from the seat of mercy to the seat of judgment.

Removing the Obstacles

The woman at the well knew that she had to have the water that Jesus was offering her. There comes a time in people's lives when they have nowhere else to turn. When your back is against the wall, that is when Jesus wants to work. There was something different about the water that Jesus spoke of. It was not literal water. This water was some-

thing that she desperately needed in her life. You cannot get this Living Water just on the surface. You have to dig deep. There is too much shallowness today. Shallow worship will lead you to do other things that are shallow. Then when the winds come, what is going to happen to your vessel? You are going to capsize. Do not be afraid to go deeper in the things of God.

Are you a servant of God? Someone wrote: "Real servants do their best with what they have." Servants do not make excuses, servants do not procrastinate, and servants do not wait for better circumstances. Servants never say, "Well, one of these days . . ." Servants do not say, "When the time is right . . ." They just do what needs to be done. God expects you to do what you can with what you have. Wherever you are, the Lord expects you to use what you have for Him. Do not let obstacles stand in your way. You would be surprised by the number of people who let obstacles stand in their way. Do not let anything prevent you from doing what you need to do for God.

Henry Ford once said, "Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off the goal." When you start taking your eyes off Jesus, obstacles will arise. Again, I am not saying that you will not have any problems in your life, but many people get knocked out of this Christian race when they get their eyes off Jesus.

Someone may say, "Well, I can go there and make better money at that job." That would be an obstacle if you did not have a church to go to where the Truth is preached. It would be better to work for minimum wage if you are some place where you are getting your soul fed. That is the most important consideration. Many people do not see that. What is the most important thing to you? Is it the dollar signs or your soul's welfare? You cannot take the money with you when you die, but your soul is going to go somewhere for eternity.

Dear one, Jesus wants you to partake of this Living Water. Jesus let this woman know exactly where she stood. He knew all about her. John 4:17a says, "The woman answered and said, I have no husband." Jesus already knew that she had previous husbands, and He also knew that the man with whom she was living was not her husband. She said, in so many words: "This man must be a prophet! He knows all about me. I did not tell Him anything." It is amazing how much Jesus knows about each of us.

In verses 17-18 Jesus said: "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly." He knew all about this woman. Sinner friend, Jesus knows all about you. He knows what is standing in your way to prevent you from getting saved. He knows exactly what your hang-up is.

The Good News of the Gospel

Jesus wants you to partake of this Living Water. It is not just any water. Living Water is for living people. There is good news in the Gospel. The good news of the Gospel is this: you can tap into the living well today. If your well is dried up, there is victory and hope in Jesus Christ!

The Living Water will heal your every need. It will truly satisfy your soul. The Samaritan woman had need of salvation, and Christ wanted to bring the conversation with her closer to home. To do this, He had to accomplish two goals. First, He had to penetrate her conscience with a sense of sin. He had to let her know that she was in a sinful condition. That is where we all were before we were saved. We had to realize that we were living in sin. She wanted her thirst taken care of, but she had to realize her sinful condition first. When you realize that sin is preventing you from getting victory in your soul, that is the starting point. You have to admit that you are a sinner.

The second goal that Jesus had to accomplish was this: it was important that Jesus establish His authority as being a spokesman for God. He said, in essence, "I am your help; I am the answer." Jesus Christ is still the answer. Jesus knew all about her lifestyle, just as He knows all about your lifestyle. Jesus knows your every need, and He wants to take care of your needs. He wants you to go deeper than merely having a profession. You want to be a possessor of Jesus Christ, not just a professor of religion. Too many people merely have a profession of religion. You need something that will last throughout the ceaseless age of eternity.

You should not go another day without Jesus in your life. It is not worth it. The woman at the well had a need, and just a little talk with Jesus made it right. He wants you to confess that you are a sinner and that you have a need. He is more than willing to satisfy that need, but you have to ask Him first. He already knows your need, but He takes joy in your coming to Him and confessing that need.

Has Jesus taken up residency in your heart? He wants to supply your needs, friend. Philippians 4:19 says, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

There are many good things in our Scripture lesson. There is more to it than just a woman coming to a well. Also, there is more to salvation than just going to church. There is more about salvation than just knowing a few Scriptures. This is something that you must put on and wear every day. It is not something that you do only during the Easter and Christmas seasons. When you get saved, you will enjoy being around the Spirit of God. You will enjoy being in the house of God. You will enjoy being with the saints of God. Your soul will crave these things. If you do not crave them, you need to check your well.

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