

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 44 January 2014 No. 1



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*

# Guest Editorial

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

## THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER USPS #871620

Periodicals postage paid at the post office in Newark, Ohio 43055.

POSTMAN, send form 3579 to the printer:

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER  
675 N. Cedar Street  
Newark, Ohio 43055

This periodical carries no subscription price; however, it is partially maintained through the gifts and offerings of its readers, with the balance of the expenses being paid by the local congregation.

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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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"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

1 Corinthians 3:9

"We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

2 Corinthians 6:1

### LABORING WITH CHRIST

As disciples of Christ, we are to be laborers with Him, building up the Kingdom of God. Working together in harmony as God's people, our efforts are to be focused on winning honest hearts to the Lord and to the Truth. The Lord has a specific mission for each brother and sister to perform. Each worker is important and necessary to accomplish the mission of spreading the Gospel to a lost world.

When each individual dedicates his or her talent and ability to Christ, He can direct individuals in the way that He pleases. Having a burden and being willing to contribute time, energy, and talent to His cause is necessary. Faithfulness to God and His work conveys an important message to those watching our lives. Friends, neighbors, people we work around or with whom we attend school can see what is most important in our lives.

All of us will not be called to be preachers, and not everyone will be an evangelist, a singer, or a teacher. Yet we all can be workers and helpers together, each filling his or her place in the body. It is not just working and doing what we think is good, but it is working in harmony for the glory of God. Working together demonstrates unity.

Laboring together creates a close relationship with Christ and with one another. Unity in heart and spirit is so essential, espe-

cially in a world where division and strife run so prevalent. Satan has those in denominationalism so divided and separated that it is impossible for them to be profitable for the Lord. Through deceitfulness, Satan strives to bring division among the saints. God's people must be on guard and reject Satan's tricks to separate us from Christ and from one another. There is power in unity, and Satan knows this; therefore, we must stay focused on the directives that the Lord has laid out for us to follow. Jesus reminds us of the need of being one with the Father. He prayed for this oneness and unity to be among His people. His words in John 17:11 were, "Holy Father, keep in thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

As the world looks on the church and sees genuine love and concern being manifested from heart to heart, it creates a drawing effect on honest, peace-seeking souls. Love for Christ, first of all, and love one to another is the key to success and unity. In John 13:34-35 Jesus said: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Love is the major ingredient in Christianity that binds

[continued on page 9]

*Daniel 9:20 And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God;*

*21 Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.*

*22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.*

*23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth,*

*and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.*

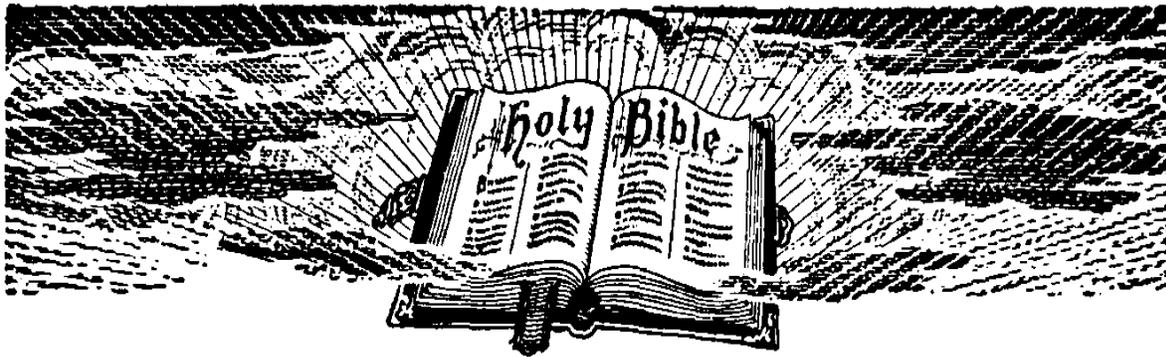
*24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*

*25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore [which is sixty] and two weeks: the street shall be*

*built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

*26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

*27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*



# The Setting Up of the Kingdom

*Part 1 of 2*

*Brother Roger L. Decker*

## "A More Sure Word of Prophecy"

Second Timothy 2:15 says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." We want to look into Old Testament prophecy to pinpoint the exact time of the setting

up of the Kingdom of God. This is important. What was the first message that Jesus ever preached? It is written in Mark 1:14-15: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent

ye, and believe the gospel."

Peter had much to say about prophecy. He said in 2 Peter 1:19-21: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first,

that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

In these Scriptures the Apostle Peter tells about prophecy, and he said we would do well to pay attention to it. He said it is a light shining in a dark place and that it is of no private interpretation. Also, he let us know that it was not the thoughts of the prophets, but it had its origin with the Holy Spirit.

The prophecy regarding the setting up of the Kingdom of God is one of the most pinpointed prophecies in the Bible. Although Daniel is considered to be a minor prophet, in my opinion, he dealt with some major issues. You may say, "I don't care whether the kingdom is set up or not." You need to care, and you need to care whether or not you are in it, because the Bible lets us know that when Jesus comes, He is going to deliver up the kingdom. It is of vast importance to know whether or not you are a member of God's kingdom. I do not understand how people can sit in a Babylonian congregation where the sect does not believe that the Kingdom of God has come yet, at the same time, believing it is out in the future, and yet they claim to have a born-again experience and be in the kingdom.

### **Why Was Daniel Given This Prophecy?**

First, Daniel had a burden for God's people, and he also believed that God's Word was factual. He believed that what God said He would do and that what God said would happen. We read in Daniel 9:2, "In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem." What did Daniel do? He understood that, and he knew nothing had happened yet.

Daniel said in verse 3, "And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes."

The prophecy that Daniel understood is found in Jeremiah 25:11-12: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations." Daniel had read in the Book of Jeremiah that Judah was going to be in Babylonian captivity for seventy years. Therefore, Daniel sought the Lord in prayer and fasting, and he wanted God to remove His wrath and forgive their sins.

There is something else that you need to know about Daniel. The latter part of Daniel 9:23 says, ". . . for thou are greatly beloved." God loved Daniel in a special way. Daniel was true to God. He believed God, and he put God first in his daily life. I say again, this prophecy is the most pinpointed of all prophecies that deal with a specific time.

In the earlier part of Daniel, Chapter 9, Daniel confessed his sin and the sins of Judah as a nation. Daniel said in verses 7-8: "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee."

Daniel said they were in confusion of faces. What brought about the confusion? The Bible lets us know in 1 Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the

saints." Daniel said in Chapter 9 that confusion of faces belonged to them. They had ceased to be loyal to God. Verse 7 says they trespassed, verse 8 says they sinned, verse 9 says they rebelled, and verse 10 says they disobeyed. Is it any wonder they were in the shape they were in? Sin will bring shame and disorder in a person's life. They were covered with shame.

There are some things a man of God would not even have to deal with if people would leave sin alone. Some people get lean in their souls, and the next thing they know, they begin to entertain things they would not have entertained when they were spiritual. I repeat, sin will bring shame and disorder. Sin changes a person's way of life, and then families get embarrassed, homes split up, and children have to choose between parents. That certainly ought not to happen in a Christian home. The world is full of that, but it ought not to be in the church. There should be a mother and a father in a home, not two fathers or two mothers.

Judah was in need of repentance, and there was only one in the land of Babylon who recognized it, and that was Daniel. He was the only one who recognized the true need of Israel.

### **The Way Out of Confusion**

One of the biggest sins prevalent today is division, and there is going to be a price to pay. Is it any wonder that hypocrisy is the rule for many people instead of the exception to the rule? Do you know what a hypocrite is? He is an actor, a pretender, one who plays the part. Did you ever wonder, if Jesus tarries, what the next generation of the church is going to be like? Division has done a devastating work. It puts out what vision ones did have and causes souls to perish. Proverbs 29:18 reads, "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

Daniel had enough godliness

about him to realize the way out of confusion and shame was by the route of repentance. Friend, the way out of your confusion is to repent. Daniel knew there had to be a turning. To receive a revelation of the seventy weeks, it had to come from God Himself. Therefore, God sent an angel called Gabriel. The angel Gabriel was sent from God to fly swiftly and to touch him at the time of the evening sacrifice. Daniel 9:21 states, "Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation."

The Bible does not reveal how long Daniel prayed, but he was not done yet, and the angel had to touch him to get his attention. The angel left at the start, and the angel interrupted him and touched him. He was sent to give Daniel skill and understanding. Daniel was concerned about Judah's welfare as a nation. What would happen? What was going to take place after the seventy weeks?

Every time Gabriel appeared, his appearances preceded quite an event. Gabriel was sent by God to give understanding. Every time he appeared, he had a message to bear. He appeared to Daniel in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, he appeared to Zacharias (the father of John the Baptist), to Mary (the mother of Jesus) to give her comfort, and to Joseph in a dream to calm his fear. Every time he appeared, a great event was about to take place.

### **The Message to Daniel**

Let us look at the message that God had Gabriel take to Daniel. Now, we are going to get into some numbers, and it is very necessary that you understand this. I want you to follow along in your Bible. I want to focus on verse 24 of our Scripture text, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make

reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." He said seventy weeks are "determined," which means they are fixed, or decreed. Why was Israel cut off? When writing to the Romans, Paul said in Romans 11:20, "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off." The seventy weeks were how long God was going to put up with Israel of old.

Seventy weeks were determined upon the people and upon the holy city. The holy city was Jerusalem. I will prove it with Scriptures. Revelation 21:2 tells us, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Revelation 21:10 reads, "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."

In the Old Testament in Isaiah 52:1 we read, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Nehemiah 11:1 states, "And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell in other cities."

We know what is called the holy city. The holy city is Jerusalem, but who were the people? The people were the people of Israel, who were divided at the time. Israel was divided into a northern kingdom and a southern kingdom. Daniel was saying that Old Testament Israel was going to cease from being God's people. God was going to have a new Israel, and He was going to have a new holy city. I will prove it by the Bible. God's wrath was filled up, and Daniel told why it was filled up. He said it was due to their rebellion, their sin, and their trespasses. He said to them belonged confusion

of faces. If you have sin in your life, you have rebellion and confusion in your life.

### **The Old and the New Covenants**

A split took place right after King Solomon's death. There was Judah (Jesus came out of the tribe of Judah). Judah was in the south. The other tribes, called Israel, were in the north. To understand this prophecy, you must have something to calculate it with. There are two things you definitely have to know. If you get these two things, then you can pinpoint the prophecy. One is how time is figured. The second is when to start the time. If you can understand those two things, you can pinpoint when the kingdom was set up. How did they figure time? What was Daniel talking about when he spoke of weeks? If you start in B.C., you can find out when the kingdom was set up.

Literal Israel, being God's people, and continuing under the old covenant, was coming to an end. God was going to make a new Israel. Reading some Scriptures in the Old and the New Testaments will show you this.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 states: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."

"And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for

I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." The law would be in their inward parts; in other words, in their minds and in their hearts.

The New Testament writer in Hebrews picks up these same thoughts. Hebrews 8:7-13 reads: "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." The Hebrew writer repeated portions of the prophecy of Jeremiah.

### **Who Is a Jew?**

Now we are going to talk about Israel a little, and then we are going to get into the time element. Romans 9:6 says, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." In other words, not all those who call themselves God's people are His children; that is all he was talking about. Not all the people in Israel were true Israelites. Verses 7-8

read: "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Not all of Israel were of Israel.

Galatians 6:15-16 says: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." God still has a Jerusalem, but it is the spiritual Israel now; it is a spiritual Jerusalem under the new covenant.

You may say, "Well, once a Jew, always a Jew." That may be true literally, but not spiritually. Paul said in Romans 2:28, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh." Who is a Jew? He went on to say in verse 29, "But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." We have new Jews, and they have to dwell in a new Jerusalem.

### **The Number of the Days**

To pinpoint this prophecy, you have to know how time is figured, and when to start it. If you are going to come up with those years, you must have a starting time. Seventy weeks represents weeks of years. Each week is seven years. The angel Gabriel said seventy weeks are determined. You can find these answers right in the Bible. I might add, I do not know of any Bible scholar who disagrees along this line of figuring the years.

A day represents one year. No doubt, you have read in the Old Testament about how Jacob loved Rachel. He served her father Laban seven years for her, but what happened? When it came time for Laban to fulfill his part of the agreement, he deceived Jacob and gave him Leah (Rachel's older sister) as a wife,

claiming that it was only right to give his firstborn ahead of the younger. Finally, after some discussion, Laban agreed to give Rachel to Jacob, but only after Jacob agreed to labor for Laban seven years longer. Why? When Jacob was there, God blessed Laban's home.

Genesis 29:27-28 says: "Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week [a week represented seven years]: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also."

In Numbers 14:33-37 we read: "And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. I the LORD have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die. And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land, Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD."

In the Bible, time is figured as a day for a year, so seventy weeks equals four hundred ninety years. What is the starting date of the Kingdom of God? Daniel 9:25 says, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

### **The Four-Year Error**

We need to start at the proper time in history. There were four

decrees given to go back to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. The decree I used for the study is found in Ezra 7:6-7, and this is what Ezra said: "This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him. And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king." Artaxerxes was king from B.C. 464 to B.C. 423. In the seventh year would make the starting time B.C. 457.

Daniel 9:25 tells us, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore [sixty] and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." When you add that all together, seven plus sixty-two is sixty-nine weeks. Remember that a day represents a year, so a week equals seven years. Sixty-nine weeks times seven is four hundred eighty-three years; starting in B.C. 457, that brings us to A.D. 26.

Here is a little history. A sixth century monk by the name of Dionysius Exiguus calculated the Christian calendar for the Emperor Justinian in A.D. 26, and he made a four-year error in the calendar. His calendar is what we still use today, even though there is a four-year error in it. Jesus was thirty years old when He was baptized. In A.D. 1, Jesus was four years of age. With the calculations being off four years, this brings us to A.D. 30. What happened in A.D. 30? Jesus was baptized.

Luke 3:21-24 reads: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came

from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph."

### **The Seventieth Week**

The seventieth week is where the problem lies with most dispensationalists. They promote what they call the "gap theory," and it stretches for over two thousand years. It is taught that Israel, because of unbelief, did not accept Christ as the Messiah, so God put off the seventieth week for more than two thousand years. In that they include the tribulation. They put in many kinds of teachings, and the only way they can fit it in is to stretch out the seventieth week. However, if the seventieth week has not taken place, then you do not have salvation. Why? Christ came to bring an end to sin. In the seventieth week, one thing that happened was, sin was to come to an end in individual lives.

Romans 3:3-4 reads: "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." Romans 3:3-4 says from another translation. "It is true that some Jews were not faithful to God, but will that stop God from doing what He promised? God forbid." The false teaching is that one day Christ will return invisibly, and then the seventieth week will again commence. However, Daniel said, "Seventy weeks were determined." Again, the word *determined* means "fixed, or decreed." In other words, it cannot be changed. Once something is determined by God, it is settled.

Daniel 9:26 states, "And after

threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

What prince was he talking about? It was Prince Titus, the captain of the Roman army that besieged Jerusalem. In the midst of the seventieth week, the Scripture says Messiah would be cut off, but He was not cut off for Himself. He was not dying for His own sins. For whom did He die? John 3:16 tells us, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

### **"The Time Is Fulfilled"**

Isaiah 53:3-7 says: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."

What cut Jesus off? It was your sin and my sin. What was the sin? It was our going astray and turning to our own way. The flesh is stronger than you think it is. Psalm 94:19 says, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul." What does that tell you? You have all kinds of thoughts going through your mind continu-

ally, but the comfort comes when you think on the things of God. The enemy will pull you this direction and that direction, but you need to get the mind of God and make sure that it is God talking to you.

What was the message that Jesus proclaimed? You read it in the beginning. Again, Mark 1:14-15 reads: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled [the word *fulfilled* means 'completed'], and the kingdom of God is at hand [when something is *at hand* it is right nearby, not two thousand years away]: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Why would Jesus say it was at hand if people would have to wait two thousand years for the kingdom? Something is wrong. How do you get into the kingdom? You must repent and believe the Gospel. Jesus said in His day, "The kingdom is at hand."

Daniel 2:44 reads, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." What kings was Daniel talking about? He gave the dream and the interpretation.

Daniel was talking about the head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, the legs of iron, and feet of part clay and part iron. Right at the time of these literal four kingdoms: the Babylonians, the Grecians, the Medo-Persians, and the pagan Roman empire. What was Daniel saying? Right in the days of these kingdoms, God was going to set up a kingdom, and His kingdom will never be destroyed. It will never be left to another people. It is an everlasting kingdom, and it will be the same kingdom that Jesus delivers up to the Father.

When fleshly kingdoms ruled the then-known world, God set up His kingdom. The darker it is, the

brighter the light. When did God set up His kingdom? No one heard from God for four hundred years, from Malachi to Matthew. What happened? A light began to shine through. I thank God for that light! John the Baptist came making a way, or a path for Christ. What did John say? The same thing Jesus said: "Repent." That is the message yet today.

Many people do not want to repent. They will go through formalities, water baptism, the Lord's Supper, and social events, but they refuse to get down on their knees and say they are wrong. Dear one, the only way to get into God's kingdom is to repent. I am glad I did. God's kingdom is wonderful!

### "Holy and Without Blemish"

In the days of these kings, when fleshly kingdoms ruled, God was going to set up a kingdom, and it was going to have certain attributes, and they are wonderful. This kingdom will never be destroyed. You cannot do anything against it. You can run it down all you want to, but all you do when you run it down is build it up. I repeat, it will never be destroyed. It is not left to another people. There is no one else to whom God would trust His kingdom except Jesus Christ. It broke in pieces and consumed all other kingdoms. It broke up the pagan Roman empire. What broke the pagan Roman empire? The preaching of the Gospel. This kingdom is going to stand forever. When you and I are six feet under the ground, if Jesus tarries, His kingdom is still going right on.

Where does Jesus reign? Jesus reigns in the hearts of His people. His kingdom is in the hearts of His people. You are in the Kingdom of God when the King comes into your heart through old-time repentance.

Ezekiel 36:25 states, "Then will I sprinkle [Ezekiel was not talking about water baptism, because he used the word 'sprinkle.' Water baptism is by immersion. When Jesus

was baptized, the Bible says He came up out of the river Jordan. He did not have a pitcher of water sprinkled over Him.] clean water upon you, [That cannot be baptismal water. If you go to Africa, you will see all kinds of little things and creatures in that water, but Ezekiel was speaking of clean water, not dirty water. What will it do?] and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." Water baptism does not cleanse the heart. You have to have something besides literal water to get to the inside. All the literal water will do is make you wet on the outside.

Verses 26-28 continue: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

What was he talking about when he spoke of clean water? Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:25-27: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church [Husband, that is quite a love. What was Paul saying? Husband, love your wife the same way Jesus loves you, if you are in the church.], and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Water, as it is used in the Scripture, represents the Word, and it is the Word that can clean you up, not literal water. He said, "A new heart . . . and a new spirit will I put within you." That takes place in repentance.

### An Evening-Time Apostasy

I mentioned in the beginning of the message that Israel was in Baby-

lonian captivity because of disobedience, sin, and rebellion. Daniel named those things out in Chapter 9. We are in an evening-time apostasy right now. Many people are playing church. Some people are walking out of congregations because they cannot have their own way, and it brings confusion of faces. Many people do not even understand the Kingdom of God any more. They do not see the church any more. What brought that about? The same thing that brought it about in Daniel's day. Sin, rebellion, trespasses, and disobedience bring it about. Some people are not

living close enough to God to actually see that we are living in an apostasy. The seventy weeks that Daniel spoke of brought an end to Israel of old and the holy city Jerusalem. Under the New Covenant, we have a new Israel and a new Jerusalem. Where do the seventy weeks bring us? They bring us right up to the cutting off of the Messiah [speaking of the Cross] for our sins.

We will go a little further in part 2 of this message. We want to continue with the kingdom, showing what took place in the seventieth week, because if the seventieth week had not taken place, then those

things have not happened. Again, verse 24 of our Scripture text reads, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, [Has that happened? Surely it has.] and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy [Jesus Christ]." Those are the things that took place in the seventieth week.

*(Compact Disc TR-1062E)*

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[Guest Editorial—continued from p. 2]  
the hearts of God's people together and causes them to labor together in harmony. Without the love of God ruling and reigning in our hearts, laboring together is impossible. Real love is long-suffering and kind, and it demonstrates humility. Love does not demand its own way, and it will not create problems when things go differently than one would desire.

Whenever love becomes cool toward God, it will not be long until love also becomes strained toward one another; then laboring together can no longer be a joy, a benefit, or a pleasure. It soon becomes an irksome task. Separations created

begin to divide the church body. If this is allowed to continue, it will portray a distorted picture of Christianity to the world around about us. Those who are looking on will wonder what has happened and why we who claim to be the church cannot get along with one another. They may see the members working, but they will be laboring independently of one another instead of laboring together. When this happens, it hinders the promotion of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Laboring together for the cause of the Gospel may require us to forsake our ideas, our wants, and our desires. One may strongly feel that things should be done a certain

way in order to attain the best results. Being laborers together first calls for submission to God and then to one another. Paul admonished the Ephesian brethren with these words: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Ephesians 5:21). The Apostle Peter said in 1 Peter 5:5b, "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Let us be true laborers together with Christ and one another.

Selected

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### *Power in Prayer*

*I seek God every morning  
Before my day's begun;  
I feel the strength He offers  
At rising of the sun.*

*He leads me, gives me courage  
Whene'er I ask in prayer;  
I always find Him ready  
To bear my every care.*

*I know He shares my labor  
And walks close by my side;  
He helps to solve each problem  
If I in Him abide.*

*I pause at night to thank Him  
For His nearness through the  
day  
And feel His loving Presence  
When to rest I wend my way.*

*Again, I ask His tender care  
As nighttime shadows fall;  
It's good to know I'll find God  
When in prayer His name I call!*

*Esther Dauber*

*Matthew 21:42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?*

*43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*

# GOD IS GATHERING A HEAVENLY NATION



*Brother Karl Wilson*

## **A Great Uniting and a Great Separating**

God's people are like no other people on the face of this earth. This holy nation that God is gathering is a people whose lives have undergone a divine transformation. Their similarities draw them together.

They have not all come from the same schools of spiritual teaching, but they have similar characteristics, and they are becoming an inseparable union, so pure and so sweet.

In the Book of Isaiah is a prophetic Scripture for our day, because God was making a summation of His gathering. Isaiah 55:5 says, "Be-

hold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee."

This nation that God is gathering has characteristics that cannot be imitated. God has given His people

those characteristics. They did not even know one another at one time but have found in the Word of God that they have something that cannot be imitated. It can only be possessed if God has given it to you, and that is a love to one another, a love for all the people of God. The Bible says we are taught of God to love one another.

The people that God is gathering together have the same qualities. They are living with great integrity, zeal, and motivation. They are doing all they know and understand and have been taught what it takes to please God. This heavenly nation that God has been gathering to sing and shout around the throne of God are people of every race, kindred, nation, and tongue; but thank God they have similar characteristics. They are willing to walk in the light as God reveals it to them.

Some light is sometimes hard to see because people have been mistaught or misguided by those who have looked in the Word of God and thought that some things did not really matter, but God has given them something that no man can give them. No man can put it within them, but it comes directly from God. It is His love, because that is what God is. God has led them and is leading them—some through the waters, some through the fire, some through great sorrows, and some through floods, but all through the blood.

While there is a gathering in, there also is a gathering out. While there is a great uniting, there is also a great separation of everything that is not heavenly and those who are not highly motivated to seek God's favor. Matthew 13:38-41 says: "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his

angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." With this great gathering in, God is establishing as His holy nation something that cannot be imitated. It has to be given to you from a divine source.

### **"Let No Man Deceive You"**

Second Thessalonians 2:1-2 reads: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." We have now approached the eleventh hour of Christ's return. We are much closer to that time to claim the place in the feast of glory set aside for all God's people to rejoice forevermore with the host of Heaven.

The time we now know, we will soon know no more. We realize that we are closer than when we first believed. We do not know whether the Lord will come in our lifetime or we will be translated, but we want to stay ready, because nobody knows the exact time of His return. We know not the hour of His appearing. We do not know whether we will meet in the great camp meeting in the air or an angel will be sent to summon us at our bedside, but one thing we do want to know is that we are ready. I thank God that I have lived a life of no regrets.

Verse 3 reads, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." The son of perdition is a symbol of a preeminent spirit. We never want to be caught up under a preeminent spirit, where we cease to grow and think we have arrived and become the servants that beat on other servants.

Psalm 50:5-6 says: "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by

sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah."

Verses 16-20 continue: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son." This is speaking of a spiritual condition.

It is sad to see people who have gotten caught up in slander and mean name calling. The blessed church of the Living God is the mother of all who have been set free from sin, sectarianism, and sectarian bondage. Sheep stealing is bad business for a man who is calling himself a minister, but it seems that some do not know how to have a flock. Spiritual adultery is an ugly situation, but some will try to get into that to have an increase. The servant of the Lord must not strive, but he must be gentle.

### **Loving One Another**

This nation that God is gathering has a quality, a characteristic, and a personality that no other people on the face of this earth have. This heavenly nation that God is gathering has a love for all men. However, the doctrine of this nation takes them beyond the love that they have for themselves. This heavenly nation that God is gathering together loves one another as much as they love God. They also love all others that have not God's love as much as they love themselves.

We find in John 15:12 that Jesus was speaking to His disciples, saying, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." We are to love one another as much as God loves us.

In 1 John 3:16 the Apostle John

brought it somewhat clearer when he said, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." It seems that as much as He has loved us and as much as we love Him is as much as we should love one another. We cannot separate the head from the body. If we love the head, then we must love the body. We love the body as much as we love the head. Our Savior is the head of the body, but we are the body. How we love one another is just how much we love Him. In fact, we cannot really show God how much we love Him without loving one another that much.

Some people have gotten off in their own relationship regarding how they love Him and love others less. This salvation is more about a relationship between us down here than about us and God up there, because we have to learn through forging ourselves together to be that heavenly body. The more we love one another, the more we learn to love one another. The more we learn to love God, the more we love one another. We are learning to love Him so much more.

Do you know we are to love for Jesus' sake? He uses His people to show Himself. He uses us, the love in us, to show His love. The body is the church. The head of the body is the Lord Jesus Christ. We sing a song that says, "O how He loves you and me," and we sing, "Oh, how I love Jesus," and "I love Him too much to fail Him now." What about our love to one another? How can we separate our love for Him from our love for the body? You cannot love the head more than you love the body.

### **Exhibiting the Love of God**

In this heavenly nation that God is gathering, Jesus spoke of sheep that are not of this fold. He must bring them together so there might be one Shepherd and one fold, taught of God to love one another.

Love is gentle. Is that not how He loved us? Love is kind. Is that not how He called us? Love is compassionate. Can you see His compassion? His compassion is still the same; He is just the same today. His love is comforting. God is the God of all comfort. His love is understanding, and we depend on that when we come boldly to the throne of grace so that we might find help. Oh, I thank God that we know that He is an understanding God and that He understands us. We should try to understand one another, because that is the way love is. It is trying to understand the other person's position, trying to understand where the other person is, and trying to assist the other person to a better position. Love is caring. He cares for me. I know Jesus cares. Love is pitiful: in pity He redeemed me when He saw me in my woe.

Love is meek. Jesus said in Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Love tries to comfort and to set the person whom we love at ease, because we have received this same kind of love from God. Thank God, we are taught of the Holy Ghost that God is a God of loving compassion.

First John 5:1 states, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him."

This heavenly nation is a people saved and filled with the Holy Ghost, Who causes them to love as God loves, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. We are a very peculiar people; therefore, sometimes people do not understand our conversation and mannerism. We are zealous for the Lord. Many times we find a way beyond the impulse of the flesh so that the Spirit will shine.

This heavenly nation is an overcoming people who wants to see all people prosper and do well. Let no division be among us. We are our brother's keeper. No one can know that they are fully saved or

really saved until they have love for others who are saved as much as they feel God has loved them. We must recognize that we love all the body as much as we know He loves us, and we love them because He has loved us. We love them because He has placed His love in us. Love is what life is all about.

### **Manifesting Brotherly Love**

We are on this earth preparing to live with all the host of Heaven forever, and there is no pretense there. We are known as we are known. Everything is naked and open before Him with whom we have to do; therefore, we have to overcome difficult situations and difficult people with the love of God. We have to let the Holy Spirit shine.

Romans 12:10 says, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." The Bible tells us that as a heavenly nation, we must love even our enemies. Sometimes it is the imposition of your own flesh that has a difficult time, and you have to say, "They wouldn't be like they are if they were saved." We have to love them enough to want to see them saved. We must be overcomers; only cowards yield when the foe they meet on the battlefield. Sometimes I have to ask God for more of the Holy Spirit. We can pray, "Lord, I need more of the Holy Ghost, because they are more difficult than I thought they would be."

First John 3:14 says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." We cannot even know where we are until we have overcome difficulties, until we can feel for one another as we feel for God and feel for God as we feel for one another. We all are part of the nation that God is gathering. We want to know we are those whom God has established to be His people that will witness on the Day of Judgment to those who would not serve Him.

God's love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. We sing, "O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!" John 3:16 tells us, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." The Bible says that the Son loved us, so He laid down His life. Since we are the sons of God, we ought to lay down our lives for one another. As a heavenly nation, some of what we are going to have in Heaven starts here on the earth. We have to be overcomers here. In order to overcome and rejoice in spite of difficult situations, you must have God's love.

This is the day of salvation. You cannot wait to get up in Heaven, because when you are called to go and give an account of your work, everything must stand as it is. If you have not overcome by His love, then Jesus said, in so many words, "Where I am, you cannot come." You have to manifest heavenly character on earth. Someone may say, "Do you mean that I have to live holy amidst all this ungodly stuff?" Yes, I mean amidst all this ungodly stuff and whatever stuff comes along.

### Keep on the Firing Line

This heavenly nation that God is gathering is a nation of people that is overcoming difficult situations with difficult people by the love of God, with which they have been baptized. What we have in God must increase so that we can overcome situations that are difficult and overtake circumstances that seem to be inconvenient and very obnoxious. What we have in God must increase, and what we find that causes it to decrease must be resisted. We must resist what causes bad feelings and the bad spirit that causes those feelings. That is the reason we must pray, and that is the reason we continue to pray always.

We do not want to have bad feelings against some poor, struggling brother or sister who is trying to get to glory and having a difficult time in the fight. Sometimes people

are just having a difficult time because they are unskilled in resisting the enemy and in knowing how to rejoice evermore. What they are going through is getting them down. Sometimes when that happens, they may begin to find fault because they are not doing well. We have to recognize when people are not doing well. We have to understand that we have an adversary that is trying to lure people.

Many folks have been taken captive because they did not know how to fight well. May God help us to fight the good fight of faith. One song says, "Oh, you must fight, be brave against all evil, Never run, nor even lag behind; If you would win for God and the right, Just keep on the firing line." You must stay on the firing line. When people get complicated, you have to be uncomplicated. You have to show a person how they are supposed to act when they are not what they ought to be.

God wants us to be ambassadors for Him. We have to take His love to others. We are to be His instruments. He is love, and we have to show others there is a better way. The commandments of God are still the same now as they were years ago. The Bible still says not to let division be among you. Where did the understanding, the gentleness, the kindness, the meekness, the caring, and the comforting go? What has happened to some people? They thought they were ever so skilled, but they found that they were not skilled at all. We do not want to be

novices in the Gospel.

Love will find a way to express its desire, to express what we are all about, and to overcome whatever we need to overcome so that we might continue to shine as the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. In 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 we read: "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another [as we increase in our love toward Him, thank God, we increase in our love toward one another], and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

This nation, or this heavenly body, is a blameless church without spot and wrinkle. Do you see the church? We have talked about a nation that is like no other people on the face of the earth, and we have a distinguishing characteristic that stands out: we love God, and we love one another as much as we love God. We are ready to go to Heaven because we are already heavenly.

I thank God for His Word. We pray it will bring an increase to you. On the Day of Judgment, this is the only thing that will matter. All other attainments are going to be just a memory. Everything else will be forgotten soon after we are gone. May God give you this legacy: "Oh, how he loved God! He was truly a saint of God."

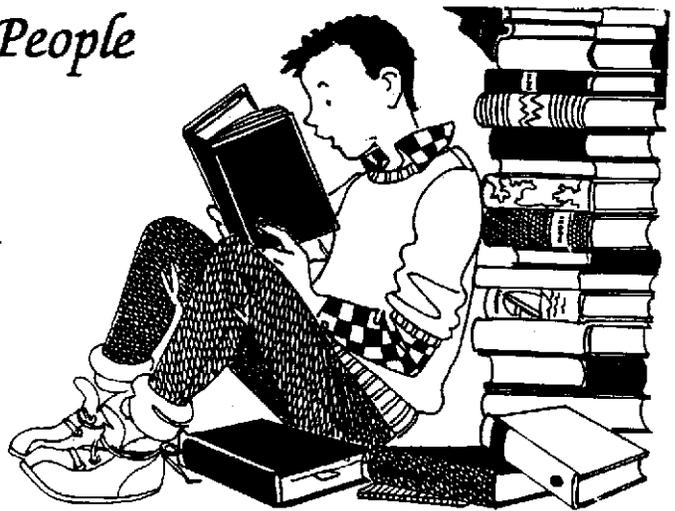
*(Compact Disc TR-1182)*

**The secret of contentment is knowing how to enjoy what you have and being able to lose all desire for things beyond your reach.**

*Especially for Young People*



## Spiritual Prosperity



A great many people would like to grow in grace and are trying to be spiritual, but they do not know how. Let me invite your attention to the words of Jesus in the twelfth chapter of Luke and the twenty-seventh verse: "Consider the lilies how they grow." The lily does not grow by toiling or spinning, nor does she take anxious thought. She does not fear that it will not rain or that the sun will not shine on the morrow. In fact, she does not put forth any special effort to grow, yet she grows and is arrayed more gorgeously than was Solomon in all his glory.

Growth and perpetuation of life are brought about by two things—food and exercise. The lily sends her tender roots into the earth, opens her petals to the dew, and receives her God-given nourishment; and from the gentle breezes that sweep the meadow, she receives exercise. By these means she grows. There is only one way to grow, to correspond with the environments, to eat the food that God has provided, and to exercise. People who are always making a conscious effort to grow in their own strength, often, like the wasp, which is larger when hatched than at any other time in its life, grow smaller instead of larger. Our spiritual food is the Word of God. Jesus said in Matthew 4:4, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by

every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Isaiah 55:2). Our spiritual exercise is to "watch and pray." Luke 18:1 says, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." We must endure temptation, do good to all men, and rejoice evermore. If we do these things, our growth, like that of the lily, will be unconscious and spontaneous. Conscious effort to grow and a neglect of the laws of growth are fruitless and vain. Jesus said in Matthew 6:27, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?"

David described the blessedness of the man who delights himself in the law of the Lord: "And he shall be like a tree planted 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" (Psalm 1:3). From the rich soil of the riverbank and the moisture of its waters, the tree draws its food, corresponds with its environment, and so prospers. The winds give it exercise, and it grows.

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; To show that the

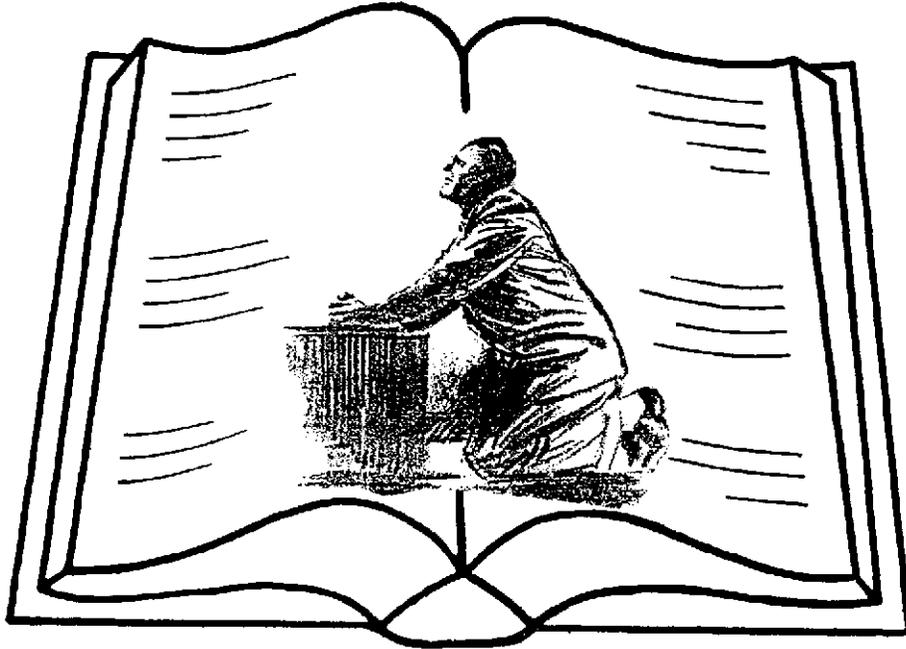
LORD is upright . . ." (Psalm 92:12-15). When does the palm tree flourish the most? When the winds bend it and sway it to and fro, for then the roots run farther and deeper, the sap flows faster and more abundantly, the trunk grows larger and stronger, and the branches become more luxuriant and beautiful. Just so with the righteous. When the storms of trials and temptations rage against them, then life and vitality within flows quicker and the strength of the inner man is renewed day by day.

How does the cedar in Lebanon grow? By sinking its roots deep in the ground; and when the storms sway it to and fro, its roots get exercise and take deeper hold in the soil. This is so with the person who is planted in the house of the Lord, rooted and grounded in love. The more trials and storms, the more he loves his Lord, "and taking root downward, he bears fruit upward." Dear one, if you would be established in the grace of God, if you would flourish in the courts of our God, you must stand the storms of trials and temptations.

Our growth must be brought about and our life must be perpetuated by the simple acts of eating and exercising. The infant draws its food from its mother, and by crying, kicking, and playing, it gets

*[continued on page 20]*

# Press the Battle On



*Brother James Presley*

## **Press Toward the Mark for the Prize**

We all are in a battle, and we need to press on. We cannot win if we do not put forth the effort to go forward. We cannot make it to Heaven by coasting in. Some people think, "If you get saved, you are going to coast right into Heaven." No, the devil is going to try to drag you down to the bottom of the river. You have to press on. Why do you need to press? The devil is always there pressing against you, trying to get you to give up on God.

You need to have the determination to fight until you win. Determination is a big thing. You need determination to press on and

not to give up on God when things are not going well. When you do not feel God, do not give up. You need to get on your knees and ask God to help you to feel the grace of God. He is there for you, and He wants you to press your way forward. Philipians 3:14 says, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." You will not win this prize if you do not press, or put forth the effort to go forward.

When the Israelites came out of Egypt, what happened? They were between the mountains and the Red Sea, and the Egyptian army was coming. What did God tell them? He told them to go forward! They went forward by faith. When they got to the sea, they were told to go

forward. They could not foresee what was going to happen, but God had something planned. Sometimes your back will be against the wall with mountains on the side and a sea ahead of you. You will not know which way to turn, yet God will say, "Go forward." You will not see the answer, but you will have to go forward. Once you start moving forward, the sea will begin to part. The troubled times will part. The encouragement and the help will be there, but you need to go forward and press on in the battle.

Through the hard times and during temptations, the devil will try to get you down. He will say, "You might as well give up." No, you need to press on. Through

temptations and when you are afflicted, you need to press on. You do not have time to stop. A child of God should not stop pressing forward. If you stop to rest a little, give up a little, take a break, or think you do not need to press against it so hard, you are going to be just like the prophet who prophesied against the altar in 1 Kings, Chapter 13. The false prophet went after him, and he was an old lying prophet.

First Kings 13:14 reads, "And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am." The man of God went back with the lying prophet. He did the thing that God told him not to do. God instructed him not to eat in that place. The man of God went another way, but what was the problem? Some people want to blame the man of God's demise on the old lying prophet. The lying prophet did have his part to play, but the problem was, the man of God was sitting still under an oak tree taking a break. He should have kept going forward. Had he done that, the old lying prophet never would have caught up with him and deceived him into believing a lie.

Let us go back to Egypt when Israel went through the Red Sea. If they had merely stood and waited for the sea to part, the Egyptians would have come upon them, but they went forward. The Egyptian army never caught them. Pharaoh and his men were destroyed. The devil is trying to catch up with each of us and take us back to the old life of sin and bondage. He does not want us to enjoy the good things that God has for us. The devil wants us to go back to the wicked way that we used to live. We must keep pressing. There is nothing to go back to.

### **Touching Jesus by Faith**

I want you to visualize that the devil is running after you. I have been chased before. I had not been

doing the right thing, so I was being chased. When you have done something wrong and somebody is running after you, there is fear. Someone was trying to catch me to harm me. That is exactly what the devil does. He will chase after you. If you stop for just a moment, he will catch you. You need to keep moving forward for God. You cannot let the devil catch up with you. The only thing the devil has in mind is to take you to hell with him. He does not want you to keep going on for God.

Sometimes you need to press even harder. In spiritual living, you have to press all the time, but there are times when you have to press harder. One of those times is when you are afflicted. The devil will take advantage of your being afflicted. Mark 5:25-29 reads: "And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague."

This woman had an issue of blood. She had been sick for many years, but she had to press to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. I can visualize a long garment with a low hem. No doubt, people were all around Jesus, trying to get closer to Him. They were up against Him and bumping into Him. He said virtue went out of Him. He knew that someone had touched Him by faith. This woman had to press to get her healing. Sometimes when you are going through hard times, you will have to press through some things. The devil will tell you things such as: "God doesn't care. If He did, He would have healed you already." Sometimes healing comes instantly, but other times it may take weeks or months. You can learn a lesson through healing. You never know

who might be watching you or what God has in store for you. Somebody may be watching you to see how you handle it. Sometimes, if a person is not saved, suffering may cause that person to have an wrong attitude or become bitter.

Sometimes when you are ill, the devil will tell you there must be something displeasing to God in your life. He has told me, "You must have some sin in your life, because you have not been healed." That is the same thing Job's friends told him. If your life is clean, God has healing for you, but it will be in His time.

"If God cared, you wouldn't have been sick" is another lie the devil will tell you. Sickness helps us. The Scripture lets you know that after you have suffered for a while, God will strengthen you, establish you, and help you. Sometimes there is a reason that you get sick. It could be so that you will call on God more. You might have gotten too busy in your everyday living, so you need to slow down a little. During your illness, you may start reading the Bible more because you cannot get up and go. Sometimes you may get a little too busy in your life to take time for God, so God has to slow you down a little.

### **The God of All Comfort**

We read in 2 Corinthians 1:3, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." If you have no sin in your life and you are clean before God, God will speak comforting words to you and tell you that He loves you. He has all power, and He can heal you anytime He wants. There is a reason for everything. He will encourage your heart to press on. Third John, verse 2 reads, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." If your soul is prospering, God desires for you to be in good health. The devil will lie to you and tell you all kinds of things

to get you to become discouraged about being afflicted.

John 8:44 tells us about the devil. It 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."

The devil is a liar. He will tell you: "God does not care. He will not heal you. You are going to suffer this way for the rest of your life." What should you do? You need to press on! We serve a God who is able. He has all power. He has healed many people. You need to press past the lies the devil tells you.

If you are suffering an affliction, God cares more about you than you can even imagine. He will work it out in His time. You need to press on through the suffering, through the pain, and through the agony. Do not believe the devil. If you are suffering, God cares.

You need to press on in the hour of temptation. James 4:7 says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." That word *resist* in Greek means "to set oneself against; to withstand, to resist, to oppose, or to set against." When the devil is tempting you, you have to set yourself against him and stand your ground. Some people have failures in their lives because they do not want to stand. They do not want to press on through the temptation. It is so easy to give up and say, "I just can't do it." Well, if you are thinking that you cannot do it, you most likely are not going to do it. You need to have the determination to press on. You need to say: "Devil, I am not going to do this. The temptation is desirable, but I'm not doing it." You need to stand against the evils of the devil.

If someone was breaking down your door, trying to push it in, what would you do? Some people would call the police, but if there is no possibility of that, you are going to hold

the door and press firmly against that door. You are going to stand against it. That is the same thing we need to do with the devil. When he tries to get in your spiritual house, you have to stand against him and press against that door. Do not give up. Press on!

### Ways to Resist the Devil

What are some ways that you can resist the devil? Psalm 119:11 says, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." The Word of God will keep you, strengthen you, and help you to resist the devil. Colossians 3:16 states, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." The Word of God will encourage you to press on. When the devil is after you, you should get the Bible out, read the Scriptures, and think about them.

Also, you should fill your mind with the songs of Zion. Isaiah 35:10 says, "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Good Spirit-filled songs are uplifting. They are encouraging to the hearts of the saints. They will encourage your heart to press on. When the devil is after you, start singing a song. It will remind you of all the good things that God has done. God has done great things for us, and He definitely has victory. One song of victory in the "Evening Light Songs" hymnal reads:

*Hallelujah, what a thought!  
Jesus full salvation brought,  
Victory, victory;  
Let the pow'rs of sin assail,  
Heaven's grace can never fail,  
Victory, victory.*

*I am trusting in the Lord,  
I am standing on His Word,*

*Victory, victory;  
I have peace and joy within,  
Since my life is free from sin,  
Victory, victory.*

*Shout your freedom everywhere,  
His eternal peace declare,  
Victory, victory,  
Let us sing it here below  
In the face of every foe,  
Victory, victory.*

*We will sing it on that shore,  
When this fleeting life is o'er,  
Victory, victory;  
Sing it here, ye ransomed throng,  
Start the everlasting song:  
Victory, victory.*

*Victory, yes, victory;  
Hallelujah! I am free,  
Jesus gives me victory.  
Glory, glory! hallelujah!  
He is all in all to me.*

Do you think the devil is going to stick around after he hears that song? When you are going through the hour of temptation and you sing that song, do you think he is going to say, "Oh, I'll just listen." I believe he has to flee. I believe if you resist the devil and sing a song of victory, the devil will flee. That song will burn the ears of the devil. The songs of Zion will give you the victory. You do not have to give place to the devil. You can press right on through.

### "The God of Hope"

What is another circumstance where you must press through? Sometimes discouragement will come to you. It could come through circumstances of life. It could come through a death in your family. There are things that will bring you low. That is what the devil wants to happen to you. He wants you to become discouraged, but you need to remember that God is not the God of discouragement. God is an encourager. He will uplift you and strengthen you. He will take you above the clouds of discouragement.

He will hold you up when you cannot hold yourself up.

There is a song that says, "*When I can't stand, I have to lean.*" Many times I have to lean on the Lord. I am sure that before I die, I am going to do a lot more leaning. The Lord is a strong tower to lean on, and He will lift you above things. Psalm 28:8-9 says: "The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed. Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever." He is a God who will lift you up.

When you are discouraged, you need to think about what God's Word says in Hebrews 13:5, which reads, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." That is a promise of God. He is not going to leave you or forsake you. He is always going to be there for you. You may be discouraged because you have no work right now, and maybe it has been years since you have had a job. Do not be discouraged. God will work out something. He may not be working in your time, but He is working in His time. When He works in His time, it will be right.

You may be discouraged about family problems. Sometimes there could be things that you disagree with. If so, you need to take those things to God and press through it. God can encourage you in the midst of these things. He will show you that He has a divine plan in every part of your life. It does not matter whether it is regarding work, family problems, or financial situations. He has a plan, and you need to step back and say, "God, have it Your way." He will work things out for your good.

Whatever life may bring you, you need to step back and let God have it all. He will encourage you through it. He will show you that He is in control of everything. God will be there for you. He wants to lift you above the storms of life. All

you have to do is go to Him and tell Him how discouraged you are. Let Him know how you feel. When you come to God, you have to be honest with Him. God wants to hear how sad you are and how hard the circumstance is. He wants His children to cry out to Him. When you cry to God, He will help you.

When you are discouraged, the devil will try to get you to doubt God and say, "God can't help my marriage." I have good news for you. God can help any marriage. He has the power and the wisdom to fix anything. Whether it is a troubled marriage or a bad circumstance on the job, God can fix it. The devil will try to cause you to doubt that God can give you a job if you are unemployed. He will bring up how long you have been without work and the bad reports in the news. If you are out of a job, lean on God, read the Word of God, and He will help you. The devil will try to tell you, "God can't give you a job," but God can do anything.

God can help your financial situation. We went through ten weeks with no money. I did not tell anybody. We prayed about it and kept asking God to show us what to do. God showed us exactly what to do, and the bills got paid. He took care of us. At the end of the ten weeks, we received a check, and I thank the Lord for that. We may not have the answers, but God has the answers, and we need to press through those hard times. God will come through for you too.

If the devil can get you to think that God cannot help you, you will not call on God as you should. That is the reason he wants to discourage you. The devil does not want you to call on God, because he knows that when you call on God, He will be there for you. He is your Father, He cares for you. He is willing to help His child no matter what. If you have children, would you not want to help them? Would you not want to help them to get through the trying circumstances of life? My parents were not saved, but they helped

me to get through circumstances of life from time to time. Why was that? They went out of their way because they loved me. I was their child. Child of God, God feels the same way about you.

When you are discouraged, the devil wants you to feel there is no hope and that nothing will work out. You need to go to the One Who will encourage you. If you needed a loan for a new car, you would go to the bank. Well, if you need encouragement, you need to go to the One who can encourage and strengthen you. God is your hope. He is everything to the child of God. Romans 15:13 says, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." God has all power. I want you to think about that. Since He has all power, He can do anything. He is the One in charge. Also, He has the grace to get you through the hard circumstances of life.

### **God Is All Powerful**

God will have mercy when you cry to Him that you need some strength and guidance. He can fix your financial situation. God is merciful. He wants to hear His children cry out to Him. I hate to see my children cry, but God hates it even more. When you cry out to God, He will be there for you. He is loving, and He will help you beyond measure. Do not let discouragement get you down. Do not let the devil discourage you. We have a great God. I pray that you are encouraged that God is on your side. He will help you through the hard times and through your struggles. No matter what comes your way, do not give up. Do not get discouraged.

Discouragement is something that we each battle from time to time. This is a natural thing. If you start to get discouraged, it is due to getting your eyes on the wrong thing. When Israel came out of Egypt, they looked behind them and got their eyes on the Egyptian army.

They did not have their eyes where they were headed. Once they got their eyes on the right spot, they went on with victory. That is the same thing you need to do. You need to keep your eyes on God. You need to keep your eyes on things above. You can press right on through the battle. You do not have to let discouragement beat you down.

Saint, you are in a battle, and this battle will go on until the day you die. It is a battle that you must win. It is a battle that you cannot afford to lose. The devil has many weapons, but you do not have to worry about what the devil has to throw at you. You have the armor that God has given you, and you have the power of God on your side. There is no reason for you to fret and worry and be discouraged. God has all the weapons you need. God has some awesome weapons. He is the power that you need to get through things.

If you are not careful, you could end up like the ones that Jesus spoke of in Matthew 22:29. Jesus said to them, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." The devil will try to cause you to forget that God is all powerful and that God can help you through any circumstance of life. You need to press through and remember that God is on your side.

If you are saved today, it was the power of God that saved you. Romans 1:16 states, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." It was the power of God that saved me from the sinful life that I was living. I was drinking, reveling, and doing things I should not have done. It was the power of God that cleansed me, and I appreciate that. It is the power of God that keeps me from day to day. When the devil is after me, it is the power of God that keeps me. First Peter 1:5 says, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be

revealed in the last time."

The power of God will deliver you from afflictions, from temptations, from discouragement, and from hard places in life. It is not your power. If you start struggling and become discouraged, you will start to doubt and forget that God is there for you. Then you will try to walk in your own power. You need to remember that you cannot do anything without God.

### Seek the Lord

To make Heaven your home, you will have to press your way into it. Have you been pressing forward or have you been allowing the devil to have his way with you? Have you been allowing the devil to work on your mind to cause you to become discouraged or depressed? If the devil has been having his way, you can stop it. You do not have to be depressed or discouraged. God has something great for you.

Have you been afflicted? Has the devil been telling you lies about God's love toward you? Has he been telling you that God does not care? Has he been telling you that God cannot heal you or that God is not going to heal you? Do not believe the devil. God is more than able to heal you. Ephesians 3:20 reads, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." What is that power that works in us? It is the power of God. Colossians 1:27 reads, "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Has discouragement been working on you? Do not let the devil lie to you and tell you that God and the church do not care. As a saint, you may see someone who is discouraged and feels no one cares about him or her. You need to go to that person and tell him or her and express your love and concern. God loves each of us, and He does not want any of us to go through discouragement. He gave His Son to die for us. That should show you how much He loved you. If you are

getting discouraged and you think that God does not care, remember that God gave His only Son for you.

Before the world was even formed, God was thinking about you. That is a good feeling to know that God was thinking about me many years ago. He knew about you before you were even born, just as he did Jeremiah. We read in Jeremiah 1:5, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."

God knew there would be ups and downs in life. He knew that we would have trouble from time to time. That is the reason He gives grace and mercy, and that is the reason He sent His Son. He will save you and help you in this life. The problem is, sometimes people do not want God's help. Oh, they do not necessarily stand back and say, "I don't want God to help me." When the devil causes you to become discouraged and thinking that everything is bad, you need to ask God for help.

If you are going through hard places and it does not seem as though you are going to make it, you need to ask God to help you, give you grace, mercy, or whatever you need. He gave His Son so that you could have this power to overcome the world. You do not have to be a servant to the things of this world. John 16:33 says, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." If Jesus Christ overcame the world, you can overcome all the turmoil, the temptations, and the afflictions that the devil uses to try to get you to doubt God. You can overcome these things because Christ overcame them.

You can overcome anything the devil throws your way. The temptations are manifold, but God will be there to help you through them. He will give you the victory over temptations. You can overcome anything

the devil throws at you. If the devil has been troubling you along any line, you need to take it to God. He has the power to help you. I want to encourage you to press the battle on. You are going to be fighting a battle until the day you die, so you need to press the battle on. One song entitled "Press the Battle On" says: *Forward, forward is the battle cry, On-*

*ward, onward, to our home on high, We will conquer for the Lord or die, The foe's retreating, press the battle on."* Why did the songwriter say, "The foe's retreating, press the battle on"? He knew that the saint has God on his side. When the devil is after you, you have God on your side. You need to call out to Him and ask Him to help you. What will happen? The

devil must flee. If you have a need, I hope you will seek the Lord. If you have been struggling with doubting God or discouragement, won't you bring it to God? He has more than enough help for you, and He wants to help you.

*(Compact Disc TR-995E)*

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*[Especially for Young People—contin. from p. 14]* exercise. The colt draws its sustenance from its mother and by playing about the barnyard gets exercise. So it is with every form of life—growth is brought about by corresponding with environments and by taking proper exercise.

Sometimes we hear Christians say, "There is no use for me to pray in public or to testify to what the Lord has done for me; for I cannot speak well, and it will do nobody any good." Do you suppose it does the farmer any good to see his colt run and play about the barnyard? Do you suppose that it does the

mother any good for the infant to play and cry? No; but it does the infant good to cry and play, because that is its exercise, just as it does the colt good to run and play. By continuing to do itself good, the child may become a strong man or woman, and then it can be a help to others. The colt, while it is kicking and playing about the barnyard, does the farmer no good, but it does itself good, and after a while it may be a strong draft horse and able to draw heavy loads.

So it is with you, dear one. If your prayers or your testimonies or your efforts to glorify the Lord do

not accomplish as much as those of some stronger Christian, you need the exercise. It will do you good, and after a while, you will be strong and able to do good to others. Even the humblest efforts of God's little ones sometimes accomplish a great deal, and God is not unrighteous to forget your labor of love. So if you would prosper in the divine life and grow in grace, remember these two things: feed your soul on the Word of God and exercise yourself unto godliness. If you do these things, you shall never fall.

D. O. Teasley

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## SEEK YE OUT OF THE BOOK OF THE LORD

*I supposed I knew my Bible  
Reading piecemeal, hit and miss,  
Now a bit of John or Matthew,  
Now a snatch of Genesis.  
Certain chapters of Isaiah,  
Certain Psalms (the twenty-third).  
Twelfth of Romans, first of  
Proverbs,  
Yes, I thought I knew the Word.  
But I found that thorough reading  
Was a different thing to do,  
And the way was unfamiliar  
When I read the Bible through.*

*You who like to play at Bible,  
Dap and dabble, here and there,  
Just before you kneel awery  
And yawn through a hurried  
prayer;  
You who treat the Crown of  
writings,  
As you treat no other book,  
Just a paragraph disjointed,  
Just a crude impatient look,  
Try a worthier procedure,  
Try a broad and steady view;  
You will kneel in very rapture  
When you read the Bible  
through.*

(Martin Luther said that he studied the Bible as he gathered apples. First, he shook the whole tree, that the ripest apples might fall; then he climbed the tree and shook each limb; and then when he had shaken each limb, he shook every branch. After that, he examined every twig and looked under every leaf. In other words, he searched the Bible as a whole, studied each book, then studied each chapter, studied each verse, and finally, studied each word!)

Selected

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be

saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

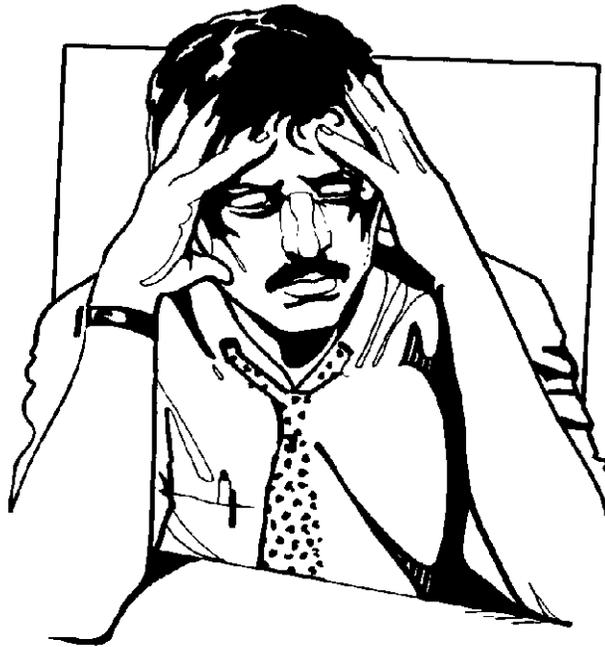
19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and

men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

# Life's Mistakes



*Brother Calvin Foster*

## **Recovering From Errors**

People make many mistakes. The word *mistake* can be defined as an error. I remember some years ago that a certain basketball player was picked by the National Basketball Association for the first-round draft pick, so he went out to celebrate, took some drugs, and died. He made a very bad mistake and lost

his life. Not long ago a football coach in Arkansas coached a winning team. However, he was dishonest with school officials and got fired.

Sometimes when individuals get in trouble, a judge places them on probation. A person on probation can get himself in trouble by breaking the rules of his probation and get additional charges against him.

Many people make mistakes through the Internet. Some people think they have fallen in love with people they have never seen. Meeting a stranger online and sending money to that person can be a costly mistake.

Sometimes people quit their jobs without having another one set up; that is a mistake. Some people show a lack of common sense by taking a

job that they are unqualified for. For example, there is no sense in taking a job to work on computers when you do not understand much about them.

Some people test positive for drugs on the job. At my place of employment, the supervisor will call employees in unexpectedly for drug testing. He will say, "Come here, Calvin."

"Yes, sir."

"Let's go!"

"Where am I going?"

"You are going to take a drug test."

I have seen people get fired for refusing to take a drug test. Sometimes people make poor business decisions, others have moral failures. Some people make mistakes that hurt others and destroy themselves, such as backsliding.

I want to tell you a little of my life's story. When I got saved, I came out of a street gang, but the Lord blessed my life after I got saved. My brother helped me to get a job in a factory where he worked. I worked there for a while, but the factory laid off people, and I was laid off. I thank God that I had been listening to Gospel preachers in the congregation. One dear brother used to encourage the young men to go to school and learn a trade. I took that to heart and went to night school to learn the trade of repairing appliances, air conditioners, and furnaces.

As I was looking in the newspaper one day, I saw an advertisement for a job and applied for it. The man gave me an application and I filled it out. When I gave it back to him, he said, "Why didn't you follow the instructions?"

I said, "What? I filled out the application."

He said, "Take another look at it."

At the top, it read, "Do not fill out this application without talking to the person who gave it to you first."

Nevertheless, I took a test and got the job. I was very happy to get

that job. When I went into his shop, I was inspired by what I saw. He repaired microwave ovens, stoves, refrigerators, air conditioners, furnaces, and hot water heaters. He had tools and all kinds of electronic gadgets. I was always intrigued by the story in the Bible of Joseph, so I said to myself, "I'm going to be loyal to this man, like Joseph was to Potiphar." I was excited about that job, and I was ready to go to work. I said, "I'm going to work hard and learn all I can from this man, and I'm going to be faithful to him. He will not have to worry about me stealing from him."

This man was very professional. I wore a uniform, and we went to the job sites together. I was eager to learn and to do everything I could to help him, but every time I made a mistake, he would take off his hat and throw it down in disgust. The time came for me to go on a service call alone, and I was excited about that. He said, "We've been there before, Calvin. Do you know where it is?"

I said, "Yes, I mapped it out."

He said, "Okay, take the credit card and gas up the truck before you go, and then go on."

I went to a gas station, put the gas in the truck and went to pay. I gave the man the credit card, and he looked at it and said: "We don't take this. You should have gone across the street." Now, there I was, stranded at the gas station, and the man would not let me go. I had to call my boss to come to my rescue.

You can probably imagine what it was like when I got home. My wife often asked how my day was, and I would tell her about it; then I would ask about her day. She would ask: "Did he throw his hat down on you today? How many times did he throw his hat down?" Through the years, I have had a lot of fun with my family because of that. When my children would do something or when they came to me with something, I would jokingly tell them, "Go get my hat!"

One day my boss called me into

his office and said he decided that I was not the man that he was looking for to fill the job. He knew I was an apprentice and not a sharp technician at that time, so we parted ways.

After that, the factory where my brother worked began to get busy again. My brother had kept my union card intact, and I still had my seniority, so they called me back to work. I had my diploma by that time. This was an air conditioning factory and assembly line. So I put in for a job. I had my credentials, and I got a job. I was the man at the end of the line. I tested the finished air conditioners. I charged them and pushed them down to the cabinet man. I was very successful in the factory. They started a new line, and there I worked with the engineers. They depended on me and made me the head leader of the line. I was in charge of the solderers, the electricians, the wirers, and the assemblers on that line. I was the man at the end of the line testing and troubleshooting the units. God really blessed me.

The point I want to make to you is that even though you make mistakes in life, you can rebound from those mistakes. When it comes to spiritual things, God will reprove you and correct you. He might disapprove of what you are doing or of how you are acting, but He will correct you and help you.

### **Reproof Gives Understanding**

When you make mistakes and have to be corrected, it is good to listen to God. Proverbs 15:10-12 says: "Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die. Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men? A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise." People do not love reproof. Often they do not love the person who is trying to help them and correct them.

Proverbs 10:17 reads, "He is in the way of life that keepeth instruc-

tion: but he that refuseth reproof erreth." If you are saved and living for God, somebody may say something to correct you. It will help you to grow and become strong. People who do not listen to reproof will be destroyed. Proverbs 29:1 says, "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

God's ministers are to reprove and to correct according to the Word of God. Second Timothy 3:16-17 states: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The ministers of God are not to reprove with their own sense, but with longsuffering and with the Word of God.

In 2 Timothy 4:2 Paul admonished, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." People receive reproof and correction in different ways. Ministers correct in different ways. A true Christian will love his reprov'er. Proverbs 9:8-9 says: "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning." You should take reproof the right way.

Psalms 141:5 says, "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities." I would rather have God reprove me, speak to my heart, and correct me than to lack understanding. I would rather let the man of God and the saints of God show me where I am wrong so that I can use my error as a stepping stone.

Proverbs 15:31-32 says: "The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise. He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof

getteth understanding." When somebody comes to you in a gentle, loving way and corrects you, you need to accept it, and you will get understanding.

The Holy Spirit is the reprov'er. In John 16:7-9 Jesus said: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me." The Holy Spirit's job is to reprove and to correct when you get off track. When you are losing your way, the Holy Spirit will check you. I thank God for that!

### **Neglecting to Discipline Children**

I thought about the lesson concerning Eli in 1 Samuel, Chapter 2. Eli was the temple priest at Shiloh, but his sons were evil. First Samuel 2:12 says, "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD." They violated the laws concerning the sacrifices at Shiloh, and they greedily kept the best part of the meat sacrifices for themselves rather than giving them to God. Also, they were doing profane things with women in the sanctuary.

Eli spoke to his sons about their behavior. First Samuel 2:22-25 reads: "Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD'S people to transgress.

"If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them." We do not know

how Eli dealt with his sons as they were growing up, but as men, he looked the other way and failed to reprove and remove them from the temple as he should have. Basically, Eli honored his sons above the Lord.

We are not to honor our children above the Lord. If it is time to correct them, we should correct them. Parents who do not correct their children and who neglect to discipline them are failing to equip them to deal with the real world. If all you are doing is kissing and hugging Johnny and buying him everything he wants you to buy him, but never correcting him, you are ruining him.

Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 29:15 reads, "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." Verse 17 tells you, "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul."

We are living in a time when the family is not the way it used to be. Many family situations are very bad and messed up these days. Many parents do not take their children to church or teach them about God in any way. It is a sad day in which we live as far as the family situation is concerned.

John 2:13-15 reads: "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables." Jesus made a correction. Do not let people take over your house, and do not let people take over the church. When they try, it is time to do some correcting.

The Bible has a message for children. Ephesians 6:1-4 states: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first

commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Parents, you must bring them up with discipline, educate them, train them, and instruct them. Even though the man who hired me threw his hat down on me, I listened and learned all I could. I would not have treated anyone that way, but that was the type of man he was.

### **"We Have an Advocate With the Father"**

In 1 John, Chapter 2, the Lord spoke through His servant John. The Lord is good. In verses 1-2 John said: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

John was saying that the rule is, sin not. He did not say, "when you sin," but he said, "if any man sin," teaching that it is not impossible to sin. The eternal security doctrine says that no one can live free from sin. However, John said, "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ."

You need to be honest. If you have committed sin, you need to call it sin. Do not say, "I made a mistake." If you committed sin, you need to be honest about it and say, "I've sinned." The devil likes to tell people, "If you fall, you will never get back to where you once were." That is a lie of the devil. You *can* get back to where you once were. As a matter of fact, you can come back to God and go further with God than you went before.

In Galatians 6:1 Paul wrote, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." If a brother

should fall, you should not be ready to beat him down. Again, the Bible says to "restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." You should say to yourself, I had better be careful, because that same thing could happen to me."

Paul went on to say in verse 2, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." If you make a mistake or if you fall, you need to be humble, repent, and keep going for God. Do not quit trying. Had I quit learning on my job, I would not have gone on to be successful.

There is great profit in being corrected for mistakes. Some people do not want to be corrected. You need to remember this: if you are going to follow God, you must take correction. I cannot tell others how to go through life, but God will tell you how to make it through. You had better keep your eyes on Him.

### **The Folly of Error**

Let us consider some people in the Bible who made mistakes. Jonah made a mistake. When God told him to go to Nineveh to preach, he went to Tarshish instead. God taught him a lesson, did He not? In essence, God said, "Jonah, I told you to go to Nineveh, but you got on a boat to Tarshish. I have news for you. You are going to sleep in the belly of a big fish for a few days."

Samson made a mistake. His parents warned him and asked: "Samson, why are you dealing with those Philistine women? What's wrong with the women of Israel?" Samson went there and told Delilah that his strength was in his hair. As a result, he lost his eyes and his strength, and he was forced to grind in the Philistine's prison house. Friend, do not play around with the devil. There is a song that says, "Don't dance with the devil."

The prodigal son made a mistake when, in so many words, he said: "Father, give me all the inheritance that is mine. I'm going out on

my own." Young person, are you dissatisfied and want to go out on your own? Do you want to pack your clothes and leave because you do not like the rules around the house any more? Like the prodigal son, you, too, will learn a hard lesson.

After the prodigal son spent all his money, he ended up feeding swine. In desperation, he decided to go back home. His father met him and, in essence, said: "Come on home, son. I love you." The father told the servants to kill the fatted calf and to make a feast. He said to put a robe on his son and put shoes on his feet. That is how much God loves you, backslider. That is how God loves His children. God will stop at nothing to help you get to Heaven. He does not want you to be lost.

The rich man in Luke, Chapter 12, made a mistake when he said, "I'm going to tear down my barns and build greater barns." The Lord said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee" (Luke 12:20). The rich man clothed in purple and fine linen in Luke, Chapter 16, died, and the Scripture says he lifts up his eyes in hell.

In Matthew, Chapter 25, you can read of the ten virgins. Five of them were wise and five were foolish. The foolish virgins did not have oil for their lamps. When it came time for the bridegroom to come, a cry went out, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him" (verse 6).

You must keep oil in your lamp. Do not make the mistake of not having oil. You had better watch for your own soul, my brother, my sister. You had better quit listening to all those other voices besides the voice of Truth. I am a man who could have been dead, in jail, or messed up with drugs; but I found Jesus, and He saved my soul. Now I keep company with God's people. I am glad that someone said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

You can read about Ananias and Sapphira in Acts, Chapter 5, who

made a deadly mistake. Peter said, "Why have you lied to the Holy Ghost?" Ananias dropped dead, and they took him out and buried him. A little later, in came his wife and told the same lie, and she dropped dead.

### **Endure Chastening**

God deals with us as with sons. Hebrews 12:5-6 says: "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." No matter how long you have been saved, you are subject to correction and reproof from the Heavenly Father.

Verses 7-10 continue: "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

Proverbs 16:25 says, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." The greatest mistake that you can make in life is to hear the Gospel preached and not give your life to God. Brother, sister, you are making a very big mistake if you do not give your life to God.

In Romans 3:3-4 we read: "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

If God has blessed you with a good family, a good spouse, and a

good job, you do not want to go back on God. Have you lost your job? Was it your fault? Were you in the habit of being late? If so, you did not do your best. Did you keep taking days off? If so, it was your fault that you lost your job. Do you have health problems because you have been drinking and smoking? If you are not obeying the Gospel, you need to repent. If you are old and your life is nearly over and you are sitting under the Gospel, but you will not obey it, you will die and go to hell. If you are taking life easy and have a little money, a comfortable home, and a nice car, if you refuse to obey the Gospel, you will be lost, and it will be your own fault.

Jesus talked about the Judgment Day being a day of sorrow, with people crying and gnashing their teeth. If you are lost when Judgment Day comes, you will say: "Why didn't I get saved? I went to camp meetings and revivals and sat there, and now it is too late. I listened to people who were not concerned about getting saved."

Jesus said in Matthew 7:22-23: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Judgment Day is going to be a disappointing day for many religious people. Ministers, men of God, if you do not preach the Word of God, if you soften it for your family and fail to put judgment on sin like Eli failed to put judgment on his sons, God will hold

you accountable.

Jesus told a parable in Luke, Chapter 15, about a man having a hundred sheep. When he lost one of them, he left the ninety-nine in the wilderness and searched for that one lost sheep. When he found it, he lay it on His shoulders and came back rejoicing. He called His friends and neighbors together and said, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost" (Luke 15:6). It is time to call friends and neighbors together and rejoice over one soul getting saved. Verse 10 says, "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

In 1 Corinthians 4:9 Paul said, "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." Paul said we are made a spectacle. The church is like a theatre in the sense that men are looking at our lives. The angels are looking at us too; we are made a spectacle to the world and to the angels. If we were to do wrong, people would say, "Look what that person did!" Do not allow Satan to enter your heart.

Do not think that God does not know what is going on in your life. The greatest mistake in the world is failing to get saved. Do not make the mistake of backsliding. Without God you cannot make it. That is the reason it is so important to stay close to Him. God bless you is my prayer.

*(Compact Disc TR-1188)*

***The measure of your usefulness  
is determined by the measure  
of your consecration.***

# What Must I Do to Be Saved?

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

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

**The sinners only hope:** "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Because it is impossible for a man or a woman, a boy or a girl, to save oneself, God sent His Son into the world to live a perfect life and to die on the Cross to make atonement for sin, that whosoever will believe and trust in Him shall be saved.

There is no other way to heaven, but by and through Him. There is no other name whereby we can be saved but by the precious name of Jesus.

**What must I do to be saved?**

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9-10).

Dear friend, will you accept the Lord Jesus as your personal Savior? If so, just bow your head and ask Him to forgive your sins, and He will come into your heart right now. He will wash all your sins away and write your name in the Lamb's Book of Life.

After you are saved, Jesus has promised you the following:

**He will give you eternal life:** "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

**He will bear your burdens:** "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

**He will supply your needs:** "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by

Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

**He will keep you from falling:** "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer 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" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

**He will give you peace:** "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

**He will never leave you:** "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

**He has prepared a place for you:** "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3).

Selected

## THREE NOBLE TRAITS

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

James 1:19

1. Be Swift to Hear—Have a receptive mind, be teachable, & listen attentively.
2. Be Slow to Speak—Guard your tongue, be slow to speak when angry & when you've nothing to say.
3. Be Slow to Wrath—Temper is a valuable possession, so don't lose it.

# 2014 Camp Meeting Dates

*June 15-22*

*August 3-10*

*December 28-31*

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

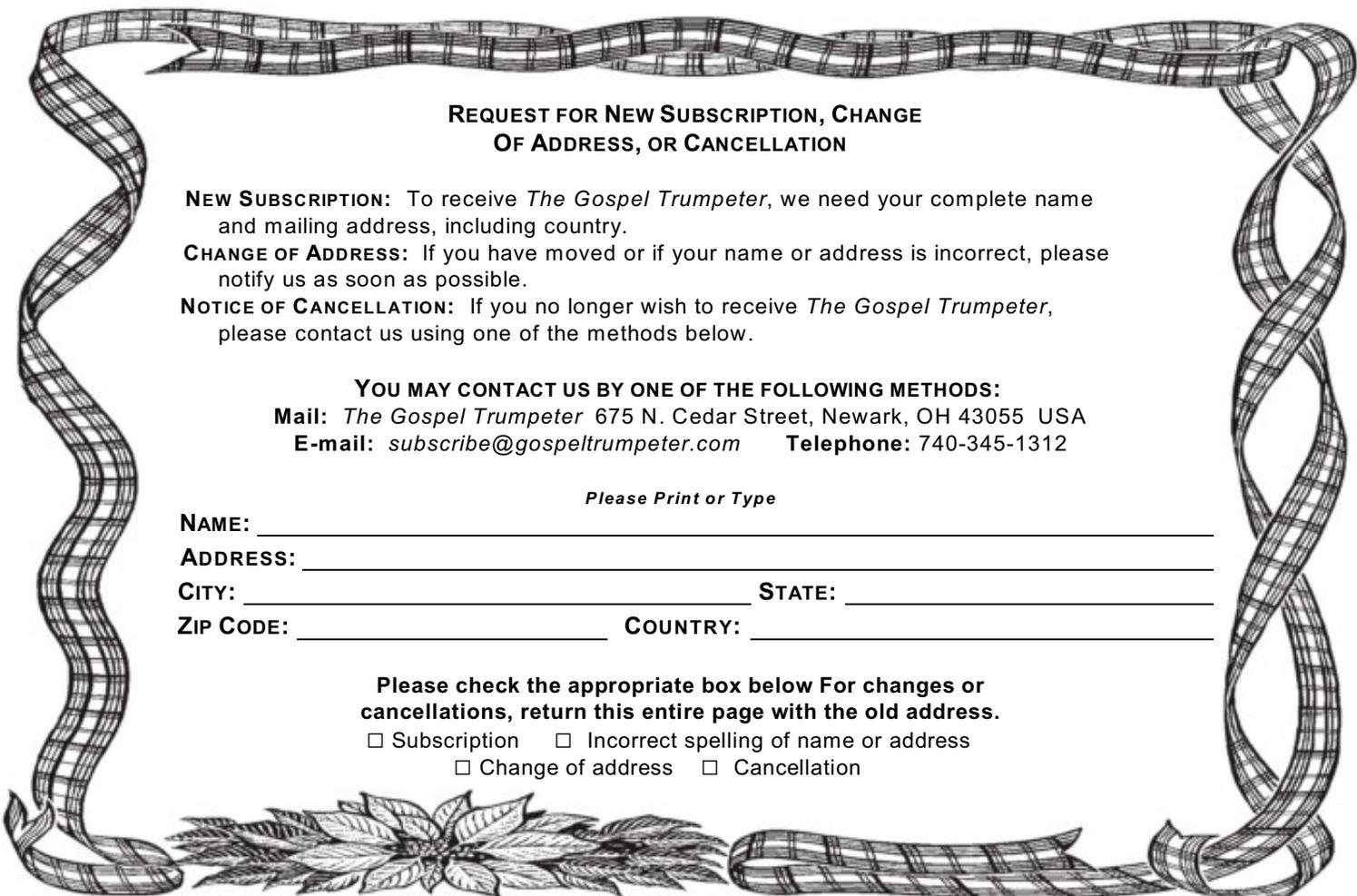


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