

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 43 August 2013 No. 8



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

*Psalms 122:1*

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

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

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

**THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:**

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS**

**PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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# Spring 2013 Camp Meeting Report

It was a beautiful day as the saints gathered in for camp meeting on Sunday morning, June 16, 2013, at God's Acres. Once again, God's children came from near and far to enjoy another week of fellowship and feasting on the wonderful Word of God. As the ungodly clouds of darkness continue to worsen all around us in the world, these times of refreshing are needed more and more.

Pastor Roger L. Decker asked Brother Irwin Seshier to open the morning service and welcome everyone to God's Acres camp meeting. Brother Seshier then encouraged us all to open our hearts and allow the Lord to have His way. He said, "This meeting will be over before we realize it." It is so important for us all to engulf as much of the Word as possible. Prayer was made to petition God to bless, strengthen, and encourage the saints and to save those who are lost.

Brother Larry Dishman, the evangelist for the meeting, began with a stirring Father's Day message. He pointed out the characteristics of a loving father, and he used Jesus' example of the prodigal son. This beautiful portrayal of a father's love for a wayfaring son who had departed touched our hearts. He expressed the deep grief that our Heavenly Father suffered while watching a child turn away to a sinful life. However, our spirit was made to rejoice as we saw the compassion and the forgiveness granted upon his return.

Each afternoon, beginning on Monday, Brother Reggie Stegmeier brought provocative lessons centered on the mind. These teachings that revealed the many different aspects that Satan uses to mislead, to deceive, and to destroy a Christian's life were

very stimulating. We must be reminded that the same mind that God works through to encourage us to live godly is the same mind that Satan uses to entice us to do that which is displeasing to God and holiness.

Although we are unable to mention each message and each speaker, we would touch on Brother Tim Wilson's message. His sermon was entitled "Can Something Be Done With My Burden?" This inspiring message covered the "dry bones" in Ezekiel, Chapter 37. Looking at this lesson, we find an impossible situation for which Ezekiel had no remedy. Divine inspiration sent encouragement to our hearts to hold fast to the faith. Dear one, most of us have conditions existing that we, in ourselves, have no power to change; but God still has the power and the ability to bring victory. Brother and Sister Whitehead sang a song entitled "It Won't Always Be That Way." This song speaks of many unfortunate things that happen in life. However, some day when the saints enter Heaven, they will never be troubled again.

Time or space will not allow the writer to elaborate on each inspiring message and song, but they certainly were very stirring. Every message was Holy Ghost inspired and brought much enlightenment to all who were present. Brother Decker was pleased to see all the ministers who attended the camp meeting. Their labors and support helped make the services successful. Soul-stirring sermons were preached by Brothers James Presley, Richard Talbot, Karl Wilson, Leamon Whitehead, Calvin Foster, and David Stegmeier.

Another highlight of the June meeting that the saints enjoyed [continued on page 7]

Revelation 14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 And they sung as it were a new

song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

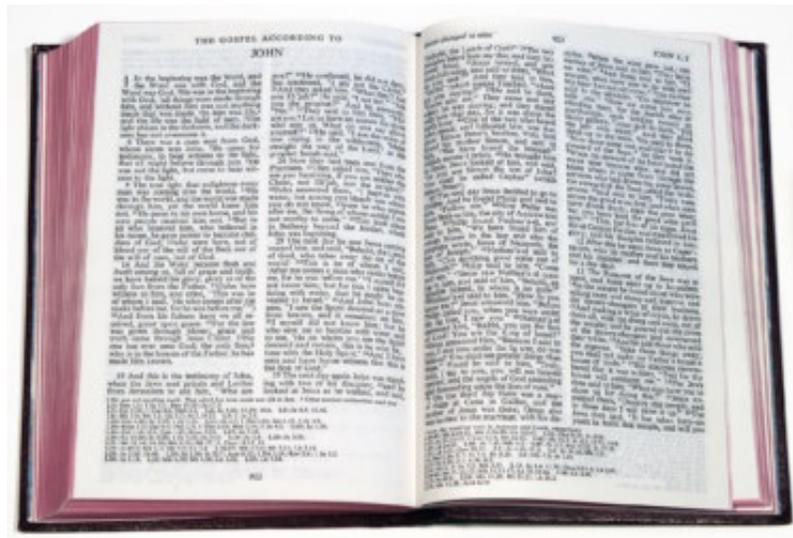
4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being

the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

# The Everlasting Gospel



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

## **The Power of the Gospel**

In verse 1 of our Scripture text we see the evening-time church coming back into view. It says the Lamb stood on Mount Zion, and the only way the Lamb can stand on Mount Zion is through you and me. In other words, the Spirit of God and the Word of God have their rightful place once again in the church. The everlasting Gospel is for an everlasting people. You may say, "We're not everlasting." What about your soul? Is your soul not eternal? John called it the everlasting Gospel,

or we could call it the eternal Gospel. The Gospel is universal, reaching every soul on this earth. The Gospel is eternally valid.

Even in a world that is heading for destruction, the Gospel will still stand. It is called the everlasting Gospel because it comes from an everlasting God. The Gospel deals with the souls of man, and it also deals with eternal things. The Gospel is universal because sin is universal, and there is no other way to eradicate sin from an individual's life except through the Gospel. Sin is not confined to one locality. It

strikes the soul of every individual who comes to the age of accountability. It visits every nation, every tongue, and every person. None of us can escape the piercing arrows of sin.

Verse 6 of our Scripture text says the Gospel goes out to every nation. It reads, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Mark 16:15-16 states: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the

world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Baptism follows believing; it does not make you a believer. Baptizing does not change a person's belief.

The Gospel is good news for every nation. If you believe it, you can be saved, but it is a two-edged sword. If you disbelieve the Gospel, you will be damned. There is power in the Gospel. It can convert men and women, and it can change the hardest heart. It can reach to the deepest depths and rise to the greatest heights. It is an everlasting Gospel.

From where did the news of the Gospel come? It came straight from Heaven. Proverbs 25:25 says, "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." The Gospel is good news from a far country. Jesus brought that news to the hearts of you and me, and He brought that far country close to every one of us. Jesus brought Heaven to you and me. I enjoy sitting together in heavenly places. Where are those heavenly places? They are in Christ Jesus. He brought Heaven to you and me so that we might have a taste of Heaven to go to Heaven in.

The good news of the Gospel is that you do not have to stay in sin a moment longer. If you will believe and take hold of the Gospel, the power of sin will be broken. You may say, "You don't know what I've done." God does, and God sent forth the Gospel to your heart. When believing takes hold of the Word of God, the power of sin is broken. You can be a resurrected, changed individual, a new man or a new woman. Then the walk becomes straight and the talk becomes clear and good.

The instant you believe, all sin is forgiven, and the power of sin is broken. You can go free, like a bird out of a cage. Just as a man sitting on death row who receives a pardon can go free, you can go free when you receive a pardon from God.

Psalm 124:7 says, "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped." This is good news, and it is everlasting. The Gospel will keep you throughout the ceaseless age of eternity.

### **The Binding Power of Sin**

Sin will destroy you, and it will ruin your influence. Sometimes some people work so hard to build up a good influence, but they get involved in things they should not have gotten involved in, and their influence is destroyed. Sin will bind you with sinful habits. Young person, do not fool around with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. Do not mess around with sinful things on the Internet. Those things will get hold of you and bind you. If you become bound by those things, then what are you going to say? "I would to God I had never taken the first drag on a cigarette" or "I would to God that I had never taken the first drink" or "I would to God I had never even tried the first drug."

Sin has power. Some states are now trying to legalize marijuana. I want you to see how sin has power, especially in a nation that is leaving God out. Sin will destroy you. It will bind you with habits that will ruin your health. Many people suffer later in life for things that they messed around with in their youth. Sin breaks up homes and ruins relationships. It separates brothers, sisters, and even congregations. Sin has no mercy, shows no mercy, knows no mercy, and gives no mercy. The Gospel is the opposite: the Gospel brings mercy straight to the door of your heart.

John wrote in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." The "door" mentioned in this verse is talking about the heart. The heart's door has to be opened voluntarily, just as you would open the door to your home to someone

who knocked on the door. John used this illustration to show that is what you need to do when Jesus knocks on your heart. You need to open the door and let Him in, and then you can feast with Him and He with you.

Jesus is a gentleman. He is not going to make you serve Him. He is not going to push you around or dispatch a special angel to you; you have the Gospel. If you do not want Jesus to come into your heart, He will move on to somebody who does want Him to come in.

The Gospel is good news for those who have problems with gossiping. They can be delivered from that terrible sin. You need to know what the Word of God has to say about that sin. Words of warning are scattered throughout the Bible. Proverbs 11:13 says, "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter." Proverbs 20:19 states, "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips." Proverbs 26:20 states, "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth."

Will Rogers, who was a speaker and a comedian, once said, "The only time people dislike gossip is when you gossip about them." Those who are caught up in sinful lusts that war against the soul can also be delivered, and there is only one Gospel.

### **Perverting the Gospel**

Paul, writing to the Galatians, said in Galatians 1:6-9: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man

preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." That is strong language, but the Apostle Paul was a defender of the Gospel.

The same word is used in Acts 20:30 where Paul warned the elders about things that would take place after his departure. He said, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Another translation says, "Also men from your own group will begin to teach things that are wrong. They will lead some of the Lord's followers away from the truth to follow them." The word *pervert* means "to corrupt." How does one become corrupt? One way is by adding to or subtracting from the Word of God. There is a terrible price for adding to or subtracting from God's Word.

I want you to read some Scriptures found in the Book of Revelation. It talks about adding to or subtracting from God's Word. Revelation 22:18-19 reads: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

By teaching that which is contrary to what the Bible teaches, a person adds to or subtracts from God's Word. The Bible does not teach a millennium, a purgatory, inbred sin, or salvation through water baptism. Also, it does not teach speaking in tongues as a sign of the Holy Spirit, confessing your sins to a Catholic priest, joining a church, voting in a pastor, or voting in other positions in the body of Christ. These are things that pervert the Gospel. They have no Bible foundation, and often they have been taken out of context. People can preach lots of things, but when

those doctrines are examined under the spotlight of truth, it shows the falsity of those things.

Abraham Lincoln used to have a favorite riddle he used on his colleagues. He would say this: "If a man were to call the tail of a dog a leg, how many legs would a dog have?"

People would reply, "Five."

Mr. Lincoln would smile and say: "Wrong. The dog still has four legs. Calling the tail a leg doesn't make it a leg."

There are lots of doctrines taught from God's Word, but that does not make them true. The Gospel fits all men everywhere. This Gospel will either save you from sin or damn your soul in a lost eternity; it is a two-edged sword. I do not think anyone can even comprehend what it would be like to be lost. If people really did, they would walk closer to the Lord. Being lost for eternity would be terrible.

### **The Gospel Brings Hope**

This Gospel fits the whole man. Man is comprised of spirit, soul, and body. The Gospel takes care of all three. There is provision in the Gospel for the healing of the body. Mark 3:14-15 tells us: "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." In Matthew 10:7-8 Jesus said: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." Speaking of the twelve that were sent out, Luke 9:6 reads, "And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where." Healing is in the atonement, and it belongs to the child of God, and healing is for you and me. It is for the church today.

James 5:13-15 says: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for

the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." The only way a person's sins can be forgiven is for that person to ask God to forgive him.

Terrible vengeance is going to be taken against those who refuse to obey the Gospel. Disobeying the Gospel is not like disobeying your mom or dad. If you continue to disobey the Gospel, you need to realize what you are going to face at the Judgment.

Second Thessalonians 1:7-8 reads: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." I repeat, the Gospel is everlasting. It is eternal, and we are going to face it in eternity.

When the Gospel is preached, it bears good news. Rejecting the Gospel is throwing away all hope of your salvation. You do not have any hope if you disobey the Gospel. You have to come back to the Gospel to bring hope back into your life. Paul, writing to the Colossians, said in Colossians 1:23, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." The Gospel brings hope to a hopeless soul.

When I first sat under the Gospel, I was in a hopeless condition. I did not know whether to turn to the right or to the left to find hope. When I heard the Gospel preached in its fullness, it brought everlasting hope to my soul. Colossians 1:5 reads, "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel."

## What Will You Do in the End?

The Gospel is called the Gospel of peace. Do you really have peace in your soul? Do you really have peace with God? The peace that the Bible talks about is peace with God. Ephesians 6:15 says, "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

With the Gospel comes the grace of God. The Gospel gives grace to walk away from your sins and come to Jesus Christ. You cannot do that in your own strength; it takes the grace of God. You are saved by grace. Acts 20:24 reads, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

The Gospel is a Gospel of the Kingdom of God. The reason that people are messed up on the doctrine concerning the Kingdom of God is that they are not really hearing the Gospel. Mark 1:14 tells us, "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God." You dare not disobey the Gospel, for there is nothing else to save you. What are you going to do in the end? There is nothing left to save you from being lost without the Gospel.

Many people are wearing themselves out trying to get ahead in life, but they are leaving God out of the equation. Oh, they might get along adequately for a while, but always remember that when there is disobedience and it is not eradicated, it is going to manifest itself. Disobedience loves more disobedience. Some people have backed away from the stand that they once had for the Truth. That is a shame, because what comes with it is a spirit that will justify themselves in doing so. What is troubling is that once people get under that spirit, they are actually convinced that they are right. It will cause them to profess higher than they are really

living. That spirit influences them to profess something that they are really not doing. When a person starts down the road of disobedience, a spirit will convince that person that he is on the right road, but that one is getting further and further away from God.

I want to tell you that there are going to be things coming down the highway of life that you cannot handle. It might be a good job, financial security, social status, or popularity. It comes to every one of us some time in our lives, and it will take God to bring it under control or to deliver you from the torment or the destruction of it. Life has some cruel twists and turns to it, and unless God is present in your life, it will have a tendency to take you under.

There are some things that you cannot grit your teeth and tough out. You need God to comfort you. You are going to need God to sustain you in the trial. The longer you stay unsaved and the longer you stay in disobedience, the more difficult it will be to get saved. Sin does not get weaker with age; it gets stronger. When people start cutting corners on God, He sees their hearts. Often they have made up their minds to go that route. You see, if the Gospel cannot convince you to get saved and do what is right, then you cannot be convinced. People may talk to you and warn you, but if your heart is set to go your own way, you are going to have to go that route, but woe to you in the end!

## The Remedy for Sin

The everlasting Gospel is your only hope in this world of uncertainty. The world is getting more corrupt as the days slip by. I am concerned that some people have let the fervency that comes with salvation leak out of their souls to the degree that they think: "Ho-hum, this is just another meeting. I might attend the services a time or two if I'm able."

The Gospel does not mean as

much to them as it once did, and they find the strength of God is not there as it once was. Dwight L. Moody used to say, "The only way to keep a broken vessel full is to keep it always under the tap." The Word of God tells of a man who took his relationship with God as something that would always be as it was, regardless of how he conducted himself. This individual got under a spirit of disobedience, but he thought God would always be there. After Samson had played around and told the Philistine woman the secret of his strength, he thought he could go out as before.

Judges 16:18-20 reads: "And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, [That is all the devil wants—your heart. You see, either God has your heart or the world has your heart.] she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath showed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not [or he knew not] that the LORD was departed from him."

Samson did not know the Lord had left him. Why did the Lord leave him? Because his heart left the Lord. He told her all his heart. God was no longer in Samson's heart. Some people really struggle hard to make it to the services because something else has gotten hold of their hearts. A lost and dying world cannot satisfy their souls. Sometimes people get Gospel hardened after they have heard it so much and fail to obey it.

Galatians 6:9 reads, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint

not." Some people get weary with living right, so they decide, "I want to try all these things I've been missing that others have been telling me about." Well, most people out there are dissatisfied with life. There is no satisfaction in the things of this world compared to Jesus Christ. It is not there! Satisfaction cannot be found in a person or in a thing; to get hope, it must come through the Gospel. If this is your condition, you

are on the wrong road; but there is a remedy!

You need to get your heart fixed today. Do not continue in sin and challenge God. If you have sinful things in your life, there is a remedy, and the remedy is Jesus Christ. You need to get it fixed before you are completely destroyed. When people start down the road that leads to destruction, often they start down it very stubbornly, and they

could not care less about their influence and their family, just as long as they have their own way. They are always bucking up against the One who loves them more than anything else in this world, yet God has made provision to deliver them from all those sinful conditions.

*(Compact Disc TR-1092)*

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*[Camp Meeting Report—contin. from p. 2]*  
was when we met Brother Karl Wilson and his beautiful congregation from Bessemer, Alabama. He shared a message with us on "God Is Now Gathering a Heavenly Nation." He expressed God's desire is to bring all men and women together from every walk of life. He wants us to enjoy fellowship with Christ and to be a holy nation. The singing of Brother Karl Wilson's choir blessed our hearts, as did their special singers.

The sweet presence of the Holy Spirit was expressed in an overwhelming way. He moved throughout the congregation to warm, comfort, and cheer hearts. The shouts and praises to God reverberated over and over as some jumped for joy and others walked the aisles with arms raised to God in adoration. These spiritual outpourings made our cups overflow time and time again.

The greatest of all blessings

enjoyed was seeing the lost move to an altar of prayer. It was a beautiful sight to see ones pleading for the Lord to forgive them from sin and rebellion. How good it was to see souls bow down before Christ, having broken and contrite hearts, arise as new creatures. Oh, the joy that filled our hearts as we witnessed the Lord pick up the broken pieces and mend them together again!

Several souls yielded themselves during the week, but the apex was reached in the last service of the meeting. Sunday evening the Lord changed the order of the service. He chose to move in before anyone could brace himself or herself against the preached Word. Eighteen to twenty souls surrendered themselves to God as several specials were sung. As soon as we thought everything was finished, then more would come bowing at an altar of prayer.

Certainly much more could be

said regarding the blessedness of the meeting. As always, the visitation of God's Spirit only comes about by the saint's seeking the Lord. Prayer and fasting is the most important ingredient for any victorious meeting. No successful revival or special meeting was ever accomplished without first seeking God's divine intervention. He only is the One who controls the services. He gauges how desperately we desire to see good things happen and moves accordingly.

We certainly encourage you to obtain the camp meeting CD's or DVD's. You will find a list of the CD's and MP3's on page 26. You may inquire about the DVD's available by writing. You may do so by sending your order or inquiry to God's Acres Tape Ministry, 725 N. Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055. Also, we want to invite you to the Fall Camp Meeting starting Sunday, August 4, 2013.

Those who go against the grain  
of God's law shouldn't complain  
when they get splinters.

*Psalm 50:1 The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.*

*2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.*

*3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.*

*4 He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.*

*5 Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant*

*with me by sacrifice.*

*6 And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah*

*7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God.*

*8 I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me.*

*9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds.*

*10 For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.*

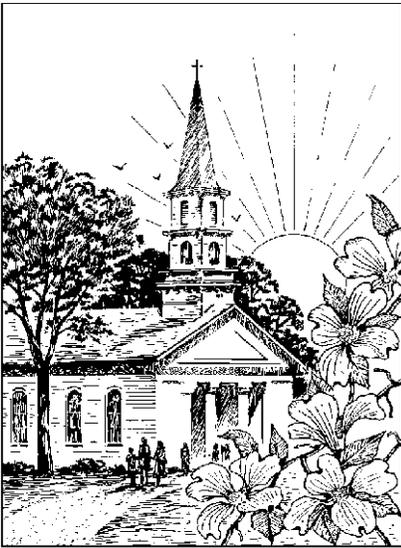
*11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.*

*12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.*

*13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?*

*14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:*

*15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*



# The Beauty of the Church of God

*Brother E. David Stegmeier*

## **The Perfection of Beauty**

We have a courtroom scene portrayed in this Psalm. God is the judge, the witness, and the jury. He brings the indictment against His people as well. Court is called into session, not with the rap of the wooden gavel, but with the manifestation of God's eternal glory. He orders His people to offer sincere, heartfelt sacrifices. God does not need our things; He needs our sacrifice of thanksgiving, praise, and obedience.

I want to focus on verse 2 of the Scripture text, which reads, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God

hath shined." The church is the most beautiful institution in the world! The church of God is the bride of Christ. The Church of God is a beautiful institution. I thank God for the Church of the Living God!

According to Hebrews 12:22-23, Zion is another name for the Church of the Living God. Again, verse 2 of our Scripture text says, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Perfection is a perfect condition; it is the highest of excellence and faultlessness; a perfect person or thing. God is concerned about beauty. We can see His handiwork all around us. In the autumn we see the turning of the leaves from green

to yellow, orange, and red. There is beauty in every area of the world.

I was raised in the Rocky Mountains, and they are very pretty, especially in the time of year when God dusts them with beautiful snow. There is beauty in every season in the mountains and on the plains. The beautiful grains as the wind causes them to sway are gorgeous. In the desert, on the beach, or wherever you go, there is beauty. God has beautiful things for us to enjoy, and I like to see those beautiful things. Even in the animals there is beauty. The male peacock is beautiful as he struts around. God loves beauty.

One song entitled "For the Beauty of the Earth" reads:

*For the beauty of the earth,  
For the glory of the skies,  
For the love which from our birth  
Over and around us lies;  
Lord of all, to thee we raise,  
This our hymn of grateful praise.*

*For the beauty of each hour  
Of the day and of the night,  
Hill and vale, and tree and flower,  
Sun and moon, and stars of light;  
Lord of all, to thee we raise  
This our hymn of grateful praise.*

*For the joy of human love,  
Brother, sister, parent, child,  
Friends on earth and friends above,  
For all the gentle thoughts and mild;  
Lord of all, to thee we raise  
This our hymn of grateful praise.*

*For thy church, that evermore  
Lifteth up holy hands above,  
Offering up on every shore,  
Her pure sacrifice of love;  
This our hymn of grateful praise.*

Down through the annals of history, God has always been concerned about beauty. In every age God has ordained that His house be a house of beauty and a house of glory. The tabernacle in the wilderness was gorgeously arrayed. In it was the ark, which was built with the finest wood and overlaid with pure gold. Much of the furnishings were of gold, such as the mercy seat and the two cherubims above the mercy seat. The tabernacle was a facility that displayed fabulous wealth and beauty, and its furnishings were provided for the Israelites for both glory and beauty.

### **Holiness Adorns God's House**

I want you to consider Moses' brother Aaron, the high priest. I believe his priestly attire was emblematic of something in our day. Aaron was dressed in the finest of linen with the mitre of pure gold placed upon his head. This was to

beautify God's house, and it was emblematic of God's holiness that adorns His house today. What makes God's house beautiful today is men and women who live holy, clean, godly lives. That is what makes the Church of God. I repeat, the church is the most beautiful institution in the world.

The fine linen that Aaron was dressed in represents the righteousness of the saints; the way the saints live is emblematic of that fine linen. God honored the old tabernacle with His presence, and God's presence is what makes the church so beautiful today.

Once permanently in Canaan, God commanded them to build a new house. Solomon's temple was constructed, and no expense was spared. The finest materials were used in its construction. All the vessels were of gold, and upon them was inscribed, "Holiness unto the Lord." However, God warned the people that if they were unfaithful, the temple would be destroyed. True to His words, later it was destroyed. The people did not remain faithful to God; therefore, they were driven from the land, and Solomon's temple was left in ruins.

In the Book of Ezra, Nehemiah described the return of the faithful remnant from their captivity to the land of Canaan where they rebuilt the temple and the city of Jerusalem. They were guided and encouraged by their minor prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. When the temple was rebuilt, it did not have the splendor of the first temple, so some of the old timers wept. I do not want the old timers around the Church of God to weep because of the condition of the temple today. God still has a people, and they know something about the glory of God. Jesus came to build the final, eternal house, the church. He changed His residence from the temple of the Jews, and as the Bible says in Matthew 23:38, He left their house desolate. It would be terrible to worship in a place desolate and forsaken by the Lord.

The Church of God is absolutely beautiful! This New Testament temple is made of individuals like you and me. Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:19-22: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." What can be more beautiful than a place that is inhabited by the Spirit of God.

Holiness now is not ceremonial; holiness is actually demonstrated in the lives of real people. The people of God have pure hearts and pure eyes. The Bible says you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. Thank God, you can be free from all man-made creeds, such as "sin you must and sin you cannot help it," and on and on they go. God's people live pure lives. Holiness is real. In the Church of God beauty is not found in material things; beauty is found in the lives of His people.

### **The Law That Rules the Church**

The church is the most glorious and the most beautiful of all institutions. One reason is that Christ is the architect. Some people talk about famous architects, men who have designed great buildings; but Christ is the greatest of all architects. He has built a glorious church, and I am glad that I am a member of her. Christ takes special care of the church because she is His bride, and He is concerned about her beauty.

The Church of God is a fellowship of blood-bought brothers and sisters who love God and who love one another. Our mission is the greatest of all missions, and it is to bring everyone to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. What mission could be greater? Have you read

about when David decided to go out and fight against the giant Goliath and his brothers got after him? What did David say? In 1 Samuel 17:29 he said, "Is there not a cause?" The cause and the mission of the church are the greatest! The mission of the Church of God on earth is to bring others to Jesus Christ so they can enjoy salvation and worship God in unity and true holiness.

The Church of God excludes no one socially or according to race or gender; everyone is accepted. All people are equal in God's sight. Peter had to learn that. Acts 10:35-36 lets us know there is no prejudice between races and classes of people in the Church of God.

A person comes into this beautiful organization through the new birth, and he is given the mind of Christ. Then love, kindness, humility, and righteousness rule. What is the law that rules the Church of God? Romans 13:10 tells us that it is the law of love. I repeat, the Church of God is the most beautiful institution in the world.

We used to sing a song in a Church of God hymnal entitled "Beautiful Zion." The song reads:

*Beautiful, peaceful Zion,  
We've heard of thy wonders of old,  
And out of the ages rising,  
The city of light we behold.*

*Out of the shadows hanging  
Dark over the valley of fear,  
We mount up to Zion's glory,  
As crystal, eternally clear.*

*Beautiful, holy Zion,  
Oh, mountain of glory divine,  
We come to thy peaceful summit,  
Where heavenly songs ever chime.*

*Wonderful, happy Zion,  
We stand on thy summit so free,  
While joyfully singing, upward,  
The ransomed are coming to thee.*

*Welcome the joyful tidings  
Of Zion, the mountain of love;  
'Tis freedom from Babel bondage,  
And coming, that freedom we prove.*

*Coming, coming,  
Zion we come to thee;  
Coming, coming,  
Coming with joy to thee.*

I thank God for the church. Many years ago when one brother was a boy and not living for God, when he heard about a tornado coming, he ran as fast as he could to where the saints were, and he got in the middle of the group to rest securely. He said he knew God would not touch the saints. The church is a place of safety. Jesus has one bride, and there is one church, one faith, one God, and one Lord.

The world opposes what the church stands for, and the church contradicts what the world stands for. If the church offers to compromise, the next step would be total collapse as a divine institution. Peaceful coexistence between the world and the church is absolutely impossible. When the world makes friends with the local church, the church can well put on its bulletin boards "Ichabod," meaning, "the glory of the Lord has departed." The church has what the world is looking for. The church and the world can no more mix than oil and water can mix. The reason for this is that there are irreconcilable differences; their ideals are different. Their goals are different, their tasks are different, their speech is different, their preferred associates are different, and their manner of life is different. The godly are supernaturally different inside. They are different people. Their natures are different.

### **Triumph Is Assured**

The Church of God, which is the body of Christ, has been transformed, regenerated, and recreated. Christians unconsciously invite persecution in that they are as salt in the world's guilt wounds. They interfere with the world's peace of mind. When I was in the military service, I always prayed at lunch time. The fellows around the table used to say, "Dave, don't pray; it

makes us feel guilty." I did not pray to make them feel guilty, but I was doing it because I appreciated what God had done for me.

The beauty of the Church of God is that girls and women look like females and boys and men look like males. The world attempts to get the church into compromising positions and digs pitfalls for the destruction of their influence. People make attacks on the beliefs of the church, its practices, and its members. They are good at misconstruction and misstatements. This is a satanic war on the world's part, but it is a holy war on the part of the saints.

As saints, we have two advantages: the captain of our salvation is Jesus Christ, and our weapons are ample. In addition to this, our ultimate triumph is assured. God's church is triumphant. I thank God for the beautiful Church of God. I am so glad that I am a member of the Church of the Living God! If you are not a member of the Church of God, why not join? How can you join? You can join by giving your heart and life to Jesus Christ. That is another beauty about the church.

Years ago, a sister came to our congregation and said: "I love it here. When are you going to open the doors?"

I replied: "Jesus said He is the door, and you have to come through Him to get into the church. If you are saved, you are a member."

She said: "Wow! That is awesome! I have never heard of that before."

I said, "Well, it is in the Bible." That is another beauty about the church.

If you are not a member, you can be. No one is excluded. Verse 2 of our Scripture text says, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." The more we let God control our lives and the more we yield to God, the more beautiful and Christlike we will be. If you are not a Christian, I invite you to give your heart and life to Christ.

*(Compact Disc TR-1065)*

2 *Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:*

2 *Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

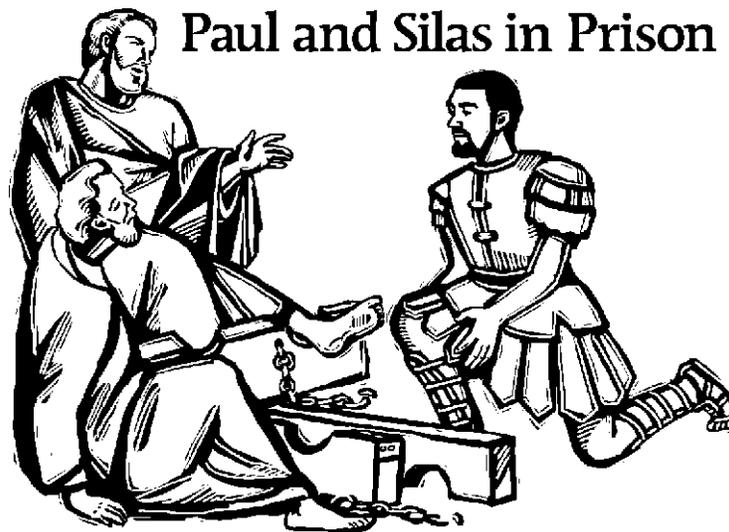
3 *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;*

4 *So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience*

*and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:*

5 *Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer.*

## Are You Suffering for the Kingdom of God?



Paul and Silas in Prison

*Brother Esau Brooks*

### **Patience and Faith in the Midst of Persecution**

Notice in Paul's introductory words to the brethren in this letter that he was writing to show his appreciation for their stand in the things of God. He said in verse 3, "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, [Why?] because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." These are marvelous words.

The Apostle Paul rejoiced that those brethren's faith in God was growing; it was not at a standstill. Their faith was not getting dimmer, but rather their faith was growing. Praise the Lord! Faith was meant to

grow. In the kind of world in which we are living today, to me it is strange that there is not more growing of faith in believers. More and more, it seems that people are turned off from God, from religion, and from salvation. Even though the brethren at Thessalonica had opposition, conflict, and tribulations, their faith was growing. Also, their love for one another was abounding, and they had patience and faith in the midst of their persecutions.

I want you to notice what Paul said in verse 4: "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure." It never was an easygoing faith to be a child of God, not in this world of sin in which we

are living.

Many times people talk about having a hard time. Well, it all depends on which way a person is looking at it. I have always told people, "If it seems hard to serve God, you do not really understand what is going on." You see, the church has an adversary, the devil. The Scripture, speaking about the devil, reads in 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." He is as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Lots of times, as I have looked upon mankind and have seen how taken up he is with the affairs of this life, I have wondered why anyone would consider it hard to serve God.

This world and this lifetime were meant to come to an end. There was a time when things were marvelous and glorious in the beginning when God made man, put him in the garden, and left him there to look after the garden. In the cool of the day, God always came down to spend time with both the man and the woman whom He had made. It was sweet fellowship; it was real and enjoyable fellowship. God meant to have that fellowship continue, but Satan managed to get in between man and his God. From that condition, things have been getting progressively worse.

### **Life's Greatest Thrill**

Going back to verse 3 of our Scripture text, Paul said, "We are bound to thank God always for you." In verse 1 we find that Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus were the ones who were sending this letter to these Thessalonian brethren, and Paul was penning the letter. Again, he wrote in verse 4, "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God."

There is a lot of trouble in this world. I am living in the same world that you are living in, and the same one that Paul was living in. In the midst of all the hardships, there are yet things about the things of God that make us thank God. Saint of God, we have something to thank God for. No matter how dark it gets all around us and no matter how much the hardness increases, we can thank God.

People need to get back to where they enjoy living for the Lord. It is thrilling! One of the greatest joys that I have had down through the years is in the fact that when Satan comes around and says, "Do that," I can say, "Thank God, I do not have to." Friend, you do not have to sin. You do not have to follow the ways of the world. You do not have to go where others are going. That should bring a thrill to your soul and joy to your heart. I have really enjoyed serving the Lord. I have

gone through some dark places, but I have never entertained the thought of giving up on God.

This Christian life has promise not only for this life but also for the life to come. When you look at the time of dying, you do not have to worry; to die is gain. May God help people to get their spiritual eyes worked on so that they can see the good in serving the Lord. Sin and the life of sin have always been filled with disappointment, grief, and sorrow; but such is not the case for the child of God.

During my seventeenth year of life, I embarked on this journey to live for God, and now people would call me an old man, but I still enjoy living for God. I still would rather live for God than to live for the devil. I am glad that I am a Christian. I do not have to bow down to what others are bowing to. Thank God, I am free!

Again, Paul wrote in our Scripture text in verse 4, "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure." Persecutions and tribulations are not joyous for the present. Such times may be hard and hurtful, but I thank God that they do not stay. Because of that, you can look and see the time coming when you can go on rejoicing. It is not a waste of time to serve God. The only things that you are missing in the world are the things that are harmful to you.

### **Being Counted Worthy of the Kingdom of God**

Paul went on to write in verse 5 of our Scripture text, "Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." Those brethren had patience in their persecutions. Have you ever thought about being "counted worthy of the kingdom of God?"

The manifest token for this all is to make us worthy of the Kingdom

of God for which we suffer. We are living in a day when there is all kinds of suffering. Some are suffering for one thing and others are suffering through other things, but it is an honor to suffer for the Kingdom of God. Some people are suffering because they are in the Kingdom of God, and others are suffering because they will not give up the Kingdom of God. Their constant ambition and desire is that they may be counted worthy of it.

The world is doing its share of discouraging people. Sometimes when people go through hard places, others speak of wanting to encourage them. Have you read about the times when David was running from Saul? One time David was out in the country to do something, and when he returned to town, the enemy had come into that little town, laid it low, and had taken everybody captive. When David looked at the desolation and the destruction, nobody could give him a word of encouragement. Do you know what he did? He encouraged himself. Have you ever had to encourage yourself? If you have, then you know what I am talking about. Someone may ask, "What's the point?" That you may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God for which you suffer.

Some people say and do mean things. They may trouble you, but you need to keep your head up, because you have a purpose for putting up with it. It is for the Kingdom of God. Some people suffer for their welfare and the welfare of their family. Others suffer through some things unnecessarily; but when you suffer for the Kingdom of God, it is all gain and no loss.

Peter wrote in 1 Peter 2:20, "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." The Christian does not mind suffering when he comes to the realization that it is acceptable with God. If you do well and suffer wrong, you

should not hang your head in despair. You should do as the Apostle Peter said: you need to take it patiently.

The devil's job is to make you feel that you are wasting time in trying to serve God. Many times he points to sinners and says, "They are having a better time than you are." On the contrary, that is not true. No other people on the earth are having as good a time as the people of God are having. I am sorry if you have not found out yet. The tears may flow because of the hardships, and you may be tempted to become bitter and hardened; but when you look down the road, you will realize that is foolishness. You need to gird up the loins of your mind and go on and hope to the end. Heaven and earth may pass away, but Jesus never fails, and serving God will never fail.

In so many words, Paul was saying to those brethren, "Your suffering is a manifest token of the judgment of God so that you may be counted worthy." There is such a thing as your being counted worthy of the kingdom, not the kingdom being counted worthy of having you.

### **Life Will Be Sweeter Someday**

In writing to Timothy, Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:1-4: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." The more these spirits increase, the harder it will be to serve God, but you must keep holding on. By the grace of God, it is going to be brighter someday.

When I was a young convert, the church used to sing a song that says, "*The things of this life may leave us weeping, And sorrows may come our*

*way, But only remember God is keeping, And life will be sweeter some day.*" Many times I have to say those words to myself. The Christian does not have anything to look down the road and fret about. He has a lot to rejoice about. The life of a Christian suits me. If I had ten thousand lives to live, I would still live them for God. One of my favorite songs says, "I'd do it all over again."

Young person, the devil may try to deceive you into thinking that you are wasting time worrying about religion, but there is a world of difference between religion and salvation. You will not lose by being saved and living holy. Often the devil tells people, "Look at all the fun you are letting pass you by." You should be glad that which the world calls fun is passing you by, because that kind of fun leaves a bad taste in your mouth. Be encouraged in serving God. Be encouraged in living for God. Be encouraged in suffering for the Kingdom of God.

### **Remaining True and Faithful**

In our Scripture lesson, we see the exalted aim of the Christian life is to be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God. Is the kingdom blessed for having you? Are you loaded down with cares, troubles, and worries? Are you a drag on the kingdom? Now, it could happen, but it does not have to. I want you, by the help of the Lord, to encourage yourself in living for God. Romans 14:8 reads, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." Paul wrote to the church at Corinth in 2 Corinthians 5:9, "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."

In our Scripture text Paul was thanking God for the qualities those brethren had in Thessalonica. In speaking about these qualities, Paul said he was bound to thank God because they were growing. The world has it in for the church, and

their aim is to make it as hard as they can for us. They speak and act in whatever way they can to make it difficult, but we can change all of that. Sometimes things are not as bad as you may take them to be. As you look upon situations, if you could just get somebody to tap you on the shoulder and tell you, "Don't worry; you are going to get over that and you are going to be glad."

There are qualities that we must have for the Kingdom of God. In the world those qualities are fast disappearing. It is somewhat increasing our burdens, increasing our hardships, yet we must see that we need to thank God for the kingdom and thank God for being a child of God.

In the epistle to the church at Thessalonica Paul was speaking about those qualities growing, or increasing. Jesus our Savior, in one of the messages that He preached in Matthew, Chapter 13, likened the Christian to being good ground, or good soil. Whatever happens on good soil is always profitable. The Christian life is as good soil. Friend, you need to look to God and beg Him to help you to be as the good soil in this world of sin.

What makes you worthy of the kingdom is what you need to concentrate on, or work on. If you are not worthy of the kingdom, you cannot be a part of the kingdom. You must be worthy of it to be a part of it, and just by being a part of it, you are worthy.

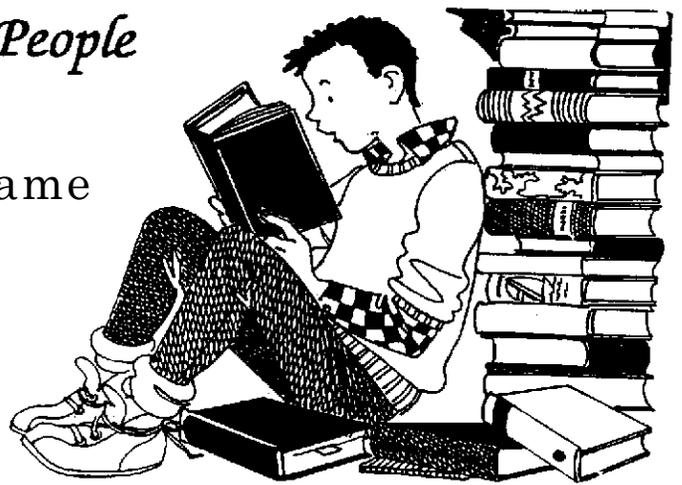
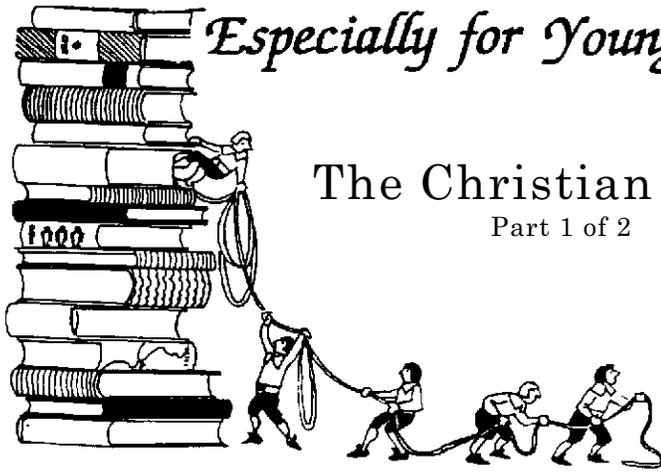
Again, the Apostle Paul told the congregation at Thessalonica that he was bound to thank God for them because the qualities they possessed were qualities that were increasing. Today there is too much carelessness. At one time, people used to enjoy suffering for Christ. I have read some of the stories about men and women who lived for God. In one story in particular, the brethren had been captured and were waiting for their destruction, one after the other. When it came time for one brother to go out and suffer, he was asked if, after he got there, he would

*[continued on page 20]*

# Especially for Young People

## The Christian Name

Part 1 of 2



I want to challenge you to see if you can lay aside anything in your life so that you can become a better Christian and to have a closer walk with Christ. In this world there is sin and Christianity, and the difference is as black and white. In the blackness of sin we find smoking, drinking, drugs, lying, cheating, and so on. The white signifies purity, praying, reading the Bible, testifying, and going to church. Then there is a gray area in between that is questionable, because it is not spelled out clearly in the Bible. The gray area can mar your reputation. The Christian's reputation is very important. It has been said that it takes years to build a good name, but it only takes one little thing to destroy it.

In thinking about a good name, I thought about Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. If you want to consider a good business-minded person, Bill Gates is a good name. He has done very well for himself. If you want to consider someone who is spiritual, Brother Roger L. Decker, Sister E. Faith Stewart, Brother Esau Brooks, and many others have good names. When you think of bad names, you can think of Bernie Madoff, Fidel Castro, Tim Bundy, and Adolf Hitler. Many other names could be added to that list.

Officially, the records state that Adolf Hitler did not have any biological children, but there were rumors of his having a secret child.

Suppose Hitler did have a son and that child was not bad. He could not control his father's actions. However, he would have inherited his name, so how would he have been viewed? He would have been associated with that name for life, no matter what good he might have done in life.

We each have some kind of name. If you are saved, yours is "child of God." By your actions, you are saying, "God is my Father; I am a Christian." By the things that you say and do and by the places you go, you are wearing a "sign" daily. If Adolf Hitler had a child, his child could have inherited his "sign," but maybe he decided that he was going to be different from his father to change people's opinion about himself. Suppose he said, "I am going to cause people not to associate me with bad and dark behavior.

People with whom you associate, whether it is in school, on the job, or where you go to church, affects people's opinion of you, although you may never interact with them. The only thing they may know about being a Christian could be what they see in you.

If they see you go somewhere that a Christian should not go or see you do something that you should not do, they may pass judgment on all Christians. Remember, you are wearing a "sign" that tells others, "I am a child of God." You could be their only impression of what a Christian is. You may say, "I

am not responsible for what others think or perceive about me by what I say or do." Romans 14:7 says, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." You are not living to yourself. You are going to leave footprints behind, and someone is going to follow those footprints. Whether you know it or not, you are being either a good example or a bad example. Someone is watching your life.

When you are walking, you do not usually look behind you. You may not really see who is following your footsteps. If you are doing what is right, and then you start leaning toward gray areas, or questionable things, you might have little footsteps following you. Others are watching your life.

When you first become a Christian, you are on this spiritual high, so to speak. You might have smooth sailing and think nothing can bring you down. You need to remember that the devil also sees your life, and he is not going to let you stay up there. He is waiting to destroy you. He knows your weaknesses and your faults, and he is going to work to bring you down. He may not start big and say, "Here are some drugs" or "Here is some alcohol." He knows what will cause you to trip. He may use something small.

Recently, I tripped and fell. At first, I was not sure what the problem was. Was it my ankle or my shoes? I found that it was just a little twig that I caught my foot on

and caused me to fall. It was not a big stone, but it was something small that I did not even notice. The next thing I knew, I was flat on my stomach.

The decisions you make today may put you on a path that you have to travel for life. As a young person, you will have many decisions to make. You will have to decide regarding school, college, career, where you are going to live, and who you are going to marry. You have to make big decisions.

New Christians are in close relationship with God. Friends, good and bad, will be put in your path, and they will either help you or hinder you. They may try to make you become different. They can be a hindrance between you and God. When you choose a girlfriend or a boyfriend, you need to ask yourself if that person is helping you spiritually or if little red warning flags are showing up. Those little red flags can help you to identify little things that you should be concerned about in a relationship. You should not keep pushing off those warnings until that person comes between you and God.

You need to consider your job when it comes to serving God. Do you have to miss church a lot for it? Are you looking for a job that is going to make you work on Sundays and Wednesday nights continually? Have you prayed about it? Did you ask God what He wants you to do? In selecting a college, have you prayed and asked for God's will? Can you still go to a Church of God congregation? Have you sought godly council and godly wisdom about it? Could it come between you and God?

Friends can be there to help you or to draw you away from God. A friend can be someone in your life that can uplift you. Maybe that person is not saved or maybe he or she is struggling spiritually. You could help that person to be closer to God. On the other hand, you may want to lift this person up, but he

or she may not really want to serve God. There is a struggle, right? If you continue that friendship, what is going to happen to you as a Christian? You could have a constant struggle. What happens when the friend wants to be a better Christian or wants to live for Christ? Your relationship is so much better. This is where you really need to pray and ask God to direct you. If a person is not willing to accept Christianity or the Bible standard or whatever he or she is struggling with, that person's struggle can affect you spiritually. He or she can pull you down and come between you and Christ.

Regarding marriage, it is never too early to pray about it. It is one of life's most important decisions. Young person, it is important to pray about God's plan for your life now. You do not want to marry someone just because you like them or because you want to get married. You should marry because God has led you to do so. You should marry because you can work together for God. You can have a good marriage, but you do not want just a good marriage; you want to have a great marriage. God can make your marriage great if you both serve Him wholeheartedly.

You need to get God's direction about whom you should marry. He knows who is right for you. How can you find the right one? You must get on your knees and pray and ask God. You cannot find the answer by trying to find out who has the best looks and the most money, because those things will not last.

You have a short span in which these decisions seem to fall. Often it seems like you have to make one decision right after the other, and there is a lot of pressure. These things can start to crowd between you and God in this Christian life. Then how easy will it be for you to hear what God is saying? Friends can fill your mind with their opinions and what they think, and then it can become hard for you to think

clearly. It is not always easy to hear God because of all the voices trying to tell you what they think you should do.

It is good to seek the advice of a godly pastor regarding major decisions, especially if your thinking has become clouded by other people's opinions. A godly pastor can see things that are tripping young people up and causing them to lose out with God. A godly pastor will warn you of the dangers ahead that could trip you up. He can see further down the road spiritually, and because he is the watchman on the wall, he can see pitfalls that you cannot see. Maybe you can see something that should cause you concern, but he can see something that will cause you to fall.

Sometimes you may think you need to make your own choices and your own mistakes so that you can learn from them, but it could be a bad experience, and why waste the time? Allow me to illustrate the point this way. Suppose a certain route was closed because a bridge was out, and someone told you the route was closed. Would you decide to drive through the barricade just to see if what someone told you was true? I do not think you would do that.

You would not waste time going that direction. You would be thankful that someone saved you the time. You would try to find a different route to your destination. The same is true spiritually. We are trying to warn you of the danger of living in sin. Why do you need to go down that road and see for yourself? We are trying to warn you to go a different way, to go God's way. Do not waste your time living in sin. That way leads to destruction.

If a roller coaster ride had statistics that showed that only 10 percent of the people who ride it will get off alive, how many people would want to ride it? Most people would say, "No, thank you." You would not gamble with your physical life, so why would you gamble with your spiritual life?

Sister Victoria Miller

Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the

dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast

into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.

# The Court of No Appeal



Brother Larry Dishman

## The Judgment Is Coming

Jeremiah 28:16 says, "Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD." In the light of that Scripture and that subject, what if you were to die this year or this month? What if you were to die this week, or even tonight? The Scripture says that after death comes the Judgment.

Now, I want you to imagine that before you is a courtroom scene. It is an assembly of the unsaved, and all the unredeemed of history are standing before God to give an account for their rejection of Christ

and their unbelief. One day every sinner is going to stand in the "true" Supreme Court; it is truly the court of no appeal. This court will be different from all other courts in history because there will be no attorneys, no jury, and no case to be debated. The Judgment Day will be the capital day on the calendar of time.

We read in these passages of Scripture that God predicted there is going to be a final Judgment Day. God made other predictions of judgments throughout His Word also. If you study God's Word, you will find that in every era of time in the past, every prediction that God made came to pass exactly as He said He would. The Flood came just as God

warned. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah just as He said He would. I could mention many other prophecies that have happened exactly the way God said they would.

John said in Revelation 20:11, "And I saw a great white throne. . . ." He said this throne was great; He was referring to the power of it. This is the highest court in the universe. When judgment is rendered from God's throne, there is no court to which you can appeal because there is not a higher court than the one that we read about in the Word of God. Friend, this is the place of the highest authority and final Judgment.

Notice what else John said in verse 11. It is not only great but also

white. This speaks of the purity of this court. All human courts are stained by sin, prejudice, and viability. On the other hand, this court is absolutely perfect and the judgment rendered from this court will always be fair and righteous. Friend, if you are a sinner, there will be no place to hide on Judgment Day. You will not be able to evade it. The Judgment is coming, and every sinner is going to be there.

No one will be able to hide behind excuses. People have lots of excuses concerning why they are not saved and why they do not go to church. On that day, no one will be able to hide behind any excuse whatsoever. You will not be able to hide behind ignorance or a false profession. You will not be able to hide behind your parents, your companion, or your pastor. You may think, "If that had not happened, I would have gotten saved" or "If there were not so many hypocrites, I would have gone to church." You are not going to be able to hide behind the hypocrite on that day.

### **An Infallible Judge**

I want to talk to you about the Judge that occupies the bench. He is infallible. He is not tainted by sin or by prejudice. He renders judgment in a perfect, righteous, fair way. Not a single person judged on that day will be able to cry out, "*Unfair, unfair!*" Every sinner judged and every sinner sentenced will know that he or she received perfect, fair judgment. If you fail to get saved, friend, you are going to have a fair judgment.

Though Revelation, Chapter 20, does not identify who is sitting on the throne, many other Scriptures do. Second Timothy 4:1 reads, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." Christ is the One sitting on the throne; He is the One before whom every other judge will stand. He is the Judge of the universe, before whom nothing

is hidden.

It needs to be remembered that this righteous Judge sees all. He sees everything in your life, and He knows everything about you. Friend, no sin in your life is hidden from Him. You cannot even hide the thoughts that come into your mind from Him. In fact, you cannot hide one thing from Him. Nothing is concealed from Him. All things are open before Him with whom we have to do.

There will be no pretending, and there will be no pretense on that great Judgment Day. You need to think about this. No one is getting by with sin, not one individual. I have often heard people say over the years: "Look what he is doing. I don't know how he can get by with that." I repeat, no one is getting by with sin. We all are going to the Judgment one day, and we are going to have to give an account of the deeds done in the body.

Many folks think they are getting away with things, but God knows all about them. He knows what you have been doing, and He knows what you have been thinking. He knows everything there is to know about you. He knows more about you than your husband or your wife. He knows more about you than your parents, your brothers and sisters, or your best friends. You cannot hide anything from God. If you have sin in your life and you do not repent, you can be sure that one day you will face those sins at the Judgment.

Galatians 6:7-8 states: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

The Scripture cries out in Numbers 32:23, "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out." You cannot hide from this righteous Judge. If you die unsaved, you will wish that

you could hide from Him, but you will not be able to. He will know all there is to know about you before you even appear before His presence. He knows you intimately. The Bible states in Romans 14:11 concerning this Judge, "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." That does not leave anybody out. The big knees are going to bow, the little knees are going to bow, the white knees are going to bow, the black knees are going to bow, the brown knees are going to bow, and the red knees are going to bow. Every knee shall bow to God, and every tongue shall confess.

### **Three Types of Sinners**

I want you to consider the people who will be coming before the throne. I want to focus on three types of sinners. First, there is the renegade sinner. He lives each day as if there is no God. A lot of people live as though there is no God, no Bible, no church, no Heaven, and no hell. Second, there is the respectable sinner. He is the good person, and he says: "I'm just as good as that Christian. I don't go to church, but I'm not a bad person. Maybe someday I'll get saved, but I'm not doing so bad." What that person fails to realize is that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. He needs to be saved just as much as the drunkard and the drug addict. He is heading for the Judgment just as other folks are.

Third, there is the religious sinner. No doubt, there will be more religious sinners at the Judgment than any other type. Religious sinners are people who think they are saved, or think they are right with God, but they are not. Religious sinners have a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof. They might have joined a church, and they might have been baptized in water; but the devil sold them counterfeit religion. They are not genuinely saved.

Many folks cannot point back to a time in their lives when they were made new creatures in Christ, where old things passed away and all things became new. Do not forget that it is not enough to be religious, because the Bible tells us in Proverbs 16:25, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." That Scripture is not talking about the renegade sinner; it is talking about religious people. The renegade sinner is not on the way that seems right. It does not seem right to be a drunkard, to live in adultery, or to live in the vile sins of life. However, there is a way that seems right to a man but the end thereof are the ways of death. I am talking about the person who professes, but he is not a possessor of real salvation.

At the Judgment, there will be religious preachers, religious pastors and assistant pastors, Sunday school teachers, deacons, church members, popes, priests, nuns, and choir members who will be unprepared on that day. Their names will not be found in the Lamb's Book of Life. That will be a sad day for those souls. They had religion and went to church, but they will be weighed and found wanting. This reminds me of what Jesus said in Matthew 7:22-23: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

### **The Proceedings of the Judgment**

In the proceedings of the judgment in every court trial, there are at least five phases that take place. I want to share these five phases with you. First of all, the charges are read. Next, the evidence against the defendant is presented. After that, the defense attorneys present their case on behalf of the defendant. Once the jury reaches a verdict, the verdict is read. Finally,

if the defendant is found guilty, the sentencing takes place. Let us look at the charges. Romans 3:23 states, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." You may say, "I have not been that bad." Still, you have sinned and come short of the glory of God; therefore, you stand before God guilty. You may say, "I have never smoked a cigarette, drank alcohol, cussed, or told a lie. I do not know of any sins that I have committed." The Bible says in John 3:18, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." You might not have smoked a cigarette or drunk alcohol, but you are guilty for not believing in the name of the only begotten Son of God. The Bible says that you are without excuse for not believing in God, simply because of the creation of this world and the things that God has made. Perhaps you have never heard a Gospel message, but if you are honest in heart, you are without excuse for not believing in God.

My friend, there is also going to be evidence in the proceedings of the Judgment. Do you know what the Bible says in verse 12 of our Scripture text? It says that "the books were opened . . . and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

What kind of books will be opened? I believe some of these books will be books of deeds, where our biographies are being written. Recorded will be every lie that you have ever told, every evil thought that you have allowed to dwell in your mind, every sin and every opportunity that you had to be saved, and every time you rejected the Holy Spirit's call. Every excuse that you give for not being a Christian will be written down in the books. Recorded will be every decision that you have made, and the choices that you have chosen. Also, recorded will be the sins of commis-

sion, the sins of omission, the secret sins, the sins of the heart, and the sins of the mind. You can be sure that the evidence in this book will be accurate, and the record will be complete.

Do you know what other book I believe will be opened? The Bible will be opened. Jesus Himself reminded us that we would be judged out of the Word of God. I believe that John 12:48 will back this up. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." The Bible, the Book that sinners mock, the Book that people fail to heed, will be used to render judgment upon their lives in that day. Friend, it is better to believe God's Word now and go to Heaven than to reject it and face the Judgment and go to hell.

### **The Book of Life**

The Book of Revelation tells us there will be another book, and it is the Book of Life. Revelation 20:15 reads, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." The Lamb's Book of Life contains the names of all the redeemed, all who have been blood washed. When a sinner is saved, his name is written in the Book of Life. That is what the Bible is talking about in Luke 10:20, which says, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Saint, if you do not have anything else to rejoice about, you can rejoice that your name has been inscribed in the Lamb's Book of Life. I love the song that says: "*I am so glad that God holds the blessed Book of Life, And my name is written safe, secure inside. Jesus wrote it there one day When he washed my sins away. I am so glad that God holds the blessed Book of Life. You may have your name upon some preacher's book And if he does not like the way that you dress or look He can open his book wide And erase your*

*name and throw you outside. But I am so glad that God holds the blessed Book of Life."*

I am glad that I know that my name is written safe and secure inside. Jesus wrote it there one day. Praise be to God! Friend, you have to keep your name in that Book. Someone may say, "I thought once my name was in the Book of Life, it would always be in the Book." No, friend, the Bible states in Revelation 3:5, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." In order to keep your name in the Book of Life, you must be an overcomer. As long as you overcome, you can keep your name in the Lamb's Book of Life. In Exodus 32:33 the Lord said, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." If you will live free from sin, you can keep your name in the Lamb's Book of Life until Jesus comes back. That is shouting ground to know that your name has been inscribed in the Lamb's Book of Life!

How about you, sinner friend? You know that your name is not in the Book of Life. You need to do something about that. The evidence—God, Christ, the Holy Ghost, the Word of God, the angels, nature, your memory, and your conscience will be there to witness against you on that day.

What about the defense? Friend, you will be your only defense. There will be no slick attorneys, no room for doubt, no plea bargaining, and no acceptable excuses. You will not be able to say, "I didn't know." You will not be able to say, "I never had an opportunity to get saved." There will be no bribes, no kickbacks, no loopholes, and no legal maneuvering in this courtroom that I am talking about.

### **The Verdict and the Sentencing**

At the proceedings of the Judgment, there is going to be a

verdict when the names of the lost are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life: *Guilty!* No person at the Judgment of the lost will avoid the horrible verdict of *guilty*. What will they be guilty of? They will be guilty of unbelief, rejection, procrastination, loving sin more than the Savior, pride, bitterness, unforgiveness, fornication, adultery, drunkenness, prayerlessness, idolatry, unrighteousness, stealing, murder, sodomy, envy, rebellion, loving the world, loving pleasures more than loving God, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof, deceitfulness, drug addiction, taking God's holy name in vain, cursing, swearing, hypocrisy, indifference, anger, profanity, witchcraft, emulations, uncleanness, lasciviousness, strife, sedition, disobedience to parents, love of self, ungodliness, being greedy for filthy lucre, boasting, blasphemy, unnatural affections, truce breaking, false accusations, lust, hatred, dishonesty, gossip, slander, criticism, prejudice, wasted time, looking at pornography, being a harlot, lawlessness, and the list goes on and on. The verdict of the lost will be *guilty, guilty, guilty!* The word *guilty* will sound in the ears of the lost throughout the ceaseless age of eternity.

Last comes the sentencing, which you can read of in Revelation 20:14-15: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." That will be the sentencing. Matthew 25:41 says, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

All people will face Jesus as Lord and Judge and will receive just sentences for their deeds. I cannot imagine the horror of hearing Christ the Judge utter the words: "*Guilty! Depart from Me into everlasting torments. I never knew you.*" You never want to hear these words from the Judge of the universe, because this is

the court of no appeal. When lots of folks go to court, before they ever get there, they have already planned to appeal in case they lose. Sometimes they begin to plan it weeks or months ahead of time. The Judgment will be a court of no appeal; nobody is going to appeal.

### **Settling Out of Court**

The difference between the saved and the lost is this: the saved have settled their cases out of court. Praise God! I have had my case settled out of court. My advocate is Jesus. His righteousness is my righteousness, and He has fully paid the price for my sins. God has accepted the supreme payment at Calvary with the amen of the resurrection and the promise of eternal life to all who will repent and believe.

I plead with you to settle your case out of court. First Timothy 5:24 says, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment [that is what I did; I settled out of court]; and some men they follow after." Those whose sins follow after them are those who failed to settle out of court. You can choose to stand on your own record and face God for the sins that you have committed or you can do something about it today.

If you wait until the final Judgment, the verdict will be *guilty*. Repentance and faith and the new birth can wipe your record clean. It replaces the record of your sins with the record of Christ's righteousness. If you could look at the Book where my sins were once written, when you come to my name, you would find that it simply says: "See Calvary and an empty tomb. This man's record is clear." That is what did it, and that is the way it is with everyone who has been saved. If you could see the Book where all my sinful deeds were once recorded, you would find that all of it has been erased.

I want to remind you that we still live in the day of grace. During this time in history, a sinner can

come before God and cry out for forgiveness and the Lord will receive him and save him by His grace. Today is the day of grace and forgiveness. Today is the day of repentance, the day of mercy, and the day of faith. Today is the day of salvation. None of these things will be dispensed on Judgment Day. Only judgment, swift and sure, will

issue from this great, white throne from the Lord Jesus Christ on that day. There will be no appeals. All judgments rendered from His bench will be final and binding. The sinner will be forever consigned to the lake of fire to suffer the torments of eternity forever and ever.

Dear one, I am pleading with you to get saved, because this year,

this month, this week, or even today, you could die. A terrible tragedy could be awaiting you. After death comes the Judgment. After death, you are going to face the Judge of all the earth. You have to make up your own mind. You need to make the decision today.

*(Compact Disc TR-1013E)*

*[Are You Suffering . . . ? continued from p. 13]*  
clap three times. He promised, "I will." The guards led him out, put the wood around him, poured the oil on the wood, and lit a match.

The other brethren were there looking anxiously. They saw the fire come up and burn his clothing, his legs, his fingers, and his hands. Soon his hands were burning up to his wrists, and he had only two knuckles left. They were about to walk away and say, "There is no gaining in this; no profit in this thing." Then they saw what was left of his hands start going up over his head, and he knocked them together three times. Praise the Lord! No matter how dark things get, there will always be something that you can smile about. You are not wasting time in serving God. You are not wasting time putting up with whatever you have

to put up with. You need to remain true and be faithful until the end.

Paul told the congregation, in essence, "We thank God for you because your faith and charity are increasing among you, and they are a manifest token of the righteousness of God, that you may be worthy of this kingdom for which you suffer." Today you would think there is not much trouble with people to be worthy. Today it almost seems that the pagans and everybody else are worthy, but that is not true. There is no other experience like the Christian experience. I would rather be an old-time Christian than anything I know. By the grace of God, as long as God counts me worthy to be here and to be a part of His family, a part of His church, I am going to count it a privilege and count myself happy to

suffer for the kingdom.

There is going to be suffering, the Bible says. It becomes us as godly people to suffer persecution, but thank God, it is not a waste of time. It is not throwing away your life. So lift up your heads and look down the road, and remember what is coming after awhile. Think of the time when your association will be with the angels, the Apostles, and the Prophets. You will look back on these days and wonder why you did not ask for more instead of complaining. You are going to forget the light afflictions that are but for a moment. They are going to bring you an exceeding, great reward. May God bless you.

*(No recording available)*

## **My Name Is "Gossip"**

My name is Gossip, and I have no respect for Justice.

I maim without killing. I break hearts and ruin lives.

I am cunning and malicious and gather strength with age.

The more I am quoted, the more I am believed.

I flourish at every level of society.

My victims are helpless. They cannot protect themselves against me because I have no name and no face.

To track me down is impossible. The harder you try the more elusive I become.

I am nobody's friend.

Once I tarnish a reputation, it is never quite the same.

I topple governments and wreck marriages.

I ruin careers, cause sleepless nights, heartaches, and indigestion.

I spawn suspicion and generate grief.

I make innocent people cry in their pillows.

Even my name hisses. I am called Gossip.

I make headlines and headaches. Before you repeat a story, ask yourself: Is it true? Is it fair? Is it necessary? Is it kind?

*Galatians 5:7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?*

*8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.*

*9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole*

*lump.*

*10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.*

*11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach*

*circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.*

*12 I would they were even cut off which trouble you.*

# The Wellness of God's People



*Brother Paul Prinkey*

## Who Did Hinder You?

In writing the Galatian letter to the church of Galatia, the Apostle Paul had learned some things that discouraged him about that congregation. He wrote pertaining to the contention over the matter of circumcision. Paul cared about the church at Galatia, just as every godly pastor cares for his flock. Paul said in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all

the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Every man of God who truly loves the Church of God desires to take care of the church. When he sees problems or things that would cause the congregation trouble, it burdens the heart of the man of God. He takes it very seriously.

The Apostle Paul was concerned about the church at Galatia when he

wrote to them. That is the reason he said in verse 7 of our Scripture text, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" He had been watching their progress, and he saw that they had been doing very well for a while. A faithful minister watches for the souls of his people. We read in Hebrews 13:7, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, consider-

ing the end of their conversation." Verse 17 says, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

The Apostle Paul was watching over the church at Galatia, and he had seen their performance, but in watching for their souls, he noticed that something began to hinder their spiritual progress. The spiritual health of the congregation began to deteriorate. As Paul began to notice their lack of progress, he asked, "Who did hinder you?" When people who were once prospering spiritually begin to cool off, a godly pastor begins to wonder what has happened. He watches for their souls and wants to know what is hindering them.

When the Apostle Paul said, "Who did hinder you?" he knew that he was not hindering them. He also knew it was not any other true minister of God who had hindered them. In Galatians 1:11 he said, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man." Paul made it clear that he had preached God's Word to them faithfully. He acknowledged that someone had hindered them.

Sometimes people blame the minister when they are not doing well. They may say, "You've been hammering me from the pulpit" or "You weren't there for me when I needed you most." Sometimes people point their finger at others, but in essence, the Apostle Paul said, "I'm not the one who has hindered you, but you're not doing well anymore."

### **Losing Focus and Failing to Obey the Truth**

In Galatians 3:1 Paul asked, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" Paul

was convinced that the people had come under an ungodly influence because they were turning away from the Truth and fighting against it when they had once prospered under it. Something has happened when people turn away from Truth and fight against it. Their spiritual health fails. They are no longer healthy in their Christian experience. This is something that concerns a true minister of God. Why? He wants people to be healthy. John, in 3 John, verse 2, said that it was his desire that Gaius would prosper and be in health, even as their soul prospers.

A true man of God wants to see people get saved, dig down deep, and be healthy in the things of the Lord. Young babes in Christ desire the sincere milk of the Word, and as they mature spiritually, they begin to take the meat of the Word of God and become healthy and strong in their souls. This is what a true minister of God desires for people. It is not his desire to see someone become weak and stumble in his or her experience. Many times people begin to stumble because of sin's influence. Things begin to affect them. Although the pastor has been faithful in preaching the Word of God, many times individuals allow things to creep in that affect their experiences, and their spiritual health begins to fail.

In our Scripture text Paul said, "Who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" It is important for you to love God's Word. You need to get saved and come to a knowledge of the Truth. The Bible lets us know that those who obey the Truth will come to the light. Paul said love rejoices in the Truth. When a person gets saved, he desires to hear the Truth of God's Word. You should want to measure to it and draw closer to God. You should covet a spiritual experience and desire to be close to the Lord. There should be an intimacy between you and God that you never want to lose. You should always want to keep it. As you live for God

and stay close to Him, your experience will prosper, but if something begins to affect your love for the Truth, you will no longer accept what is preached. You will begin to lose focus and fight it.

At Galatia, Paul realized the people were not obeying the Truth, but Paul knew he had been faithful to preach God's Word. He delivered everything that God had laid on his heart, but something was taking place that caused them not to want to take hold of the Truth anymore.

In Galatians 5:8 Paul said, "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." As I read that Scripture, I thought about how sometimes people get entangled in things. They may believe they have found "new light" and begin to follow it. It pulls them away from the righteous principles they used to stand for. Paul made it clear to those people not to try to profess that God led them that way. Many times people say, "Well, this is the way the Holy Ghost has led me." A man of God needs to tell them, "No, it is not the Holy Ghost who led you in that direction." Sometimes people get the idea that they can stay home and get their souls fed with a cassette tape or a compact disc ministry, but God's Word tells us in Hebrews 10:25 not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. The Holy Ghost will not show you something contrary to God's Word.

### **A Little Leaven**

The Apostle Paul told the church in Galatians 5:8, "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." He said in Galatians 1:6, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." When I see situations take place, I marvel. It is beyond my comprehension how quickly some people can change. They hold on to the Word of God for years, believed it, practiced it, testified of it; yet they change so quickly.

Paul said he marveled that some people were so soon removed from Him that called them into the grace of Christ to another gospel. In other words, it was not God's Word but something else that they were choosing to believe. Some other persuasion had come along and led them to believe something that was not true. Somewhere along the way, they had chosen to stop believing God's Word and had chosen to hold on to something that was false. What is the effect of that? It causes people to be unhealthy in their spiritual experience. They were once doing well, but not anymore. Something hindered them. Something came along and caused them to be hindered in their walk with the Lord.

Paul went on to say in Galatians 5:9, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." A little falsehood accepted into a Christian's life will ruin that person's whole Christian experience. It does not take much to ruin a Christian experience—just a little falsehood.

Oftentimes people who accept a teaching of error will give up a teaching of truth to make room for it. God does not tear down established truth to make room for more truth. He does not take away a portion of truth to make room for another truth. Some people get themselves in trouble when they begin to believe a falsehood and lay aside that which is true.

In 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 the Apostle Paul, writing to the church at Corinth, said: "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." What is the unleavened bread? It is sincerity and truth. What happens when a little leaven gets mixed in with the bread? It corrupts

all of it.

### Following Other Persuasions

In Matthew, Chapter 16, Jesus took seven loaves of bread, blessed them, and fed four thousand people. Afterward He was talking to His disciples and made a comment to them. In Matthew 16:6-12 Jesus said: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?"

"Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

The disciples were a little confused. They thought Jesus was talking about the fact that they did not have any literal bread to eat. Jesus spoke to them and said, in essence: "Don't you realize what I did when I fed the five thousand? How about the four thousand and how many baskets you took up?" He was making it clear to them that it was not bread or the necessity of having something to eat that He was trying to warn them about. He was warning them about the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. After He explained it to them, the disciples began to realize He was talking about the leaven of the doctrine that the Pharisees and the Sadducees taught.

When people begin to take heed to a doctrine that is in error, they lay aside a doctrine that is true to make

room for it. Jesus dealt with the same thing with the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees in His day. They knew the commandments of God, but they preferred to believe their own traditions and make up their own teachings. They instituted those teachings in the place of what God had commanded.

Jesus said the Word of God says that a child needs to obey his parents, but they said to tell the children that they could say to the parents, "I am a gift to you; therefore, you cannot make me do anything!" How many children act that way today? The Jews were making room for disobedience in the home because of their vain traditions. Jesus told them they were making the commandments of God of none effect by their own teachings. People were listening to that, and it was as a leaven introduced into the bread, and it leavened the whole lump.

Jesus warned the disciples of such doctrines that were affecting people. They were believing and practicing things that were wrong. They were teachings of error, and they were leading people astray from God's true Word.

Many times people get led astray because they begin to accept falsehoods in their Christian experience. What does it do? It corrupts the entire Christian experience. Their fruitfulness for God is ruined, but at one time they ran well. They were spiritually healthy, and they were an asset to the Church of God. They were providing something good to the congregation, but now they just go along for the ride. Eventually you see them missing church often and backing away from their stand for the Lord. Next, their families begin to get worldly. Sometimes people say, "It's not the outward standard of holiness that I have a problem with." Often, however, that is the first thing that they change in their lives. They fall away from what they once stood for. If that is not what they have a problem with, then why can they not live it? They

used to believe it, practice it, and testify of it. They did run well. Who did hinder them?

Sometimes people hold to Truth until another persuasion comes along. You are going to be tested about what you believe. There are going to be times when other ideas will be introduced to you. God is going to test and prove you to see if you really believe what you say you do. How firmly are you standing for Truth? How rooted are you in the Truth? God is going to have a proven people. Other persuasions and other temptations will come along, but God is going to watch you to see how you respond to it.

### **Having a Backbone to Stand**

In our Scripture text in verse 10, the Apostle Paul said, "I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be." In Galatians 1:7 the Apostle Paul said, "Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."

The early morning church prayed that God would give them boldness to speak His Truth. Other people are bold. Sometimes some Christians seem timid and say they do not want to offend anyone or cause somebody to be hurt. At times they let others beat them up with their doctrine and say, "You are wrong for the way you see it and for the way you believe." Right then you need to respond: "Let me tell you what the Word of God says and what the Spirit of the Lord has revealed to me."

Sometimes people are very pushy, and very persistent with false doctrine. If you listen to it, the time might come when you will be tempted to start leaning the wrong direction. That teaching of error might begin to get a little foothold in your experience. You have to guard against it. Why? Because a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

When it comes to the one

church, to Heaven and hell, to being separate from the world, you need to let people know where you stand. You need to tell them the reasons that you believe in holiness and why you practice it. You should not give ear to false doctrine. Often when people try to defend false doctrine, they say things such as: "This is the way I was brought up" or "This is the way my pastor preaches it." Well, where is your Bible? Which do you think is going to stand before God on Judgment Day? The way your pastor preaches it or the way God proclaims it in His Word?

We need to have a backbone to stand when faith is opposed or when our beliefs are challenged. Many people cannot stand up to close scrutiny about the experience they profess to have with God because they do not want to measure to something in God's Word.

When I was in the hospital, a man who brought in my meals often talked about the Bible, and we had some good conversations. One day we discussed 1 John, Chapter 3, and we talked about how Christians do not practice sin. We do not sin because we have His seed in us, and those who commit sin are of the devil. As we began to talk about that, I noticed that he did not have much to say. After he left my room that day, I never saw him again. He had heard all he wanted to hear about not sinning; nevertheless, this is the way God's Word teaches it.

### **How to Recover Spiritually From Hindrances**

In verse 10 of our Scripture text, the Apostle Paul told the Galatians "I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded." Paul was trusting that the people would not turn away from God but instead would recover from their hindrance. I believe that is the desire of every true minister. When someone begins to get tripped up with false doctrine or a teaching of error, we do not want them to be lost. We want them to recover.

The Apostle Paul had confidence in them through the Lord. He was trusting that those people would not be turned away from God, but that they would recover from the hindrance that had hindered them in their experience. The Apostle Paul believed they were not beyond hope, and this is the way every true man of God ought to be. Although someone might have given ear to something that is not true, we must have faith to believe that person is not beyond recovery. There is still the possibility that souls can be plucked from the fire. People do not have to be lost.

In verse 12 of our Scripture text the Apostle Paul said, "I would they were even cut off which trouble you." In Galatians 1:8-9 he said: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Paul's desire was that the troublemakers would be accursed and denied the opportunity to cause further problems to God's people. He said that he would they were even cut off. I do not believe Paul was wishing death on them, but he wanted their influence that was persuading the congregation to be led away from God's way to be stopped. He made it clear that if someone preaches anything that is not God's Word, let that man be accursed. In other words, Paul was saying, "Do not let the words coming from his mouth affect you. You need to cut off that influence."

There are times when you have to cut off some relationships. It is important that you cut off communication with people who try to lead you away. You need to cut off any persuasion that is not according to God's Word. Why? The intent of their hearts is not right; their motives are impure. They have another agenda, and it is not in drawing you closer to God, but rather it is in

wanting to draw you away from Truth. You need to beware of people who leave a congregation and want to tell you about all their grievances, everything that went wrong, how they feel about it, and who has done them wrong. If you listen to that, it will hinder you in your work for God, or in bringing forth the spiritual fruits that God would have you to. You need to cut off that influence.

How healthy are you spiritually? Are you bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit? If the rest of the congregation was as healthy as you are, spiritually speaking, how healthy would the entire congregation be? Are you allowing yourself

to be influenced by a false teaching? If that happens, it will bring leaven into your experience. It is going to ruin your Christian experience. What do you need to do? You need to cut off that influence, dedicate yourself to God, and stand for the Lord. You must shut out any influence that tries to draw you away from the way the Bible says you ought to live for God.

How well are you doing today? Does God still hear your prayers? Do you still have victory? If you are struggling, the devil is trying to work his way into your life. Do not allow him to get his foot in the door, so to speak. You must resist him. Why do you need to resist him? He

will do anything he can to ruin your experience with God. He is always watching for an opportunity. First Peter 5:8 says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." In 2 Corinthians 2:11 Paul said, "We are not ignorant of his devices." As Christians, we know the way the devil works. You need to make sure your Christian experience is everything that God wants it to be. You need to stay healthy before the Lord. Do not let anything hinder you in your walk with God.

(Compact Disc TR-1034M)

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## Meeting Announcements

**Hamilton, MT**  
August 14-18

**REVIVAL:** The Church of God, Hamilton, MT  
Evangelist: Brother Reggie Stegmeier, Canby, Oregon  
Service times: 7:00 p.m. each evening; Sunday 10:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.  
For further information contact: Pastor Patrick Brower, 58 Rockland Lane, Victor, Montana 59875  
Telephone: 406-642-3956

**Summersville, WV**  
August 23-25

**REVIVAL:** The Church of God, 74 Armstrong Road, Summersville, WV 26651  
Evangelist: Brother James Presley, Medina, Ohio  
Service times: Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.  
For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders. Telephone: 304-872-4047  
Visit our website at: [www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com](http://www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com)

**Medina, OH**  
August 31

**ALL-DAY FELLOWSHIP MEETING:** The Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH. Service times: 10:00 a.m. & 2:30 p.m.  
For further information contact: Pastor James Presley, 7451 Wooster Pike, Seville, OH Ohio 44256. Telephone: (740) 644-9266 or (740) 745-1150

### Do You Have a Power Shortage?

***"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."***  
**Acts 1:8**

The Holy Spirit is the author of your hunger for more of God's power in your life. The prayer which He inspired Paul to pray is the echo of the heart cry of God, that you might know "the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe" (Ephesians 1:19). More than half of Paul's prayer is given to describing this power. It is an exceeding great power, a resurrecting power, a power by which Christ reins over all, and all this power is for the child of God.

# Spring 2013 Camp Meeting Recordings

Recrd. No.	Date	Message Title	Minister
TR-1174	6-16-2013	The Story of the Loving Father	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1175		A Call to Examine Yourself	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1176	6-17-2013	We Have a Great Work	Bro. James Presley
TR-1177		The Mind, Part 1	Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
TR-1178		If I Were the Devil	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1179	6-18-2013	The Blessing and the Curse of Time	Bro. Richard Talbot
TR-1180		The Mind, Part 2	Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
TR-1181		If I Were the Lord, Part 1	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1182	6-19-2013	God Is Right Now Gathering a Heavenly Nation	Bro. Karl Wilson
TR-1183		The Mind, Part 3	Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
TR-1184		If I Were a Sinner	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1185	6-20-2013	Choices	Bro. Leamon Whitehead
TR-1186		The Mind, Part 4	Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
TR-1187		If I Were the Lord, Part 2	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1188	6-21-2013	Life's Mistakes	Bro. Calvin Foster
TR-1189		The Mind, Part 5	Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
TR-1190		Whom Will You Blame for Your Lost Soul?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1191	6-22-2013	The Mind, Part 6	Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
TR-1192		How Can a Free Gift Be So Costly?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1194		Can Something Be Done With My Burden?	Bro. Tim Wilson
TM-306	2013	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #1	
TM-307	2013	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #2	
TM-308	2013	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #3	
TM-309	2013	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #4	
TM-310	2013	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #5	
TM-311	2013	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #6	
TM-312	2013	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #7	
	2013	Spring Camp Meeting Choir Songs # 1	
		Spring Camp Meeting Choir Songs # 2	
	2013	Spring Camp Meeting Children's Program Songs CD	
	2013	All Spring Camp Meeting Morning & Evening Messages in MP3 Format (1 CD)	
	2013	All Spring Camp Meeting Teaching/Afternoon Services in MP3 Format (1 CD)	
	2013	All the Songs for the Spring Camp Meeting in MP3 Format (1 CD)	

All messages and music recordings are available only on regular CD's or MP3 format. (Cassette tapes are no longer available.) The suggested donation for regular CD's is \$3.00 each. The suggested donation for MP3's is \$10.00 each. The postage is \$3.00 for one CD or MP3 and \$0.35 for each additional. Recordings may be ordered by writing The Gospel Trumpeter, Tape Ministry, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, Ohio 43055, or by calling (740) 345-1312, the Print Shop. Make check or money order in U.S. funds payable to The Gospel Trumpeter.



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