

# The Gospel Trumpeter

JUSTIFICATION

SANCTIFICATION

UNITY & TRUTH

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

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

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 43 October 2013 No. 10



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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Vol. 43 October 2013 No. 10

# Fall 2013 Camp Meeting Report

"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them."

Isaiah 41:17

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD."

Amos 8:11

## A Time of Feasting

As the hearts of men starve in search for something to satisfy that hungering deep within, the saints enjoy feasting at God's banqueting table. God's people have found that satisfying portion that enriches the soul. It is a great blessing to be in a place where you can hear the preaching of the pure Word of God. There are not many places any more where you can hear the clear sounding of the trumpet. In the vast majority of churches throughout our land, there is a spiritual famine. Amos did not show this famine as a physical lack of literal bread or water. The prophet described this scarcity as a terrible spiritual condition. It is caused when the pulpits over the land become silent on the sounding of the Truth of God's Word. Seemingly, more effort is placed on the material issues of life rather than spiritual realities. In Matthew 4:4 Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." It is the Word of God coupled with faith that saves man from sin and teaches him how to live a righteous life daily.

Before souls can be saved from sin, they must first hear the message of repentance and faith preached. In Romans 10:17 Paul said, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word

of God." However, if people do not hear the Word of God, how then can they know or obey it. Sad to say, far too often the ministry fails to teach God's requirements for salvation. They also neglect to continually preach sound doctrine that instructs men and women concerning how to live holy lives. If the ministry ignores its responsibility of preaching the Truth, you can be assured that it will bring a spiritual famine.

In the midst of this existing spiritual famine today, it is good to know there are yet congregations where the Truth is going forth. There are ministers yet being true and faithful to the souls of men. God knows those who love Him and who are striving to obey all that He commands. Although the times look dark, remember that God is committed to His people and has promised to keep them in times of famine. In the midst of famine, the people of God are feasting bountifully.

On Sunday morning August 4, 2013, Pastor Roger Decker walked to the microphone and greeted the saints from near and far who made their way to the feast. He again invited the audience to draw up to Father's table and enjoy eight days of dining on spiritual food. Following the pastor's prayer,

[continued on page 11]

*Hebrews 12:12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;*

*13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*14 Follow peace with all men, and*

*holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:*

*15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

*16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one*

*morsel of meat sold his birthright.*

*17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

# The Great Peril of Bitterness



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

## Lacking the Grace of God

We live in a world where many people are getting bitter. Some people are bitter over the elections, some are bitter over finances, others are bitter over this or that. Bitterness is affecting many people who profess to be Christians. I want you to focus on verse 15 of our Scripture text, which reads, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." Of all the perils listed in the Word of God, this is one that the Scripture says would defile many. This is not a peril that keeps to one person. The Scripture says

you must look diligently, or give close attention to it. It is your Christian duty to see that your salvation stays secure and that you do not lack the grace of God.

Paul wrote in Philippians 2:12, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." He went on to say in verse 13, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The Scriptures let us know that God works it in and we must work it out. There are things we each must do to keep our salvation intact.

The Hebrew writer said in vers-

es 12-14 of our Scripture text: "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." In these verses of Scripture we have three distinct goals laid out before us: to strengthen the weak, to follow peace, and to live holy.

Job 4:1, 3-4 reads: "Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said . . . Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and

thou hast strengthened the feeble knees." We can see the things that Job had done in his life, and that was to strengthen the weak, to follow peace, and to live holy. We are to be an encouragement to the one who is in despair and a strength to the one who is failing. Romans 15:1 tells us, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

Church of God, when you see people struggling in life, maybe in their Christian experience or in their marriage, do not let the enemy get you switched over from being a helper to being a judge. It is very easy to do. You might not have gone through anything like what they are experiencing, but God never set you up as a judge of your brothers or your sisters. What should you do? You ought to pray for them. Why? You could also fail of the grace of God. Yes, things can happen that you do not understand, but you have to leave those things with God. It is God who puts people up and puts them down. If people are to receive help in their lives, you have to pray that they will get the grace of God in their lives to get straightened out, because that is what is lacking in their lives. We are to follow peace, and the Christian does his very best to live peacefully with all men, yet he must never compromise the Truth or his convictions to get along with people.

### **Follow Holiness**

If your wife or your husband does not attend the house of God, you must not compromise the Truth or your convictions to get him or her into the house of God. Why? Then you will get yourself in trouble with the Lord, and instead of there being one in trouble, there will be two. This kind of peace is to be pursued, and this peace comes from obedience. Proverbs 3:1-2 says: "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: [Why?] For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to

thee."

Men and women are to follow holiness. The Christian's standards are not the world's standards. The Christian's conduct is not the world's conduct. Our commitment is not to please men, but it is to please God in all things. First Thessalonians 4:1 states, "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more." The Christian is one who always keeps in his mind that he is in the presence of God. Whatever you do, you never get out of the sight of God.

First Thessalonians 4:7 says, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." We read in Psalm 93:5, "Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever."

All of us need to be checked along this line of bitterness. The Apostle Paul pointed out some dangers along the way in our Christian journey. First of all, one can fail of the grace of God. There is a great danger in lingering behind, drifting along, and then failing of the grace of God. We each must be ever on alert, because it is the grace of God that brings opportunities. It is the grace of God that makes life what it ought to be. A person can fail of the grace of God through lethargy, procrastination, thoughtlessness, carelessness, neglect, and esteeming oneself higher than he should.

Church of God, if God has used you in any capacity at all, you need to be careful that you do not get puffed up so that your head gets bigger than your position. Why? If it does, you will fail of the grace of God. If you fail of the grace of God, what can happen? A root will take hold, and the next thing you know, you will become bitter. When one fails of the grace of God, he is a prime candidate for the root of bitterness. There is great danger in the root of bitterness defiling many. This root bears bitter and poison

fruit.

### **Seducing Spirits**

I want you to read what the Old Testament Scriptures have to say about bitterness. Deuteronomy 29:18 says, "Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood."

Dear one, a man or a woman who turns away from God is a very dangerous individual. You need to always keep in your mind that misery loves company. How did I learn that? A teacher taught that to me. She taught it to me because I was hanging around with fellows who were not too pleasant in her sight. She said, "They're miserable, and they want you to be miserable with them." So she would always tell me, "Misery loves company," and that is true. It is more than just a saying. When people get miserable, they love to have company in that misery. I repeat, such a person is a very dangerous individual. If you listen to God and follow after the grace of God, He can keep you from getting caught up in it.

Let us consider the root of bitterness for a while. It can come on those who are not serving God, those who have apostatized in their hearts, those who (as in the Old Testament) serve the gods of this world (such as the god of pleasure, the god of self, the god of lust, the gods of Babylon, and the god of the flesh). These individuals are very dangerous to the saints of God. You must be careful of anyone who would try to lure you away from Truth.

I want to tell you one of the biggest things that the enemy uses today, and that is friendship. People become friends with people who have apostatized, and next they start to sympathize with that spirit. All you have to do is give way to it a

little, and soon you will find that same spirit making inroads into your heart. The next thing you know, you will excuse the condition that your friend is in and turn on the people of God.

I say again, you must be careful of anyone who would try to lure you away from Truth. First Timothy 4:1 warns, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly [or clearly], that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." An individual's spirit changes before his doctrine changes.

There are always going to be some people who think the Christian standards are unfair, who think the church is too fanatical and too strict, or who think the pastor is too strict and that he should back off a little. All you have to do is loose that flesh of yours a little, and it will never be satisfied; it will want to go all the way back to the old life.

Many who once stood and backed the Truth have turned back. They have turned back to wearing wedding rings and jewelry. Women have turned back to wearing pants and chopping off their hair. You cannot tell some of them from a man. In fact, sometimes men wear their hair longer than some of them do. What happened to them? It started with a little bitterness, a little attitude, thinking, "God's got it too straight." Once you open that door, that spirit will come in. I know what I am talking about. I have seen it. It is on display when you go to the shopping malls and the restaurants. It does not happen overnight. No, it might take a few years. It could take six or seven years, but it happens when people walk away from Truth. Why? Truth is what holds people.

Pastor, if you compromise Truth, you are not going to hold people. You might get their attention and get them to come to church, but you are not going to get them to line up with holiness. There are always going to be those who feel you are too strict. "I'll serve God, but I'm not going to serve Him the way

you want me to. I'll serve God my own way and on my own terms." Friend, you can never serve God *your* way or on your own terms. Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." You must serve God His way and on His terms.

### Fighting Bitterness

The morning-time church was surrounded by paganism and persecution. It was tremendous, but God was faithful to them. We are in an evening-time apostasy right now, but God will keep you if you will allow Him to keep you. If you cannot see an evening-time apostasy, then you are not very close to God.

You can become bitter. Many people become defiled by bitterness by those who are against a brother or a sister or a pastor. If you are not careful, you will lose your soul. If there is a bad apple in the barrel, soon you will see more apples turning. If you dig down in the barrel, you will find the culprit. You might have to take off a few layers of apples, but the bad apple will be in there somewhere. Bitterness is a terrible sin, and it defiles many.

Let us look again at Deuteronomy 29:18-19: "Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst."

These verses of Scripture give us a picture of an individual who knows he is wrong, yet he goes on saying that he has peace. The Scripture says he walks in the imagination of his heart. Those who claim to have peace though they spew poison from their mouths feel they are

all right in their souls, but these individuals are not ignorant of their true condition. They hear the words of this curse, and they know that God is not pleased with them.

Sometimes people fight bitterness because they get too close to somebody who is bitter. What is going to happen to them? Verse 20 says, "The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven."

Bitterness will affect you if you do not separate yourself from it. It will trouble you, and many will be defiled, or contaminated. Bitterness spreads like a great forest fire or like a fire on the plains, and only those who have the grace of God are going to avoid it. Once bitterness strikes a congregation, many will become defiled. There is no justifiable reason to become bitter, but you will be tempted very strongly along this line. You might have been mistreated, and if you do not bring the flesh under, you can go from having an attitude to having bitterness.

Some people get angry with God because of some things that happened in their lives. If that is the case with you, you need to get rid of that anger. God will help you to get rid of it. He wants what is good for you. He will be a real Father to you, if you will let Him. You need to consider what Jesus endured. He was called a blasphemer, Beelzebub, and an imposter; yet He went right on pleasing the Father and enduring the shame. He was misused more than anyone else in this world. He was wounded, spit upon, mocked, and crucified, but He never became like His persecutors.

When people come against you with bitterness and slander, do not get down in the trenches with them. You need to stay aloft. Why? Staying up is the only way you can bring them up. Jesus would never bring Himself down to the same level of those who persecuted Him.

The Apostles could have become bitter. They were mistreated, ridiculed, and threatened, but they were kept by the grace of God. You can stand for Truth and stand against compromise, worldliness, wickedness, and division and still keep a sweet spirit. Too many people have given vent to deceptive, seducing spirits; so now they have become defiled and the anger of the Lord has turned against them.

### Root Causes of Bitterness

We have a picture of bitterness in Revelation 8:10-11: "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven [the stars are the ministry], burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

These verses of Scripture portray a fallen ministry, and they fell on those who had a real experience with God. They continued to profess and preach. It says a star fell from heaven, or from an exalted position before God. The name of the star was called Wormwood, and the word *wormwood* simply means "bitterness." They continued to preach the Word, but they left off righteousness. When you leave out righteousness, you will become bitter.

Amos 5:7 reads, "Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave out righteousness in the earth." John let us know in Revelation, Chapter 8, that the waters became bitter. Many people died, spiritually speaking, because they became bitter. The Hebrew writer said many become defiled. The "waters" represent people. He was talking about people who became bitter. Revelation 17:15 says, "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations,

and tongues."

When bitterness sets in, righteousness will be left out. When individuals become bitter, they also become judgmental. Judgmental people are picky. They actually look for faults in people. They are never satisfied. To them, there is always something wrong in the worship services or with the singing or the preaching. A bitter person always has a chip on his shoulder, so to speak, or an axe to grind. You must be careful of one who is bitter. If you start having communication with that person, you could get turned to wormwood. Remember, this fallen ministry fell on those who had good experiences. What happened? It turned the waters bitter.

Sometimes families become bitter because of marriage failures, and many become defiled. You need to be careful along this line. When couples have trouble in their marriage, you need to watch that you do not start taking sides. If you start taking sides, then you become a judge. God knows the truth of the matter. Some husbands become bitter toward the wife, and some wives become bitter against the husband.

No one is going to see the inside of Heaven with a bitter spirit. Bitterness is a destroyer. It destroys homes, congregations, and the chiefest of friends. It will set you back spirituality in your life. One has well said, "Forgiveness is the key that unlocks the door of resentment and the handcuffs of hate. It is the power that breaks the chains of bitterness and the shackles of selfishness."

Another quote says this: "Bitterness is like drinking rat poison and waiting for the rat to die." You cannot have bitterness in your heart and have a good relationship with God at the same time. They just do not mix. If you have bitterness in your heart, you know that you are in trouble. If you have bitterness, things are not going well on the inside. Oh, you may put on a good front outwardly, but you are

not doing well inwardly. You have turmoil and a troubled mind. You will doubt your experience and doubt the doctrine, and things will begin to work on you that had no effect on you at one time.

### How to Get Free From Bitterness

I want to give you three reasons that bitterness should be avoided. First, bitterness damages your relationship with God. Second, bitterness alienates you from other people. Third, bitterness detours you from being your best.

There are some steps that you can take to get free from bitterness. The first step is to take it to God. You need to tell God how helpless you really are and turn it completely over to Him. Hebrews 4:16 says, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." That is a good Scripture.

Another step that you can take is to thank God for all the good things in life that He has allowed you to have. If you begin to entertain bitterness, you need to think about all the good things that God has allowed you to have in your life, the many blessings that He has bestowed upon you. Another step you can take is to ask God to help you to enjoy and to love your church family. The church family is closer than your physical family. The family of God is a family in the spirit, a family that is going to be together here on this earth and throughout all eternity; that is a close family.

Bitterness can be removed if you are willing to let it go. However, you must not nurse it, hold on to it, pamper it, or baby it. You must get rid of it. Why? It will defile you, and it will also defile many others. God will help you, but you need to listen to His Word and obey it. God cannot make you get rid of bitterness, but God will certainly be there to help you get rid of it, if you will let Him.

(Compact Disc TR-1084M)

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

*2 For if the word spoken by angels*

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

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

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

# Five Inescapable Realities



*Brother E. David Stegmeier*

## **The Importance of Giving the More Earnest Heed**

Today Christ is speaking through the Scripture text, saying that we need to "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." I have known many people over the years who have attended the house of worship. Sad to say, many of them are no longer saved. They have allowed the Word of God and the things that they have heard to slip from them. Therefore, we need to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard and apply them to our lives. I am working harder every day to be all that God would have me to be. Are you? I really do not care wheth-

er I read the daily newspaper or listen to the news every day, but I spend a good amount of the day in the Word and in prayer. It is of utmost importance that we study God's Eternal Word. We should not only study it, but also apply it to our daily lives.

I do not believe the Word of God is redundant. Every word has great meaning. God intended all of it to be there. Again, verse 1 of our Scripture text reads, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed." I like to give God my best attention in the house of worship. I do not like to allow my mind to wander during the preaching. I want to hear what God has for me. Do you? When the Word of God is preached, you must keep your mind confined to the

Word. It is very serious to call down the judgments of God on yourself. You can do this by ignoring the messages of God.

God visits His people every time they attend a church service, but too many people ignore the day of their visitation. Many messages have been preached, but too many people have ignored them. I listen carefully to each message that I hear, and I listen to the nuances of the Spirit and how He deals with me and applies the messages to my life. You had better be very careful. God personalizes the message for you every time you go to the house of worship. It could be your final day of visitation. You must not ignore it. You need to be very alert, not telling jokes or writing a letter. Your mind

needs to be confined to the preached Word of God. God could be speaking to you for the last time.

In speaking about five inescapable realities, I could also call them five things that are known. They are in the Word of God, and I will trust the Word of God before I will trust the word of any man. You ought to apply every word of God's Word to your life. If you fail to obey every doctrine that you have heard, in essence, you are guilty of it all. You must obey every known truth.

### **Sin Is an Individual Choice**

There are five things that you cannot avoid in your life. They are sure to happen, and you must face them. First of all, you have to face the reality that you are guilty of your own sins. Everyone has sinned, not because of Adam, but because he or she has chosen to sin. Friend, you made that choice yourself. You cannot blame it on your parents, the environment, or society. Your condition is due to the choices that you have made. You are responsible. I have a real problem with people blaming others for their own problems. You are responsible for where you are.

These five realities happen to all people. Everyone who has ever lived on the earth, outside of Christ, has fallen into sin because of his or her choices. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." What is the glory of God? We were created in His image, so God intended for us to be like Him: impeccable, clean, and holy. I have read bumper stickers that stated, "Christians are not perfect; they're just forgiven." That idea is not biblical. What did Jesus say in Matthew 5:48? "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

You may say that a person cannot have absolute perfection, but he can have biblical perfection. You can have the perfection that God intended His people to have if you will be obedient to every bit of truth

that you know right now. Tomorrow God may reveal something else to you, and you are duty bound to obey that as well. If you do not, a spiritual eclipse will take place. If you continue in that condition, you will be in spiritual darkness. Some people have their own interpretation, but they need to know what God has to say. Second Corinthians 7:1 says, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved," [What kind of promises? The promises that God will dwell in us, walk with us, and be our Father.] let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." It takes work to perfect holiness, and God's people are ever working to do so.

Child of God, there may be some things that you are doing that God wishes that you did not do. It might be something in the flesh or in the spirit. For example, you might have too much pride. God has a good way of humbling a person. Maybe you lack patience. Perhaps you have a short temper. God has a way to work with you. You should be making progress with God. As a pastor, sometimes I see people begin to look like a wilted plant, spiritually speaking. Something has happened to them. It may be that a spiritual worm has begun to work on them, and that is serious. Each of us should be growing in the Lord. If God puts His finger on something in your life and says, "You must do away with this," you had better get rid of it.

Everyone has come short of the glory of God while living in sin, but God has no sin. If you are living in sin, you are separated from God. There is no connection between a sinner and God, spiritually speaking. The only prayer that God hears a sinner make is the one that leads to his salvation. What does the Bible say? Isaiah 59:1-2 says: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have

hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

I do not go along with this modern "Promise Keepers" movement. The man who was instrumental in founding that movement wanted men to pledge to keep his list of promises and to stay true to their word, yet he was having an extramarital affair at the time. False religion is filthy and ungodly, and it is something you need to stay away from.

We read in John, Chapter 9, of the young, blind man who was healed. When he was quieted by the Jews, he said in verse 31, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." I will take the Word of God as the final authority. When the Bible says, "All have sinned," it is speaking in the past tense. It does not say all *are* sinners or that all *are* sinning, because there is a way out of sin. It is an inescapable reality that everyone goes into sin because of his or her individual choices, but that person does not have to stay in sin.

### **Holiness Is God's Plan**

Many times people have come to me and said, "How can you say that you live without sin?" The Word of God is replete with holiness. Many Scriptures let us know that God requires His people to live holy lives. Some people have a few Scriptures that they use to try to put down holiness. If they understood those Scriptures correctly, they would see that they actually substantiate the truth of holiness. The teaching that we all sin more or less in word, thought, or deed is from the devil, yet that teaching permeates much of Christendom.

Romans 6:1-2 reads: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid [such a notion]. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" This is certainly a positive statement, and it should

leave no doubt that God requires His people to live free from sin. Passage after passage lets us know that holiness is God's plan. This truth is the line of demarcation that is drawn between Christians and non-Christians. First John 3:9-10 states: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; [That is very positive. I am glad that I can live without sin, by the grace of God. My wife was asked by a woman, 'Aren't you very proud people to say that you live without sin?' My wife said: 'No, on the contrary, we can't do it ourselves. It is God who gives us the ability.' It is the greatness of God within us.] for his seed [or God's nature] remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this [in sinning and in not sinning] the children of God are manifest [or easily seen], and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

There are only two classes of people in the world: a person is either saved or lost, a saint or a sinner. You cannot belong to both classes. You cannot sin during the week and live holy on Sunday; that is impossible. It makes no difference how many churches you have joined or how many times you have been baptized, if you still have sin in your life, you cannot say your sin is not your personal responsibility. However, there is a way out of sin, dear one. Jesus said in Luke 13:5, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." If you back up a little, coming into that Scripture you will find that everyone deserves the judgment of God when he is living in sin. Sinner friend, knowing that, you ought to rush to an altar of prayer to ask God for mercy, lest you be the next in line to receive His judgment. A person will perish unless he or she is willing to repent.

### **Salvation Is Offered to All**

The next inescapable reality is

that salvation is not just for a certain class of people. No, Jesus died for all. Salvation is for everyone. Jesus said in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The world includes every man, woman, boy, and girl. Second Corinthians 5:15 says, "He died for all." I am glad that He included me. Some people exclude me from their fellowship, but I am thankful that God includes me. Salvation is the second inescapable reality. All must deal with it. You may say, "I am not going to do anything about my soul." Then you are rejecting Christ. In 2 Peter 3:9 Peter wrote, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

You may ask: "What about the people who are not privileged to hear the Truth? Is salvation still offered to them? How will they be judged?" God deals with all people. The Bible says nature is a witness. Psalm 19:1-4 tells us that nature witnesses to us of a mighty, wonderful, loving God. The universe was created by a great God so that all mankind could see God's witness.

Romans, Chapter 2, tells of another witness: the conscience. All humanity has a conscience, a law written inside. You know you should treat your brother and sister with love. It is an innate knowledge that God has put within all men. Every man, woman, boy, and girl has a conscience. Too many people ignore it, stifle it, shut it up, and refuse to listen to it. I want my ear to be attuned to my conscience. When God speaks to my spirit and searches my heart, I want to be listening. Salvation is everyone's responsibility.

Second Corinthians 6:2 tells us there is a time for us to receive salvation. Sinner friend, you cannot turn to God any time you please. God has appointed a time for you to

be saved, and you need to listen; it could be today. This could be your last opportunity. That is the reason you need to be serious about salvation. To me it is *very* serious. We are living in very serious times, dear one. If you were in the military service and your unit was getting ready to go into a great battle, there would be no funny business. You would be listening to the commander, and you had better understand those instructions.

There is a time when you need to turn to God, and that time is now. If you are not saved, you can be saved now. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 6:2, "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." As I said before, church joining, card signing, baptism, Scripture memorization, and catechism will not do you any good.

When I was a boy, my father went to church and learned a catechism. He had a little green catechism book, and he always wanted me to study it, but I never did. I was taught in the Church of God, and I did not need it. Catechisms will not do you any good. Being sprinkled or confirmed will not avail you of anything, but those outward works could deceive you. I have heard people say they were sprinkled or baptized as a child, so they think they are saved. That is foolishness.

You may ask, "Can I know that I have been saved?" Yes, you can. In 1 John 3:14 John said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Today could be your time of visitation. Since salvation is something that can be neglected, it is also something that can be obtained. You may say, "I just don't know whether I am saved. Can I know in this world?" You can know that you are saved. One song says, "I know on whom my faith is fixed." I like the positive messages of the Church of God hymns. Luke 1:77 says that Jesus came "To give knowledge of salvation . . . by the remission of their sins." How can you

know that you are saved? Your sins are gone.

### **Death Is a Reality**

The third inescapable reality is a very gloomy one, especially if you are lost. Everyone is involved, or will be involved, in the experience called death. One morning in our house of worship as I was preaching, a couple of boys were misbehaving. I do not like to embarrass anyone. I try to be very kind, sympathetic, and respectful of people's feelings. However, I stopped the service and asked the young people if they knew this could be their last day or their last opportunity to get saved? I urged them to be serious about the things of God. After the service had ended and I went home, I received a telephone call from the county ambulance service, and the person said, "Someone of your congregation has been involved in a fatal car accident." I came to find out that it was one of the boys whom I had warned that morning. God had told me to stop the service and warn those boys, so I did. Our youth leader and I went to the hospital. One boy ran to me, crying, "*My brother is dead! My brother is dead!*" Life is very serious.

People may make light of ministers, pastors, and leaders; but when a godly pastor speaks, he is the voice of God. I speak with great authority in the congregation because the Bible says to rebuke with all authority. It is a very serious time when people are making eternal decisions. Sad to say, the majority is lost. Paul said it is appointed unto man once to die. You can be assured that every man, woman, boy, and girl will be warned prior to that experience. We all receive the warning. Most of us have had loved ones pass away. The cemetery is a witness that death is an inescapable reality.

We see and read of accidents all around us. Many years ago, there was an accident not far from our home. A mother had twin babies in

the backseat, and a friend was sitting in the front seat. The mother was driving and talking on her cell phone. She came to a very busy intersection. She stopped at a stop sign on her side of the road, but she was so involved in her conversation that she just drove on out across that highway, thinking that she could make it. A dump truck going at a high rate of speed hit her and threw her car round and round until it landed in a nearby cemetery. The accident killed one of the twins, a little baby boy. Things can happen so quickly! The course of your life can be changed in the twinkling of an eye. No doubt, the loss of her baby has grieved that mother deeply. Death is an inescapable reality. Through the seasons of the year—spring, summer, autumn, and winter—God witnesses all around us that death is an inescapable reality.

Ecclesiastes 9:2-3 reads: "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath. This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead."

Ecclesiastes 7:2 states, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart." Did you know that? It is better to go to a funeral service than to go to a birthday party. There is a chance that you might act loose, silly, and indifferent at a party. You might say and do things that you should not, but at a funeral service you think seriously. You are reflective and pensive. You realize that the next time, it could be you that people are looking at. At the house of mourning, people consider death. They think

seriously, and they are affected by it. They work to prepare for that inescapable reality.

Life is uncertain, but death is certain. Beneath every tombstone in every graveyard, there lies the remains of a man, a woman, a boy, or a girl. Dear one, the grave ends all opportunities to get saved. There is no purgatory; that is man's idea. Purgatory is a fabrication of man's mind to fill his coffers. If you should die lost, dear one, you will be separated from God and lost eternally. The wise man said in Ecclesiastes 11:3, "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." There are no chances after death. In Luke 16:26 Abraham let us know there is a great gulf fixed between the saved and the lost.

### **Appearing Before the Judgment Seat of Christ**

The fourth inescapable reality is the Judgment. When you die, you will not sleep on and on. You will not go into a nonexistent state. The next step is the Judgment, and it is an inescapable reality. We all will be there, but we each will stand alone. Today too many people are affected by others. They are continually concerned about what others might think: "What decision would So-and-So make?" or "Which way are they going to go?" You should not be connected to people that much, dear one. I have friends, but God is my ultimate Friend. I have a lot of friends that have said, "We do not want to go that way." You may ask, "Did it hurt you?" Yes, it hurt me deeply, but Jesus means more to me.

Hebrews 9:27 reads, "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Second Corinthians 5:10 tells us, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." This is the fourth inescapable reality. You will be there. Each of us will stand

before the judgment bar of God and give an account of our lives. Have you prepared, or are you preparing? Amos 4:12 warns, "Prepare to meet thy God." God must come first.

We read in Acts 17:31, "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." A day is coming when every individual will personally give an account of his or her words; that is the reason we had better be very careful of what we say. We will be judged by our words, by the thoughts we allow to permeate our minds, by the thoughts we allow our will to connect with, and by our deeds. If you deny the existence of the Scriptures, that does not change them. You may hope that you can think those Scrip-

tures out of existence, but you are wasting your time.

### The Second Death

The last and final inescapable reality is regarding our eternal home. Psalm 9:17 says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Revelation 20:11-15 states: "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. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened [people will be judged according to the light of their day]: 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.

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. 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."

In closing, I ask you, where are you? If you have a need, you need to be honest. You need to ask God to help you. These five inescapable events will happen. Some might have happened already. If you are not a Christian, won't you allow Christ to come into your life? It will be the best decision that you have ever made in your life.

*(No recording available)*

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[Camp Meeting Report—contin. from p. 2] the song leader led the congregation in the old song that says, "*We have met today on the old campground, And our hearts, O God, o'erflow With our songs of joy, and a stream of thanks For the love Thou dost bestow.*"

Brother Decker preached the first message entitled "Measuring to the Pattern," using Ezekiel 43:10-12 as his Scripture text. Other ministers who preached during the camp meeting were Brothers Michael Wilks, James Presley, Calvin Foster, Paul Prinkey, Vernon Plyler, Leamon Whitehead, Larry Dishman, Earl Borders, Garrett Haylock, and Richard Talbot. Each of the brethren brought soul-stirring sermons that laid the Truth of God's Word before our hearts. The preaching was simply outstanding, as every message was to the point. As a result of these piercing messages, many souls moved to the altar, and some were saved from deep sin and rebellion. Brother David Stegmeier also taught each afternoon on the subject of "Godly Principles for Pastors and Christian Workers." God's Word

was sounded forth with great clarity, bringing help and strength to the Christian as well as conviction to the lost.

Time after time, our hearts were blessed and our cups overflowed as the Spirit of God visited with us. This heavenly atmosphere is always uplifting to our souls. The choir's singing and the special groups added much to the success of our worship services. Great jubilation was felt as the saints stood to their feet in praise to the Lord, while others were shouting as they ran the aisles. Oh, what a pleasure and privilege it is to be together with God's people! We surely enjoyed this heavenly atmosphere we were ushered into.

Yes, we assuredly say the Lord prepared a fabulous table for each of us. There certainly was no famine in this camp! It was a time of feasting on spiritual meat for the mature saints and nourishment for the newly converted. God surely spread His table with everything we needed. Praise His Holy Name!

As always, we encourage you to

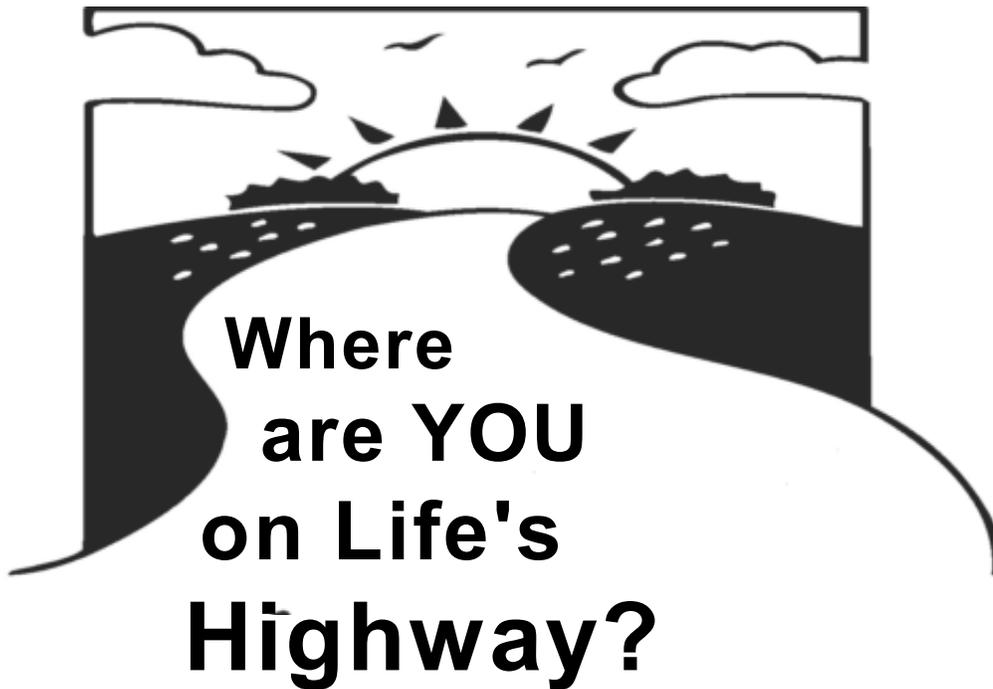
obtain a copy of the CD's or DVD's of the camp meeting. Please write to The Gospel Trumpeter, Tape Ministry, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, Ohio 43055, or call 740-345-1312.

One last thought we want to remind you of is that our mission is to be a light in the world. God has saved us to be of service to Him and to demonstrate His love and holiness to those who are lost in sin and bound in false religion. Multitudes of people are starving for the heavenly bread that we have.

***There will be  
no crown-  
bearers in  
Heaven who  
were not  
cross-bearers  
here on earth.***

*Matthew 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:*

*14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*



*Brother Irwin Seshier*

### **The Busy Road of Life**

In these two verses of Scripture we have a description of two different ways in which you can travel in this life. You must consider not only the road on which you are traveling but also where you are on the road. Often people on the broad road walk through life with their spiritual eyes closed, not realizing their true condition. This is very dangerous. The enemy wants you to walk the broad way, and he does not want you to see your true condition.

The devil wants you to become very busy in the things of this world. Have you ever seen such a busy age as the one in which we are living? Our calendars at home are marked with things that we have to do, and it does not take very long for

the calendar to become full. Sometimes we run out of space to put information on the calendar, so we have to use sticky notes. Dear one, if you are not careful, you can become so involved with things that you do not have time for God. Certainly you can get busy with things that are needful, but as you are busy with the things that you need to take care of in this life, do not forget God.

Time quickly passes, and the years can roll by unnoticed. Many people on the road of life keep walking casually until they suddenly reach the end of life. For some, the end of life comes as a surprise, and for others, the end of life can be seen approaching. At the end, people fall over the edge, and then it is too late to do anything about their souls. Their fate is forever sealed and they

are forever lost in a devil's hell. They were so taken up with other things that they had no time for God. You may sit in a church pew regularly and yet be on the wrong road.

Friend, serving God is more than going to the house of God out of duty. You must have a desire in your heart to serve God above anything else in this life. The devil is working overtime to get your love to wax cold. You might be closer to the end of life than you realize. You do not know how much time you have left or when your end is going to come. When I read the obituaries in the newspaper, I often think, "I am sure a lot of those people did not know when their end was going to come, but their lives are over."

Sinner friend, it is time for you

to get off the broad road that leads to destruction and get on the narrow road that leads to Heaven. There is an end coming to this life for each of us. Total damnation lies at the end of the broad road, but you will be alive somewhere a million years from today.

### **Are You Satisfied With Your Progress?**

Revelation 20:15 reads, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." To the saved who are on the narrow road, that means Heaven and eternal life in the very presence of the Lord are at the end of their journey. One of these days life's trials will be over. One day all sickness will be over. All family problems and the difficult things that you have to go through in this life will be over, and a reward will await each child of God. Remember, an eternity in Heaven in the presence of God will only be for the saved, the blood-bought saints of God.

Philippians 1:21-23 says: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." Saint of God, there is something that lies ahead of you that is far better than what you are experiencing here on this earth. Persecution will come, opposition will come, and other things will come against you when you are a child of God; but God has something ahead of you that is far better. I am looking forward to the day when something will be far better than what I am experiencing right now, and every child of God desires that too.

The burden of my heart is found with the progress of ones on the narrow road. Are you satisfied with your position on this road? Sometimes I sense that the desire to be on this narrow road is not what people

want to experience. If you are on the narrow road, you should thank God, but how is your position on this road? That is the key. Friend, you cannot make it to Heaven by doing good works; good works cannot save your soul. Showing up for church services cannot save you, just as walking through a garage cannot make you a mechanic. The burden of my heart is to get you involved in the work of God. If you claim to be a child of God, then you need to live as the Bible says you ought to live and go forward with Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-10 states: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

As a child of God, you should not be so taken up with the things of this world. It is so easy to be overly occupied with the things of this old world. Some people work much overtime to get what they want, thinking they must have this and that. Friend, what you truly need is a close walk with God. Surely it would be nice to have a fine home, a boat, and a very fine car, but the material things are not the essence of the Christian's life. Whatever God has blessed you with, you should say, "Thank You, Lord, for giving me that," but material things should not be your greatest desire.

You must not lose the focus of why you are here. We have the most modern-day conveniences today, but people still have no time to do the will of God. Many young people today are so taken up with cell phone technology that it seems they do not have time to do anything else.

### **Training Our Children**

Many young people cannot work out problems. When I was growing up, if I had a problem with another boy, I did not go home and

say, "Dad, where is your pistol?" We had conflict resolution. We might have gotten in a scuffle, but nothing went through our minds of getting a weapon. However, this seems to be what our world is coming to.

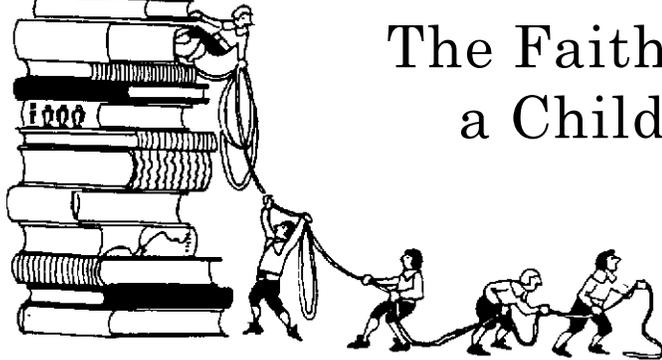
Too many people are lashing out violently because they have not been taught how to work out their problems. Many schools do not have games anymore where the students have social interaction because they say it might be harmful to their self-esteem. That is nonsense! Years ago, if the children had a problem on the playground, we talked about it and worked it out. Today we hear about people getting stabbed, shot, or clubbed. Something is wrong with our society when people want to lash out violently toward others.

Parents need to know what their children are listening to, such as what songs they have downloaded on their media players. Many young people say, "This is my room. Adults should stay out." The parents need to say: "This is my house, and I pay the house payment, the electric bill, the water bill, the gas bill, and the grocery bill. You are taking up just a little spot in it." Sometimes it might be beneficial to check out your children's rooms to see what might be in there. You might be shocked. It would not hurt to check the glove compartment in the car to see if there might be some music on compact discs that they should not listen to.

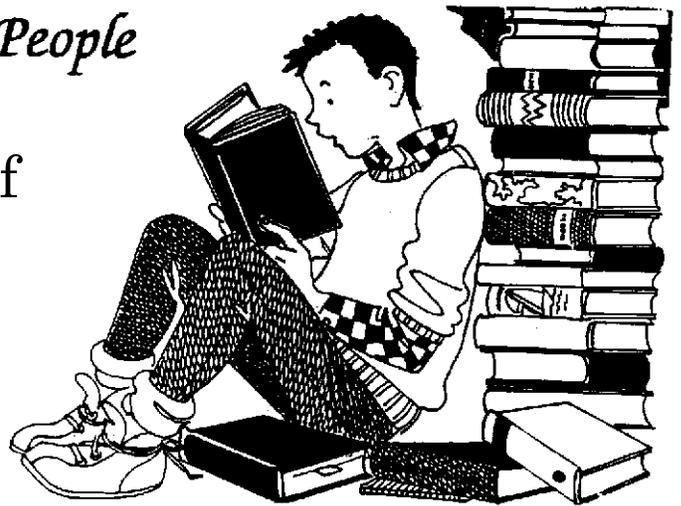
If you let your children go on and do not check on some of their activities once in a while, they might become bolder in what they do. As a parent, you are responsible for your children. You brought them into the world, and you are responsible for their training. God put parents in authority over their children. If you fail to do what you ought to do, their rebellion will become harder and harder to deal with. If more parents would nip certain problems in the bud, so to speak, when the children are young, it would eliminate some problems. Lots of people

*[continued on page 25]*

*Especially for Young People*



## The Faith of a Child



When Paul was three years old, he and his sister were taken to a Christian mission orphanage. Paul's father did not know the true God. He worshipped Mohammed as the prophet of God. He was a Moslem. However, in the mission orphanage little Paul came to know the Lord Jesus as his Savior. No longer did he want to worship Mohammed or be called by his old Moslem name. He announced that his new name was "Paul," and everyone called him by that name from that time on.

When Paul's father heard that his son had become a Christian, he was very angry. At first, he did not take his little son away from the orphanage; but when a Moslem feast day came, he went to the orphanage to take Paul to the Moslem church, called a mosque.

When Paul knew that his father was coming for him, he said to the missionary, "If my father questions me, I shall have to witness that I am a Christian, won't I?"

His father came, and together they walked through the streets of the city. Everybody was happy. Children were playing on special swings that had been put up for the holiday. When they reached the mosque, Paul saw many men at prayer. They were saying the Moslem creed, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the Prophet of God."

"Now," said Paul's father, "you hear what they are saying. I wish

my son to repeat the creed also."

"Father," said Paul, "I am a Christian."

"Do as I tell you this moment," Paul's father insisted.

Paul turned pale. "There is no God but God, and Jesus Christ is the Son of God." His childish voice rang out over the crowd.

For a moment the men were silent. Then they took the lad and beat him cruelly. They threatened him with worse things if he did not withdraw what he had said. Then they gave Paul one more chance. Paul took it. This time he said, "There is no God but God, and Jesus Christ is my Savior."

Paul's father did not know what to do with the boy. He did not want him in his home, but he did not want him to return to the Christian orphanage either. At last, he decided to send him to a Moslem school. He told the men there to fill his son's mind with the teachings from the Moslem holy book—the Koran—and the Moslem faith so that he would forget all about Christianity. So strong was little Paul's testimony for Jesus that before long the teachers brought Paul back to his father.

"It is no good," they said, "we can't knock this nonsense out of him, and if he stays here much longer, we shall all be Christians."

Again, Paul's father had to decide what to do with him. At last, hearing that an errand boy was

needed by a man who kept a little store in the town, he got Paul a job. The father did not know that the man was an earnest Christian. How wonderfully God had planned for His little Paul! Paul and the storekeeper had such good times together, talking about the Bible and praying. They both loved Jesus so much.

Often the storekeeper would send Paul on errands to the mission school so that he could see his teachers. "You need not hurry back, Paul," he would say.

For a time Paul disappeared. Perhaps his father found out what was happening. Then word came that Paul had been placed in a reformatory to see if that would make him renounce his faith in Christ. No matter what they said or did to him, Paul stood firm in his faith.

For a long time Paul's witness was silenced, and he was kept in a Moslem orphanage until he was eighteen. Finally, he was released. He hurried back to the missionaries in his home city where he began to witness for the Lord who died for him and rose again.

Selected

When Truth stands  
in your way, it is time  
to change directions.

Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

8 And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11 The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

12 And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.

13 And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

14 And the name of the third river

is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

# What Is Wrong With Living Right?



*Brother Leamon Whitehead*

## **The Forbidden Fruit**

I have been serving the Lord for fifty-six years, and I have never found anything wrong with living right. God has been a faithful, honest, great Heavenly Father. He is a good God. The Bible says God is love, and God is light. He is an

example of everything that is good and right in this time world. God so loved mankind. Look at what He created for our enjoyment. He is not a hard taskmaster. In the Old Testament you can read that Pharaoh was a hard taskmaster, but God is not. His desire for His children is for us to do what is right. He wants our

lives to be good, happy, and contented so that we might be able to rejoice in this time world. God wants what is good for us.

The enemy works on people, and many people give God a bad name by the way they live. The devil tries to give God a bad name and tries to make Him look like He

is a hard taskmaster, but He is not. God has some laws that we must obey, but He is looking out for our good. He wants to keep us out of trouble. The enemy wants to wreck our lives and cause us to drown in the sea of life without any hope, but God is doing everything He can to help us and to lift us up so that we can have joy and peace. There is not peace all over the world, but that peace is in Mount Zion, the holy hill of God. Praise God! We are in the world, but we are not of the world. We are a peculiar people, and we are living lives that please God. We have fellowship with Him, we sup with Him, and He sups with us. Glory be to God! What is wrong with living right?

Of all the trees that God placed in the garden, He told man that He could freely eat of them all except one. What is wrong with honoring God with our lives, living lives that are upright, living lives that are good for man to live? Our Heavenly Father formed man, and He put the man in the garden and told him that he could eat of all the trees in that garden but one. There was a very small percentage that God wanted man to leave alone. He could eat of all those other trees that he wanted to eat, but man wanted the one that he should not eat. Man had no idea what door he was opening when he ate of the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:24-25 reads: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." The reason they were not ashamed was that they had no knowledge of their nakedness, and they did not know anything about shame. They had not eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Man was in the state in which God had made him. He had fellowship with God, but he had no knowledge of evil things. That door was not opened until Adam and Eve

partook of the forbidden fruit, and then that door was opened to the whole world. The wickedness and the things of this world take men and women away from God.

I love serving God. It is so wonderful! Man chose to walk away from God and not do what was pleasing to Him. Nothing good has been forbidden from man. What good thing is it that you cannot do? As Christians, we are free to partake of everything that is good, everything that is right, and everything that will fill your life with joy unspeakable. That should cause you to praise God and have the victory!

The only things that are forbidden are those things that are bad. As a child of God, you should not feel that you are imprisoned. We have been set free! He opened sin's prison doors, cleaned us up, and gave us a way out of that prison! For every true desire that God gave man (I am not talking about perverted desires), He made a lawful way for that desire to be satisfied.

There is no reason for man to go down the wrong road, because he can enjoy everything that is good. God has some "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not's," but they are for our good. It is not that God wants to keep us from lots of pleasure. No, my friend, those forbidden things out there will bite you like a serpent. Sinful things will get you in trouble. You can partake of and enjoy to the fullest everything that is good. That makes your cup run over, doesn't it? Praise God! What is wrong with living right? What is wrong with being a Christian and walking uprightly? What is wrong with doing that which is good? There is nothing wrong with that. I praise God for His goodness!

### **Walking Uprightly**

Psalm 84:11 says, "For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." My friend, do not let the devil make you think that

you are going to miss out on something good because you are a Christian. You will not miss anything good. God will send good things your way. It will come like a river. Glory be to God! You can rejoice and enjoy all the good things that God has given to you. Praise God forever!

Sinner friend, the devil will try to convince you that you do not want to become a Christian. He will tell you that you would be better off to go down to the county jail and let them lock you up, because you would not be able to do anything if you were a Christian. Thank God, through Jesus Christ, you can be set free, and you can enjoy all the good things. Do you know what some people who are sitting in prison are thinking? "I wish I hadn't done that. I wish I hadn't made that decision, and then I would not be in prison." Had they followed God, they would not be there. Thank God, the Christian is happy! We can live lives that are pleasing to God.

When you see the sheriff's car coming down the street, you do not have to duck into an alley, thinking that he is looking for you. No, you can wave at him as he goes by. There is nothing wrong with living right. The child of God is enjoying the best of both worlds. We are enjoying the best of this one, and we are enjoying the best that Heaven has. No wonder Peter said in 1 Peter 1:8 that it is "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Why would anyone ever go back into bondage? God has given us so much to enjoy. I am enjoying all the good things that God has provided. Nothing is boring about this life! We do not go to the house of God just to sit in a pew. No, we go because our Father has a table spread where the saints of God are fed. Glory be to God! We feel better when we leave than we did when we came.

Every blessing that God gives is brand new. He does not give refurbished ones. He gives us brand new ones all the time. I like to go to

the house of God. I want to go in anticipation to see what God is going to do. I might have heard the preacher preach many times before, but I have not heard him preach what he is going to preach this time. It will be a brand-new message. The message that God sends our way will be just what you need to hear. This life of serving God is not a dull life. I enjoy my salvation all the time. There are no blue Mondays, so to speak, in the child of God's life. Oh, we have tests and trials and sometimes some low places, but not to the degree that we are just moaning the blues. We are not merely enduring salvation; we are enjoying it.

Salvation is something that works all the time. It works on the job or wherever you are. I thank God for a life of peace and joy. It is getting better all the time. I am learning more about my Heavenly Father and more about how much He loves me. It is so wonderful! Praise God! This is a peace that works right in the midst of trouble. You may feel overwhelmed and covered with problems and hardly know which way to turn, yet you can have peace on the inside. Do you know why? It is because Christ lives down in the heart of the Christian.

### **God's Great Love for Man**

No matter how great the problem is, all God has to do is speak the Word. He can tell the devil: "That is enough. Go on down the road and leave this brother alone." He will do the same for you! When you are His child, He is your Heavenly Father. He cares for you. What is wrong with living right? The world may talk against it, and the devil tries to put it down, but you cannot deny that it is a good life. It is the way that God intended for man to live.

Now, the problem that happened to man was no surprise to God. He knew what was in man, and He knew what man was going

to do; but He loves man, and He wants to redeem him. He wants to bring him back so that he can have fellowship with Him and so that he can enjoy this good life that God intended.

God did not throw Adam out into a briar patch or cast him down a hillside of rocks when He made him. God put him in the garden. Man did not even have to plant it; God planted it. When God saved me, He took me out of the briar patch and put me in a garden, "where the flowers bloom forever, and the sun is always bright," as one songwriter penned. Is that where you are living? I am living on a mountain. Praise God forever! He does not put us down in a valley somewhere. No! We are living on Mount Zion, the city of the Living God. He took me out of all the mess that I was in. I like it on Mount Zion. I like what God has provided.

Have you read about when Peter, James, and John were up on the Mount of Transfiguration? They decided that was a good place to be. Sometimes we have some good times, and we just like to stay there. The saints of God have enjoyed some great times, but I believe there are greater times that we can have. I do not believe that God's storehouse is about to run out of blessings. I do not believe that God is tightening down the valve, so to speak, because He is about to run out of blessings. No! He would like to open it up wider and pour out blessings that you will not have room to contain. Glory be to God!

One songwriter talked about the waves of devotion rebounding in the soul. It is hard to explain how wonderful that is! God has built a great name for Himself. He has been very faithful to mankind. Those who testify of Him tell how good He is. What is wrong with living right? In fifty-six years, I have not found anything that I would want to change as far as God is concerned. I want to become more like Him. I am not looking for something different, but I am digging for more of this.

God will not withhold one good thing from His people. So you see, there is no use for man to search for something else. Oh, there is pleasure in sin, but it is only for a season, and the reaping will bite you. Although you have been serving God for a long time, there may be sinful things that you have done in your past that the devil drags through your mind every now and then. You cannot completely forget about it. God has forgiven it, but the devil likes to drag it through like a chain. Do you know why he does that? Because it brings a tinge of sadness to you. The devil does not want you to rejoice much or to get too excited. He wants to let the air out of your balloon, so to speak. The devil likes to bring you down.

God has been good to me. I have great confidence in my brothers and sisters in Christ, but I would not trade my experience for theirs, because I know what I have and what He has done for me. God has never once told me: "This case is so hard that I cannot help you. You are on your own." No, He has never said that.

### **Waiting Upon the Lord**

You will not feel God's presence all the time, but He is there all the time. Perhaps you have prayed and have not gotten an answer to your prayer. You might have looked for God and could not find Him. Maybe you have waited on Him, but you have not heard from Him. Well, one songwriter must have experienced something like that, because he said "Standing somewhere in the shadows, you'll find Jesus." Somewhere in the shadows, He is watching. Do you know why He has not answered? We have to be tested. You may get a little weary, but Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 40:31, "But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Praise God forever!

No good thing will God withhold from those who walk uprightly before Him. God said in Deuteronomy 30:19, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." God wants good things for His people. Every problem of the human race stems from man's rebellion against God's law, wanting to do things his own way. You cannot do wrong and get by. Paul said in Galatians 6:7 (talking about the law of sowing and reaping), "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

The Bible says that all we like sheep have gone astray; that is the reason we all need a Savior. We needed to be brought back. The road we were on was a downward road that took us deeper and deeper into the things of sin. We were getting more bound all the time. The people in the world think they are having a good time. Why do they feel that way? They are blinded by sin, and their hearts are hardened. They do not know that the bridge is out just down the road a little way. They are partying and enjoying the freedom of the flesh, but sin has a price tag.

I cannot stress it enough that we can do everything that is good when we live for God. God made us the way we are, but He gave us a law to go by. That law was not to take joy away from our living and make life unbearable. It was to keep us from getting into bad things that would be like a serpent biting us.

God made male and female. It is God's will for a young man to find a wife. It is God's will for a young woman to look for a nice husband, a good, godly man. That is all in the plan of God. Hebrews 13:4 reads, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." Think of all the illicit sex going on today out in the world. God ordained that every man and woman could be living the blessings

of God. They could have their homes blessed instead of cursed. What is wrong with living right?

### **Choosing to Go God's Way**

Psalms 19:7 reads, "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple." I thank God that He touched me one day and gave me a little wisdom. The devil had my life in sin all mapped out, but at fifteen years of age, I got saved. The devil had me. I had been going down the road of sin a little way, getting hooked more all the time. I was like an old fish: I started nibbling, and I was swallowing the hook when God saved me.

The devil had me going down the road away from God. I still remember that, even after fifty-six years. I did not find God; He found me. He called me and invited me to come to Him. Oh, so many times down through life I have thanked Him. I have been so thankful that He found me just in time. Being free from sin and walking with God causes joy to well up within the hearts of God's people.

Verses 8-11 continue: "The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward." We are working on that reward.

Genesis 6:5 tells us that God saw the wickedness of man. This was after man had sinned, and man went on to become more and more wicked. God looked down and saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, but that wickedness did not come as a surprise to God. God can predict exactly what man is going to do, but God does not make him do that. God can pre-

dict what a man is going to do because He knows him. He knows all about each of us. God did not have to say: "Whoa, man! I was not paying attention. I did not know things were getting that bad down there."

In Genesis 4:7a God said to Cain, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." He did not have to go way down the road or out in the future somewhere, but sin was right there at Cain's door. Sometimes God can be grieved. His heart can be saddened and disappointed. You know how you are when you are disappointed. Maybe your children have disappointed you, perhaps your peers at school disappointed you, or possibly some people that you work with on the job disappointed you. You know the feeling. You see, when God looks down on man, He sees what it could have been, or what it should have been.

When Jesus came, He tried His best to gather the children of Israel together, but they rejected Him. Jesus said, at one point, talking about that destruction of Jerusalem, they knew not the time of their visitation. God knew how it should have been and how it could have been, and He was saddened. God looks down and sees all that He has done for mankind to make his life wonderful, but man is going on his own way and rejecting God.

### **God Gave Heaven's Best for You**

With all the wickedness going on in the world today, what is wrong with living right? Oh, what a world this could be if people would serve God! With the vast prison population around the world and all the injustice, with all the murders, with all the rape, and with all the kidnaping, what is wrong with living right? With all the illicit sex, with all the children born out of wedlock, with all the men and women who are not married and are living together, with all the broken homes, what is wrong with living

right?

When God found us, we were on our way down like the prodigal son. Every day took the prodigal son a little further from father's house. No wonder somebody wrote a song that says, "He found me just in time." That ought to build a fire in your soul and cause you to rejoice. Walking with God is fresh every day. I have had many blessings since I have been serving the Lord.

With all the drinking of strong drink, with all the drug use and drug addicts, what is wrong with living right? Thank God, I do not need any "uppers" or "downers." God is supplying me. I am drinking from the fountain! Glory be to God! It satisfies my soul. Nothing can take the place of the contentment that God gives. The cow that is contented is not over trying to get through the fence. She is content to eat and enjoy her master's pasture. On the other hand, if a cow thinks that the blades of grass are longer on the other side of the fence, she will be crowding the fence.

God's people are a contented people. We enjoy being the sheep of His pasture. Godliness with contentment is great gain. Unrest is a terrible thing. Sometimes if you are not careful, you can get your eyes on others and say: "Oh, if I just had the money to buy that place! That is what I need. That would be the answer to my problems." However, most of the time bigger payments come with that. There is more grass to mow, and there is more home to

keep up. There is more work involved.

Have you ever heard that old saying, "Sometimes you can't see the trees for the forest"? Have you ever looked for something and found that you were looking too high? You need to drop back down. I am talking about contentment. Do not focus on what you do not have. Let your focus be on what God has done for you, where He has brought you from, and what He has done for you.

If you are lost, I want you to know that God loves you, and He wants to redeem you; He wants to save you. There is no sin that the fountain will not wash away. Isn't that wonderful? Thank God, there is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins. Sinner friend, with all that is wrong in your life, with all the failures, with all the heartache, with all the sadness, with all the uncertainty, with all the bad habits, and with all of sin's bondage, what is wrong with living right? David, testifying of God, said the Lord loads us daily with His benefits. He does not just toss you a small one, but He loads you with benefits.

The heart of God has been broken and disappointed so many times over the sins and the failures of mankind, yet His love for man has never failed. God sees it all. I believe that man can go on until there is no remedy, but God's love and mercy is reaching out to you right now. God is trying to get your

attention because He loves you. You see, you are His creation, but He will not save you against your will. He will not force you to do right. If you have a desire and a determination to do right, He will furnish you all the help you need. Praise God! He will flood your soul! He will give you all that you need. His love for man has never failed.

John 3:16 reads, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That is how much God loves you, sinner friend. He gave the best that Heaven had, His only begotten Son, because He loves you. What is wrong with living right? The answer is, there is nothing wrong with it.

Do you know what the testimonies of many people are when they get saved? "I wished I had done that sooner. I do not know why I waited so long." I got saved at 15 years of age, but I wish I had gotten saved sooner. It would have saved me some scars on my life. I want you to think about the message. What is wrong with living right? If you are lost, I hope this message will cause you to fall out with the devil, the enemy of your soul, the one that has dragged you down the road of sin and wickedness, and say no to him. Won't you come to Jesus and let Him set you free? Do not spend another day in sin.

*(Compact Disc TR-1031M)*

## **NOTICE!**

**To those who ordered the afternoon teaching CD's from the June Camp Meeting, please check your CD's. An error was made, and your copy of The Mind, Part 3, may be a duplicate of The Mind, Part 2, even though it was labeled as part 3. If you have a set that has this error, please let us know and we will gladly mail part 3 of the recording to you at no charge. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused you.**

*Jeremiah 28:16 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.*



OR



# What If You Die Tonight?

*Brother Larry Dishman*

## **The River of Death**

Our Scripture text says, "Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die." Some people who do not think they are going to die will die this year. Hebrews 9:27 states, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." The most certain thing in life is the end of life. Any time you pick up the newspaper and read about a baby being born, unless Jesus comes, eventually someone is going to read that the same individual has died.

Ecclesiastes 3:2 says, "A time to be born, and a time to die." One day each of us will have a time to die, unless Jesus comes ahead of that time. Psalm 89:48 reads, "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" When your appointment with death comes,

whether you are ready or not, you will not be able to postpone the time that God has appointed for you to die. No doubt, many people would like to postpone that dreadful moment, but they cannot. The valley of the shadow of death is the longest valley in the world. It began with Adam, and it has continued throughout human history. The seeds of death are in our physical nature.

The past generations of our species have practically attested it. Whatever man is, he is assured and certain heir of mortality in the tomb. There is no bridge over the river of death. There is no ferryboat by which you may cross death's river dry shod. Each of us must descend into its chilly depths. Beneath the foamy billows, our heads must sink.

The time of death is uncertain. I do not know when my time will come, and you do not know when

your time will come. Men know nothing about the time of their death. It is an event to which we are liable every moment. Death enters all abodes. In every instance death is directing its darts with unerring precision. We live on the borders of the grave, on the margin of eternity. Which week, which hour, which moment, we do not know. You do not know what year you will have your appointment with death. Every one of us is just a few heartbeats from eternity.

When we think about eternity and how long it is, we realize that it goes on and on throughout the ceaseless age of eternity. When we look at our lives compared to eternity, in just a few heartbeats, we will be gone. Often I wonder how people can act so arrogantly and so proudly, as though they are the captain of their own souls. Many people act that way when they go to church.

Many years ago when I was preaching at a place, God's Holy Spirit came down convicting souls, and people were getting saved. A teenaged girl was under conviction. She was crying and trying to go to the altar, but her boyfriend would not let her go. He literally had hold of her. He was a strong young man, and I wanted to get him out of the way. Her daddy saw what was going on, and he was a big man. He walked over and got between his daughter and that boy. He said, "Honey, if you want to go and get saved, you can. He can't stop you." That girl went to the altar and got saved. She did not marry that boy, thank God. She is married to a Church of God preacher.

It is a sad thing when a person stands in the way of another person who really wants to get saved. I have witnessed lots of times in church services where God was dealing with a young man or a young lady and another young man or young lady tried to get that friend's attention off the message. One kept talking to the other person to disturb the one that God was dealing with so that he or she did not get right with God. Do not let anybody keep you from getting saved. Do not let a friend, your wife, or your husband keep you from getting right with God, because that person will not be there on Judgment Day to plead your case. If you would try to keep someone from getting saved, shame on you. It is a terrible offense to try to hinder someone else. If you want to be lost, if you want to leave this world unprepared to meet God, that is your choice; but do not try to keep others from living for God.

### **The Nearness of Death**

Dear one, the time of your death is so uncertain. David said in 1 Samuel 20:3, "There is but a step between me and death." That is not very much. How quickly can we take one step! Every step you take brings you nearer to eternity. Every

step you take in life is bringing you closer to the end of your journey. It is only a matter of time until you will have to bid farewell to every earthly tie. Death is already slowly overtaking you. It is already working on you. It will not be much longer. The clock of life is wound only one time. Nobody knows whether the hands of the clock are going to stop at an early or a late hour.

Young person, you do not know when the hands of the clock are going to stop. Oh, how it pays to be saved and to know that you are right with God and on your way to Heaven! You can die suddenly and be ushered into the very presence of God without any advance warning. I remember when a fellow got up and sang the song that says, "I just heard from Heaven, and it's all right now." He walked back to his seat, and right there, he left this world. Thank God, he had just heard from Heaven. The sad thing is, when a lot of people leave this world, they have not heard from Heaven for a long time.

Dear one, you should consider the nearness of death. Every one of us needs to consider, "How close am I to death?" I examined my life while I was in the study, and I realized how close I could be to death. Whether you are a young person, an older person, or a middle-aged person, do you realize how close you might be to death's door? It might not be long until an undertaker pumps you full of embalming fluid, and a preacher will say a few words. Where will your spirit be then? Where will your soul be while that funeral service is going on? Death is ordered by God. Job 14:5 says, "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass."

Death is the officer of God. It acts under His immediate authority and control. It is the officer that no money can bribe, no skill can evade, and no power can resist. The death of a lost sinner never occurs unbeknownst to God. No sinner ever dies

and goes to hell until God decides. When he has turned down the invitation one too many times, rejecting whatever light that God might have sent to him, the unconverted will die. Christ will then turn the sinner over to Satan. Deuteronomy 32:29 reads, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

I beg of you to stop thinking about the things of this world for a little while and get your mind off earthly things. You need to think about eternity and think about your eternal soul. Won't you consider your latter end for a little while? What are you going to do when you come down to death's door without God, without a Savior?

You should not think about death so much that you miss the joys of living. On the other hand, you should not forget about death so much that you are unprepared. The sad thing is, most people are unprepared. You would probably be shocked if you could see people as God sees them, if you could see how many people are really unprepared to meet God. It is definitely better to be familiar with the subject of death so that you are not overwhelmed and surprised and confused upon its arrival. It would be better that you found out about it today. Now is a time for examination. Dear one, you need to think about your soul and think about eternity.

You should be serious about death, because it comes without an invitation. You send out invitations for a birthday party, for a wedding, for a shower, and for a reunion; but nobody sends out the invitation, "Come and be with me, for I am going to die at such-and-such time." Death seems so cruel because it robs you of your loved ones, the most valuable jewels you possess. Oh, how it leaves a home in desolation and the heart wounded and broken, because it breaks natural ties. It brings sorrow to every home and leaves vacancies in the home and the community. Sadly, death separates friends and families. Some-

times that separation is forever. If you have a saved mother, father, companion, or child who has gone on to glory, and you die without God, you will be separated from your loved one throughout eternity.

No one knows when death will come knocking on the door. To the sinner, death always comes as an unwelcome guest. Often death is an unexpected guest. The sinner always finds death like a glaring monster. Having been by the deathbed of many people who were dying without God, I can tell you that it came to them as an unwelcome guest.

### **Death Is a Transition**

Life holds many transitions. Perhaps you have already gone through many transitions of life, and you have more to go through. Life holds many changes, but nothing compares to the change from physical life to physical death and what follows that. Oh, what a transition to go from this life into a lost eternity! The rich man and Lazarus changed places at death. Each man had a turnaround in fortune.

The Bible tells us in Luke 16:19-25: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy

good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

Both men experienced a turnaround in fortune. The beggar became a rich man, and the rich man became a beggar. The rich man is still begging and pleading. He still wants water, and he is still in misery; but it is too late. Do you know why? He died unprepared to meet God.

Death is not only the end of some things but also the beginning of others. To the sinner, Matthew 25:41 states, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Also, verse 46 says, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." What will happen to you if you die as a sinner? You will be cut off from all the pleasures of life, from all the tempting amusements, from all vain delights, from all the flattering prospects of this life, and from all hope of Heaven. You will be fixed in an unchangeable state of misery. This state excludes all hope of making any accomplishments, except as the monuments of the vindictive justice of God and the deadly effects of sin. If you die without God, all your hopes of Heaven will vanish forever. The unfaithful professor of religion and the sinner have absolutely nothing good awaiting them beyond the grave. The only thing awaiting them will be sorrow and misery throughout the ceaseless age of eternity.

### **The Gulf of Everlasting Despair**

The two rich men in Luke, Chapter 12, and Luke, Chapter 16, found death to be an end of their previous lifestyles. After the death of the sinner, the soul will become a resident in an eternal world to sink into the blackened shades of eternal night. After death, there is no probation and no means of mercy. All is fixed forever. A man who dies, dies but once. He cannot come back and

make preparation. It will be too late. Whatever is to be done in reference to death must be done before you die.

If you arrive in that horrible gulf of hell, there will be no agreeable companions, no sympathizing friends, no relaxation, no pleasing hobbies, no encouraging prospects, no comforts of home, no tokens of love, no gifts of grace from the Father of mercy, no hope in the future, no relief from the past, no refuge, and no escape. Above you will be an angry, omnipotent God in Heaven. Behind you will be a misspent life of opportunities for salvation. You will be lost forever. Oh, how sad!

Within you will be a guilty, remorseful conscience, and an implacable self-tormenter. Around you will be the belligerent, the unbelieving, the natural tormenters, the murderers, the whoremongers, the sorcerers, the idolaters, the liars, the adulterers, the unrighteous, the fornicators, the effeminate, the thieves, the covetous, the drunkards, and the revilers. Oh, what tremendous doom! Who can bear the thought of dying without God?

Often I ask people these questions: What are you going to do if you come down to the end of life's journey and find out that you are lost? What are you going to do when you come to the Judgment unprepared to meet God? What are you going to do when you lift your eyes in hell? Most people say it will be too late to do anything, and that is the absolute truth.

Young person, do not get the idea that you are too young to die. If you die young, while you are still in your sins, you will be cut off from the land of the living, useless and hopeless in both worlds. Oh, to be fallen from the summit of hope into the gulf of everlasting despair! This could be your doom this year, this month, this week, and even tonight. If you die lost, there will be no more happiness for you. You will have received your portion in this life—a few years of fleeting, unsatisfactory happiness, and an entire eternity of

misery follows. That is what you would be trading. It is not worth it.

No wonder the Bible says in Matthew 16:26, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Are you willing to trade a few years of fleeting, unsatisfied happiness for an eternity of misery? If you were to do that, there would be no honor for you, only shame in everlasting contempt. There would be no more amusement for you, only the blackness and darkness forever, only intense hopelessness, wretchedness, tormenting recollections of your past folly and madness, involuntarily rushing into the infernal pit.

I ask you, as one who loves your soul, is it wise for you to be so thoughtless about eternity? Death comes not only to the aged but also to the young. Cemeteries are full of little girls, little boys, and teenagers who met untimely deaths. Those who are unprepared for death have a horrible surprise coming one of these days. I wish I could tell you how bad it really is. There are not enough words in the vocabulary for me to describe to you how terrible it will be if you leave this world unprepared to meet God. If there was a way that I could, I believe you would get saved immediately.

### **Death Ends All Opportunities**

Only one group of people can face death with confidence, and that is the faithful Christians. It is not the ones who are lukewarm, the ones who have been missing church, the ones who are at ease in Zion, the ones who have been committing the sin of prayerlessness, the ones who have laid the Bible on the shelf and never study it. The only ones who are really ready for death are the faithful Christians. Are you a faithful Christian? It is not based on the estimation of your pastor, your wife or husband, or your children; but it is based on how God sees you. You see, you could be deceived. Are you

a faithful Christian? Are you ready for death?

May you think soberly and seriously in scrutiny of your death. You need to be prepared, for death is coming. Instead of fearing death, you should live each day in such a way that you can say as John did: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20b). Can you say that? This event demands your solemn consideration. How quickly the death summons can come, but oh, how long is eternity! It has been said that eternity is so long that we could compare it to a bird picking up one grain of sand, flying to the moon and laying that grain of sand down, returning, and picking up another grain of sand, until all the sand on the earth was gone. Eventually, millions of years later, eternity would have only begun. This is serious, and it is true.

You need to think about this, friend: death ends all opportunities to repent. The new birth must take place in this life and not in the next life. You ought to tremble at the thought of dying without God. The spirit of this age gets hold of people. When King Agrippa heard the message, it caused him to tremble. When Felix heard about the Judgment to come, it caused him to tremble. The spirit of this age will so work on you that you will lose the fear of God, if you are not careful.

Every sinner who dies without God will awake in hell. By this time tomorrow, all of men's pursuits, the world and all it contains, all its enjoyments, and all its cares and sorrows may be as insignificant to you as the grandeur of Caesar or the riches of the world before the Flood. If you die this year, then what about your earthly riches or your poverty? Honor or disgrace, joy or sorrow, sickness or health will not be concerns of yours as the dust covers your coffin.

### **Unprepared for Eternity**

Can you imagine yourself dying without God? Can you see yourself

gasping for breath while you are surrounded by weeping relatives and friends? Imagine the cold dew making its way down your fever-scorched brow. For the first time in your life, you experience the death rattle in your throat. No doubt, you have heard about the death rattle many times, but you have never experienced it. Now you are experiencing it.

The doctor is summoned, and he declares that your case is hopeless, and you have but a short time to live. While you are lying in this position, you awake to the fact that the faces in the room and all the furniture are fading away from your vision. All the sounds in the room are dying away like the chimes of the evening bells.

All of a sudden, you wake up to the fact that this room that you are in is filling with legions of devils from the underworld. Now, though you are barely conscious, you realize for the first time that you have lost the power of utterance. Your tongue cleaves fast to the roof of your mouth. You try to say something, but you cannot speak.

I wonder what you are going to try to say as you realize you are dying. Are you trying to say, "Children, I'm sorry that I did not raise you in the church"? Are you trying to say to your mother or your father: "I'm sorry for my rebellion. I'm sorry for the way I have treated you"? Would you try to say, "Pray," but you cannot get the words out because you cannot speak? Have you waited too late to pray?

There is a poem about death that reads:

*O who is this? I cannot see,  
I see hands, they're taking hold of me.  
Well I am death, none can excel  
I'll open the door to Heaven or hell.  
O death, o death,  
How can it be that I must go with thee?  
I'm unprepared for eternity.  
I'm death, I come to get your soul  
Leave the body and leave it cold,  
To draw the flesh off of the frame,*

*Dirt and worm both have a claim.*

One sob, one faint struggle, and the dart of death will fly through your fainting heart, and you will be gone. The undertaker will be called, and soon you will be laid quietly in a casket. At last, the funeral hour will arrive. The undertaker might have put a beautiful smile upon your face, but in reality you are not smiling at all. In reality you are weeping and begging God for mercy, but mercy's door will be closed.

I remember one of the saddest incidents that I have ever had to face in my life. I received a call one night and rushed to a nearby hospital. There was a young man who was on his deathbed. Previously, I had visited him in jail, and I talked to him about getting right with God. He came to church once or twice with his grandmother. He had heard the Gospel preached and could have

gotten saved, but he did not. If this young man could talk to you now, he would say, "Sin will take you further than you want to go, it will keep you longer than you want to stay, and it will cost you more than you want to pay."

If I had some way of knowing what he was going to do, perhaps I could have told him; "This is what the devil is going to do to you. This is how far the devil is going to take you." People do not think the devil is going to do terrible things, but the devil will stop at nothing to destroy lives. Parent, you need to raise your children in the church. If you stay true to God, possibly you can avoid such terrible tragedies.

What is it going to be for you when you come down to the end of life's journey? When your funeral service is over and your casket is lowered into the cold bosom of the earth, where will you be? Will your coffin be lowered into a Christless

grave? Saint of God, you need to agonize before God and travail for souls before it is too late. Who is it that is hanging over the mouth of hell by a thread, and that thread is breaking? Who is the wretched creature who stands this very moment upon the slippery brink of the horrible precipice of hell? It could be you. Though you cannot see it, the mouth of hell could all ready be opening. You could be hanging over hell by a thread. As I stated earlier in the message, only one group of people are ready for Heaven, and that is the faithful Christians. You might have a profession of religion, but if you have not been what God wants you to be, you need to kneel at an altar of prayer. I ask you, sinner friend, won't you humble yourself before God before it is too late? Do not gamble with your soul.

*(Compact Disc TR-1010E)*

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## Announcements

### **Mechanicsburg, IN** October 2-6

**REVIVAL:** Church of God, Mechanicsburg, Indiana  
Evangelist: Brother Adam Wolf, New Florence, Pennsylvania  
Service times: Wednesday-Saturday 7:00 p.m. @ Mechanicsburg; & Sunday Morning 10:30 a.m. at Mechanicsburg; & Sun. Eve. 4:00 p.m. at Brown Road church.  
For further information contact: Pastor Allen Polston, 2020 Ralph St, New Castle, IN  
Telephone: 765-521-8284.

### **Summersville, WV** October 7-13

**REVIVAL:** Church of God, 74 Armstrong Road, Summersville, WV 26651  
Evangelist: Brother Irwin Seshier, Heath, Ohio  
Service times: Monday-Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday 6:00 p.m. & 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)

### **Springfield, OH** October 14-20

**REVIVAL:** Possum Road Church of God, 1601 W. Possum Rd., Springfield, OH 45506  
Evangelist: Brother Calvin Foster, Kensett, Arkansas  
Service times Monday-Saturday 7:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.  
For information contact: Pastor Vernon Plyler, 1561 W. Possum Road, Springfield, OH 45506. Telephone: 937-925-5223. Email: [vern@reagan.com](mailto:vern@reagan.com)

### **Newark, OH** December 26-29

**WINTER CAMP MEETING: PLEASE NOTE THIS CHANGE: The first service will begin on Thursday, December 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.** For reservations contact Brother Dave or Sister Ruby Bush, 725 N. Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055, or call 740-345-1213. Please make reservations in advance, if possible.  
For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker, 87 Decrow Ave., Newark, Ohio  
Telephone: 740-344-2543

*[Where Are You . . . continued from p. 13]*

do not want to be parents to their children; they want to be their friend. As a parent, you must be in control.

Sometimes teenagers say, "I can't wait until I'm eighteen, and then I'm moving out." Where would you want to go? What would you want to do? You have no secure place to live. Young person, you cannot make it out there without a job. The friends that you might be staying with could move suddenly.

I am so thankful that I did not have that type of thinking when I was growing up. I enjoyed living at home. I wanted to be at home, because I knew if I rebelled what would happen to me. I tried it a few times, and I did not like it. I still did not want to go out on my own. I did not want to have to pay rent and utilities and buy groceries. I loved being at home, and I did all I could to stay under the jurisdiction of my home.

In high school, I saved the money that I earned while working in a grocery store, cutting grass, and delivering newspapers. My parents instilled in me a work ethic, thank the Lord. Though I was an only child, I did not get everything I wanted. They let me know that I was not going to have everything handed to me. My parents were instilling in me what it would be like if I became a parent one day.

I thank God for godly parents who instill good values in their children today. I truly appreciate my godly heritage. I am so thankful that I had parents who loved the Truth, who stood by the Truth, who lived the Truth, and who sacrificed for the Truth. They did not cave in to accepting just any teaching. We have the ultimate Truth, and we are so blessed.

Accepting a substitute for Truth would have been easy for my parents, but they did not look at substitutes. They were striving for the real thing. Church of God, we need to strive for the real thing. The Lord must be first in your life in all

things. When He is first, you can move up life's highway the way you should. You should not be satisfied with what you have already accomplished. You need to get more involved in the things of God.

### **Obtaining Strength Through Christ**

Are you applying the Truth to your everyday living? Someone once quoted this saying: "Life is like ten-speed bicycles; most of them have gears we never use." Do you remember getting that ten-speed bicycle? If you had the extra money, you probably got it. However, there were only a few gears that you actually used. Likewise, there are things in your life and in your mind that you do not use. The Lord gave you the capacity to use your brain, but how much of it do you actually use? How much Truth do you actually maintain and put out there for other people? Can the world see Jesus in your life?

As a Christian, you need to put your full effort into the worship services. God is pleased when you put in your entire effort. You must keep one thing in mind as you enter the sanctuary; you are gathered together to worship the Almighty God.

Someone once said: "Do not place your mistakes or your trials on your head; that weight might crush you. Instead place them under your feet and use them as a platform to view your horizons." You can take all those things that are burdening you and put them under your feet and let Jesus Christ take care of them, and then you can use them as a platform to help you to live for Christ.

Saint of God, you must realize that your strength and victory come from Jesus Christ. The enemy wants to try to convince you that you cannot overcome adversity. Has the devil ever come to you with that idea? You can overcome adversity with the help of the Lord. How do I know that? Philippians 4:13 states, "I

can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." You get strength from Christ. Many people who are having problems in their lives are not drawing strength from Christ. They are not really where they need to be on the narrow road. They have let things come into their lives to distract them, and they have taken their eyes off Jesus. Friend, your eyes need to be on the ultimate goal.

### **Surrendering to the Will of God**

Many people do not want to surrender their will to God. They do not like to hear the word surrender, because the devil tells them that surrendering to God gives them a sense of defeat. If you are going to get help from God, you have to surrender to Him. You need to let the Lord know: "I cannot make it on my own. God, I need You in all facets of my life. I cannot do this. I cannot worship You in the right way if I do not have You to help me." Surrendering to God is not passive resignation; it is not fatalism or an excuse for laziness. It may mean the exact opposite of that. It is sacrificing your life or your suffering in order to change what needs to be changed.

Do you know that God calls surrendered people to do battle on His behalf? Surrendering to God is not for cowards. Surrendering can be hard work. It is not as easy as it sounds. The Lord wants to work with individuals who are willing to surrender everything for His cause. Why do people have a struggle with surrendering to the will of God? Too many other things have taken up residency in their hearts.

Today it is difficult to find people who will acknowledge their true need. We live in a blessed age of conveniences and all these help organizations are out there. I thank the Lord that there is help set up for people who desperately need it. However, sometimes those things can be a curse. People depend more on those things than on Jesus. They think they will always have organi-

zations to help them through. What about Jesus? Jesus knows what is best for you better than any organization downtown. He knows what you need in your life. He knows what job you need. Often people get their eyes off the true help that they need and focus on organizations. What did people do before these organizations were founded? They trusted God.

If you are looking for a mate, God will help you. If you are looking for a job, God will supply it. If you have needs in your life, why not trust God? Many people want to trust God as a last resort instead of first. God must be first in your life, not last. Too many times God is not in people's schedules. We live in a day when people do not take time for God. They think they have more important things to do than to be in church services.

#### Examine Your Position

Where are you on life's highway? Are you losing ground spiritually? Are you allowing other things to creep into your life? Are you as spiritual as you once were? Have you let other things come in and take over? You must do the basics to maintain your spiritual welfare. Attending the house of worship should be your number one priority.

I cannot understand why people who claim to be Christians find it so difficult to be in the worship services. The Lord knows if it is your work schedule, but He does not excuse just missing the services when you *could* be there. You could not do that on the job. Unfaithfulness disturbs your pastor and brings added stress to his life. If you fail to attend Sunday school, you are also cheating your children by not being there. If your children grow up seeing that you are not in Sunday school, when they get older, they might not have a desire to be there either. Your children are watching you. How do you expect your children to learn the wonderful Bible stories? You need to keep them around other Christian young people.

Where are you on the narrow road? The Bible states plainly in Romans 14:12, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." You need to think of the seriousness of that Scripture. One day God will compare how much time and energy you spent on yourself to what you invested in serving others. You will not be able to say on that day: "Well, I was too busy. I had things that I wanted to do. I wanted to do things that would give me more satisfaction." Friend, excuses will not hold any value on that day.

The Lord created you for a life of service to Him.

Are the things of God as real and as fresh to you today as when you were first saved? Is it still as rich and full and marvelous as it was when you first got saved? Is the joy of serving Jesus Christ as strong today as it was when you got saved? It should be even greater. Is serving God getting sweeter as the days go by? Do you have inner peace, enthusiasm, and joy in your soul? Where are you on the road of life? Have you gained ground or are you running in place? Your days are running out. Your time on this earth is coming to an end.

Someone once wrote these words: "God is not just a starting point of life; He is the source of it." He is the source of life, and He has done so much for you. Can you not give Him a little of your time, your efforts, and your service? Why is it such a struggle? You need to learn not to depend or to lean on your own understanding, or your own knowledge. You need to depend solely upon Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to guide and direct you in these closing days of time. Where are you on life's highway today?

(Compact Disc TR-993M)

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## 2014 Camp Meeting Dates

June 15-22 August 3-10  
December 28-31

*We hope you will plan your vacation time so that you can join us in these old-fashioned camp meetings.*

# Fall 2013 Camp Meeting Recordings

CD No.	Date	Message Title	Minister
TR-1207 TR-1208	8-04-2013	Measuring to the Pattern Who Is Your God?	Bro. Roger L. Decker Bro. Michael Wilks
TR-1209 TR-1210	8-05-2013	Are You Giving God Your All? Responsibilities & Principles for Gospel Workers: Part 1 – Duties and Rules of Conduct for God's Anointed	Bro. James Presley Bro. E. David Stegmeier
TR-1211		It Is Time to Grow Up	Bro. Calvin Foster
TR-1212 TR-1213	8-06-2013	The Power of a Filled Vessel Responsibilities & Principles for Gospel Workers: Part 2 – General Qualifications of All Gospel Workers	Bro. Vernon Plyler Bro. E. David Stegmeier
TR-1214		Where Are You?	Bro. Calvin Foster
TR-1215 TR-1216	8-07-2013	Our Enemy the Devil Responsibilities & Principles for Gospel Workers: Part 3 – Everyone in Any Facet of the Ministry	Bro. Paul Prinkey Bro. E. David Stegmeier
TR-1217		Spiritually Bilingual	Bro. Calvin Foster
TR-1218 TR-1219	8-08-2013	Reflecting on What God Has Done and Is Doing Responsibilities & Principles for Gospel Workers: Part 4 – Jesus, A Servant	Bro. Leamon Whitehead Bro. E. David Stegmeier
TR-1220		The Danger of Playing Church	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1221 TR-1222	8-09-2013	General Principles of Compromise Responsibilities & Principles for Gospel Workers: Part 5 – We Are Called to Be Servants	Bro. Earl R. Borders Bro. E. David Stegmeier
TR-1223		Do You Have a Strong Spiritual Immune System?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1224 TR-1225	8-10-2013	The Importance of Sharing the Faith Responsibilities & Principles for Gospel Workers: Part 6 – The Highest of All Callings	Bro. Garrett Haylock Bro. E. David Stegmeier
TR-1226		What If God Says No	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1227 TR-1228	8-11-2013	The Joy of the Lord Responsibilities & Principles for Gospel Workers: Part 7 – The Joy of the Harvest	Bro. Richard Talbot Bro. E. David Stegmeier
TR-1229		How to Resist the Devil	Bro. Larry Dishman
2013	Fall Camp Meeting Songs 1 (TM-313), 2 (TM-314), 3 (TM-315), 4 (TM-316), 5 (TM-317), & 6 (TM-318)		
2013	Fall Camp Meeting Choir Songs # 1 & # 2		
2013	Fall Camp Meeting Children's Program Songs CD		
2013	All Fall Camp Meeting Morning & Evening Messages in <b>MP3</b> Format (1 CD)		
2013	All Fall Camp Meeting Teaching & Afternoon Services in <b>MP3</b> Format (1 CD)		
2013	All the Songs for the Fall Camp Meeting in <b>MP3</b> Format (1 CD)		

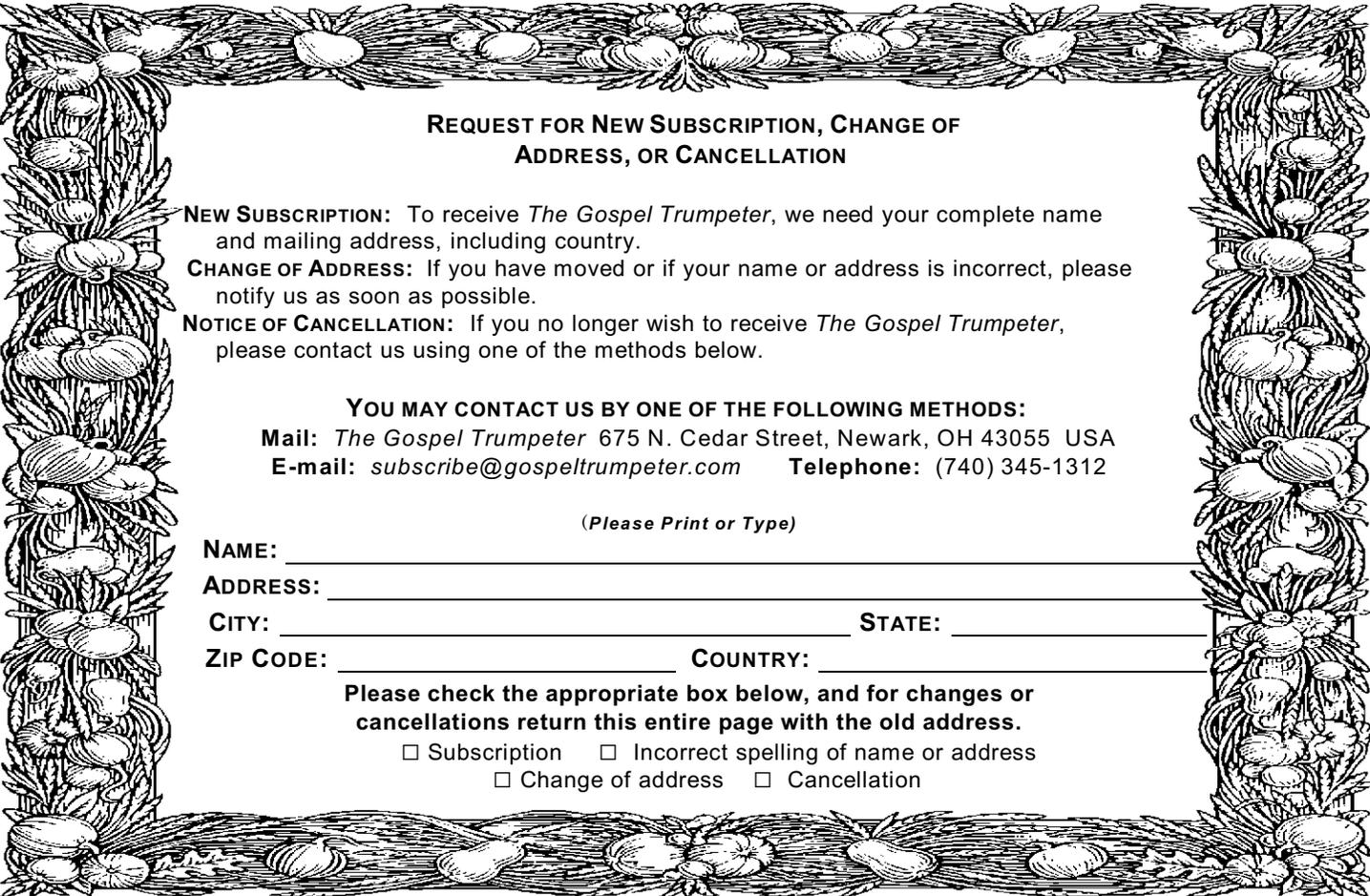
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