

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 44 July 2014 No. 7



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

Guest Editorial

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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"Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I
will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the
potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.
And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand
of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed
good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came
to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this
potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's
hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."

Jeremiah 18:2-6

There Is Yet Hope!

Failure is never a pleasant
thing for anyone to experience in
life. However, not too many peo-
ple can say they have never
slipped or come short since they
began their journey with the
Lord. Failure often comes as the
result of neglect to a known duty
or command. Perhaps it was care-
lessness during a serious time of
trial. On the other hand, it may
be the result of taking the warn-
ings of God too lightly. In any
event, the individual ends up
falling away. Instead of humbling
himself before the Lord and ac-
knowledging his error, he chooses
to throw in the towel, so to speak.
Today he no longer possesses the
joy and the blessings of salvation.
His life has once again become
entangled with a yoke of bondage.

The above Scripture reveals
God's love and patience toward
those who have been tarnished
with failure. Notice what the pot-
ter could do with clay that was
soft and pliable in his hands. Al-
though the vessel had become
marred and ugly, he was ready to
put it back on the wheel. He de-
sired to rework it and to make it
beautiful once again. We have a
picture before us of a people
whose failure was turned into
success and victory. As the Lord
patiently worked with old Israel

back then, He is yet willing to
work with others today. Only He
can take the broken pieces of a
man's or a woman's life and put
those pieces back together. The
miraculous work is performed
when the vessel is fully yielded
into the hands of the great Potter.

There is good news for those
who have been marred by sin and
failure. There is hope! Yes, you
can actually start afresh with the
Lord and be lifted to success and
enjoy victory in your soul. You
can bring your life that has been
broken and lay it at the feet of
Jesus and trust His tender mercy.
Do not allow the transgressions of
the past to bring you to total ruin
with no remedy. Nothing can be
done with clay that has become
stiff and hardened. When it gets
to that point, all that is left is to
cast it off.

God is affording you the
opportunity of allowing your past
failure or departure from the
faith to actually become a step-
ping stone. You need to allow this
misguided move to teach you a
lesson instead of allowing it to
be a stumbling block. You are
given a chance to turn from your
sin and evil by returning to the
strait and narrow way that the
Lord has chosen for you. If you
[continued on page 21]

James 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, nothing

wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

The Trying of Your Faith



Brother Roger L. Decker

God's Plan for Man

In these verses of Scripture James put forth God's plan for you and me. In James 1:2 he said, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." When we read the word *temptation* in this Scripture text, it does not mean enticement to sin. The word actually means "testing." When a bird begins to fly, it likes to test its wings. The Queen of Sheba came to test the wisdom of Solomon. You can read in 1 Kings 10:1, "And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him [or test

him] with hard questions."

Israel was tested when they went into the Promised Land. God did not remove all the obstacles or all the "ites" there. He did not remove all the enemies, but they were tested on their obedience and loyalty to God. Today God's people are tried. If you are a true Christian, you will be tried until you lay down the robe of flesh and enter the next phase of God's great plan called eternity. God's way is not a popular way. No one asks to be tried or tested; nevertheless, in God's great wisdom, He saw fit for you and me to go through tests and trials of life. To be tried is to be tested.

A student in school may say he has studied and feels that he knows all the answers, but the teacher will find out how much he knows by giving him a test. When the test results are in, then it is revealed whether he was prepared as well as he thought he was.

There are driving schools for teenagers to attend before they acquire their driver's license. An individual may do really well while driving with his mom or dad or his brother or sister. He may even do well through the driver's training with an instructor, but he still has to get in an automobile and drive with a member of the highway patrol

sitting next to him with a checklist. That checklist contains a list of driving skills that he must perform adequately before he can pass the test.

All of God's children are going to be tested. The Psalmist said in Psalm 66:10, "For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried." We know that we are tried by the Word of God. Psalm 12:6 says, "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."

Tests Reveal What Is in the Heart

Whenever you take part in the work of God, you are going to be tried. It is one thing to get up and speak, but it is another thing to stand the test. The devil will do anything he can, once you are in front of people, to make you fall in front of people. I cannot stress that enough. If you hold an office in the church, you are going to be tested. Every Christian is going to go through tests of life. You are going to be tested, and that test is going to reveal what is in your heart.

Matthew, Chapter 4, talks about Jesus. Verses 1-11 read: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

"Jesus said unto him, It is

written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

The word *tempt* means "to entice to do wrong; to seduce to sin, to persuade one to go the wrong way." The word as it is used in our Scripture text means "to test." Abraham was tested. Genesis 22:1 says, "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt [or test] Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am." Abraham was tested on his loyalty, his love, and his obedience. The Jews of old had a saying, and it was this: "The Holy One does not elevate a man to dignity till He first has tried and searched him." The Psalmist said in Psalm 139:23-24: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

A Faulty Heart

Second Chronicles 32:27-29 says: "And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks. Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for God had given him substance very much."

God was really blessing Hezekiah, and you can see this down through those verses of Scripture. Verses 30-31 read: "This same

Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him [God left him to make a decision, and the Scripture says], to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart."

Here we see that God had blessed Hezekiah abundantly. It seemed like everything his hand touched was a blessing. He had great storehouses, and he stored up plenty. He was blessed in every avenue where he turned. God left Hezekiah to try him so that He might know all that was in his heart.

Second Kings 20:12-18 reads: "At that time Berodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. [You want to watch false prophets knocking on your door or calling you when you are sick. They are out there. The king of Babylon heard that Hezekiah had been sick, so what did he do? He sent a get well letter to him and sent him a present.]

"And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and showed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon.

"And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them. And Isaiah

said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried [Where?] into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

Hezekiah was left to himself to make a decision, but his heart was not perfect before God. He could be bought, and that test revealed something. It revealed pride and a weakness in his life. A trial will reveal a weakness that you might not have even thought you had. A trial will bring it out, and that which is in the heart will be manifested. It is good to know yourself in that which is weak so that you might not become conceited or overconfident. If you are anything at all, it is by the grace of God. If you have been able to stand in the test, it has been by the grace of God.

Hezekiah's heart was not perfect, and the test revealed it. Tests, trials, temptations are not meant to cause you to sin or to backslide, but they are sent to strengthen you against sin. There is a perfecting work that is needed to strengthen you against sin. There is a perfecting work that needs to be done in each of our lives. When you are saved, you are perfect before God as far as your soul is concerned, but there is a perfecting that needs to be done in your flesh and in your spirit.

Purifying Your Soul

Psalm 138:8 says, "The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands." Trials are not meant to weaken you, but rather to show areas where you are weak or to show where you have let down. Why does He reveal them to you? So you can strengthen those areas. How can you get them strengthened? You

can pray more over those weak areas when they are revealed to you. The trying of your faith is not meant to pollute your soul, but it is meant to purify your soul. Some people say they have a desire to work for the Lord in a greater capacity. The trying of your faith will better prepare you to work in His kingdom and to be used in His fields.

Jesus had His faith tried. You read in Matthew 4:1, "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." The same Spirit that led him into the wilderness is the same Spirit that descended on Him in the form of a dove. His Father spoke out of Heaven saying in Matthew 3:17, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." After He got all that recognition, what happened to Him? He was led up into the wilderness by the same Spirit to be tempted of the devil.

The first act of the ministry of Christ was a one-on-one combat with Satan. In the fall of man, God set forth this prophesy. He said in Genesis 3:15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here was Jesus alone, and it was beyond a normal trial. He was not encountering one of Satan's imps, but rather He was taking on the spirit of Satan. The devil did not spare Him in this test.

The temptation, or test, came right after God had recognized Him publicly at His baptism. It came right after a great manifestation of the glory of God. When that happens in your life, when you are used of God and God's anointing rests upon you, you need to be careful; that stirs the devil. What does it do? It builds up the Kingdom of God, the Spirit of God, and the glory of God. Then Satan is going to take you on. This was right after Jesus had received such great manifestation of the glory of God. The Father had spoken to Him. He had been baptized, and the Spirit descended on Him as a dove. There

was great glory manifested right after that happened, and that stirred the devil.

Where did Jesus go? He went into the wilderness to take on the devil, one-on-one. I said to Brother Wilson one time: "It seems like the closer I get to God, the more battles I have." He said: "That's the way it works. But also the more glory you have, the more God blesses you."

Be on Your Guard

In Acts, Chapter 3, God used Peter and John. A man who had been lame from his birth was healed. However, Acts, Chapter 4, gives a different picture. We read that the priest, the Sadducees, and the captain of the temple took them and kept them till the next day. Then they brought them before the religious hierarchy of that day. The great glory fell, the lame man was healed, and the devil got stirred. What happened? Peter and John had to go before the religious hierarchy of that day.

We read in 1 Kings 18:17-21a: "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? [That is the question yet today. How long are *you* going to halt between two opinions? You lean to one opinion, and then you lean to the other. This was going on back in Elijah's day. In essence, he said, 'How long are you going to be moved by two opin-

ions?'] if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, follow him." That was a simple choice. Friend, if you feel that the world is your god, then follow the world; but if God is your God, then follow Him, because you cannot mix the two of them together. You will be halted between two opinions. You cannot mix God with any other god, whether it is the god of this world or any other image that you have built up in your life.

First Kings 18:36-40 reads: "And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. [What happened?] Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water [water usually kills fire, but not this fire] that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets [take the leaders] of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there."

Here we have a picture of Elijah on Mount Carmel, and he was withstanding the prophets of Baal. This was a great moment of God showing His power and His majesty, but the devil was not done. He was stirred, and he had hold of a woman by the name of Jezebel. As mighty a man as Elijah was, along came a woman named Jezebel who sent out a death threat to Elijah. The threat was so real that Elijah arose and fled. He fearlessly took on the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal, but he did not know how to take on that woman, so he fled.

You are going to be contested. Your faith is going to be tried. It is going to be tested and proved. When you seem to be soaring as great as the eagles, soaring in great heights, you must be on your guard, because your soaring has stirred the devil. I bring this, not to discourage you, but to caution you that you need to be on your guard.

Guard Your Thought Life

Jesus was in the wilderness facing an inner struggle in His heart, His mind, and His soul. He was facing an inward attack. Hebrews 4:15 states, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He was tempted in every avenue that you and I could be tempted, in all points. Jesus had temptations, yet without sin.

The devil likes to get into your thoughts, so you need to guard your thought life. That is where the devil loves to get into first. We read in 2 Corinthians 10:3-6: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled." You have to watch your desires.

Psalms 38:9 reads, "LORD, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee." You have to be careful of the thoughts that you allow to come into your mind. The devil wants to use your mind. Philippians 2:5 says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Sometimes Satan makes his attack so real that you can even feel his presence. Have you ever felt his presence? He can make himself very real. The devil loves to attack your

mind and get you to think wrong thoughts. Peter lets you know that you need to prepare for a mental battle. There is a mental battle that goes on. He said in 1 Peter 1:13, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Satan would like to take over your thought life completely. He would like to have you sitting right in the house of God but have your mind somewhere else. You have to bring your thoughts into subjection. How can you do that? He said you have to "gird up the loins of your mind." In other words, you have to bring your mind into focus on what is going on in the service. Do not let your mind wander off. You will miss something that God has for you. The devil would like to overtake your thought life completely, if you will let him. Once the devil takes your mind over, you are fit for destruction.

The Bible says this of the antediluvian age in Genesis 6:5: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." I warn you to be careful of your thought life; be careful of what you think on. When temptations and sin come, they usually enter the avenue of the mind first. They are channeled through the mind to other places in your body, whether it is passions, desires, or thinking wrong thoughts.

Our Perfect Example

Jesus had to be tried and tested and proved. Satan did his best to try to overthrow the Head of the church to prove that He was a fraud, to prove that He had no power, to prove that He was not the Messiah, our Savior and our example; but Jesus stayed true and overcame all the avenues of temptation that the devil brought His way.

There were three main tempta-

tions that you can read about in Matthew, Chapter 4. All three of those temptations were answered by the Word of God. The main reason behind the temptations was found in Matthew 4:9, which reads, "And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." That motive is the same one he uses yet today with a child of God. Satan wants you to fall down from the plane of holiness, to fall from the elevation that God has lifted you to. Satan wants you to fall down and worship him, to fall down and worship the world, to fall down and worship everything but God Himself.

Jesus took everything, man and religion, that Satan could come up with, and stayed true to God. What does that prove? He is a perfect example for you and me so that we do not have to fall. You do not have to fall if you do not want to fall. You do not have to give in to temptation, if you do not want to give in. Someone may say, "Well, He was the Son of God." So are you, if you are saved. First Peter 4:1 says, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."

Why does God allow your faith to be tried? One reason is that it works patience. You want to be careful when you pray for patience. If you pray for patience, it is going to come, but it is not going to come necessarily through the avenue that you want it to come through. It can come through trials. James 1:3 says, "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." Another translation makes it plainer. It reads, "Because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance."

When a man goes through testing, or when his faith is being tried, he is developing into an unswerving pillar in the church. God does not want His people to be unstable. He does not want His people swerving this way and that way. He

wants them to be real pillars in the Kingdom of God. Verse 4 says, "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

First Peter 5:10 says, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Some people need to settle down, and there is no other way for you to get settled except through trials. The trying of your faith makes you more like Jesus, or James says "perfect and entire, wanting nothing." What does that mean? It means mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Standing True

Abraham was tried, and he proved true. Lot was also tried, and ended up in Sodom. What was the difference between them? Lot was along for the fleshly blessings, but Abraham truly loved God. Lot followed his uncle, and he received all the material blessings, but Abraham truly was obedient to God. If you do not have what it takes, if you do not have what you profess, it will show up in the trial. This thing of serving God goes beyond lip service. You can exalt your experience with God, but you must be ready to back it up. God does not want you to trumpet something that is not true. If you are a hypocrite, it will show up in the trial. Some people go along for just a little while because their roots are not very deep. The Bible says in Matthew, Chapter 13, they are offended through the Word. The next thing you know, they get a little persecution, and what do they want to do? They want to give up! God allows persecution to come along just to show you what is in your heart. You may see that you are not deep enough. You may be too superficial in your experience.

If your heart is not perfect, it will surface in a trial. You are going to go through some things that will really test your faith. Let us consider

some of the most trying trials that you can have. One is family. Everybody has one. Family can be a real trial. Have you ever read about Gideon in the Old Testament? Gideon was called to be a leader of God's people. What did he have to do first? Gideon had to be tested, and the test that came upon him was almost unbelievable that anybody could be tested this way.

Judges 6:25-27 reads: "And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it: And build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down. Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the LORD had said unto him: and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night." He feared his father's household, but God blessed. He did it by night, yet he did it. That was a severe test.

There are times when one has to stand against his family if they are wrong. Many people are very hesitant to do that. Now, one must do it in a right way, but you are an individual before God. Your mother or your dad did not die for you. Your brother or your sister did not die for you. Your close friends did not die for you. It took Jesus Christ to die for you. There are times when ones are going to have to stand against their family if their family is wrong.

The Bible says in Matthew 10:37, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Family will try your faith, and family is going to cause you to check your loyalty. How loyal are you to God when it comes to family? How

loyal are you when it comes to mom and dad or brother and sister? Jesus said in Luke 14:26, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

Being Loyal to Christ

Friends will try your faith. Job said in Job 19:14, "My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me." Your girlfriend or boyfriend can try your faith. They can test you. You need to watch that you do not become more loyal to that one than you are to Jesus Christ. A Christian young person should never even consider dating someone who is unsaved. Before you date someone, he or she should have lived for God long enough to show that he or she is steadfast. You need to be careful.

Christian young men should stay away from a girl who acts and dresses like a Jezebel. Proverbs 5:1-5 says: "My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honey-comb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell."

No decent young lady would want a young man who continually chases after morally loose girls, not if she is planning a home in the future. No decent guy would want to marry a young woman with loose morals. Who would want a girl that many young men have tossed around and talked about? Who would want a guy who has a bad reputation? You need to consider these points.

There should be an awful lot of praying that goes into dating. However, when people pray about things, they are not always ready to accept the will of God. Sometimes

they pray with their mind made up. They pray, but they already have it fixed in their minds what they are going to do. They are not truly loyal to God as they say they are. Instead of asking God to show them, they might pray: "Lord, help him not to do that any more. Help him to be nicer to me. Lord, help him not to get fresh with me." Instead of asking God to truly direct their steps, they put limitations on how they pray. They want God to answer their prayer the way they want Him to answer.

You should not want to consider marrying somebody who is not true Church of God. Why? You are not just thinking of the present; you are thinking of the future. You need to think of any children that you might have. You need to think of so many things. You are not just going for the present; you should be thinking: "How is it going to be in the family? How is it going to be when I come to the house of God? Am I going to have to battle to come to church? Am I going to wind up having to battle dressing as a sister should dress? Am I going to have to battle keeping the television out of the home? Am I going to have to battle keeping other things out of the house?" You need to think about those things. What kind of parents does that person have? Have they been taught right or let go to do whatever?

What else will try your faith? Money will try your faith. It will test your faith. First Timothy 6:10 states, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Money is not the root of evil; the *love* of money is the root of all evil. Some people are so much in love with money that it hinders them in the work of God. Saint of God, you are going to have your faith tried, but Jesus will be in the trial with you. You see, you will go through some of the same trials that the world goes through, but the difference is, you have Jesus Christ

with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.

Isaiah 43:1-3 reads: "But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee."

We are going to be a tried people. God is going to count us worthy to be tried, and only what is in the heart is going to be manifested. If you have not been doing very well in the trying of your faith, you need to talk to Jesus. If you do that, it will be all right.

(Compact Disc TR-1116E)

Alone With Jesus

*It's not how much you've been doing;
It is not your zeal and vim
That wins the most souls to our Savior,
It's the time alone with Him.*

*If you're counting on your good works;
Then your chance is very slim.
For Christ is calling for a people
Who'll get alone with Him.*

*Does your light blaze out brightly,
Or is it growing very dim?
There's one place to fill your lamp up;
And that's alone with Him.*

*Are you in the center of the circle
Of God's will or near the rim?
To be right in the very center
Means to get alone with Him.*

*Neglect your friends or business,
Though it brings you much chagrin,
If you really have to do it
To get alone with Him.*

Selected

Deuteronomy 12:1 These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.

2 Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree:

3 And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of

that place.

4 Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God.

5 But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:

6 And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks:

7 And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in

all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

8 Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.

9 For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you.

10 But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety.



On the Other Side of Jordan

Brother Leaman Whitehead

You Can Do All Things Through Christ

What a precious promise to people who had been in bondage down in Egypt for so long. You talk about good news! Was that not good news when God told them about the blessings that He had for them? I am thankful for the thoughts that God has toward us. He is not a God who

is ready to pounce on you and destroy you, but He has good thoughts about you. He wants you to be successful and to make it to Heaven. He wants you to be faithful, and He wants you to come and live with Him throughout the ceaseless age of eternity. His thoughts toward us are good. To sum all of that up, God loves us. 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." God is working on our behalf. He is not working against us.

I do not know what that does to you, but it sends a thrill down deep in my soul to know that God loves me and to know that He wants me to make it. He is doing everything He can to see that I remain faithful.

Glory be to God! In Philippians 4:13 Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Our battle with the enemy along these lines is that he will try to tell you: "You can't do anything. You can't live free from sin. You can't serve God." When the devil tells you that "you can't," remember that Paul said, "I can do all things. . . ." You can do whatever He bids you to do, but just make sure He bids you.

Our Scripture text reads in verses 7-10: "And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee. Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes. For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you. But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety."

God was talking to people who had been down in the land of Egypt in bondage for several hundred years. God called Moses and sent him to lead those people out of that land of bondage and to the Promised Land. You and I are heading for Heaven, Christian friend, and the devil is trying his best to cause us to fall short, not to go all the way with God, not to finish our course, not to finish the race with joy. He does not care about our getting started and going part way. The devil does not want us to be serious about serving God. He does not want us to make a total commitment and sacrifice to go all the way with God.

Keep Pressing On

The Israelites were headed for the other side of Jordan. Moses brought them out of Egypt, but he was not able to go with them into the Promised Land. God chose

Joshua, and in essence, He said, "Joshua, I want you to take the children of Israel on over into Canaan and divide their inheritance." The inheritance was over on the other side of Jordan; that was the Promised Land.

My friend, we are not home yet, but we are on our way. There is no place to let down, so we have to keep pressing the battle on. You may ask, "How long do we have to keep pressing?" We must keep pressing until the final triumph, until it is all over. God was thinking of those dear people, and He talked about a rest. He was going to give them a rest from all their enemies. I believe that God has a place for every one of us where we can live victoriously. I am not speaking of a place that is free from tests, trials, or hardships, but a place where we can have confidence in God so that we can live victoriously. No matter what might come our way, we can be winners. Praise God!

We can be winners with God, not ready to give up. Some people are ready to give up every time they hit a little hill or a little rough place. When tests come their way or when they run into hardships, the first thing they begin to do is to give up on God. My friend, you want to hold onto God. You do not want to let God go. He is the best friend you have ever had. Without God you are sure to go down, but with God you are a winner.

We see so many people who seem to lose heart from time to time, and they want to give up on God. If you are going through a rough place, do not think about giving up on God. You need to just get a tighter grip on God and draw up a little closer to Him. He wants to impart to you whatever you stand in need of.

There is a perfect will of God and a permissive will of God. If you want to be fully blessed, you do not want to be in the permissive will of God, but you want to be in the perfect will of God. You should want His perfect plan for your life. That is where the blessings will

flow, and that is where you will have strength sufficient for the journey, where you can live a victorious life continuously for God in any kind of circumstance.

God is not just God of the day, but He is God of the night. He is not just God in fair weather, but He is God in bad weather. Glory be to God! God told the children of Israel: "I'll take you through. I'll never leave you or forsake you, but I am right here." I want to add to that, I have found it so. That makes it so sweet when I have found it so. How wonderful it is to read from God's Word and then to realize and to know that you have that experience!

How Is Your Commitment to God?

Those people were living down in Egypt in bondage, and hardships were getting greater all the time. God heard their cry. Isn't that wonderful? He heard my cry one day. I was raised in false religion, but God heard my cry. He saw the desire of my heart, that I wanted to live for Him and serve Him. God brought me around to where I could come in contact with Truth; that is the goodness of God. He wanted me to be His child, to have victory and to live a holy life free from sin, and to bring glory to God and win souls to Him. God was good to me, and He called me out of false religion to the glorious Church of God. It has spoiled me for anything else. Praise His Holy Name!

I have never had a desire to go back to those things that I left behind. God said He would give you rest from all your enemies, dear one. That is what He wants to do. Did you know that we have some enemies in this world? The devil is out there, and he works through people. The devil is out to trick you and to trap you any way he can. He wants to trip you along the journey and cause you to fall short. The Lord can make you wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove. He will take you right on through the rough places

and through the dangerous places. The ship of Zion will sail right on through, and you can too if you will stay with God.

You do not have to be up and down in your Christian experience. You do not have to constantly lose out with God and get saved again every revival. I am not against people who are having struggles. I am not talking about that, dear one. My heart goes out to them. I am telling you that you do not have to live that way. Once you get it settled in your heart and life that you are going to go with God, it does not matter what others do, you can serve God. The devil cannot do much with a commitment like that. He cannot do much when you are a totally committed, satisfied customer. When you love God and want to serve Him, you are not doing it because somebody else is, but because you came to an altar of prayer one day and made the decision: "I am going to serve God." You do not serve God because your buddies or your schoolmates are.

In Joshua 24:15 Joshua said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." I have had it settled for a long time that I am going to serve God. I am not interested in people trying to talk me out of salvation or trying to sell me on another way. I am as happy as I can be. All I want is more of this. I do not try to push religion down people's throats, but I want to live it and be what God would have me to be. Christian friend, people are watching your life. They know whether you are really sold out to God or if it is a sideline to you. They can tell by your commitment to God. Dear one, do not settle for the permissive will of God, but only settle for the perfect will of God, that perfect plan of God for your life.

The Consequences of Failing to Go All the Way With God

God had Israel on a trip to go into the Promised Land. The Bible lets us know where the borders of it

were and how it was divided to each tribe. God had a plan for them, but I want you to keep in mind that it was on the *other* side of Jordan.

Sometimes people look around and want to stop and camp for a while. Lot got in trouble because he looked down across the plains of Sodom and saw the well-watered plains and valleys. No doubt, he thought: "My, that would be a nice place. It has plenty of good grass." He was only looking at what would profit him. He never really saw the wickedness down in Sodom. He never really thought about what the cost was going to be, and the cost was great. Dear one, he made the wrong decision. His cattle might have gotten fat, he might have made money from them and had something good to eat, but he lost his family because he was only looking at the material side of things.

I want you to notice what happened to part of the children of Israel. There were two and one-half tribes that did not want to cross over the Jordan River: the tribe of Gad, the tribe of Reuben, and half of the tribe of Manasseh. I believe it is very important that God said to cross over Jordan. He did not tell them to look around before they went over to see if they wanted to stay on this side. The other side was where the inheritance was. That was where the Promised Land was located. Those two and one-half tribes began to scout the land and decided, "This would be a good place."

Has the devil ever tried to get you to stop short of being what God would have you to be? You see, almost is not good enough. Almost making it to Heaven is not making it into Heaven. A pretty song years ago said, "*Ninety-nine and a half won't do.*" You have to live right and make it 100 percent. Ninety-nine and a half won't do. Satan is so sly that he will cause you to come a *little* short of being all that God would have you to be and giving your all to God, but that will not work.

These two and one-half tribes decided they were not going to cross

over to the other side of Jordan. This was where God's permissive will came in. In essence, Moses said, "Okay, but first you are going to have to go over and fight with your brethren until they get established. Then if you want to go back, you can." I want you to keep in mind, that never was God's plan. God's plan and all His promises were on the other side of Jordan.

You may ask, "How does that apply to us today?" My friend, unless we each pay the full price, we are not going to have the victory that God has for us. We are not going to excel as children of God in the things of God and grow and mature and be what God would have us to be unless we pay the full price. There are consequences to be paid for those who fail to go all the way with God.

Failing to Serve God Wholeheartedly

The message is very simple, but the devil is very real. People do not just drop out of God's service all of a sudden. They are like someone once said about an old car: it always starts missing before it quits. If the enemy is working on you and you feel weak and down and do not know whether you can go on, you need to find a place of prayer and pray until you have it all on the altar before God and settle it that, "I want to go with God."

Dear one, you cannot be double minded or split on serving God. You have to put God first and keep Him first in every aspect of your life. If you do not, you will give the devil just a little. There is a saying that says, "If you give him an inch, he will become your ruler." That is true. The enemy does not come in and overwhelm you all at once, but he comes in and tries to get a little influence in your life. That influence will grow until, little by little, he has a greater hold.

Historians tell us when the falling away started back in that day that those two and one-half tribes

started falling away first. You see, they were not in God's perfect will. They might have prospered materially. Everything might have looked good. That is the reason you cannot measure your success by what you have, or by your material blessings.

I would have taken Lazarus' side anytime. He was a beggar, and he had nothing. He laid at the rich man's gate. When he died, the rich man died also, and the Bible says that in hell he lifts up his eyes. When Lazarus died, the angels carried him away. I repeat, friend, you cannot judge your spirituality, or how close you are to God, by how much material gain you have. The enemy will use that, and then people say, "I must be serving God; look what He's doing for me."

There is a little story about a man who took his friend out. The man had been successful and owned a lot of land. He took his friend out to his land and said: "Just look around. As far as you can see, I own all of that."

His friend looked around and said, "That's good, but how much do you own up that way (pointing toward Heaven)?"

The man just dropped his head. My friend, what you own up that way is what is going to count.

Going back to laying treasures up on the other side, the bank is not going to make any difference, whether you have half interest in it or a lot of money in it; it is not going to matter. It is how many treasures you have over yonder. You see, we are just passing through. This world is not our home. We are only here for a little while, and then we are gone.

God was going to overthrow those enemies in the land of Canaan. They had houses and vineyards. They had all that God's people would need, and God was going to drive them out and give it to His people. God had good thoughts of them, and He has good thoughts of us. He has made provisions for us. He said, "I am going to give you houses that you did not build."

Praise God!

Down in the land of Egypt, the children of Israel had provisions, but they could not have been much. It started out well, but they began to find themselves under a great taskmaster. God called them out and led them out of that bondage. He was going to take them over into a land that flowed with milk and honey, but there were other people who possessed that land. God told them, "I am going to go before you." It is sad when you think about the end of all of that, because they never did conquer the land; therefore, they never experienced the fulness of God's blessings. Finally, they began to try to coexist with the enemies about them; however, that did not work, because they soon found themselves under servitude. Oh, what a lesson!

Failing to Obey God Fully

We cannot coexist with false religion or with the world. We have to stand apart and be separate. The Lord told His people not to touch the unclean thing and He would receive them. Dear one, we have to take a stand to go with God. We cannot silently go along with the world. I do not make a fuss with people. I have worked with all kinds of people, some from sectarian religions. I could have had an argument going all the time, but I did not do that. Now, if somebody presses me and really wants to know the truth or if someone asks my opinion of what I think about a certain Scripture or a certain doctrine, then I feel that I have the liberty to tell them. I have never been one to try to cram religion down people's throats, because I do not want them to try to cram their way down my throat. You are only going to win the honest-hearted anyway. I have found the best thing to do is to live the life before them, although there is a time to testify to others.

People know that I am a preacher. Once in a while somebody will come around and say, "I would

like for you to remember So-and-So in prayer." People know your life, and they see how you live. If you are really true to God, they will see the difference between you and sectarians. They might not know what the difference is, but they will know there is a difference. I believe God wants us to be good witnesses where we work so that people can have enough confidence in us to ask us to pray. Dear one, you should not lower yourself down to the world's standard of living. In cold weather or warm weather, you ought to dress modestly. You should keep your clothes on and show people how God wants you to live and to dress.

The move that those two and a half tribes made cost them. Even those who went on over failed to fully obey God, and it cost them as well. God said it was not a land that would eat up the inhabitants, but it was a land that takes in the rain from Heaven. In other words, it would just grow and give them plenty to eat. However, there was a price they would have to pay: they would have to keep God's statutes and keep Him first. God cautioned them. You see, as humans, people have to be reminded. That is the reason you do not want to turn a deaf ear when the preacher gets up and announces what he is going to preach on. You may think, "I've heard that time and time again." You might have, but it will not hurt you to hear it again, because you need to be reminded. Heaven will be for those who are faithful to the end.

Our minds need to be stirred up. We need to be reminded of God's promises and of His goodness. God reminded Israel, and there was bound to have been danger. When we get in a comfort zone, there is a danger. God warned them to be careful not to forget Him when they got over in the land and won a few battles. He reminded them to be careful that they did not forget Him. That is true for every one of us. I have been serving the Lord for a good number of years. I started out

when I was about fifteen years of age, but the danger is ever before me. I am not home yet. Satan would like to knock me out now more than any other time. He would like to knock you out too. That is the reason we cannot become careless. We have to be ever on guard and keep pressing the battle on.

Crossing Jordan

Dear one, the promises of God were on the other side of Jordan. That is what I want to keep pressing. While that was the Promised Land, the land of Canaan, it has its fulfillment to you and me in Christ. God told them, in essence, "I am going to give you every bit of ground that you set your feet on."

There are some things that you and I have to set our feet on. It is more than just coming down to an altar of prayer in the initial part of salvation. There is more to salvation than that. You have to take hold of the things of God and begin to conquer things in your life. Some things that have driven you to sin have to be put under your feet. If you do not have real victory in your soul, it is not God's fault, but it has to do with a lack in your experience. Maybe you are not willing to pay the price to really sell out and get what God has for you. The life of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost is there for you, but unless you pay the price and conquer self, you are not going to be able to enjoy it. The devil will have you hemmed in on every side, but God wants to set you free.

Jordan can be seen as anything that stands between where you are and where you ought to be. That might not have seemed like much. I do not know how wide the Jordan was there, but that was how much they lacked crossing over it. How close are you, dear one? Jesus told a man one time that he was not far from the Kingdom of God, but he was not in the kingdom. He had not come far enough; he had not done enough. He was not far away, but he was not where he ought to have

been.

Is anything standing between where you are and where you ought to be? You need to let the Holy Spirit search your heart and see if you have a need. I am not trying to condemn anyone, but you know whether or not you have real victory. You must have victory to live in this day in which we are living to know God's will for your life and to be willing to consecrate your whole being to God.

Are you just on the other side of Jordan? Have you failed to do what God would really have you to do? The Scriptures are so plain, my friend. Israel could have been victorious and had what God had promised them, but they failed to do what God said. If you want the experience that the Bible speaks about, you have to pay the price that the Bible sets forth. If you will pay the price, you can get the goods. Friend, do not blame God, but it is self.

I sing a song from time to time entitled "It's bubbling." The last verse talks about getting victory over people. You have to get victory over others. It is not what people think about you that counts. I do not worry about what people think about me when I dress as God would have me to dress. I want to please God. I want to keep my experience up to date in my soul and live as God would have me to live. That is a great test on people. You need to cut yourself free from the fads that go around and say, "I'm going to go with God."

I have been a satisfied customer for a good number of years. I love and appreciate the Lord. I would not trade what He has done for me for all this world has. If there is a need in your heart and life, if you do not have the joy that you feel you ought to have, pray and seek God. I think so often of what He told Israel. In essence, He said, "If you would have hearkened to My commandments, your peace would have been like a river." Now, I want you to think about that. Some people struggle to keep their heads above water, so to

speaking. The enemy is about to drag them under. They go to church, but it is not because they are excited about serving God. They go because of what people would think if they did not go. Sooner or later, the enemy will stop them.

My friend, you can get hold of something that has more joy and peace in it than the devil has to offer, something that brings satisfaction. You need to get your soul fed. You can drink from the water of life and eat the Word of God and grow in the things of God, and it will be a joy. You can wake up with God in the morning, go out on the job, and live as God would have you to live.

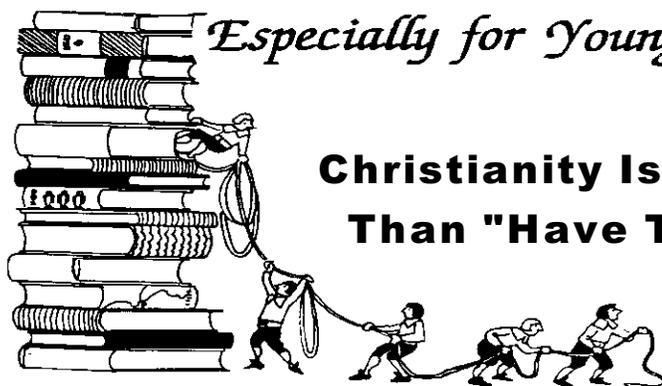
Being saved is not a profession; it is a way of life. Praise God! Why not serve notice on the devil that you are tired of playing around. You need to be determined: "I am going over on the other side of Jordan." Will you cut all the shorelines and launch out for God? It is going to take your all to make Heaven your home.

Why have a profession when you have just enough religion to make you miserable? Some religious people get to the place where the world will not really have them because they interfere with what they are doing, but they do not have pure religion where they really get excited and enjoy the things of God. They are in complete misery.

I beg of you, whatever your status is with God, if you have been holding out on God and not wanting to pay the price, go all the way with Him. Are you struggling with some of the Bible teachings? Are you really letting God have His way? I beg of you to turn it over to God. You will find that He has the satisfying portion that you stand in need of. He will brighten your countenance on your face. He will cause the joybells of Heaven to ring down in your soul, and everybody around you will know that something has happened.

(Compact Disc TR-134M)

Especially for Young People



Christianity Is More Than "Have To's"



Mark 4:36-39 says: "And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he [Jesus] was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." We need to show the world that there is a peace that will last in the midst of the storms.

Luke 4:17-21 states: "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Everything that the prophets told of, everything that they hoped for, everything that the people before them died waiting for was at that very moment to see the Son of God, and He was right there in front of them. All those years, they were hungering for the power to live free from sin.

Every one of us who is saved has that power, and the world is looking for that. They are thinking, "I need something." We need to show the world that this Christian life is more than "have to's." Sometimes people think, "If I get saved, I will have to quit smoking, I will have to quit drinking, and I will have to quit cussing." If you truly get saved, you will want to quit these things, but serving God is more than commandments. The world needs peace, grace, comfort, love, strength, power, and hope. Can the world see Jesus in you?

Suicide is no respecter of persons. Worldwide nearly one million young people take their own lives. This number is expected to raise to 1.5 million to 2 million by 2020. The world needs something. Sometimes young people can become depressed; it just comes with growing. The devil is using that moment when you are depressed and causes you to feel that this world is not worth living. Giving up your life like that is not worth it. The devil may tell you, "There is no reason to live." With Jesus you can have comfort and peace. You can have something to hold on to. Young people who take their own lives are searching for something.

Eight hundred twenty thousand young people per year have teen pregnancies, and of those, only one-third will complete high school. Seven out of one hundred teenagers will have teen pregnancies. They are looking for something to fulfill their needs.

Luke 15:4-7 reads: "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth

it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

We need to find our lost sheep, those who walk around unnoticed every day. We need to pray, "Help us to have the strength to defeat our own giants so we can help them defeat theirs."

All over the United States young men and women are losing their hope and their sense of direction. Everywhere you look, someone lost is begging for someone to care enough to reach out a hand and lead. If we can just reach one, it will be worth it all. We need to show the world it is just not about the "have to's." It is about the peace that God gives you.

Young people do not have to walk around every day defeated, wishing they had something. Oh, they are happy here and there, but they know deep down in their hearts that they need something. They know what they need, but something just keeps hindering them. We need a quickening of the Holy Spirit. The word *quicken* means "to preserve, to repair, or to restore." Psalm 71:20 says, "Thou which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth." The Bible says we are more than conquerors. Do you believe from the depths of your heart that no matter what God is on your side?

David said in Psalm 71:22-24: "I will also praise thee with the psalter, even

thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel. My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed. My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt."

The best of God's saints sometimes have great and sore troubles in this world, but God's eyes are on all the troubles of the saints. He will help to make them seem light. God's people may be brought ever so low, but He can raise them up to walk on mountains, on the stormy seas, through the hottest furnace, or to face any giant. If we regard the hand of the Almighty God in our troubles, we are promised deliverance out of them in due time. Our present troubles, though great and sore, shall be no hindrance to our joy. Jesus was shown great and sore troubles, but He was quickened by God and raised from the dead.

Psalm 71:3 says, "Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress." You may ask, "Why would I want to get saved when I can have fun with my buddies and do what I want to do? To tell you the truth, you are not doing what you want to do. The devil is telling you what to do. In your mind he is deceiving you and telling you that.

No matter how many cigarettes you smoke, how much liquor you drink, how much chewing tobacco you put in your mouth, how much illicit sex you have, how much drugs you take, or any other sin you can partake of, it is going to be as lightning. It will be here, and then it is gone; then you are going to go back to it again and again. Your satisfaction will never be fulfilled until you have a change of heart. Young people get so worried, "Oh, I'm going to be bored in church." I have not been bored in church for the last ten years. God is more than just the commandments. This life is so worth it.

I faced the biggest giant of my life in the seventh grade. I did not sin or do anything against God's will to cause my

situation. I knew that God was real and that He was still with me, but I did not feel Him. I felt that no matter what I did, I could not get hold of Him again. I felt depressed. It was a really hard place in my life. I felt all alone. It seemed like I was drifting away from God. I was not backsliding, but I could not get hold of it. I loved being in church because I felt peace, but as soon as I walked out the door, the devil just moved in on me. It showed me that the devil had nothing for me. He has nothing for you. There is no reason even to think about it. God has done so much for us.

I remember one Sunday between services that I was praying, and I was miserable. I was walking toward the fellowship hall. All I heard in my mind was "Don't you dare walk in that fellowship hall." I ran to the fellowship hall and sat down and bawled my eyes out. A sister came over and said, "What's wrong?" I said: "I don't know what I did wrong. I feel so alone. I feel so depressed, and it seems like the devil is always winning no matter what I do." She called a brother to come over and talk with me. I really do not remember what he said, but it seemed like God walked right back in my life. Through that trial, I thank God that I was never suicidal, but God is still teaching me things now. It caused me to write a song called, "Facing the Giants."

I want to say to other young people, this Christian life is so much better than all that the world has to offer you. If you walk into church and think you are bored, then talk to God. God is so awesome. He makes a way when there is no way. I have always wondered why people do not see that. Why would they rather go and fill their lives with so much sin and live the way they do?

We need to raise up a generation of young people who are on fire for God. We need to stand fast. It says in Galatians to stand fast. We need to stand ready in the liberty wherein Christ has set us free and not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. If we just sit and get a wrong spirit, we will be just like other religions. We have salvation. False religion walks around saying: "You have to sin more or less every day. No matter what you do, you have

to sin." If that was true, then Christ died in vain. They are saying that Christ died for no reason. Some people say He was just a good teacher, but He is so much more than that.

Isaiah 41:10 reads, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." God does not want a fearful people. We can depend on His presence with Him as our God. He is all sufficient for us in the worst of times. Just look at how tenderly He speaks. He is right there next to you. That is awesome! It is so awesome to live for God. Prayer is a tool that we can use. Young people, let us rise up as a generation to be what we need to be. You do not have to go out every moment talking to people. Just be sensitive to what God would have you to do in your little place. Light your light in the corner where you are.

Are you weak spiritually? God will strengthen you. Are you destitute of friends? God will help you in your time of need. Are you ready to fall? Some young people get saved, and then they go back to school and just give up. God is so much more powerful than that. He is so much bigger than that. Your friends can influence you more than you think. God will uphold you with the right hand of His righteousness. God has promised, and He will never lie. He will go with you hand in hand. He will take you by the hand and lead you. The devil will push you and shove you and take you further than you could ever want to go, but God will never do that. He will lead and guide you.

One thing I have learned is that God will help you if you fall. When you are weak, He will hold you up. If you waiver, He will fix you. If you are trembling, He will encourage you and hold you by the right hand. He will silence your fears, saying, "Fear not!" He said that again and again in His Word. He provided sovereign antidotes against fear, but He will go further. By His Spirit He will speak to your heart and make you to hear and help you. He is all you need.

[continued on page 21]

1 Peter 5:6 *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:*

7 *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

9 *Whom resist stedfast in the faith,*

knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.



How to Resist the Devil

Brother Larry Dishman

Submit and Resist

The devil is real, and he counterfeits the things of God. The Bible lets us know that sometimes he may appear as an angel, a Christian, or a minister. Some people are confused about the devil. They wonder: "Is Satan really as bad as people say he is?" or "Is Satan a real being?" Again, Satan is real; he is not a myth. He has had at least six thousand years of experience of setting traps for the people of God; therefore, we need to learn to resist him.

Friend, all you have to do is look around to see that the devil is ruining many people's lives. He is damning sinners and defeating many saints of God. I repeat, the devil must be resisted. It is not enough to tell the young Christian that he has to resist the devil, but he needs to know from the Word of God *how* to resist the devil. I am glad that God's Word lets us know how to resist the

devil. You do not have to yield to his temptations.

In James 4:7 we find two elements plainly spoken of: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Resisting the devil and submitting to God are vital for your personal spiritual growth. You should underline or circle the two words in that verse in your Bible – *submit* and *resist*. If you are going to grow spiritually, you need to be submissive to God and you need to resist the devil. All sin is just the opposite of submission to God. In other words, to sin is to be resistant to God. Every time an individual sins, he is resisting God. You need to think about that. Every time a person does not do what God wants him to do, he is sinning. The Bible says to know to do good and to do it not is sin.

Every time a person puts his own desires above God's desires for his life, he is falling short of what

God has planned for him. In other words, he is missing the mark, and to miss the mark is to commit sin. James, therefore, says to submit to God, because sin is being submissive to Satan. I do not want to be submissive to the devil, do you? Sometimes it takes time and effort for sufficient resistance to break the attack of the enemy. The devil loves to attack the people of God.

We all prefer to see instant scattering of the works of darkness. Thank God, when you rebuke the devil and resist him, immediately there is a scattering of the works of darkness. However, if it does not happen immediately, it is not a matter of God ignoring you, but of His bringing you into the learning process. The muscle tone of faith grows stronger under those types of circumstances, and we learn the wisdom of God's way even though we sometimes have to continue to resist the devil. Inevitably, you will be

able to see a breakthrough of grace. Just as surely as the night passes and the dawn comes, and then comes high noon, there needs to be resistance in order for this to be realized. In order to be a successful Christian, you must learn to really resist the devil. Therefore, I want to reveal how you can successfully resist the devil.

If you are going to successfully resist the devil, you have to recognize the devil's battle plan. He has one for me, one for the ministers, and one for you. They are not all the same battle plans; nonetheless, the devil has one for each of us.

The Devil's Devices

The Word of God says in 2 Corinthians 2:11, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." I want to mention a few of the devil's devices. Doubt is one of his devices. He wants you to doubt the fact that you are a genuine Christian. He wants to bring doubts to your mind. He came to Jesus, and he is going to come to you and say, "If you were really a Christian, you would not be tempted along these lines" or "If you were really a Christian, this would not have happened in your life." Satan came to Jesus and said, "If thou be the Son of God. . . ." Do you know what the devil wants to do? He wants to make you doubt your salvation. If he gets you to doubt your salvation, then he will send strong temptation your way and attack you from another angle. He will say: "You do not even know if you are saved. Since you do not know whether you are saved, that means you are playing the hypocrite, so you would be better off to quit God altogether. Just throw up your hands and quit."

How can you know when the devil is lying? He lies every time he opens his mouth. He wants you to doubt God. He wants you not only to doubt God but also to be discouraged. Discouragement comes from the devil. The devil is going to do

whatever he can to discourage you. God is not in the business of discouraging His people. He is in the business of lifting them up and encouraging them. Any spirit that discourages you is a spirit from the devil. The devil wants to distract you from doing right in whatever way he can.

Another tactic the devil uses is deceit. He wants to deceive you. He wants to get you to dwell upon false doctrine so that he can lead you astray. He wants you to deceive yourself. Another tactic of the devil is to try to sow discord among the people of God. That is what he likes to do. Proverbs 6:16 says, "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him." One of those things is sowing discord among the brethren. The devil wants to bring you to a place of despair.

Something else the devil wants you to do is cause delay. When you need to make a decision in your life, do you know what the devil wants you to do? He wants you to put it off, or delay. Friend, you should never delay getting the spiritual needs met in your heart and life. Paul warned us of Satan's design when he said, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11). Are you ignorant of Satan's devices? As a young Christian, many times I was ignorant of the devil's devices. I made mistakes as a young Christian from time to time because I did not realize what the devil was trying to do to me.

The Essence of Falsehood and Deception

The Bible mentions many things the devil does, and I cannot mention them all, but one thing Satan does is lie. He is the father of all lies. The Bible says in John 8:44, "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 speak-

eth a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." Some people say the devil used to be in Heaven. Well, if that were the case, then he was a murderer while he was there, because the Bible says he was a murderer from the beginning.

The first time we read of the devil's appearance is in the Book of Genesis, Chapter 3. The very first words out of his mouth were words of suspicion toward the Truth of God's eternal Word. What was the first thing the devil said? "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The next words out of the devil's mouth were "Ye shall not surely die." He has been a liar all the way from the beginning. The Bible lets us know that he is a liar and always has been one, and he always will be one. John said there is no truth in him. We are dealing with the essence of falsehood and deception.

Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers. I believe that many people are unsaved because the devil has blinded them. Second Corinthians 4:4 says, "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." So he not only speaks of what is false but also hides what is true. Satan masquerades in costumes of light and righteousness. He does not always come as a roaring lion. Do not always look for the devil as a lion or in a red suit with horns.

Second Corinthians 11:13-15 reads: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." Paul said some people were posing as apostles who were not. In other words, Satan has his servants to profess enough to join

the church and from inside teach what Paul calls "doctrines of devils." Do not ever swallow the lie: "It does not matter what you believe. We all are going to Heaven." Friend, that is a lie from the pits of hell.

The Apostle Paul said in 1 Timothy 4:1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." God does not want us to believe any doctrines of the devil. Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). False doctrines cannot set you free, but thank God, the Truth of His Word will set you free. Jesus said there will be wolves in sheep's clothing. In Matthew 7:15 He said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Paul said they will not spare the flock, but they will draw people away after themselves. In Acts 20:30 we read, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

The Path of Suffering and Obedience

Another thing the devil does is tempt people to sin. This is what he did unsuccessfully to Jesus in the wilderness. He wanted Him to abandon the path of suffering and obedience, so he brought temptations to Him. The devil began to try to work even on the mind of Jesus. Someone may say, "I do not think Jesus was tempted." The Bible says in Hebrews 4:15, "[He] was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." The devil also came to Judas Iscariot, tempting him, but unlike with Jesus, Satan was successful with Judas.

Luke 22:3-6 reads: "Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and

covenanted to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude."

Second Corinthians 11:3 says, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

The devil plucks the Word of God out of people's hearts and chokes their faith. Mark 4:3-4 says: "Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow; And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up." Satan fights God's Word because he hates faith, which the Word produces. The Word of God produces faith.

Romans 10:17 states, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The devil does not want you to have faith, so he fights the Word of God. Paul expressed his concern for the faith of the Thessalonians when he said in 1 Thessalonians 3:5, "For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain." Paul knew that Satan's design was to choke off the faith of people who had heard the Word of God, and that is what he wants to do to you and me. The devil wants to come along and steal the Word of God from our hearts.

According to the Bible, Satan causes sicknesses and diseases to come on people. Jesus healed a woman who was bent over and could not straighten herself. When some people criticized Him for doing this on the Sabbath day, Jesus said in Luke 13:16, "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" Jesus saw Satan as one who caused disease. In Acts 10:38 Peter described Jesus as one who went about doing good, healing all who were oppressed of the devil. In other

words, the devil often oppresses people with illnesses. This is one of his designs.

The devil is a murderer. John 8:44 reads, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." To put it in a word, Satan is bloodthirsty. Christ came into the world so that we might have life and have life more abundantly, but when it comes to the devil, he came to steal and to kill and to destroy. The devil is bloodthirsty. You have to learn how to resist him.

An Accuser of the Brethren

I will tell you something else that Satan will do. He will accuse you. Young convert, you need to get ready. If he has not already, the devil will harass you and accuse you. Revelation 12:10 says, "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." It is the same with us as it was with Job.

I believe Satan says to God concerning us: "They really do not love You. They are just in this for the benefits. Their faith is not really real. They learned it from their parents. They just come to church because they like the music." Satan accuses us before God, and he accuses us personally. The devil has a way of bringing accusations to our minds. Someone may say: "I do not know if this is God or the devil speaking to me. I do not know the difference. How can I tell whether it is God or the devil?" Well, God does chastise us. If you have done something wrong, He will let you know where you have failed so that you can straighten it out and get forgiveness.

God does not bombard you and

beat you down and then leave you without any hope and in misery. However, the devil will come along and say: "Do you know what you are? You are nothing but an old hypocrite."

You may say, "Okay, well, what have I done?"

The devil will tell you, "I'm not going to tell you, but you have done something."

"But what did I do?" you ask.

"Well, you failed God," Satan replies.

Friend, that is how the devil works. Never forget that God is not the author of confusion. When you experience confusion, it is of the devil every time.

Dear one, to successfully resist the devil, you should renounce his bargaining. Matthew 4:8-10 reads: "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." You should not covet the world or conform to the ways of the world.

Romans 12:1-2 states: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

You should not allow the devil to put you into his mold. Paul said not to be conformed to this world. Do you know what the average professing Christians today are allowing the devil to do? They are allowing Satan to cause them to conform to the world. To the child of God, Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 6:17-18: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate,

saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

"Draw Nigh to God"

To successfully resist the devil, you must remember to pray. There is plenty of truth to back this up. Jesus said to Peter in Luke 22:31-32: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Prayer helps us to be able to resist the devil. In other words, Jesus gave us an example of how He opposed a specific satanical threat with prayer. Satan aimed to sift Peter, but Jesus said He would interpose with prayer. In essence, Jesus said, "I blocked him with prayer. He wanted to sift you as wheat, but I frustrated his design with prayer."

Do you pray in a focused, fervent way as a part of your assault on the devil? Jesus commanded us to pray lest Satan should lead us into temptation. You should ask God to deliver you from evil; that is, deliver you from the successful temptation of the evil one. You must resist the designs of the devil with the determined power of prayer. Friend, do you know how to do that? The Bible tells exactly how to do that in Ephesians 6:18, which reads, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Paul was talking about spiritual warfare.

God has made a way, child of God, so that you can stand. Paul said in Ephesians 6:11, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." The Word of God teaches that by the help of God, by putting on the whole armor of God, and by resisting the devil, you can stand against the wiles of the devil. You have to successfully resist the devil

by resolving to draw nigh to God. You must move toward God and move away from the devil. The further you are from the devil, the closer you are to God. You need to get as far away from the devil as you can. That will put you closer and closer to God. Also, you need to get as far away from the world as you can. Being far from the world will put you closer to God.

It is an honor and a privilege to draw nigh to God, and we each can do that. Not one person is too close to God. In these days we are not having a problem with people being too holy, but we are having a problem with people not being holy enough. All men can draw nigh to God. James said in James 4:8a, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Is that not wonderful? For every step that you take toward God, He will take a step toward you. If you get closer to God, He will get closer to you.

Before I got saved, I used to listen to a song that says, "Darling, if you want me to be closer to you, get closer to me." That is what God is saying. You cannot remain at a distance and say, "God, come over here and get close to me." You have to make some moves. You need to lay aside the things that are hindering you spiritually. One thing that will help you is to get more into the Word of God and more into your prayer life. Also, you ought to be faithful to the house of God, be faithful to Bible study, and be faithful to prayer meeting. I just do not believe that you can willfully stay out of the house of God and draw nigh to God at the same time.

"Walk in the Light, As He Is in the Light"

To successfully resist the devil, you must do it through the name of Christ. The name of Jesus should be on your lips. The adversary must yield to the power of the name of Jesus. I thank God for the name of Jesus. I believe there is still power in the name of Jesus. In Acts 3:6 we

read, "Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." It was in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The devil hates that name. You need to resist the devil in the name of Jesus. Always remember that it is the name of the Lord Jesus Christ whereby victory over the devil is made certain. Mark 16:17 says, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils."

To successfully resist the devil, you must reject his beliefs. First Timothy 4:1 states, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." What are the "doctrines of devils," or the devil's beliefs? Anything that contradicts the Word of God is a doctrine of devils. You must resist every one of them. You need to examine the beliefs being preached in the light of God's Word. If they are false, you must expel them from your life. Concerning Hymenaeus and Philetus, Paul said in 2 Timothy 2:17, "And their word will eat as doth a canker." That is what false teachings do. That is the reason we have to get hold of the pure unadulterated Word of God.

To successfully resist the devil, you must rely upon the blood of Christ. Revelation 12:11 states, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." I thank God for the blood of Jesus. You must rely on the blood of Jesus. Colossians 1:14 says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

Revelation 1:5 reads, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." You need to rely upon the sanctifying power of the blood of Jesus Christ. It has sanctifying

power. First John 1:7 says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

To successfully resist the devil, we have to remain busy in God's work. First Timothy 5:13-15 tells what happens when people do not stay busy in God's work: "And whilst they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan."

I believe that laziness is disobedience. Laziness is deceitful. A person can think he is industrious but still be lazy. Some people are lazy about almost every kind of work; however, laziness is really an unwillingness to do the work that God wants you to do. Laziness is dangerous. It sets you up for an attack of the devil. David tarried at home when he should have been on the battlefield, and that is when he sinned with Bathsheba.

Request Backup From Heaven

If you want to successfully resist the devil, you can recite the Bible verses. What did Jesus say in Luke 4:4? "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." Do you know what Jesus did? He recited the Bible. Verse 8 says, "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." He was reciting the Book.

Verse 12 continues, "And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." In each instance, Jesus' response to the devil was "it is written." In order for you to say "it is written" as a Christian, you have to

start studying the Bible. The Psalmist said in Psalm 119:11, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

You need to incorporate God's Word, the Bible, into every area, every thought, every word, and every action of your life. A biblically grounded believer will constantly overcome the devil's strategies. You must take the Word of God because it is like a sword, and you can pierce the devil with it. If you are going to successfully resist the devil, you will need to request backup from Heaven. As a young Christian, I learned to request backup from Heaven. Whenever a policeman is working and thinks he is getting into a situation that could be dangerous, immediately he calls for backup, and another officer will soon arrive to help. Saint, you can immediately call for backup. Many times I have had to say, "God, I need some help down here." It does not take help long to get to me.

A policeman's backup may be ten to fifteen minutes away, but your backup is just a prayer away. I thank God there is backup for the saint of God. You may say, "I cannot handle this." I am glad that you understand that you cannot handle it alone, but you have heavenly backup. You do not have to do it by yourself. That is the reason the Bible says in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Paul had a backup. He was not boasting in himself, but rather in Christ.

As a Christian, you need to submit yourself to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. God's help is your secret weapon. His help is always standing by. God's help is sufficient and successful. I have found it so. Is the devil allowed free course in your life? What have you been doing to resist the devil? Have you been applying these truths to your life in order to resist the devil?

Some people are constantly giving in and having failures. Do you know what the problem is many

times? It is failing to resist the devil. Many times they do not know how to resist the devil. You must not be ignorant of Satan's devices to be successful in living for God. There are lots of folks in hell simply because when the devil came to them, they failed to resist him. If you plan to go to God's Heaven, you have to learn how to resist the devil.

"Take It to the Lord in Prayer"

The very thing that hinders some folks from getting saved initially is that they feel there is no use for them to pray. Even if a minister prayed for them and rebuked the devil, they know that in the days and weeks to come, they are going to go back to being the same person they have always been. However, that does not have to be the case. You can really get saved. Not only can you really get saved, but you can learn how to resist the devil. My friend, you can have a greater One on the inside, and when He comes in, He is greater than the devil. He is greater than your fleshly will. You

can have the victory.

When you are in a trial or a strong temptation, you need to say, "God, I need backup from Heaven." I often think of the old song entitled "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." It reads:

*What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!*

I thought about it this way: Oh, what peace you often forfeit. Oh, what needless pain you bear, all because you do not call for backup to resist the devil. No matter how small or how large a problem may be, you can call for help. God loves you. God cares about you, and He wants to help you. He wants you to have total victory, not just partial victory. Some folks settle for partial victory, but you can have complete victory.

The song continues:

*Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged –
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful,
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
Take it to the Lord in prayer.*

*Are we weak and heavy-laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge –
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there.*

Do you need to take some things to the Lord in prayer? Again, the song says: "Oh, what peace we often forfeit! Oh, what needless pain we bear!" You do not have to. You can bring it all to Jesus.

(Compact Disc TR-1229E)

[Guest Editorial—contin from p. 2] will simply seek the Savior with all your heart, He will surely be found. He will turn your past defeat into sweet victory and make your life a radiant glow to those around you. There is yet hope!

Some may feel they will never be able to get back to the Lord and be beneficial in His kingdom. First of all, you must abandon negative thoughts and feelings. When God saves a soul, He does a thorough transforming work on the heart. God wants all men everywhere to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the Truth. He has a special place and purpose for each one to fill.

Allow me to remind you of the man David who was once a very special vessel in the Lord's hand. He was especially gifted and mightily used of God, yet he failed miserably. Through neglect and carelessness, David gave vent to his fleshly desires that led him into deep

degradation. His deed began with lust, just a look, and then he went on to commit adultery, and he ended up murdering an innocent man. In Psalm 51 we find David pleading for mercy and forgiveness. God was certainly stirred with David's hideous crime, but He freely forgave him, reinstated him, and led him to greater heights. This example of God's kindness ought to be an encouragement to anyone who has fallen away.

Do you, dear reader, have a desire to find your way back into the loving arms of a merciful God? There is yet hope for your redemption if you will only turn back to Him. You need to acknowledge your sin and error to the Lord and you will once again enjoy the fellowship that comes only when your life is completely clear with the Savior.

Selected

[Esp. for Young Peo.—contin. from p. 15]

Jesus felt every one of our sins, every one of people's sins before us, and everyone's sins who will live for the rest of time. He felt them all at once. It was literally a weight on Him.

Young person, if you are saved, you are an example. The world reads the Bible through you. Can they do that? Can you say: "Lord, help me just to be what You would have me to be. Help me to explain to the world why I would rather come to church than to go and watch my favorite ball team." I like football, but I have something greater than that; that is God. He is awesome!

God can give you peace. You can go through anything. What is impossible with God? Nothing! We need to prove that to the world. We need to show the world that God is so much bigger than what they think He is. Let us be on fire for God.

Brother Sam Young

Psalm 120:1 In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

3 What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false

tongue?

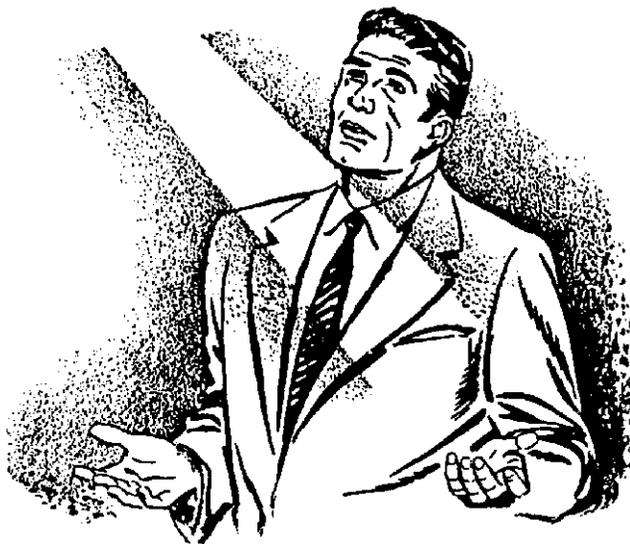
4 Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.

5 Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!

6 My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

7 I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.

Look Up!



Brother E. David Stegmeier

Uncompromising Integrity

Seasons of oppression and depression will come to all of us; that is part of life. We will suffer under physical and mental anguish. Trouble comes to everyone. I do not believe that the Patriarch Job was pessimistic or that he always looked at the dark side of life, although some people are like that. Job said in Job 5:7, "Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." It is inevitable that you and I will meet with trouble along the way, but we are serving a great and wonderful God, a God that always answers prayer. Praise God!

David said, "In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard

me" in verse 1 of our Scripture text. The Lord is a good One to cry to. He is the One to whom you should go. Every Christian can attest to the fact that God has always answered and come to his rescue. He has never failed.

Sometimes we get in situations where we feel rather low. Have you ever been there? I can empathize with you. We all have been there. Verses 3-5 of our Scripture text speak of a sad condition, a condition of anguish. David wrote: "What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper. Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" We are living

in an age of deceit. From the highest position in our governments down to the common man, people are given to deceit.

It is hard to find a real man or woman of deep integrity. I believe God wants us to have deep integrity. One person admonished, "Above everything else, let us not compromise our integrity." We ought to be true to God and to mankind. We are living in a day when people are practicing deceit in an effort to ensnare, to mislead, and to beguile. Men are betraying and double crossing us, from the highest position to the lowest level in our land today.

If we are not careful, we can become cynical. I have seen people who have actually become cynical.

They say: "You can't believe anyone. Everybody is wrong!" That is not true. God is right, and the Christian can know that he is right as well. Cynicism works on people. Some have told me, "Well, no minister is right." By the grace of God, I am and will continue to be right. Everyone who is clear with God can say that.

"Peace, If Possible, But Truth at Any Cost"

Verses 6-7 of our Scripture text say: "My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war." God's people are peace-loving people; however, not at the expense of Truth. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught in Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." God's people love peace and desire to have peace, but again I reiterate, not at the expense of Truth!

Paul wrote in Romans 12:18, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." James 3:17 says, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure [you have to be pure of heart to have godly wisdom; it starts with a pure heart], then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." This is the kind of wisdom I want. If your heart is not pure, you cannot have this kind of wisdom. I repeat, it starts with purity of heart. Those who are truly wise do everything possible to preserve this peace. However, as Martin Luther said, "Peace, if possible, but truth at any cost." I agree with him.

Again, the Psalmist said in verse 7 of our Scripture text, "I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war." God's people work for peace, unless it will sacrifice Truth, offend God, or in any way wound our consciences. Sometimes contention is unavoidable; however, be sure that you are not the cause of the conflict. In this Psalm the writer had his eyes focused on his trouble. Where are

your eyes focused? Also, in this Psalm we find a spirit of sadness, anguish, and discouragement. I think it was contingent upon the person that he was looking at; he was looking at slanderers. What is a *slanderer*? The dictionary says that a *slanderer* is "one who propagates false charges or misrepresentations; one who defames and damages a person's reputation; a person giving a false report or a malicious story." Slanderers were tormenting David. Nevertheless, the Bible says in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." All things can work for our good.

In Psalm 121 we see another picture. In the midst of all our troubles, what should we do? We need to lift up our eyes and hold up our heads. We are serving a great God, and we are involved in the greatest cause on the earth. No work is greater than the work of God. Nothing is more important than furthering the cause of God.

Confidence in God

In Psalm 121:1-3 David said: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber."

I read an article that says Christians in America are so pampered, and they are. For some, the biggest obstacle they have on Sunday morning is getting out of bed and staying awake during the sermon. In some countries Christians are at the peril of their lives.

David continued in verses 5-8: "The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee [He will save you] from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for ever-

more." Throughout this psalm we find a pervading confidence in God. Why should we be discouraged? Why should we be cast down? There is no reason when we are serving a God such as we have.

Martin Luther was a great man of God, but I am against Lutheranism. I believe God has had a lot of great men and women down through the annals of history. In a dark, depressing time and dismal moment, someone asked Martin Luther this question: "When the church turns against you, when the clergy turns against you, and when your friends turn against you, where will you be then, Martin Luther?"

"I will be where I am right now," he said, "in the hands of God." Praise the Lord! When everyone else turns me down, I will be in the hands of God.

Pervading throughout Psalm 121 is a peaceful confidence in God. Church of God, you and I are ascending to that mountaintop, where that air is pure ethereal; that is a heavenly place. There is joy and peace in God's house. It is a wonderful atmosphere. Verse 4 reads, "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." It is wise for you and for me to look to Someone stronger than we are, and we have Someone to whom we can look: God. We are serving a great, big, wonderful God.

In 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 Paul said: "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." When we feel our weakness, we must lean more heavily and rely more upon God. We sing the song, "Leaning on Jesus"; that is a good place to lean.

The things that happen to you and the things that happen to me are

opportunities for God to show His strength. I have seen God manifest Himself in a wonderful way. It takes difficult experiences to draw us closer to Him. Have you ever noticed that you pray more fervently when you are in a battle? I do. I really pray, "O God, help me!" My prayers become more earnest. I believe God wants us to be earnest people.

One time when my family and I flew home from a camp meeting at God's Acres, we got into a terrible storm. The flight attendant said it was the worst storm they had ever been in. Do you know what we did? We prayed! My mother said: "Stewardess, can my son pray over the P.A. system? We need prayer." We became more fervent.

My daughter said: "They need to shut this movie off. We need the mercy of God." Some of those movies are terrible and disgusting. Sometimes we have to pass through difficult experiences so that we draw more on the Lord. We need to rely on Him. We must get out of ourselves and lean on the Lord in a greater way.

A Mountaintop Experience

Our help as saints really comes only from above. To look somewhere else is really vain. David said in Psalm 60:11-12: "Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly [in other words, we should go forth with power]: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies."

Again, Psalm 121:1 says, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." In Oregon the tallest hill in our state is Mount Hood, and it is absolutely beautiful. On a clear day you can see it from a great distance. It is a huge mountain peak with snow all year around. A "hill" represents many things. First of all, it illustrates an experience or a place where we can get really close to God—a mountaintop experience. Where was Moses when God gave him the Law? He was on Mount Sinai. The greatest gift of God given

to man was given on a mountain—Mount Calvary. Where did Elijah whip the old prophets of Baal? It was on Mount Carmel. Where can we whip the old devil? We can do it on the mountaintop. We need mountaintop experiences to strengthen us, because sometimes we are going to go down in the valley.

The Bible calls death a valley, but God will be there all the way through. Many years ago we lost an old warrior in our congregation so unexpectedly, but when the incident happened, we could see God in it all. We were scheduled to fly out of state for a revival meeting, but we did not even go to the airport. Our plane was supposed to depart that afternoon, but we were still at home at that time. Approximately fifteen minutes later, we received a call informing us that a brother had a heart attack. Then we knew why we had missed our flight.

We went to his bedside, and he was thrilled that we were there. We had prayer, and then we asked his wife how she was doing. She said, "It is all in God's hands." The greatest peace and tranquility was in that room; it was awesome. We are serving a wonderful God. He will go with us even through the valley of death.

We need mountaintop experiences. We are going to go down into the valley, and in the valley sometimes we meet enemies, those predators that prey upon us. Such times can be discouraging, and we may suffer doubts, fears, and perplexing moments. Have you ever been perplexed? When you get into the valley, you can be distracted by all the activities. All kinds of things can go on down in the valley—all kinds of distractions, entanglements, and worldly cares.

Oftentimes we may stagger and reel under the cares of life. Sometimes we may need to pare down a little and have less of some things. We are not here to accumulate things. We are here to further the Kingdom of God.

A Place of Safety and Strength

"Hills" are symbolic of safety and freedom from danger. Isaiah 59:19b says, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." Where do the floods come? They come down in the valley. In a natural flood, what do people usually do? They go to higher ground. We are getting on higher ground all the time. One way to get on higher ground is to attend a revival meeting, a fellowship meeting, or a camp meeting. We are climbing Jacob's ladder. Are you climbing? When the enemy comes in like a flood, you need to get up higher on that mountain.

When the angels led Lot's family out of Sodom, where were they admonished to go? They were told to flee to the mountain. Mount Zion is the place to go for safety and security. It is the only safe place. I am glad I am there. Mountains symbolize strength. Have you ever seen a bulldozer move a mountain? I never have. The only mountain I have ever seen change its shape was Mount Saint Helen's. I was sleeping when it erupted, but the next morning I saw the results. You can read in the Bible that God weighs the mountains. How heavy do you think some of these mountains are?

To strengthen our faith and confidence in God, Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 40:12, "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, [Can you imagine what kind of scale God has? It is inconceivable.] and the hills in a balance?" I believe God put those mountains where He saw they needed to be so the earth would not be unbalanced; it rotates beautifully. Man could never have done that, but God did. We are serving a great God. We ought to be encouraged.

God is our strength. Many Scriptures speak of God as being our strength. Psalm 118:14 says, "The

LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation." God deserves all the glory and the credit for everything that has been done in our lives that is good. If it is bad, it is us.

"Mountains" represent steadfastness. God is steadfast and immovable. I thought of the decree of King Darius in Daniel 6:26. King Darius said this: "I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end." You cannot move Him. I often think of humanity and how some men go around like little banty roosters. Have you ever seen a little banty rooster? That is about the way people are next to a big, old elephant.

In Psalm 8:4 David said, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" God cares about us. As long as we stay humble and submissive to Him, He will protect us. We are serving a great God. He is watching over us. The Bible says He cares for us. Dear one, God is watching over you, and He is watching over me.

"Lift Up Your Heads"

"Hills" speak of lofty purposes, goals, and aims. As God's people, we have the greatest purpose in mind of all people. What do we want to do? We want to win as many souls to the Lord as we possibly can. We are saved to win others for Christ. We should take every opportunity we can to witness to every soul that we come in contact with. We are here to witness for God, and we should look for opportunities. When we meet people, we should pray, "God, give me an opportunity; open the door just a little, and I will go through." We have a great purpose in mind. We are trying to win every soul we possibly can and striving to make Heaven our eternal home.

Jesus said in the New Testament in Luke 21:28, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Church, let us lift up our heads. Let us keep our eyes on Christ and not on the problems around us. They can be so discouraging and disheartening sometimes. The battle is the Lord's. I am convinced beyond the least degree of doubt that we are in the battle of the Lord. It is God's battle.

Prior to the words that Jesus spoke in Luke 21:28, Jesus told the disciples that troublesome times were going to come. Today we are living in troublesome times. I have never seen worse times in my life than we are living in right now. Jesus said to "lift up your heads." Ahead of that, Jesus told the disciples that the temple in Jerusalem was going to be destroyed. The Bible says faithful men and women of God would be persecuted. I believe if it were not for our government, we would receive physical abuse. God's people would suffer under great injustices. The Word says that even their own families would betray them, and that happens.

In spite of all of this, Jesus said to "look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Church of God, we do not need to be afraid. Our faith and trust is in God; He will never, never fail us. When Isaiah was speaking about the world and the universe and what God has created for us, he said in Isaiah 40:26, "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth."

Keep Your Eyes on Christ

This great God cares about you, and He cares about me. Is it not wonderful how He keeps the world and the universe running so smoothly? It is awesome! Scientists can even

tell you what time tomorrow morning the sun will rise and what time the sun will go down in the evening. We can depend upon the laws of nature. God has set them into motion, and it boggles my mind how man cannot see through all of this and see there has to be a God behind all of it. This world did not just happen. Saying that is about as ludicrous as saying that a group of people could go out and throw a bunch of bricks and a marvelous building would come up. Who is being ignorant?

We are serving a great God. Colossians 1:16 says this: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." Even though God is so great and so magnificent, He considers the little sparrow. He even dresses the lily. He knows how many hairs are on your head. He is not too busy to care for you. We are serving a great and wonderful God.

When troubles press you, you need to look up; do not look down. They will only increase, make you more discouraged, sadder, and depressed. Look up! God sees it all. As saints of God, let us walk with assurance and confidence in God. Let us look to God with hope, assurance, and expectancy. We are serving a great God. We sing a song that says, "Our God is true." There is no need to tell me anything else. God is true. When you look down, there is nothing to encourage you; it will only increase your problems. As I was studying, I thought of Peter. As long as Peter kept his eyes on Christ, he walked over the turbulent sea. Let us keep our eyes on Christ, saint of God. We are living in a great day. It is a great day of opportunity. I love the Church of God, and I love the message. The Church of God is a wonderful institution. I thank God for the Truth, and I thank God for Jesus.

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