

"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. 44 August 2014 No. 8



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS

PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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Spring 2014 Camp Meeting Report

What a Feast!

We live in a day when the preaching of the Word of God has become scarce. Not many places exist anymore where the clear sounding of the trumpet can be heard. In the vast majority of churches throughout our land, there is a spiritual famine. Amos 8:11 did not portray this famine as a lack of literal bread and water. Instead, he described it as being a terrible spiritual condition. This is a famine caused by clergymen being silent regarding the requirements in God's Word. More effort is placed on the material issues of life rather than on 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 and obedience that saves people from sin and teaches them to live a righteous life before God.

When preachers fail to proclaim God's commands, then how can people know what to do or obey? In Romans 10:17 Paul said that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." It is so important that men of God diligently teach souls what God expects from them. In many cases the clergy is more interested in receiving a paycheck than they are in the spiritual welfare of souls. When there is a let down of sounding forth God's standards, you can be assured that a spiritual famine exists.

Amidst this spiritual famine today, there are still places where the Truth is being heralded. Ministers who love God want to be

faithful to the souls of men and women. Although persecution's fires are lit, there are some men who faithfully preach the Gospel without fear or favor. While famine leaves many starving spiritually, God's true people are feasting on the rich delicacies of heavenly manna. What a feast!

The Spring Camp Meeting is past, but it showered us with many good memories. Repeatedly, the Lord wonderfully poured His sweet Holy Spirit over our hearts. What a joy it was to be gathered together in the spirit of unity and fellowship with brethren! Psalm 133:1 says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" What our eyes saw and our hearts felt is beyond words to express! We saw ministers and saints alike in attendance that we have not seen for a good while. It was very refreshing to be united together again with them in a heavenly atmosphere.

Without contradiction this was a beautiful place to be. What a feast! What a time we had together! God wants His people to be united together as one people, working together to propagate His glorious Gospel and cause. Day after day, our hearts were blessed, encouraged, and uplifted. The choir and special singers helped to set the tone for each service. We are most happy to report that many souls came to the altars to seek salvation. It is always the main purpose of a meeting that souls find salvation and have their spiritual needs

[continued on page 7]

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation [your kindness or gentleness] be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.



Standing in the Strength of Christ

Brother Roger L. Decker

Contentment

We have before us one of the great differences in that which is founded in the human and that which is anchored and rooted in the divine. Our Scripture text says in verse 11, "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Verse 13 reads, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." What was the Apostle Paul saying? Being content was not something that came to Paul automatically. This was something that he had to learn, and it is

not an easy thing to learn. Why is that? Discontentment is the normal state of mind for most people. In essence, Paul was saying, "I'm so satisfied with the wise providence and goodness of God that I know whatever He determines is best; therefore, I am perfectly contented that He should govern the world in the way that seems best to His godly wisdom." A contented mind is a continual feast, and nothing is gained through murmuring and complaining.

We read in 1 Timothy 6:6, "But godliness with contentment is great gain." Godliness should be regarded

as the greatest and most valued acquisition a person could attain in his lifetime. Then when you add to that contentment, it is great gain.

Many people are dissatisfied with the state they are in, and all they do is complain and murmur. Some people are dissatisfied with the wife or the husband, with their jobs, with their homes, or with the cars they drive. It seems that nothing satisfies them. They are never satisfied, and they are under a continual spirit of complaining and murmuring. That gets old after a while. Some people are unpleasant to be around, because all they do is

issue one complaint after another. You can get so discontented that you will be under a spirit of it, and it will flow out naturally.

Paul said contentment was something that he had to learn. He found that true satisfaction in life is found in Jesus Christ, and it is evident by the Scriptures that the Apostle Paul was in some very trying circumstances. This contentment was very special to Paul, for he had to learn it by experiencing very difficult trials.

Trials will teach you things. You do not miss the water until the electricity goes off. You take it for granted day in and day out. You are used to the automobile until you run out of fuel. No doubt, Paul was discontented at times with some things, but trials taught him to be content. He spent much of his ministry in prison and in severe trials, and he learned contentment through those difficult trials and adversities that he went through. Being discontented with the providence of God would not overcome his circumstances or supply his needs. Discontentment would not overcome evil, but it would lead to discouragement and disappointment.

Again, in verses 12-13 of our Scripture text, Paul said: "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Another translation of the same verses says this: "I know what it is to be in need and what it is to have more than enough. I have learned this secret so that anywhere at any time I am content, whether I am full or hungry, whether I have too much or too little. I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me." His efficiency and his ability to stand were in Jesus Christ. To be abased is to be in a circumstance of want and to abound is to have abundance. Everywhere Paul went in his travels, he received

instruction on how to be full and how to be hungry, to have an abundance of things and to suffer need. The Scripture says, "He was instructed." I repeat, this was not something that he automatically attained. It was not something that happened overnight, but it was something that he learned through many trials; he learned to be content.

Our Sufficiency Is in Jesus Christ

Paul's condition went from one end of the spectrum to the other, from having an abundance to being reduced to want, from having all necessities supplied to being poor and hungry. How could the Apostle Paul handle those reverses in life? Those reverses in life are going to come to every one of us. There are going to be times when you are going to have an abundance, and there are going to be times when you are going to be in want. There is going to be a time when you are going to be full, and there may be a time when you are going to suffer hunger in your life.

Paul said he received instruction to be content in every circumstance. How can you stand when the reverses acquainted with this life fence you in? Dear one, your sufficiency has to come through Jesus Christ, and the closer you are to Jesus Christ, the better you can take reverses in life.

There is no way that you can overcome the great obstacles of life without Jesus. Oh, I know there are some that probably think that they can handle trials and reverses in their own strength, but something is coming down the highway of life that you cannot handle in your own strength and power. Something is always laying out ahead that you are going to have to face. One of those might be the death of a loved one. It happens to every family. Each of us is going to die, so death is going to touch every family. It is going to come into every home eventually. Somebody in your fam-

ily is going to pass away, and to stand in your own strength can be a real hardship. That is when you need to have your sufficiency in Jesus Christ.

Second Corinthians 3:5 says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." Another translation says, "There is nothing in us that allows us to claim that we are capable of doing this work. The capacity we have comes from God." The world says, "You can overcome by exercising your will." However, it fails because its sufficiency is rooted in the flesh, or in the human. Christianity succeeds because it is rooted in Jesus Christ.

God is just as close to the Christian in the reverses of life as He is in the times of prosperity. He will never leave you or forsake you if you are going through a trial, a heaviness, or a struggle. God is just as close to you then as He is when things are going well. We do not have a God that just visits us during the good times. We have a God Who is sufficient for every need, in the good times and in the hard times. In the trials and the persecutions, in the adversities of life, God is just as close to us as when we are rejoicing in His goodness.

Blessed Is the Man Who Trusts in the Lord

Adversities seldom move the men and women who have their roots in Jesus Christ. Oh, they feel it; they are not super human. They feel the heat of the trial, but they still walk on and bring forth the fruit of a Christian. The Christian is just as sweet in the midst of affliction as he is when he is feeling well. You cannot do that in your own strength when you are suffering pain and hurting all over.

The Psalmist tells how the Christian is able to walk on and bear fruit in the midst of adversity. Psalm 1:1-6 reads: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel

of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted [not a wild tree, not a tree that just happened to grow up there, but a planted tree] by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

The words of the Prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 17:7-8 read: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." Right in the midst of adversity, the Christian can still maintain his spirituality, and he still can bring forth fruit to God.

The Apostle Paul said in verse 13 of our Scripture text, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." I like this verse in the Amplified Bible. It reads, "I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me [I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency]." That is good.

Because of Jesus Christ, you do not have to sin. That is wonderful! Saint, there was a time when you had to sin, but when your sufficiency is in Jesus Christ, you do not have to sin. First Corinthians 10:13 says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful [God is faithful in the temptation], who will

not suffer [or allow] you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it [or to endure it]."

When Does Temptation Become Sin?

Temptation is not sin. Just because you are going through a temptation does not mean that you have sinned. To have sin charged to your account, you must yield to the temptation. It is the yielding that brings sin. To commit sin, you must have knowledge of the wrong.

James 4:17 reads, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." What was James saying? There has to be a knowledge to do right, and when you have that knowledge to do right and you do *not* do it, it becomes sin.

Jesus Christ was tempted, but He did no sin. No doubt, some people feel that because He was the Son of God, He could not have sinned. If He could not have sinned, then He could not have been our example. He would have had something that we could never attain. If He could not have sinned, then the devil went to a lot of trouble to try to get Him to sin, or the devil did not know what he was doing. The truth is, the devil did know what he was doing. Jesus had a will, just as you and I do. He said before going to the Cross, "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). Jesus could have sinned, just as you and I could sin. His temptations were not easy temptations.

Jesus was tempted in all points just as we are. Hebrews 4:15 states, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points [the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life] tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He was tempted as we are. You may ask, "Do you believe that Jesus could have been tempted with adultery?" It is hard to imagine that, is it not? However, there was a fleshly

part, or a human part, of Jesus Christ. He was God manifested in the flesh. He was tempted in all points just as we are. Do you think He could have been tempted to steal? Do you think He could have been tempted with pride? He was tempted in all points, just as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:16 reads, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." I hate to even mention that Jesus could be tempted with those things, but the Bible says, He was tempted in all points. If He could not be, He could not give you help when you are going through a temptation, but that is the reason we can go to the throne of grace. That is the reason He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

One of the main reasons that people fight holiness is, they do not understand temptation versus sin. Temptation is a persuasion to do wrong or to act wrong. To sin is to do the wrong, or to commit the action. In the hour of temptation, Jesus will keep everyone who will let Him. If you want Jesus to keep you in the temptation, He will keep you. If you want to go through the temptation in your own strength and disregard Jesus Christ, you can do that too, but you will end up yielding to the temptation. Jesus Christ is not going to make you call out to Him in the temptation.

You should have enough knowledge to know what you should do. This is something Paul learned. He learned that he could not stand in his own strength. He learned in all these trials that he needed to call out to Jesus Christ or he would become a failure in this life.

How to Overcome Temptation

James said in James 1:12, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, [What was James talking about? He

was speaking of this life. You are not tempted over in Heaven. You receive a crown in this life when you are tempted and tried, when you endure the temptation. That is another step up in victory: you will receive the crown of life.] which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." When you go through trials, many times you may think you are the only one who ever went through such things. What did Paul call the temptation in the Corinthian letter? He said temptation was common to man. The enemy of souls will try to convince you that what you are going through is unique, that no one has ever gone through such a thing. Temptation is common, salvation is common, and our faith is common.

The Bible says in Jude, verse 3, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Titus 1:4 says, "To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." The word *common* means "shared by all." Salvation is shared by all; your faith is shared by all, and temptation is common, or shared by all.

I want to stress again that our ability to stand is not because some people are tougher than others, because some people can take more pain, because some people can take more ridicule, or because some people are smarter than others. Our ability to stand is due to our sufficiency being in Jesus Christ. When you start struggling in adversity, struggling in temptation, struggling in doing right, and growing weary in your soul, it is due to a leanness in your soul. God is so wonderful to point that out. God loves you, and He will say: "You haven't been seeking Me and drawing close to Me. You have not been spending time with Me like you used to." God is so

loving, kind, and good, and He wants to help you.

The Christian knows from experience that he is no match for the devil without Jesus Christ. He knows that he cannot stand in his own strength. That is the reason he goes to the throne of grace to find help in time of need. The Scripture says that our high priest can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. In the Greek the word *touched* means "to sympathize; to understand." Christ can sympathize with you, and He understands what you are going through. Why? He can sympathize and understand what you are going through because He was tempted in all points.

The Need to Seek Christ

When do you come to Christ? The Scripture says to come in time of need. That actually means to come in time of weakness. This is where the struggle comes: trying to stand in your own strength and not going to the throne of grace as you ought. Some people do not like to admit that they are going through something. They do not want to admit that something is working them over, and they do not take it to the throne of grace. If a lot of people would really pray through on some matters, they would not be where they are today. They would not be going through the struggles that they are going through today if they truly put God first in their lives as they ought.

I want you to read the admonition that Jesus gave to the church in the sixth seal, the sixth trumpet age, or the church of Philadelphia. He said in Revelation 3:10, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Dear one, do you really go to the throne of grace in the hour of temptation? Do you really ask God to help you as you should? Luke wrote in Luke 11:9-10: "And I say unto

you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth: and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Many times people's marriages fail because they leave Christ out of their marriage. Children of God should have the best marriages in the world, not the worst. If a couple does have a failure, it is due to one or both of them letting down on their spirituality. People are not serious enough about the marriage vows when they take them. They just want to hurry through the ceremony and be on their way. I want to tell you, marriage vows are serious.

Everything is not going to go well every day. There are going to be some adversities in marriage, but you can make it. You can stay together, live right, and do right if you stay close enough to God and take your burdens to God instead of arguing. All some people want to do is battle it out and get the last word in. The next thing they know, it goes on and on until they separate and divorce. I am not talking about one party committing adultery. I am talking about just plain failing to get along together.

Standing Through Adversity

The husband and wife have to learn to be content, just as the Apostle Paul learned. There are things in marriage that you have to learn. There are certain "buttons" a husband can push that the wife does not like. Likewise, there are certain "buttons" the wife can push that the husband does not like. You learn what those "buttons" are, and if you have any respect for your spouse, you will not push them.

Trials are not meant to cause you to slip up and fall or to backslide. Trials come along to teach us, to instruct us. Sometimes we learn that the way we handle things is not necessarily the right way. Sometimes in marriages there are dis-

agreements, and sometimes they are not handled the right way. Sometimes it is a costly error. Sometimes it is a hard lesson to learn; nevertheless, some people leave Christ's sufficiency out of their marriage. Christ has been left out of the trials and the struggles.

Many people rely on judges and lawyers to resolve their marriage problems when Christ could save their marriage, but they do not ask Him. If your marriage is in trouble, you need to really get serious in your asking. You should not merely pray a formal prayer, "Lord, help my marriage." You need to really get down to business before God and ask God what it is that you are doing that could be wrong.

When it comes to marriage, you are not going to find a faultless

marriage. It may be perfect as far as salvation is concerned, but it is not perfected in every aspect. There are going to be disagreements. God can work out your marriage problems. He can make your marriage a happy one. God can make a marriage a haven of rest, but it takes work. Your sufficiency has to be in Christ.

Paul learned how to be content by what he went through. He learned how to be hungry and how to abound, how to be in need, and how to have an abundance. He learned that whatever state he was in to be content. Have you left God out of your trial? Oh, you might have prayed a formal prayer, but you need to seek Him fervently. Would you be honest enough to admit it? If you will, you will

receive help and victory.

Dear one, wouldn't you rather have God's smile of approval instead of God's chastisement in your life? What is your attitude toward God when He corrects you?

Your sufficiency to stand is found in Jesus Christ. I trust that you have found it so. You will never make it through adversity victoriously unless you take it to Jesus. Thank God, you can go to the throne of grace and find grace any hour of the day. It is not something that is only open on weekends. When should you come to the throne of grace? You should come in a time of weakness, or the Scripture says, "... in time of need."

(Compact Disc TR-1117M)

[Camp Meeting Report—contin. from p. 2] supplied. Others received help, encouragement, and physical healing.

Again, the Word of God was sounded forth with great clarity. Pastor Roger Decker preached the opening sermon with a Father's Day message denoting the importance of being a righteous father or grandfather. Each of the messages was anointed and to the point, bringing conviction and understanding. Brother Larry Dishman was the evangelist for the evening services. During those evenings, he brought outstanding messages. In the course of his sermons, he preached on the subjects of "Sanctification," "When Do You Receive the Holy Ghost?" and "Have You Forgiven Yourself?"

These messages and others were very enlightening.

Sister Karen Wilks brought a three-part story on *Pilgrim's Progress*. Other ministers that delivered fabulous sermons were brothers Paul Prinkey, Joe Brewer, and Calvin Foster. Brother David Stegmeier taught each afternoon on the needed topic of "Prayer." (Be sure to see the list of camp meeting messages in this issue on page 26.)

Our dear Lord certainly prepared a bountiful table for each of us to enjoy. There was no famine in this spiritual gathering. It was eight days of feasting on spiritual nutrients that our souls need to grow and mature. Oh, what a time it was!

It was very inspiring to come in

from the worldly clamor and enjoy eight days of a heavenly atmosphere unmolested. As often stated, departing from camp meeting is always a sad time. It is sad because we must depart from dear brothers and sisters whom we love and cherish so much. We must always remember that our mission is to be in the world, but not of it. God needs us to be a light to those in darkness, to shine forth the light and to help in winning others to this precious experience that we so enjoy.

We highly encourage ordering the CDs or DVDs of the camp meeting services. You can do this by writing to the CD Ministry at Church of God, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055 or by calling 740-345-1312.

*Often opportunity knocks only once,
but temptation is constantly at the door.*

John 14:15 *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

16 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;*

17 *Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

18 *I will not leave you comfortless:*

I will come to you.

19 *Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.*

20 *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*

21 *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love*

him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 *Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?*

23 *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

"If Ye Love Me. . . ."



Brother Emerson A. Wilson

Pleasing God

Satan is working on all levels to destroy. He is out to take peace from the earth. This is the reason there is so much trouble in homes, schools, and congregations. He is even infringing himself on some of God's people.

A Christian cannot be at peace unless he knows that he is pleasing God. Jesus said in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." What kind of peace did Jesus have? His was not the peace of reconciliation because He was never wrong with God. There is a peace

that comes when we come in old-time repentance, confess our sins, and believe in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. When we begin to have a knowledge that there is nothing between us and God, we begin to enjoy the peace of reconciliation, but that was not Jesus' peace. He never had to be reconciled with the Father. What peace did He have? It was a day-to-day peace that rested on a knowledge that He had pleased the Father.

If we know that our peace rests on pleasing God, we also know that to please God, we must definitely know what He expects of us in true

salvation. The burden of my heart is that we might understand ourselves in the light of God's Word as God looks upon us. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" and "If a man love me, he will keep my words."

There is much said about love, and it is one of the utmost topics in religion today. The devil is actually causing millions to lay aside all the true guidelines of love. They are uniting with anything that bears the name of religion. The picture of prophecy in Revelation is being fulfilled right before our eyes.

People say, "The devil is coming

up with many new things." Nevertheless, the words of Solomon are true: "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9). There is nothing new under the sun. What do I mean by that? Many of the tactics that the devil is using today, many of the so-called new cults in religion, are nothing more than a fresh uprising of the same old devil under a new name. The devil has nothing new to offer. If you study into witchcraft, spiritualism, or any of the cults, you can go back in the Old Testament and see them there. God has a different name for them than what man has put on them. Nevertheless, it is the same old devil, and he is working through the same old ways to destroy.

Man's Ideas Go Against Bible Teachings

Today love has been taken far from its true, biblical sense and position. What do I mean? We do not want to blame Augustine for everything, but he did put forth the teaching of two kinds of sin: mortal and venial. Augustine put forth another teaching that is very prominent today in religion. His words were, "Love God and do as you please." In other words, he instructed people that if they truly had the love of God, they did not have to be careful about what they did. The very love of God within them would be such a compelling force that everything they did would please God. Now, that may sound good, but it just does not work.

Some people testify: "Ever since the day God saved me, thank God, anything He asks me to do pleases me. I am fully pleased serving God." What they are actually saying is that they are living above temptation.

Augustine spoke those words, and they have been so infiltrated through the religious world that you would think that Jesus spoke them. They are actually taught for truth;

however, there is no truth whatsoever in them. Instead of teaching that you are to love God and please yourself, the Bible teaches just the opposite. It teaches us to love God and not to please ourselves. If you do not get anything else out of my message, get this: No matter how full of the love of God you are, not everything is going to please you. You will have to bring yourself into subjection.

This was the first thing that opened my eyes to the wrong teaching about sanctification as a second, definite work of grace. It is taught that if you are fully sanctified, there is nothing about you that will rise up against the will of God. Everything God says will please you, and you will wholeheartedly want to do it. People find out that what God wants them to do does not always please them, so they say, "I haven't gotten sanctified yet." According to that teaching, some of them still do not have it.

This very teaching that Augustine set forth (that you can love God and do as you please) causes men to reason and preachers to proclaim today that we are not under any law but under liberty; therefore, there are no rigid demands for us. They say, "Just get an individual saved, and you will not have to preach the standard because the love of God will cause him to please God." However, there is more to it than that. I pray God will help you to see it.

The Bible says that "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10). Often that Scripture is twisted to the place that they say, "If you are truly motivated by love, you will not need a preacher to hold up a standard because you will be pleased to do whatever God wants done." That is a great theory, but it does not work!

If Christians are so free through the love of God to do as they please, why do they so often do less than they ought to do? If the love of God makes it easy to do everything that pleases God, why do so many live

short of that? The truth is that a Christian, an up-to-date spiritual person, does not always feel like going to church. He does not always feel like praying or witnessing. It does not always please him to give.

People are confused. They have been taught that there will never be a struggle to please God if they really love Him. Let us not lift up a standard for people to live by that God has never lifted up. I want to repeat that Christians sometimes do not feel like going to church, and I am not talking about the times they are sick. They sometimes do not feel like praying, witnessing, or giving.

Ways the Devil Works

Since you have been a Christian, have you ever thought, "I do not want to go to church today"? When the pastor pressed the need for greater giving, have you ever had trouble getting past that ten dollar bill so that you could get the fifty out? Now, be honest! If you always did what pleased God, you could quickly go through your billfold and get out the one-hundred-dollar bill, but usually there is a battle in the mind. You will never get to Heaven if you are not honest.

I want to show how the devil works. You might have a struggle sometimes when you feel that you do not want to go to church, testify, or give. The devil will be right there to make you think, "If I do not really want to go to church, if I make myself go anyway, I will be a hypocrite. God is looking on my heart and sees that I do not really want to go." This is how the devil works.

We need to look at it this way: If I feel like doing what I need to do for God, why do I have to live by faith? Why do the just live by faith? If I always feel like going to church and feel like praying, what do I need faith for?

Since we are in the flesh, the idea of praying will not always please us. (I want you to see how the love of God works.) We will not always want to go to church. In

Mark 14:38, when Jesus was praying in Gethsemane, He said, "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. [What is the temptation?] The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak." What was Jesus talking about? He had trouble with His flesh. If you will be honest, your flesh is a little weak when it comes to praying. You have to take your flesh and bring it to the place of prayer.

Someone may say, "Oh, if you love the Lord, it will not be that way." Could you say Jesus, love personified, did not love? The Scripture tells us that He had trouble, and He also told us that we need to watch that we do not fall into the same temptation. What temptation is it? It is being tempted to listen to the flesh instead of the Spirit. If you possess the Spirit of God, He is willing, but the flesh is weak.

People say, "If you are a Christian, you will always be cheerful and confident." Now, wait just a moment! Jesus gives us the promise in John 16:33b, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Now, that is a fact, and the promise is there. You can be of good cheer, but you can get carried away in the cares and circumstances of life till you do not always remember His assurances as you should. You can become discouraged, troubled, and unhappy.

There are people who say: "I have never been discouraged since I got saved. If you have the love of God shed abroad in your heart, you will never get that way." Listen, friend, when those conditions come upon you from different circumstances, you may not always feel like smiling or feel like taking heart. The devil will be right there to tell you, "If you smile when you do not feel like it, you will be a hypocrite." That is not so! I have seen people terribly discouraged, and I have worked with them. They said, "It will not do any good to go to church because I do not really feel like I

want to go." I said: "That has nothing to do with it. If you claim to be a child of God, God said to go to church. You need to get your best clothes on and go."

The Power of God's Love

I want to show you what love will do for you. Love will not take away the work of the flesh. Love will make you able to overcome the flesh and do what is right. Love will cause you to believe that God's Word is true; therefore, you can take hold of the promise and do what God wants you to do whether you feel like it or not. When you do it, thank God, you will find that you will be blessed in your deeds, and that is what the devil does not want.

Love will override your feelings and give you strength to do what you ought to do, whether it pleases you or not. That is what love is for. Today people say it would be legalism if they prayed, smiled, worshipped, or gave contrary to their natural inclinations of the moment. No! When you overstep your natural feelings and worship God anyway, you are following what Paul called the obedience of faith.

Consider the words of Jesus in our Scripture text. In John 14:23 He said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." What was He talking about? He was merely teaching how love works within you. Love will never put an end to your feelings and desires. Love shed abroad within your heart will not hold you in a position where everything that God requires of you will be pleasing to you.

The Scripture says, "If a man love me, he will. . . ." Nowhere did Jesus say that you will always feel like it or there will be a compelling force down inside that will make you anxious to do God's will all the time. No, your flesh will rise up; however, if you love God, you will overstep your own will. When the love of God was shed abroad in your heart, you did not become a

spiritual robot. You still have a will, but God gave you love where you have the power to overstep your will and do God's will.

People say, "If you have entire Bible sanctification, your will has been taken away." Can you say Jesus was not entirely sanctified? He realized that He had a will. In Mark 14:36, He said, ". . . take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." My will may say, "I do not think I will go to church today" or "I think ten dollars is plenty to put in the offering." However, by the power of God's love, I can overstep my will and do God's will.

Love Involves an Act of the Will

Love is not altogether a feeling. Love is a volitional attitude, a stance taken by an act of the will. It is very common today to think of love as a very strong feeling that can compel one to behave in a certain way. Nevertheless, love in its strongest sense will merely impress you. Your will is going to be there, but if love is there, there will be divine strength to overstep your will and carry out God's will. That is the reason He said that if you love Him, you will keep His commandments.

The crucial aspect of love is a volitional element. Love involves an act of the will. It would be everything else but love if you were so bound by love that you never had a thought, a desire, or a feeling contrary to God's will. A young man asked me, "If God created the tobacco plant and we are not to partake of it, what did He set it here for?" He put it here for the same reason He put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden: for you not to touch! Why? If everything is good and nothing is to be rejected, how can you show your love and reverence to God?

When God changed your soul, He could have changed your body. Surely, He could have! Why did He not do that? He wants you to have a

weak flesh so that you can show your love to Him by turning from every opportunity to do wrong. This is in God's plan. However, the enemy will have suppose-to-be preachers of the Gospel lifting a standard where people attempt to please God in a manner which God in His wisdom, purpose, and plan never ordained in any way.

Love involves an act of the will, and sin is also a voluntary act of the will. You cannot be guilty of sin in any manner without a voluntary act of the will. Why? Because the Bible plainly teaches that sin comes out of the heart.

In Romans, Chapter 6, Paul let us know there cannot be any sin without the motions of sin working first. Where do those motions take place? They take place in the mind and then in the heart. Biblically speaking, how much distance is there between the heart and the mind? When temptation comes, a man may say in his heart or mind, "Well, that looks good. I know the Bible says it is wrong, but I'm going to do it anyway." There has to be a voluntary motion.

Someone may say, "They sinned ignorantly in the Old Testament." Yes, because God's law was written on the doorposts and on the shop walls, they could be ignorant of the law. However, in the New Testament God made it foolproof. He writes the law on your heart and in your mind. If He has not written it there, you are not accountable for it. If He has written it there, you are not ignorant of it.

Love involves an act of the will, a choice, or a commitment. First Corinthians, Chapter 13, the greatest passage on love in the Bible, has nothing at all to say about feelings or emotions. Every single quality attributed to love is an attitude that we may have toward another.

Love is a commitment to another person. It involves a definite choice not to do as you please, but to do what they please. It is true in the married life. First Corinthians 7:33-34 reads: "But he that is mar-

ried careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife . . . she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." Even though God says you must please Him, He gives you room to please your spouse. You should not please yourself. The temptation will be there, but you ought not do it.

A Divine Strength and Principle Within

Augustine said, "Love God and do as you please," but the truth is that you either love God *or* do as you please. You cannot do both at the same time. Even the sinless Christ did not find the things that naturally pleased Him to be consistent with His love for God. He had to choose in Gethsemane, and He chose not to please Himself. What caused Him to choose not to please Himself? His love for God.

Jesus said in Matthew 26:39, ". . . not as I will, but as thou wilt." Sometimes there will be struggles between what you might be pleased to do and what you ought to do, no matter how spiritual you are. Jesus had to go pray three times. Sinless Christ, love personified, One who had power to calm the sea or raise the dead, prayed three times. If Jesus had loved God and done as He pleased, there would have been no cross for Him and no salvation for any of us. If you do as you please, there will be no cross for you and no blessings for those you are meant to serve. Jesus said in John 14:23, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." Love is the way. This is the obedience of the faith.

Love is a divine strength and principle within you that enables you to lay aside your will and do God's will. We read in 2 Corinthians 5:12-17: "For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or

whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Paul was teaching that you have the love of God shed abroad within your heart by the Holy Spirit, and this causes you to labor for God intensely for the salvation of men. He lets you know that the love of God is not a feeling, but the love of God gives us good, sound reasons why you should overstep your own feelings and obey God.

The Constraining Love of Christ

The Apostle Paul told how the constraining love of Christ works. The love of God will straighten out your judgment. Your own human feelings and ideas will mislead you, but the love of God will be a constraining force within you that will cause you to judge right and to reason soundly.

Paul said, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge that if one [Christ] died for all, then were all dead" (verse 14). Now, here is the way the love of God will begin to work: Self is still there, your will is still there, and it will say, "This is foolish and unnecessary," but the love of God within you will cause you to judge that there is more reason to do what God said than not to do what He said.

Look what Paul said in the next verse: "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." We all were dead in tres-

passes and sins before Christ found us. We were in danger of hell. Jesus died for all of us to save us from that perdition. We are bought by His blood. The love of God constrains us to understand that if He died for us when we could not redeem ourselves, it is only good, sound thinking that we should live for Him who died for us. This is how the love of God will work.

You are not going to finish your course for God by just following some feeling. You will have to get right down to sound reasoning. The love of God will bring you to that place of sound reasoning: "Christ died for me. He raised me when I could not raise myself. Now, since He gave me this life, why shouldn't I live it for Him?"

Paul went on to say in verse 16, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh. . . ." Paul was saying that we esteem no man for his family relations or his stock because all men without Christ are shut up in unbelief.

We are living in a time when the literal Jews are being esteemed. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Paul preached that there is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile, so you need to quit making a difference between them! We cannot esteem a man who is a sinner even though he claims Abraham for his father. If he has not accepted Jesus Christ in salvation, none of those things matter. All people without Jesus Christ are just the same — sinners.

There were people in Corinth who were valuing themselves because they could say to Paul, "We lived when Jesus walked here; we saw Him in the flesh."

Paul said, in so many words: "I did not see Him, but it does not make any difference because He is not a fleshly Christ anymore; He is a spiritual Christ. If you could see Him in the flesh, it would not help you. You have to be a new creature

in Christ Jesus."

How does the love of Christ constrain you? The love of Christ constrains you, not with a force that pushes you, but that which would cause you to reason, "I serve God, not because I feel like it, but because it is right." The love of Christ will give you sound judgment. It will cause you to look at things in the right way. If you do not feel like going to church, the love of Christ will constrain you to sit down and reason, "I was lost, I was bound, and I could not lift myself from the quagmire, but Jesus lifted me." You will not think about it very long until you will be getting ready for church.

Sound Reasoning

John 15:10 says, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." There is a teaching abroad today which causes some to take these words very lightly. What is it? The teaching is that God's love is changeless, unconditional, and that He loves everyone just the same regardless of who he is or what he does. That is not true! He loves everyone, but not the same. He said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love."

God loves all men. He loves unrepentant sinners. Romans 5:8 says, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." God manifested His love toward us in that He gave His Son. God loves people who are not where they ought to be. God loves people who have allowed lukewarmness, carelessness, or indifference to get into their lives. Now, it is true that He loves all, but He does not love all just the same. If you do not obey His commandments, you will not remain in His love the same way that you would if you kept His commandments. There is a difference.

God loves us all as His people, but He loves some more than He does others. This is not what is be-

ing taught, but it is what Jesus taught. In John 19:26, 20:2, and 21:7,20, John is called the disciple whom Jesus loved. Someone may say, "Are you actually going to teach that Jesus loved John better than the rest of the disciples?" That is what the Bible says, and Jesus had reasons to love John best. Why? It was because of John's devotion to Him. John alone followed Christ through the bitterness of His trial with Pilate. John stood with Him at the Cross. Jesus put His mother into John's keeping. The more you love Jesus, the more He loves you.

Jude said in verse 21, "Keep yourselves in the love of God." If there was no way to fall out of the love of God, there would be no need to keep yourself in it.

You can only abide in God's love by keeping His commandments. Again, Jesus said in John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The love of God will be a constraining force which will cause you to know what is right and give you strength to overstep your own will and keep His commandments. If you keep His commandments, you will abide in His love. You will know the love of God in a greater way than the one who does not keep His commandments.

In John 15:7-8, and 11-12, Jesus told His disciples what it would mean to abide in His love. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you [it means answered prayer]. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples [it will make you fruitful] . . . These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full [it will affect your joy]. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." It will give you greater love for the brethren.

If your prayers begin to be answered as never before, if your personal relationships with other Christians became more warm and

fulfilling, if your joy begins to be fuller, you might think that a personal revival had come to you. These are the benefits that Jesus offers to those who love Him and keep His commandments. Obedience, when prompted by love, brings revival, and it is a revival that each of us can have.

When we pray for revival, all we can think about is a great wave of souls being saved. That is fruitfulness. However, the revival you need to pray for, my friend, is a revival within your own heart and life where the love of God will be shed abroad afresh. That will bring you

to a new level of obedience, and that will cause Christ's joy to remain in you. Your joy will be full and your life will begin to be fruitful.

I hope you understand the message: Love is not a compelling feeling within that will *make* you do God's will. No, many times you will not feel like doing it. However, if the love of God is there, you will begin to do some sound reasoning, and it will not be very long until you will be on your way to do what Christ wants you to do.

We are living in a time when everyone is seemingly looking for a feeling or a sensation of some kind,

but serving God is just obeying His Word. Why do we serve God? We do it because it is right. If you serve God for any other reason, you will have problems. You must serve Him because it is right! You should go to church because it is right! You should sing because it is right. The love of God sets up sound reasoning in your mind against every case that the devil can bring up. That constraining force, thank God, makes you able to override your own will and serve God.

(No recording is available.)

A Life of Sin Hard and Its Wages Sure

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

Sin is an employer, and whoever "committeth sin is a servant of sin" (John 8:34) and is doing his employer's work. This work is hard, for "the way of the transgressors is hard" (Proverbs 13:15). This is a voluntary service: "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness" (Romans 6:16). We choose our own master and are wholly responsible for the results.

Sin is like a big factory. Satan owns and controls the plant. Every man is assigned his work. What a motley crowd of servants! Here are found young and old, rich and poor, kings, statesmen, paupers, beggars, moral reformers, criminals, whoremongers, all grades of society working side by side. They all work without pause or rest. "There is no rest to the wicked." No vacations or holidays, none superannuated, nor any pensioners. To one the hard master says, "Get rich" and he bends all his efforts in that direction. To another, "Indulge in lust and be a sensualist," and that one ruins his character forever. To still another, "Act the hypocrite," and that person obeys, but his is tremendous work and it commands the highest wage, a "greater damnation." The

greater the light these slaves have received, the darker their sin and the stronger grows their earning power.

Every sinner is working under the wage system, for every sin has its wage. This is a proportionate wage. Certain kinds of work command the largest pay. The more work done, the greater the pay. Payday is coming. However, sin pays in part as work is being done. We see this in present disappointments, misery, woe, trouble, broken homes, ruined lives, jails, insane asylums, disease, deformations, and so on. These present installments of hell on earth are but a prelude of the final recompense. In the end the great wage that has accumulated through life will be paid in full. People are sure to get all they earned, and eternity will be one long payday.

Every lost being will "depart" from the pay station (the judgment) with his package (mind and soul) full of "shame and everlasting contempt," and in hell subsist on the wage of "everlasting punishment."

What a disappointment that will be! Payday is usually a happy day, a time when people line up, eager to receive their wage, but not so here. All will be lined up, and "every man will receive." Satan deceived them in life to believe they are working for riches, fame, and pleasure, but when they open their pack-

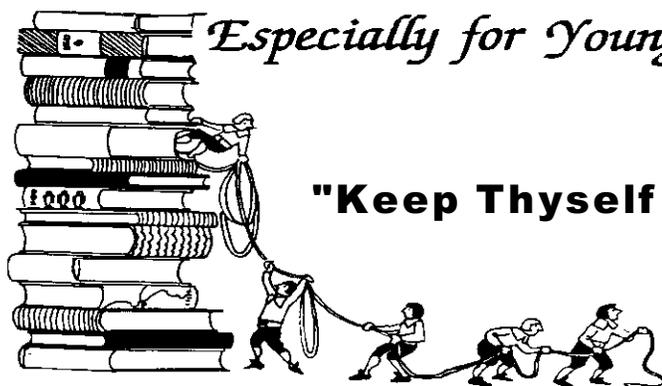
age on payday, it will be *death!* "The wages of sin is death." This means separation from God forever, a final, eternal separation, with no hope of a reunion. A separation from loved ones, and from all that is good, lovely, and pure.

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28).

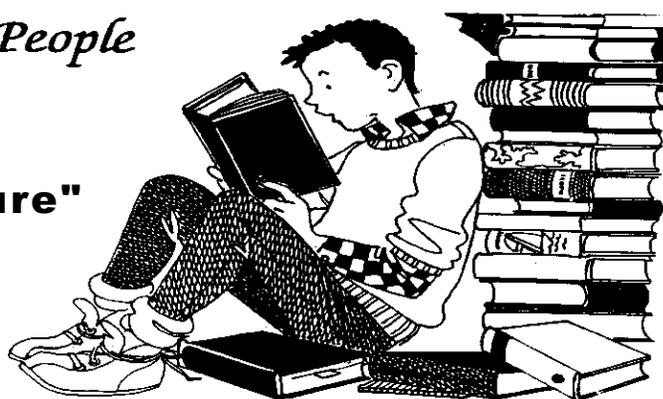
It will be death to peace of mind, to all noble feelings, to a pure character, to joy and happiness, and to all hope eternally. It will mean "tribulation and anguish" (Romans 2:9). These terms signify extreme torture, despair, and ruin. It will be confinement to the society of demons and the lowest of ages, the absence of all that can afford comfort and pleasure, and the presence of all that can create misery. An eternal consciousness of abiding wrath, of moral loathsomeness, growing worse as ages roll on, the working of uncontrolled passions and ungratified desires. There will be a constant sense of its all being self-caused and justly merited, and an utter inability to escape, or obtain mitigation, ever conscious that it is "everlasting." This is death, the true and sure wages of sin.

H. M. Riggle

Especially for Young People



"Keep Thyself Pure"



This is our earnest word of exhortation to you, young man, young woman. We can make no higher appeal than this. Purity is the highest attainment in life. Who can know something of its worth by what it cost. It cost the life blood of the Son of God. That blood is the fount of purity. The pure soul knows more of the real worth of things than any philosopher can through his philosophy. The pure sees the true worth where true worth belongs. It is only when the eye is single that the body is full of light. It is only when the soul is pure that vision is clear to see things as they are.

Moral purity is the sole condition of clear spiritual vision. True beauty is hidden from the sensual. Sensuality blurs and befores the glass through which the soul should look at the worthwhile things. What transparency is in the crystal, that is what purity is in character. The man of science scans the face of the sky and sees the distant star. The pure in heart look into the face of Jesus and behold the bright and morning star. Man, through his own wisdom, may know much about the works of God, but it is only the pure that know God. Things reveal themselves only to things of like nature. God, being pure, can reveal Himself only to the pure.

Man may invent machines whereby he can hear his fellows speaking across the continent or hear the song of the growing grass; he may gather pearls from the bottom of the sea; he may be able to explain the moon's control of the

tides; he may be able to analyze the various stratas of the earth; he may count the stars; he may weigh the sun; he may be able to tell you the distance to Arcturus, but if he does not have a pure heart, he cannot know God.

Not philosophic minds, but pure lives are the world's best teachers. The poor widow in her mountain cabin who has God in her soul can tell you more about the best things of life than the president of a theological seminary who does not have God. The pure light is the guiding star that leads the way to the worthwhile things of life. Men may teach you much about the mysteries of sound, of electricity, or of radio; but it is only the pure that can unfold the mysteries of God's wonderful economy of grace. Give me the man whose life is pure, though he be one of earth's most ignorant, that I may follow him instead of the man who can exhaust the dictionary in the use of words in lecturing upon the ape theory of the origin of man, or the man who surpasses the oratory of Cicero in denying the virgin birth of Christ. There was an old wood sawer who knew no grammar, who never saw inside a school room, who could not write his name, who could not write a word; but when he prayed, you felt that if you had put out your hand, you would touch God. Give me such a man for a teacher. An hour in his presence is worth days in the presence of the worldly wise. It is only those who are like God that can see and know Him. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Young man

and young woman, we exhort you to associate with the pure. You must shun the association with the impure. Just a little time spent in the presence of the vile and you will lose the clear vision of the delicacy of purity. A few moments contact with the ungodly will haze the mind until it will find it difficult to think the thoughts of God. A good man said, "I would give ten years of my life if I could forget the pictures which one year of my youthful days spent in impure doing has hung in my memory."

You need to keep yourself pure. Keep your thoughts pure. The indulgence of impure thoughts foul the very spring of life. A few impure imaginations dim the mind to that which is pure and beautiful. You cannot have a high standard of thought and nobleness of life if you indulge in vain imaginations. If evil images are tolerated in the silent halls of your imaginations, you will not see the realities and the beauties of worthy things.

Charles E. Orr

*I'd like to tell the story sweet
Of Jesus. Wouldn't you?
To help some other folks to meet
Their Savior. Wouldn't you?
I'd like to travel all the way
To where I'd hear my Jesus say:
"You've helped my work along today."
I'd like that. Wouldn't you?*

Selected

Matthew 14:14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may

go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

Giving of Yourself



Brother Jeff Wells

Jesus Will Seek You

When I first got saved, someone said to me, "I want you to get hold of God's arm with both hands and hang on with all you have, because you have a great shaking time coming." That person was right. My fingers are embedded in His arms, and I thank Him. A couple of times I slipped, and He reached down and pulled me right back up. I appreciate that. Satan has tried day in and day out to pull me back down, but by the grace of God, I am still standing, and I intend to keep standing.

Jesus tells you in Matthew 18:12-

13: "How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray."

Matthew 15:21-28 reads: "Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a

devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Verse

22 lets you know how to make Christ your personal Savior: cry out to Him for mercy.

Revelation 3:20 says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." The woman in the previous Scripture came out of the same coast and cried to Jesus, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David." Jesus went into the coast of Tyre and Sidon, and the woman was in the same coast. This shows that Jesus came to her. This represents Jesus standing at your heart's door waiting for you to call out, "Have mercy on me, O Lord," just as this woman did. Jesus will knock and call you to Him, but you must respond to His call if you want God to have mercy on your soul. When you open the door, He will come in and sup with you and you with Him. The devil will put in your mind that you have gone too far to be saved. No matter how far you have gone, Jesus will seek you.

Jesus went to the border of Tyre and Sidon. This area was northwest of Gennesaret, which was many miles by sea or land. It is not the geological area or distance that you need to see, but how far Jesus will travel for one needy soul. The woman was in need of Jesus, and He placed Himself close to her. Travel was not an easy thing in that day, especially for a woman. She probably would not have traveled to look for Jesus, and where would she start looking for Him in that vast land? Jesus knew this, and He made Himself available to her, just as He does with us today.

Luke 11:9 says, "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." There is no need to wander the vast land. Jesus said, "Ask . . . seek . . . knock, and it will be opened unto you." This woman did not know Jesus; she had only heard of Him. Tyre and Sidon were coastal towns. They traded by sea for their dye. Informa-

tion was passed by sailors and travelers of the sea.

The Tool of Unbelief

Mark 7:25 says, "For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet." Mark stated that the woman had heard of Jesus. That is a long way from witnessing with her own eyes the tales that she must have heard. She believed the stories of Jesus that she had heard. Today we have written Scriptures on the life of Christ and His instructions for our lives. We need to embrace Christ with the same faith that this woman did.

Matthew 15:22 tells it in more detail, saying that she cried out to Jesus. This means that she cried out from afar off, or a respectful distance. She did not even know Him. She was very respectful in her approach and stated, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David." Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you." However, He did not say it will be at that very moment. You will see as we study deeper in this lesson what God has for us.

Matthew 15:23 says that Jesus "answered her not a word." How many times have you prayed and not received an answer? The old devil will be there to tell you that God is not listening. The devil will use the tool of unbelief on you all the time, and it can cause you to feel depressed and downhearted. It is time to turn unbelief back on the creator of it. When the devil tells you his lies, saying that God is not listening, you need to remember that he is a liar. If you are irritating the devil that much, you are getting through.

The devil will try to stop you from praying. He knows that your strength comes from communication with God. He will try to control your moods when you are tired or busy to distract you from your daily communication with God. You are helping him if you put off praying because you are tired or really busy.

When Satan tells you that you can pray later or that it will be much better when you are rested or not so pressed for time, remember that the devil is a liar.

John 8:44 reads, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

As a Christian, your strength comes from your daily reading of the Bible and from your communications with God. The battle is with the devil keeping you from your daily communications with God. God is ready to give you what you need. Jesus said, "Ask," so if you ask and do not receive immediately, the devil will tell you, "See, you did not receive an answer to your prayer." What did Jesus say in Luke 11:9? "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." What is seeking God? In this lesson the woman cried out to Jesus, and He answered her not. No doubt, you know how it feels when you think Jesus is not listening to you.

How would you feel if the saints acted as unconcerned as the disciples appeared to be? Look at their comments in Matthew 15:23: "Send her away; for she crieth after us." The disciples saying, "Send her away" sounds cold and unconcerned. They had seen many miracles, and this one seemed so easy for Jesus. I believe their attitude was "Heal her daughter, because her crying bothers us, and we have more important things to do." They were more concerned about themselves than the needs of the woman. I do not believe the disciples meant any wrongdoing, but their attitude seemed very uncaring.

"Knock, and It Shall Be Opened Unto You"

We need to watch our attitudes toward those in need. We could appear uncaring to people in need.

We live in a time when people's feelings are right on their sleeves, so to speak. Jesus is a wonderful Savior to us. We need to get really close to Him, just as the disciples were with Him. They were with Him every day. If you are saved, Jesus is your friend and Savior. You worship your Savior and kneel at His feet as the woman did in Mark 7:25, which says, "For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet." She was seeking help. She had probably heard the disciples comment, "Send her away." As she was listening to this conversation, she had not moved. Then she heard the words of Jesus that made her seek diligently, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The woman knew she was not from the house of Israel, and the woman knew that Jesus was the answer for her daughter. She must get His attention for her daughter's sake.

Matthew stated, "She worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me." Mark shows her falling at His feet. Again, Luke 11:9 says, "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." The woman had asked, but Jesus answered her not. In Jeremiah 29:13 we read, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." The woman fell at Jesus' feet and diligently and earnestly tried to get Jesus' attention, saying, "Lord, help me." This is where she knocked.

When you knock on a door, you knock to get someone's attention. Knocking intently can get someone to open the door. Just knocking lightly may not get someone to open the door. I am sure that each of us, at one time or another, has not answered the door because of who was knocking. When you knock on a door, you always look around for signs to see if someone is home. This is seeking. You may look to see whether there is a car in the driveway. You try to be nonchalant, but

you look for signs to determine whether or not someone is home. Because you are seeking, you knock louder, and you may even call out someone's name. You think if the occupants could only see you, they would open the door.

We read in 1 John 3:22, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." We seek God by doing His commandments and by doing those things that are pleasing to Him. Can you now say that you understand what it means to ask and to seek? What did Jesus mean when He said, ". . . knock, and it shall be opened unto you"? Hebrews 11:6 says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Belief and faith are the sound of the knock that gets the Lord's attention. Once you get the attention of the Lord, the throne of God shall be opened to you.

"Faith as a Grain of Mustard Seed"

Matthew 17:20 reads, "And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." I do not know about you, but sometimes I make things more difficult than they need to be. Do you not think the devil uses the same tactic on you too? In order to move a mountain, you need to have faith. A mountain is huge. This thinking is where you make it difficult. Of course, the devil will try to convince you that you do not have much faith. Another tactic of Satan is to make your problems seem so big that unbelief will start to work on you. He wants to make you doubt in yourself and in your faith. This is where you may make things difficult. You may start to rely on

your own thinking and your own strength.

You may be thinking, "A big mountain means lots of faith is needed." You see, it is possible to set yourself up for discouragement. What did Jesus say in Matthew 17:20? "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed. . . ." The words "have faith" are key words in this phrase. Let us get our difficult thoughts out of the way and look at the simplicity of God. He made us, and He knows that we are weak. He knows that we look at other people and say, "He has more faith than I do." What does the Bible say in Romans 2:11? "For there is no respect of persons with God."

How much simpler can you get than to have faith as a grain of mustard seed? A grain is singular, not more than one. There are two reasons that you can fail when it comes to belief and faith. First, the mountain looks big; second, you rely on your own understanding concerning the amount of faith you need. What pleases God is that you believe in Him. Your individual faith knows that the power of God is what moves a mountain, or the power given by God will move that mountain. Sometimes it may seem that you are not getting the attention of the Lord. When this happens, you need to increase the knocking volume.

Praying and Fasting

Matthew 17:21 reads, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Fasting is a way to verify for your body and mind that God is first in your life. Fasting and prayer will bring the throne of God to your assistance. Fasting is more than going without food for a given time period. Fasting is a time when you bring your body under subjection with the soul in prayer. Prayer has to be in conjunction with fasting to keep the body under. The devil will use all his power to keep your body from being subject to a fast. Prayer in humble humiliation will

subject the body to the soul. Fasting is the volume control of your belief and faith. Fasting has been in existence for many centuries. Kings and queens have decreed their entire nations to fast on certain occasions because they had seen the successful results of the early Christians.

Here are some questions to ask yourself. Are you negligent in your fasting and praying? Do you really understand fasting? As I get into these questions, please do not feel that I am saying that the way you fast is incorrect. You must study to find yourself approved to God. God will show you light to enhance your fasting. Psalm 36:9 states, "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."

The Scriptures give directions on how to fast. In Matthew 6:16-18 we read: "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." Many people have a form of godliness, but they deny the Giver of power. Fasting has to be in the Spirit. If it is not, it is merely a form.

As you keep in mind Matthew's comments on fasting, you need to consider some pitfalls of the duty of fasting. You are not to be as the hypocrite when you fast. What are some other possible evils of fasting? There is formalism, sanctimony, strife, false profession, and unpleasantness. What are some requirements of the duty of fasting? There is benevolence, helpfulness, kindness, and sympathy. If all is done according to God's will, He will reward you openly.

A Pattern of Formalism

Isaiah 58:1-11 reads: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a

trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God. Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

"Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

"Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water,

whose waters fail not."

In verse 1 God was telling the Prophet Isaiah (or the ministers today) to cry out to His people. As you look at fasting down through time, you can see a pattern of formalism. You can see this in the rituals of the festivals during proclaimed fast days in early times. Even now, nominal religions have total formalism in their services.

First Corinthians 14:40 reads, "Let all things be done decently and in order." The difference between formalism and decency and order is the presence of the Holy Spirit. Formalism leaves no room for the Holy Spirit to work. It did have a place in the time of Moses concerning the way they dressed and other things; but in this New Testament dispensation, the Holy Spirit guides us. Just as Moses listened to God, we are to listen to the Holy Spirit. He will guide your life exclusively and will keep you in one accord and one place with God.

The Prophet Isaiah issued a warning to cry aloud against formalism and to avoid the distinguished mark of self-righteousness. The marks that people often have is a form of godliness. We read in Isaiah 58:2, "Yet they seek me daily." This is the outward observance of religious practices, such as attending services and being joyful in love of the songs. Who was Isaiah talking about? He was speaking of hypocrites. They understood righteousness because they were a nation of righteousness. They kept the ordinances of God, not for God's sake, but for their own sake. We are a nation of ceremonies and festivals. These things make people happy. These things make them feel good about themselves and their lives. As in nominal religion, they do not forsake the ordinances of God.

Fasting Without Understanding

Matthew 15:8 reads, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from

me." They told God what they did and how they afflicted themselves for Him by putting on a show of fasting, of bowing down their heads as a bullrush, and of spreading sackcloth and ashes under them. This was not an accepted fast to the Lord. Matthew 6:16 reads, "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."

As you study Isaiah, you will find that his day was much like our day. He lived in a time of ungodliness and idolatrous worship. God was using Isaiah to warn His people about the way of the hypocrites and to tell what He wanted from His people. So before you fast, you need to converse with God regarding the way to fast. You see, you may set your own time limits on your fast, what you drink during the fast, care for your medical needs, or whatever, but does it please God? You need to let the Holy Spirit guide you in fasting and not do what you think is the way to fast.

I never knew there was any other way to fast except by going without food. My fasting was without understanding. I love the Lord, and I want to do what is right. So I watched, listened, and studied. I felt that I had been going through a form of fasting. I was very dissatisfied about it. The only thing that I was doing was getting up in the morning and going without food until I did not know when. Then I heard that three o'clock in the afternoon was a time when one could eat. I was very unhappy with myself on this kind of fasting, and I started to seek God's face.

God kept bringing me back to Isaiah, Chapter 58. Verses 5, 6, and 7 were very outstanding Scriptures to me. The words in verse 5 are, "Is it such a fast that I have chosen? . . . is it to bow down his head as a bullrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?" Verse 6 says, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to

undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"

Verse 7 states, "Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" What God showed me here was to ask Him for a chosen fast. The flesh that I would have to put under was the most precious thing that I had. God showed me something that I thought I did not have, and that was time.

God's Chosen Fast

There are a few experiences that happened to my wife, Kathy, and me as we studied and asked God for a chosen fast. One morning we had to go to the bank. We stopped to do fifteen minutes of banking. We had prayed that morning, "Lead us, Lord, in a fast that You choose." We were there for two hours talking to a lady.

On another occasion we walked into the hospital just to sit in the lobby. A man in a wheelchair came through the door with four or five people with him. He brought his wheelchair right up next to Kathy and got close to her. I looked over there and recognized one man who was with him. The man I knew told me that the man in the wheelchair was suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease. I heard my wife ask him if he knew how to ask God for forgiveness. She was dealing with this man about his soul. As she talked to him, she told him that he had to forgive others, and that was where he drew the line. He backed away from her in his wheelchair and immediately shut her off. In both situations those individuals died not long after we spoke to them about their souls. God was faithful to send somebody to talk to them. You may never know why God asks you to do something, but He has a purpose for it.

You may think you know what God wants, but it is imperative that

you ask the Lord for a chosen fast. God wants you to stay in the spirit of His fast. The giving of yourself in a chosen fast that you can do on your own is not difficult, but when God is involved in it, you will see amazing things happen. While God was giving me understanding about fasting, He showed me what one could do on his own, but then He showed me what one cannot do on his own.

I had to keep going to Him in prayer and saying, "Lord, I can't do this." God was staging this. He laid a woman on my heart. I had worked with her at my place of employment. She was a very worldly person. I walked into one of the offices and I said, "I can't find So-and-So anywhere." A lady said, "Well, she's in a nursing home," and she told me where. So I went to see her. When I walked in, I did not recognize her. I said, "Are you So-and-So?"

She said, "Yes." Oh, she was so glad to see me and asked what I was doing there.

I said: "I had a life change, and God has laid you on my heart to come and see you." Since my wife and I went to see her, she has had two life and death medical conditions. At the first one she went through, she had not received Christ in her life. At the second one, she said she had reconciled with God. She has grown tremendously since that time, spiritually speaking. This is where the Lord helped us. We have had to spend time in prayer for this, because God has made it possible for us so that we can be there for her. Her sister who lives in Florida calls, and we pray with her on the phone. She has even spoken about how much her sister has changed. She is remarkably changed.

Now, this woman tries my patience. My wife and I do everything for her. We pay her bills, and I am her attorney-in-fact. Truthfully I do not have the patience. This is where God comes in. I say, "Lord, I know this is Your chosen fast for me. I need Your help with this," and in comes the compassion and the pa-

tience. From that experience, we have met so many people in that nursing home. What did we get out of this? God has rewarded us, not only with her salvation, but with being able to witness to other people in that nursing home. Whatever fasting you do, with no food or of self-giving, prayer has to be in conjunction with the fasting to keep the body under and in subjection to God.

Bear One Another's Burdens

As we consider the Canaanite woman, you can see that her maternal love was for her daughter. She stated, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David. My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." She knew that the situation at hand was out of her control. You can read that the devil vexed many souls in those biblical times.

In our day and age, we use different words to soften the expression. The word *vexed* means "annoyed, angry, provoked, irritated, displeased, cross, upset, aggravated, problematic, debated, difficult, controversial, troublesome, contentious, tricky." Now you can look at your life to see if any of those things are working on you. As a child of God, I can see where the devil can work undetected in human nature to try to vex souls.

The woman cried out, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David." In no way can you control

the devil without the power of God in your soul. Try putting yourself in the woman's place. Mark stated that she fell at Jesus' feet. Here she was at the feet of Jesus crying out to Him, but He answered not a word to her. Then she heard the disciples say, "Send her away, for she cries after us." Her heart probably just about stopped as she waited for Jesus to reply. This is the reason it is important to help share the burdens and the afflictions of others with whom you come in contact.

Galatians 6:2 says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." As a Christian, you are to fulfill the law of Christ by bearing one another's burdens. Romans 8:16 states, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." What would go through your mind if you heard a child of God say, "Send her away, because she is crying after us?" I am sure you would perceive that person did not care about you or you may get the idea that person thinks he is better than you are. Look at a couple of Scriptures that warn of this and give a way to avoid it. The warning in Galatians 6:3 says, "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."

To avoid thinking too much of ourselves, we are instructed in Philippians 2:3, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." God

set this up for a purpose. Galatians 6:5 reads, "For every man shall bear his own burden." No one else can help you bear this burden. Each of us will bear this burden in front of the throne of judgment.

Jesus answered the woman in Matthew 15:24, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The Canaanite woman knew she was in no position to help her daughter, because she herself was wanting.

Verse 25 tells us, "Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me." When issues come up that we cannot handle, we need to ask, "Am I in the will of God?" The Canaanite woman put herself as low as a dog at her master's table just to have a few crumbs that fell from the table. In other words, she was saying, "Lord, I will be satisfied in the house of Israel even if it is the lowest place that I can possibly be." Her daughter was made whole from that very hour. You need to check your life as the Canaanite woman did. You cannot help your children, your friends, or the world unless you are in the will of God. My fasting was in very poor position, but since the Lord has enhanced my fasting, I have noticed an amazing change, not only in my prayer life but also in my answered prayer life. I give the Lord all the glory and the thanks for this.

(Compact Disc TR-1148E)

Take the Time to Ask

A well-known businessman bought a large insurance policy on himself. It was so large that the newspapers published the story. One of the man's friends, an insurance agent, asked why he didn't buy the policy from him. The businessman replied, "You never asked me."

Could it be that some of your neighbors would attend Sunday school next Sunday if you just asked them? Could it be that some will never accept Christ because you never asked them? Some people are just waiting to be asked. Make sure you take the time to ask.

Matthew 18:1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as

little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARING THE FAITH



Brother Garrett Haylock

Having a Childlike Spirit

Children, in their childlike spirit, are teachable and easy to be entertained. As adult Christians, many times we underestimate the value of the time vested in working with children. Many times we fail to see how important they are. They are such an integral part of the church. They are part of the church today as well as tomorrow.

Generally, children are so forthright. They do what is needed.

They seem to be right on top of things, in most instances. I know of a little girl whose mother used to take her to the office occasionally where she worked. Some of the men there smoked, and she told someone if he did not stop smoking, he was going to die and go to hell. When I heard that, I thought about the warning that is printed on packs of cigarettes, that smoking cigarettes is hazardous to your health. I wonder if it said, "Continue to smoke and you will die and go to hell" if that

would be a more powerful message.

Many times children will tell people exactly what needs to be said. Sometimes as adults, we are hesitant to say certain things, although we do have to be careful of what we say. Someone once said, "There are two things that are equally bad: to speak when you should be quiet and to keep quiet when you should speak." Both are bad, but children with that childlike spirit and attitude are quite effective. I thought about the Scripture when

Jesus said to the disciples in John 4:35, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

Let us read about the faith of a little girl that is recorded in 2 Kings 5:1-3, which states: "Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper. And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy." Many times we see people who are lost in sin, bound by habits and addictions; yet weeks, months, and sometimes years go by and we never say anything to those individuals about their souls.

This little girl was in captivity, but she remembered that back home there was a great prophet. There is still a God in Heaven, and He had a prophet in Samaria. She ventured to speak even though she could have been reproved or rebuked because she was a servant girl. She was not on the same standing as her mistress or the household members. Naaman was a soldier going off to wars, but he was a leper. Upon learning this, the young servant girl thought about who was back home.

We try to train our children well. We see them go out into the world and see them encounter situations at school and elsewhere. They see things, and they may think: "Oh, if they would only come to church, God could help them. There is a man of God there that could pray for them. There are people of God who would embrace them and make a difference in their lives."

How often do you invite people to your church services? You may tell yourself: "Oh, they probably go

somewhere else. They do not look like they would come." Why not? So many times people make excuses. You need to ask God to help you to take on that childlikeness and be quick to tell others about Jesus, about the goodness of the God that we serve. As children grow, they will enter higher schools of learning. Some will probably go to college. It is so important to have them properly trained and taught at an early age so that they can help others.

Making a Difference in Other People's Lives

What about people who are not saved? So many times we are hesitant in sharing our faith. You may run some risks, but it is necessary. I often think of the heavy load that many people carry on their shoulders. When an individual with whom you are acquainted is cut off suddenly in death, then you realize you will never have another chance to speak to that person, because he or she is gone. It is sad to look back and see the many opportunities that you might have had and yet you never did anything about them. I had a few of those instances, and it really hurt me. I spoke to a young man who worked at an airport. This young man was a dear friend of mine. I think he was about nineteen or twenty years of age. I invited him to the revival services, and he said he was sorry, but he was working every evening. He said he was working double shifts that week. I said, "Well, why not come out on Sunday then?"

He said, "I have to fill in for a coworker on Sunday."

I said, "When you are too busy to have time for God, you are too busy."

That is how we parted. We had the meeting, and I think it was within the same month that this young man was a passenger in a car and the driver ran into a wall. When they got my friend to the hospital, the doctors put him on life support and kept him there for a couple of

days, and then he died. I questioned myself, even though I had invited him: "Could I have done a little more? Could I have been a little more convincing?"

So many times we see people, not realizing how close they are to eternity, yet we hesitate to speak to them. A few lines of a song goes like this (supposedly this is at the Judgment): "*You met me day by day, and knew I was astray, Yet you never mentioned Him to me.*" Even though you say you are a Christian, what a terrible thing it is to know there is no chance to undo a careless moment or a careless lifetime. You can tell by a person's lifestyle that he is unsaved, yet you do not mention Jesus to him. Many people have the good news of the Gospel preached to them, but so few are free in the sharing of it. Our witness is important.

It has been said that before the Titanic sank, three warning messages had been sent that said to watch out for icebergs, but because everything looked all right, the folks taking the messages never passed them on. They never sent the warnings to the people in charge who needed to hear them. As a result, more than fifteen hundred people lost their lives. The folks who knew about the icebergs kept quiet. Child of God, you know the Truth. How many of the lost are you willing to risk sharing the Gospel with?

Taking a Risk for Others

Another tragedy of the Titanic was that the lifeboats designed to carry people away from the sinking ship were only half full. People who made it to safety in the lifeboats did not want to turn around and pick up people who were dying. They did not want to take a risk of panicking people flipping over their lifeboats. You need to take the time to think that over. Suppose you were one of those in a lifeboat? Suppose you were the one who was in control or in charge of the lifeboat, and as the cries for help were going out, you were afraid to take the risk of help-

ing people who really needed help, because you were afraid they might flip over the lifeboat. After you got to safety and saw the headline "Titanic Sinks—Over Fifteen Hundred Casualties," then you remembered how few people were in your lifeboat. I can imagine you would have nightmares for the rest of your life over that. You could have gone back, you could have made a difference in another person's life, but you did not share.

The little captive maiden was quick to say there was a prophet in Samaria that could cure her master of leprosy. She wanted to let him know right away that there was hope. Today people really need us to remind them that there is hope in Jesus Christ. Not all of those fifteen hundred people who died on the Titanic had to die. The folks in the lifeboats did not want to go back because it was risky. Sharing the Gospel has some risks, mostly the risk of rejection. You may think, "If I speak, he will not accept my invitation" but at least you would have given it.

Another risk is that of being made fun of. Someone may reply, "Go to church? Me?" At least you invited him. Another risk is being called "holier than thou." Someone may accuse you of thinking that you are the only one who is saved. I have heard that before, but at least I invited them to come to the services.

If more people would adopt a childlike attitude, possibly many more people would be saved. We want more lost souls to hear the Truth. Often we become so cautious as we become adults, concerned about offending someone or wondering how we are going to come across. Another risk is the chance of being avoided or of being asked questions that we may not know the answer to.

Sometimes when people ask me questions, I say, "I do not know right now, but if you will give me a little time, I will look it up and give you the answer later." Other times people may try to throw you a curve or

want to cut you off, but at least you have tried. Let us share our faith and our experiences with others. We never know when it may be a soul-saving moment.

Being a Witness

Sometimes you may think there is no way that a certain person would come to church and get saved, but how are you going to know unless you make an effort to invite that person? You need to ask God for that childlike spirit and attitude that would cause you to witness. I do not know if I would say that children are really bold. They are just children, and they do what children do. They will go right up to a person and say what is on their minds. Children just have a way of telling you the truth.

I had a grandfather who would greet people, ask them their names, and talk to them about their family; then he would ask: "Are you saved? If you died tonight, would you know that you are going to Heaven?" It did not matter to him who he was talking to, he just had that childlike way about him. Sometimes people would say to him, "Well, Uncle Joe (he was named Joe), I want you to pray for me when you are praying today." He would say, "Come; I will pray right now." Right in the middle of town, he would get people off to the side and pray for them. If a person did not come, he would get right down on his knees and lift his hands to Heaven and pray.

Many times we say, "Okay, we will remember you in prayer in the service tonight." Do we really know if they are going to be alive then? That childlike spirit, or that childlike way, should cause us to do what needs to be done right then. Jesus was talking with His disciples and said in John 4:35a, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?" So many times people lose opportunities, and it is not until others have gone that they say, "I should have prayed for that person,

and I should have done this." If you have that childlike spirit, you will do it right then.

Children feel like playing, and sometimes we have to tell them, "This is no time to play." They are children, and naturally they feel like playing, so that is the reason God gives them parents who have to teach them that there is a time for everything. As things come to children's minds, they just do it. Adults often contemplate whether now would be okay or if tomorrow would be a better time. No doubt, you have heard the old adage, "Do not leave for tomorrow what you can do today"; yet many times we leave for tomorrow what we should do today. God wants us to be proactive. He wants us to have a real concern for every lost soul.

Souls are being lost daily. People are being lost because the good news of the Gospel has not reached them. Why? Some may say, "Well, that is the reason we have to pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth more laborers." Yes, but are you doing all that you can? Am I doing all that I can? May God help us to be like children.

We are not to say, "Yet four months, and then there will be harvest." Many times we think the end of the world is far off. We almost feel like it is not going to happen, but folks, let us be in earnest. Jesus was speaking to His disciples when He said, "Say not ye, There are yet four months." They were adults. We need to really get out there and help the cause.

Needlessly Lost

I know this is American History, but I want you to read of the account of the Battle of New Orleans in the year 1814. "It was Christmas-time, yet British and American soldiers facing each other outside New Orleans had little reason to expect peace on earth. [This story is called *The Battle After the War*.] It was 1814 and the United States had been at war with Britain for two years.

British forces had been planning to move against New Orleans for months. They assigned an expeditionary force in Jamaica and sailed for the United States. The plan drawn up by Admiral Alexander Cochrane was to capture Mobile, Alabama, and march to New Orleans. The plan failed when the British were unable to take Mobile. Unwilling to give up, the British decided on a more direct route up the Mississippi River and through the bayous and swamps.

"The United States assigned General Andrew Jackson to defend the Gulf Coast. He arrived in New Orleans with a small army on December 12, 1814. He ordered his troops to guard the roads and waterways leading to the city, but the British slipped through. On December 23 General Jackson learned of a British force advancing from the south commanded by General John Keane. The British were only nine miles away from New Orleans. General Jackson ordered a night attack that pushed back the British, and he then withdrew the American forces to a strong defensive position behind the Rodriguez Canal. The Mississippi River and a cypress swamp protected the ends of 'Line Jackson.'

"On the following day, Christmas Eve, representatives of both nations gathered at Belgium to sign the Treaty of Ghent. This resolution ended the war and restored any captured territory to its prewar holder. Unfortunately, it would be

weeks before the news crossed the Atlantic Ocean. Meanwhile, the struggle for New Orleans continued. On Christmas Day General Edward Pakenham was ordered to control the British land operations while the Americans spent the holiday working to make their positions stronger. The armies sparred on December 28 and again on New Year's Day. The final phase of the battle took place on January 8, 1815, more than two weeks after the treaty was signed.

"The British troops outnumbered the Americans and were better trained, but General Jackson had his army in a good defensive position. In the predawn hours, Pakenham ordered his troops to storm Jackson's line. As the British advanced later that morning, a dense fog hindered their movements. However, the fog lifted and the British were able to get near the American lines. Now visible to the U.S. artillery, the British formations were easy targets. The American cannons ripped huge holes in the British lines, yet the British advance continued. When the British forces came within two hundred yards, American marksmen opened fire.

"By 8:30 that morning the Americans had killed almost 300 British soldiers, including two generals, and about one hundred twenty British soldiers were wounded [Note: Wikipedia shows that 1,267 were wounded], five hundred were captured, and about seventy soldiers were killed or wounded

from the United States."

It is tragic that all those men lost their lives in the Battle of New Orleans because they did not get the good news. What was the good news? The war was over! Why did the news not get there? It did not get there because of the great distance in between. The fact is, if it were possible for the news to have reached those front lines, where both armies were confronting each other, one side could have waved the white flag and, no doubt, all arms would have been laid down. Many lives were lost because the good news did not get to them.

My question is, how many souls are going to be lost because they did not get the good news from us? Jesus said to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. Let us not take the attitude of "yet there are four months." I believe sinners sometimes take that attitude mentally as well. They sing a song over in Honduras that says, "They are sinking and they are saying it is time enough yet." Let us not adopt that mentality. Christian, there is not time enough yet. According to the signs and the writing on the wall, we are in the last of the last days. Let us make sure that the good news that Jesus still saves, Jesus still keeps, and Jesus still satisfies gets to those who need to hear it before it is eternally too late. May God bless you is my prayer.

(Compact Disc TR-1224M)



Meeting Announcement

Newton, KS

September 8-14

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

Evangelist: Bro. Irwin Seshier, Heath, Ohio

Service times: Monday-Saturday 7:00 p.m. Sunday 10:45 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

For additional information, contact: Pastor Sandy Killfoil @ 316-587-5275

The Call to Holiness

There is no doubt about the call. It is on every page of the Scriptures, and the reason for it is in the nature and character of God. Holiness is not optional, but it is imperative. Because God is holy, His people must be holy. Without holiness no man can see the Lord. The command of God is that we be holy. If holiness is His will and His command, He must have made it possible, otherwise He would mock us and call us to an unequal and unfair task. Life would be doomed to disappointment and dissatisfaction, failure, and condemnation.

When God calls us to holiness, it is frankly admitted that the demand is beyond us. God gives what we cannot gain by any will or effort of our own. It is without price, because it is priceless, and it is not of works, because it is beyond man's possibility.

God wills that we live holy lives. Of that there is no doubt. It is not a doctrine of man to be accepted or declined. We are called to holiness, and God requires His people to be holy. His holiness is the pattern, and His people are to be holy because He is holy, and His holiness is the pattern and standard of His demand. Absolute holiness belongs to God alone, and when He commands that His people be holy as He is holy, it means that every quality of holiness in Him must be in them, even as Jesus commanded, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." What He wills He commands. "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 4:7-8). To reject the

call to holiness is to reject God – to despise God. To deny the call is to deny the Holy Spirit.

The will of God implies purpose, and purpose is dependent upon power, and power assumes provision. What God wills to be, He must be able to do; what He requires He must make possible. God cannot make saints as He makes worlds. When He wills man to be holy, another will is involved. Man cannot be holy apart from consent and without cooperation. Ezekiel, Chapter 36, is the chapter of God's "I wills." At the end of the chapter, God says: "I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it" (verse 36), and immediately adds another "I will": "Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them" (verse 37). God's will waits for man's will; and God's power is conditioned upon man's consent.

Saints are God's workmanship. Paul prayed in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, "The very God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly." It is the Lord who separates the godly to Himself, and He alone can make that which is separated to be holy in nature and character. There is cleansing required that is beyond man's power, and there is a sanctification to be wrought that God alone can do. The carnal mind is rooted in the subsoil of human nature, and man knows that he cannot make himself clean. It takes God to purify the heart. He does that which He wills and commands.

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). We are sanctified through the Word of God. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). We are made holy

through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2). We are saved through faith. From first to the last, salvation is of grace through faith. As we are justified by faith, so are we sanctified by faith.

If man must be holy to see God, there must be some point at which the work is done. Because the blessing seems impossible outside heaven, there are many who believe that it takes place at death. There is no Scripture authority for such belief, and death is never said to be either the time or the means of sanctification. Because many regard holiness as a state toward which they continually strive but never attain, it is thus always an ideal and never an experience that they attain.

We do not grow into the experience of living holy, but we grow in it. The holy have their fruit unto holiness. The branch in the vine is cleansed, that it may bring forth more fruit; the call to holiness is a call to a holy life. It is a tragedy when those who call themselves holiness people are not holy.

The garden of God can suffer no neglect. Holiness involves diligence in cultivation, watchfulness in discipline, attention to nourishment, and exercise in godliness. The perfect must go on to perfection, and perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. The God that sanctifies can keep, and His keeping is complete. He keeps the spirit holy; He keeps the soul unspotted. Man cannot make himself holy, and he cannot keep himself holy. God can keep. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

Selected

SPRING 2014 CAMP MEETING RECORDINGS

Recrd. No.	Date	Message Title	Minister
TR-1354	6-15-2014	The Importance of a Godly Father	Bro. Roger L. Decker
TR-1355		The Simplicity of the Gospel	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1356	6-16-2014	He's a God of Mercy	Bro. Joe Brewer
TR-1357		Lessons on Prayer, Part 1	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1358		When Do We Receive the Holy Spirit?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1359	6-17-2014	Living Life With No Regrets	Bro. Paul Prinkey
TR-1360		Lessons on Prayer, Part 2	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1361		Sanctification	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1362	6-18-2014	Bribery	Bro. Calvin Foster
TR-1363		Lessons on Prayer, Part 3	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1364		What Does the Rich Man See When He Lifts Up His Eyes?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1365	6-19-2014	Lessons on Prayer, Part 4	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1366		Have You Forgiven Yourself?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1367	6-20-2014	Lessons on Prayer, Part 5	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1368		The Danger of Resisting the Holy Ghost	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1369	6-22-2014	A Functional Unity	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1370		Make Not Provision for the Flesh	Bro. Larry Dishman
	6-19-2014	DVD - Pilgrim's Progress - Part 1	Sis. Karen Wilks
	6-20-2014	DVD - Pilgrim's Progress - Part 2	Sis. Karen Wilks
	6-21-2014	DVD - Pilgrim's Progress - Part 3	Sis. Karen Wilks
TM-332	2014	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #1	
TM-333		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #2	
TM-334		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #3	
TM-335		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #4	
TM-336		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #5	
TM-337		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #6	
TM-338		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #7	
	2014	Spring Camp Meeting Choir Songs # 1	
		Spring Camp Meeting Choir Songs # 2	
	2014	All Morning & Evening Messages in MP3 Format (1 CD)	
		All Teaching (Afternoon) Services in MP3 Format (1 CD)	
		All Songs for the Spring Camp Meeting in MP3 Format (1 CD)	

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