

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

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

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 44 September 2014 No. 9



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

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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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We reserve the right to edit and/or decline any
material for any reason. Not responsible for unsolicited
articles or items.

CONTENTS

Discipleship	3
The Standards of the Church	7
Especially for Young People	12
Time, Talents, and Treasury	14
Trust in the Lord	15
What Kind of Salesman Are You?	21
2015 Camp Meeting Dates	26
Meeting Announcements	27

Vol. 44 September 2014 No. 9

We Appreciate Your Giving

It is time to stop and express a word of appreciation to all our readers for their faithful support of The Gospel Trumpeter. We appreciate the prayers you offer up in behalf of this work. Your generous giving is greatly appreciated, along with the letters of encouragement sent. It is due to your continued support that this periodical is reaching out to thousands of precious souls. We acknowledge our deep indebtedness to the Lord for the ability and strength that He grants and to our readers that help keep the good news being published. The work of God's kingdom is a great work, and it is especially rewarding when we receive reports of how it helps and has helped other souls. We are thankful for the privilege that God has given us to be a small part in His great work.

We want to once again remind you that putting out a religious publication is not always an easy task. Compiling the proper messages and short articles for each issue can be time consuming. It is so important that the right material is selected to provide spiritual nourishment for the souls of our readers. Exposing the Truth to the lost is truly a great concern. We need the Lord's guidance and direction. Since this periodical was first printed, we have learned that many souls have been won to Christ because of reading it. Having a part in winning souls for the Lord brings great reward to each one who has contributed a part.

As you all know, we are ever faced with the rising cost of materials and postal rates. Since God's Word instructs us not to be

sllothful in business matters, we endeavor to be as frugal as possible in our purchasing of materials. We would also like to remind those who have recently moved that a change of address needs to be sent to us as soon as possible. Doing this will eliminate the post office having to return your issue to us and charging us a return postage fee. The return postage fees have risen considerably. We sincerely ask you to send any change of address to us as quickly as possible so that we might keep the additional cost to a minimum.

When submitting a new name for the mailing list, please be sure that individual truly desires this periodical. Some people have received it who were not interested, and they have let us know that they do not want The Gospel Trumpeter sent to them. We do not want to refuse anyone from receiving the paper, but neither do we want to aggravate someone who will only discard it. Many people simply are not concerned about spiritual things or interested enough in their souls to read a religious magazine.

Many honest hearts are searching for the Truth. Our mission and our deep desire is to locate as many of these dear ones as possible. There are ones who seek the old paths, looking for the good way. You can be assured that they are out there. It will take the Spirit of God to lead us to those. We want the Lord to use this paper as one of the means to reach the honest hearts. We all are workers together with Christ for the purpose of winning souls

[continued on page 20]

John 13:33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to

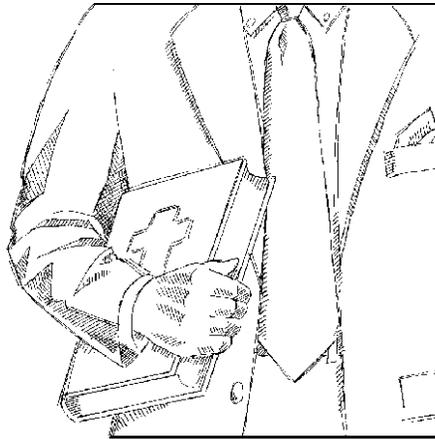
you.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one

another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Discipleship



Brother Roger L. Decker

A Distinct Mark Upon God's People

There is no other way that men will know that you are a disciple of Christ except that you have love one to another. Our love for one another is under attack. When love begins to weaken, many times harsh, critical spirits replace it. Jesus gave a sure way so that all men could know whether or not they are His followers, and that is by having love one to another. In our Scripture text it is as though Jesus was giving a farewell command to His disciples. It is as if He was saying: "I'm on My way to the Cross. In just a few short hours or days, it is all going to be over for Me, but you will have to continue. There is only one way that you will

win a lost and dying world, and that is by having love one to another." He was traveling a road that He had to travel alone, and if they were ever to hear His voice, they had to hear it then.

There is a distinct mark upon God's people, and God's people will be known by it. It is not just love for one another, but "love one to another." Someone may ask, "What is the difference?" There is a big difference. Love one to another demands works that you can see. You can say that you love someone, but when you have love one to another, it has to be backed by works. You have to prove it. It is easy to walk up to somebody and say, "I love and appreciate you." That sounds like love, but to have love one to another,

works must back it up. It goes far beyond the word of mouth.

We know that love was always commanded in the Bible even under the old law. In Leviticus 19:18 we read, "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD." We find that God's people are always taught to love one another. It was not a new commandment to love one another; the new commandment was to love as Jesus loves. There is a big difference in loving one another and loving as Jesus loves you.

This is a mark so that the whole world can know that you are a follower of Christ, and that is love. It is a mark so that a Christian can know

whether he is a child of God. First John 3:14 says, "We know that we have passed from death [spiritual death in sin] unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." What death? He was talking about spiritual death; they abide in sin. If you do not love someone, then you should not continue to profess to be a disciple of Christ. The Bible lets you know that you still abide in spiritual death.

Unconditional Love

Being able to remain sweet in your soul means that you have to spend time with Jesus. This was also a new commandment because people would be known by their love, not by external rites. The Pharisees, the Sadducees, the elders, and all those under the old law were known by their external rites.

Jesus' love was without selfishness. He gave Himself and all that He had to those whom He loved. He was willing to get down at the feet of even His betrayer (Judas Iscariot), knowing that the devil had already entered his heart. The Bible states in John 13:3, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God."

This love cannot be conquered by hatred or bitterness or give way to wrong attitudes or the flesh. Self is not on display in the love of Jesus. It is not a conditional love: you love me and I will love you back. Jesus' love is not a conditional love, expecting something in return. Jesus' love reaches out to the whole world with nothing in return.

Jesus loved me when I did not love Him. He loved me when I was unlovable. He loved me when I had all kinds of problems with those I knew. Even my wife had trouble loving me; nobody loved me like Jesus Christ. I was not always a nice character to be around. You may say, "I've always been sweet in my soul." No, you have not. When you

did not have Jesus Christ, you were unlovable. Jesus Christ is the one who makes you sweet and nice. Jesus Christ makes you pleasant to be around. His love was sacrificial even to the Cross.

Love does not always bring happiness. Sometimes it brings pain and suffering, and His love was built on forgiveness. Without forgiveness there is no love of God. God's love does not carry prejudice. Dear one, our love, our mark of discipleship, is coming under fire. Love is what dwindles in a congregation when separation starts. What did John say? He wrote in 1 John 2:19, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

Our love is going to be tried. There are going to be warring factions continually trying to upset our love one to another. Disagreements are going to arise. Wherever there are people, sometimes there will be disagreements. They are going to arise between brothers and sisters, but love for one another will keep them from becoming warring factions.

Disagreements are going to come because of different personalities. People have different understandings, different knowledge, different characteristics, and different ideas about things. Nevertheless, those differences do not have to turn into separation and division. They do not have to turn into a schism. If you keep the love of God, it will work right.

If love is right between a husband and wife, a marriage will work. There are going to be disagreements in marriages. Married couples have two different personalities. For example, my wife is an introvert, but I am an extravert. There are differences in our personalities. There were differences in the way we were raised. We must have love one to another, whether it is in

marriage or in the church. We can have love one to another through Jesus Christ. I repeat, disagreements are going to arise. We need to be extra cautious along this line. We must not be ignorant of Satan's devices. Paul, writing to the Corinthian church, warned them by saying in 2 Corinthians 2:11, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

"Let Brotherly Love Continue"

The devil will stop at nothing to hinder the church. The devil will always try to get in somewhere. Somebody may get their feelings hurt or get offended or take something the wrong way. The devil likes to stir up trouble. It makes no difference to the devil how he gets in, as long as he gets the job done. We do not want to let Satan take advantage of us, church. We do not want to give place to the devil. Let us not give the devil room to work.

This is very serious, because without your having the right attitude toward others, your home in Heaven is in jeopardy. You are not going to make it if you have something wrong in your heart against somebody. The trying of your love is going to be one of the most trying factors there is in the church. Somewhere along the line, you are going to get offended. Somewhere along the line, you are going to get ouchy with somebody. If it is not taken care of, it will destroy you. It will take you into other things that you want no part of.

Hebrews 13:1-5 reads: "Let brotherly love continue. [As each brother is saved and each sister is saved, an automatic love is started. The writer of Hebrews was saying, 'Let love flow just as the blood flows through the arteries that go to your heart.' However, there are things that can hinder or stop the flow through the arteries. Likewise, there are things that can hinder or stop the love from flowing to one another.] Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have

entertained angels unawares.

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Love is the basis for hospitality. It is the basis for compassion for those in trouble. Love will cause you to stand against wrong, and love will also cause you to be content. The Bible admonishes us to let brotherly love remain; let it endure; let it abide. Do not stop it from continuing. It will continue if you let it.

Unfeigned Love

People in religion and the world have to see something working in our lives that they do not possess. Out in the world, it is dog eat dog, so to speak. In other words, the world's attitude is, "I'll get you before you get me." Out in the world, love does not exist one to another. Love is a real struggle if your heart is not pure. The Bible states in 1 Peter 1:22, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently [or heatedly]." In other words, this divine love is a heated love. You have love for God's people. It is a fervent love, but it is an impossible love if your heart is impure. You cannot have impurities in your heart and have fervent love. Having love of a pure heart is needful in the eyes of the Lord.

The Christian is going to be misused, mistreated, and misrepresented. He is going to be mistaken for things and accused of things that are not true, but he cannot and dare not get bitter. How does he stay away from bitterness? He goes straight to the throne of grace to

receive help in the time of weakness, in the time of need, and in the time of trial.

The Christian dares not allow the seeds of revenge to get in his heart, such as thinking, "I'd like to see something happen to that person so that he is embarrassed or brought down" or "I hope he messes up or that what he does turns into a disaster." You should esteem your brother or your sister better than yourself. Jesus was face to face with a betrayer that He knew, and it was not long before He was to hang on the Cross, but He was still able to get down at His betrayer's feet.

What about those who do not love their brother? If you do not love your brother, it would be just like you are on death row, with no more appeals and awaiting your death. In the eyes of the Lord, somebody who does not love his brother is the same as a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life. John wrote in 1 John 3:14-15: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

The Heart of the Christian

A lack of love shows a lack of salvation. The Bible says in 1 John 4:8, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." Can you remember when you first got saved? One of the first manifestations of the Holy Spirit is love. You loved everybody, even those whom you knew did not love you. If you are truly saved, you no longer carry the thought of revenge, bitterness, or a wrong attitude; you love everybody.

What do you do after you get saved and this love comes into your heart? You want to make restitution to those whom you have wronged. After I got saved, I went to a man who was a very close friend of mine. We had gotten in a fight, and I said: "I want you to forgive me for that. I

had no business doing it. I had no business even going there, and I want you to forgive me." I want to tell you, it melted his heart to the place where he would sometimes say to me, "I want what you have." He knew there was a definite change in my life. Before I was saved, I was never one to back up and apologize. That was due to the love of God being shed abroad in my heart.

You cannot be a child of light and hate your brother. First John 2:9 states, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now." Whosoever does not love his brother is not living a righteous life. First John 3:10 says, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." Love is the greatest gift of all, and it is the one the devil is going to work on the hardest. You see, you might not have the gift of preaching or of teaching, but you have love, if you are a child of God, and that is the thing on which the enemy is going to hammer you. When sin starts its work, then there is a waxing cold. It does not happen overnight. It is a gradual thing, and that is how love waxes cold.

In Matthew 24:12-13 Jesus said: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." The waxing cold is not an immediate process, but a gradual, deceptive work on the heart of the Christian.

God wants you to allow the searchlight of His Word to light up the inner chambers of your heart to see if there are any impurities at work. It is necessary that we dress right and adhere to every point of doctrine, but above everything else, it is also necessary that we have love one to another. Is there anybody that you do not love? If there is, you are probably in worse shape than that person. God is the originator of love, and it is to God that we must go to keep our love fervent.

Keeping Your Love Fervent

Dear one, do not ever think that just because things look like they have settled down a little that the devil is taking a rest. I have to remind myself of that all the time. The Scripture says in 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion [a roaring lion is a lion that is awake and hungry], walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

Another translation of the same verse says, "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour." In the moment your love begins to get tainted, the moment that your love to another begins to decrease, you can rest assured that the enemy is going to be right there to devour you. In the end, he wants to devour you entirely.

The devil likes to use one who is idle or one who is offended. When somebody gets offended, often that person does not keep that to himself or herself. The next thing you know, other people get offended, and they were not even involved. They are going on what another person said. They do not even know the other side of the equation. Then love be-

gins to dwindle.

You cannot remain idle in the congregation of the righteous. You need to be busy for the Lord. You need to be doing something for God continually, and one thing every one of us can do is pray. You have that right; it cannot be taken away. I know you cannot publicly do it in some events. In some places, you cannot use the name Jesus, but that cannot stop you from praying. You can still pray, and you can still use the name of Jesus.

Almost everybody has a Bible. You should not just carry it to church with you on Sundays and Wednesday nights, but you should read it throughout the week. You might be surprised at what you learn. There are things in there that you might not have even heard before. There are things in there that you might not have seen before. I have a Bible reading plan that I do, and I have read some Scriptures that I did not even realize were in the Bible. I read the Bible through completely, but it is amazing what you read in there. Maybe you have read a certain Scripture before, but you did not see it in the light that God is showing you this time.

The devil likes to use the one who is idle, the one who is offended,

the one who is lukewarm, and the one who listens to things that he ought not to listen to. There are always people around who want to whisper in your ear, people who are dissatisfied and disgruntled about something. You may say, "Well, I want to help that person." That is usually not what happens. Usually when you listen to something long enough, you are going to feel the same way because you are going to pick up the same spirit that person has. The devil uses that person to further his cause. You must not allow the devil to use you in any way to hinder the flow of brotherly love.

How do you keep your love heated? You must go to the One who loved you first, Jesus Christ. Is there anyone in your heart or in your mind that you struggle with? It might be good to have a little talk with Jesus. If need be, have a little talk with that person and get the thing straightened out, because you do not want anything at all to hinder you from seeing the inside of God's Heaven. When love disappears in your life, the Bible says you abide in death.

(Compact Disc TR-1118E)

Have you ever heard of the famous "Tate Family" that belongs to every church?

There is old man "Dick Tate," who wants to run everything in the church. Uncle "Ro Tate" tries to change everything. Sister "Agi Tate" stirs up trouble whenever possible. Her brother "Ira Tate" helps her do so. And whenever new projects are suggested, brother "Hesi Tate" and Sister "Vegi Tate" pour cold water on proposals.

Then there is sister "Imi Tate" who tries to have the church mimic everybody else. When the church budget is announced, everybody tends to quake if brother "Devas Tate" stands up in the meeting. And brother "Poten Tate" wants to be a big shot.

But not all members of the family are bad, for brother "Facili Tate" is quite helpful. A delightful member of the family is Miss "Felici Tate." And the pastor is always delighted by brother "Cogi Tate" and his twin brother "Medi Tate."

Deuteronomy 10:12 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,

13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

14 Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.

15 Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.

16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more

stiffnecked.

17 For the LORD your God is God of gods, and LORD of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

18 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

19 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

20 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.

21 He is thy praise, and he is thy

God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.

22 Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

Romans 12:1 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.

2 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.

The Standards of the Church



Brother E. David Stegmeier

Divine Admonition

The Old Testament contains many divine principles that we can apply to our day. In 1 Corinthians 10:11 the writer said, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition [instruction], upon

whom the ends of the world are come." I believe we can benefit from considering these passages of Scripture if we will look into them with hearts that are willing to obey.

Deuteronomy means "the second Law." God has repeated the laws that He formerly gave to Moses. The Book of *Deuteronomy* contains the

ways of keeping a very close relationship between God and His people through the means of obedience.

Moses was diligent and taught the Israelites to fear God and to love Him without any dissemblance, hypocrisy, or deceit. They were to teach their children respect, love, and obedience to God and His holy

commandments.

We know that Moses interceded for Israel on the mount; therefore, God saw fit not to destroy them. He allowed Moses to continue as their leader and for them to go toward the Promised Land, and on the way God was merciful to Israel.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 reads: "And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. To keep the commandments of the LORD. . . ." Several verbs here denote action. God's people are people of action because they love, fear, respect, serve, and keep His commandments. Our actions demonstrate to the world how much we fear, love, and serve God.

God desires that we walk in His ways, receive indestructible truth, accept His laws, and follow the course of conduct that He has prescribed. The fear that God requires is the highest devoted reverence that can only coexist with love to Him. When I think of having the fear of God, I think of highly respecting Him. If there is love in our hearts for God, it naturally prompts us to serve Him.

We should give God our very best. We should unreservedly give Him our bodies and the faculties that we possess because of the mercy He has shed upon us. Romans 12:1 says in the Amplified Bible, "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, *and* beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies—presenting all your members and faculties—as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship."

Verse 2 continues, "Do not be conformed to this world—this age, fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs, but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind—by the

new ideals [The word *ideal* means, 'A perfect type, a model, to be imitated.' Children of God are examples to others. The salvation of many souls is contingent upon our being faithful to God and being ideals to others.] so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, *even* the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you]."

Build Up a Spiritual House

Just as Old Testament Israel was bound to God because of His love and His choice of them to be His peculiar people, as New Testament Israel, we are bound to Him because of His great mercies to us. We are obligated to God in view of all His mercies that have been extended to us. Jesus said in John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Because Christ has chosen us, we owe something to Him.

You may ask, "Are we the Israel of God?" The Scripture says in Galatians 6:15, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Romans 2:28-29 states: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." We are the Israel of God! If you are a child of God, if you are born again, you are a part of the Israel of God.

Paul said that it was only reasonable that we should give our bodies in their entirety back to God as living sacrifices. Let us look into just exactly what this entails. Exodus 19:5-6a says: "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."

We find in 1 Peter 2:4-5: "To

whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." The children of God are holy priests to Him.

In our Scripture reading, verse 13 says that we are to keep the commandments of God for our good. There is a cure for the drunkard, the prostitute, the homosexual, the drug addict, the lesbian, the tobacco chewer, the smoker, the adulterer, the adulteress, the rapist, and the murderer. There is a remedial action and a remedial Gospel for everyone who is bound in sin, but even greater than that, God desires to keep us from the gross sins. The Church of God has a message that it should herald to the whole world: we have a preventive Gospel.

God desires that our young people grow up to serve Him. They go into sin because of a lack of ability, a lack of grace and strength to keep them from sin; but God desires that Church of God young people escape hideous and gross sins.

Having High Standards

The Church of God has standards. We have standards of dress and standards of performance. Whenever we mention standards, it brings up a negative response in the minds of many people. The standards of the Church of God are positive and for our good. The standards of the church are not negative.

I was brought up in the Church of God most of my life, and I appreciate the Bible standards. I do not look back and say, "They were too strict." My wife was brought up in the Church of God under strict supervision, and she looks back and appreciates it. The standards of the Church of God are positive. They are for our good. As a minister of the Church of God, I desire to lift up the standards.

The child of God is to have high standards in all areas of his living. What is a standard? Webster tells us that the word *standard* means, "Anything taken as a basis of comparison, a rule, or a model." It is not up to me or anybody else to decide the standards of the Church of God. They are very explicitly stated in the Word of God. It is up to us to obey them. We might as well tear out the doctrines and teachings of the new birth, the Lord's Supper, and other doctrines as to ignore those portions that teach us standards of godly living. We have no right to take anything out of the Word of God. God intended everything to be there for our good.

Isaiah 62:1 says, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace [Zion is the church], and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." The light that shines out in all directions from our congregations and our lives should be a beacon to the world. It should bring other souls into our midst.

Isaiah 62:6 says, "I have set watchmen [ministers] upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shalt never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence." Verse 10 says, "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." That is what I am endeavoring to do by God's help.

Parental Responsibilities

Standards of conduct, dress, and action are explicit in the Word of God. In Ephesians 6:1-3, Paul wrote: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

The Word says to obey your parents; therefore, as parents, we

have the responsibility of setting the standards of our children. I am sure we all are concerned about our children's physical and mental development, but how about their spiritual development? How careful are you of the magazines and the books they read? How careful are you about their playmates?

There are some standards that can be personal standards. We have a personal standard in our home that our children do not spend time or stay overnight with other children. I do not know what they would be subject to in other people's homes; therefore, as a precautionary measure, I want them home with me. I believe it is necessary to supervise the actions of our children.

Divine Principles

Do you supervise the programs your children watch on the television? I do not have that problem. I do not have a television, for many reasons. In Psalm 101:3 David said, "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes."

I read an article once about television, and it said that the spreading influence of television upon our society is alarming to many leaders of our nation. The average preschool child in the United States spends four to six hours a day watching television. By college age, many children will have spent more time in front of a television set than in school, in play, in church, or in conversation with his parents. Children who watch television are more aggressive and less innovative than those who do not. Television hinders the social, intellectual, and spiritual development of children.

Most Church of God congregations are blessed with children. Children are beautiful, but without supervision they can be very ugly. Children should be taught the proper behavior in the house of God. They should be taught the way to enter the building, the way to behave in the building, and the way to

leave the building. They should be taught to respect the man of God, the Word of God, and all that takes place in the house of God.

Godly young people have high standards for dating. They do not sit out in the car until very early in the morning. They stay around the saints of God. I tell young people to go to all the services of the congregation and take an active part.

My wife and I courted for several years, and most of the places we went were revival meetings, camp meetings, and church services. We really enjoyed working together in God's service. That gave us a great deal of contentment and happiness, and it still does. If you reverence God and follow Him, He will choose your companion for you, and He never makes a mistake.

Young people sometimes have a problem with their minds. The Bible says in 1 Peter 1:13-14: "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; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance." Sin begins in the mind. As God's people, we will have less trouble in our minds if we are careful about all the other standards. The standards are meant to bless and to preserve us in holiness and righteousness.

As a young person, you ought to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty. Also, you must be faithful to God in His service. Paul, writing to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:1-2, said: "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Do you want to be used of God? You must be faithful to divine principles. God will commit His work to those who are faithful.

We read in 1 Peter 3:1-6: "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any

obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

"For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement."

God wants holy women who are examples in every avenue of life. However, some women contend with the church concerning the standards. They will ask, "While conforming to the standards, will I lose my individuality?" The answer is no. Of all institutions, the Church of God is the highest institution upon earth, and it allows a woman to maintain her individuality. When the Spirit of God moves upon us, some cry, some shout, and some do other things. We are allowed to be individuals in the Church of God, but God designed standards to protect us. They are for our good.

The Standard for the Home

Jesus said in Matthew 18:7, "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" Immodesty causes many, many crimes that would not have to be. I read an article in our newspaper about a man who had done research on sexual offenses. He found that many sexual offenses could be attributed to immodesty by women. God wants women as well as men to dress modestly. People ask me, "How should I dress?" I believe if you are honest and conscientious, the Holy Spirit will teach

you how to dress.

Sister, you can win your companion to the Lord by your modest living and dressing. In 1 Timothy 2:9-10 we read: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." Seeing a heavysset lady in a pair of pants is very unbecoming. In fact, pants are very unbecoming to any woman. The Bible says in Deuteronomy 22:5, "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man."

Romans 12:2 states, "And be not conformed to this world." God's people are to set the standard. We should not go to the world to determine the standard, but we should go to the Word of God. The Word of God is the sole determiner of the standards of the Church of God, because they are for our good.

The standards in our lives should be of the highest nature. Paul mentioned some of the standards in Titus 2:1-2: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine [the Greek says to 'speak the things that are wholesome']: That the aged men be sober, grave [solemn, serious], temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience." Aged man, are you exemplifying that? I love older people, and I love to be with them. They have so much to offer to the church. If you will be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, charity, and patience, you will be a pillar in the church, and God wants pillars.

Verses 3-5 read: "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

Are you exemplifying that, aged

woman? Are you teaching the young women by your behavior to be good keepers at home? We are living in a day when many women are not content to be at home. When I was growing up, very rarely did I come home and not find my mother there. If she was not at home, I became very frightened because I knew something was wrong. Today many children are insecure because their parents are not where they should be. A mother's place is in the home. She has the greatest responsibility of all, I believe, in bringing up these precious, little ones. Godly women are keepers at home, good, and obedient to their husbands that the Word of God be not blasphemed.

Verses 6-8 continue: "Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."

"Do All to the Glory of God"

For many years a warning has been placed on every cigarette advertisement. It says: "Warning: The Surgeon General has determined that cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health." How far behind the times they are! When I was a small boy, the Church of God taught that tobacco was injurious to your health. The Bible says that we should respect the temple of God, and our bodies are the temples of God. The Church of God was far ahead of medical science.

God's people do not drink alcoholic beverages. Why? Drinking leads to becoming insensitive. Drinking takes away the ability to reason. We realize what drinking does to one's health, and God wants us to abstain. God's people should appreciate the standards of the Church of God.

First Corinthians 10:31-32 states: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink,

or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God." That is the ultimate standard. Whatever you eat, whatever you drink, or whatever you are involved in, does it bring glory to God? If it does, do it.

The same Scripture in the Amplified Bible says: "So then, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you may do, do all for the honor *and* glory of God. Do not let yourselves be [hindrances by giving] an offense to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God—do not lead others into sin by your mode of life."

There is a positive side to every standard in the Church of God. Deuteronomy 7:12-14 states: "Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he swore unto thy fathers: And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people." God intends for us to be blessed above all people on the face of the earth.

Upholding the Highest Principles of Living

I am convinced that we are blessed with Truth above all people on the earth. Should we not have the highest standards and principles of living? However, how long will God bless us with the Truth that we enjoy if we do not live by His standards? God is no respecter of people. Where and to whom is He going to commit the treasures in the Word of God? According to the Word of God, He is going to commit them to people who live by the high principles in the Word of God.

I believe that as a minister of the Church of God, I am to lift up the standards as high as God's Word wants them. God wants us to live according to the highest principles of living. If we live according to His standards, He will bless and honor us. These are things which have been very heavy on my heart. Are you one who desires to lower the Bible standards? May God help you to be willing to lift them up. You should give God the benefit of the doubt.

In upholding the standards of God, we should not feel that we are better than anyone else. However, there is a danger that we could do that. God wants us to hold a high standard for our good and for the good of our children. Young person, you need to go out in the world on the offensive. Go out to win the world. You should be proud of that which you stand for.

When I was commanded to go to military service, I went there with the intention of winning someone to Christ. I intended, by the help of God, to be faithful every day that I was in the military service, and I was. I look back on my experience

and see the times that the standards which I was taught won approval for me. After our duty, we were allowed to go wherever we wanted. Almost every evening, I went to the chapel. I would go there alone most of the time and pray, read, study, sing, and play the musical instruments. I enjoyed the services—just the Lord and me. We had very precious times together. It was not very long until one of my commanding officers said: "Listen, do not worry about checking in at night. Just be at your post of duty at eight o'clock. We know where you are." I appreciated that.

I have confidence in the message of the Church of God. I am asking God to bless this message to your heart. Young person, you should serve the Lord; it is the best life. You ought to appreciate the standards that your parents are trying to enforce in the home. If you have godly parents, you ought to appreciate those standards. You will look back in years to come and say, "I am grateful."

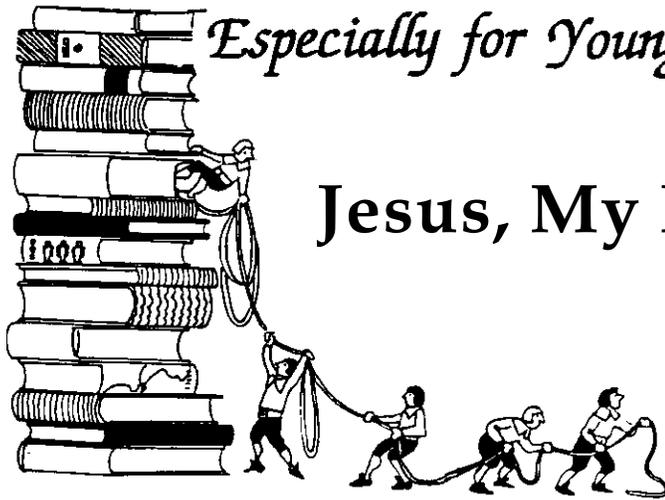
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THE DEFINITION OF GRACE

God's
Riches
At
Christ's
Expense

Especially for Young People

Jesus, My Pilot



I read a story about a woman who inherited a riverboat. It was a boat with a big paddle wheel at the back that traveled up and down the rivers many years ago. In inheriting a riverboat, this woman had to find a pilot to steer the boat. She was told to get an experienced pilot. One definition of the word *pilot* means, "a person duly qualified to steer ships; to guide the course of." A young man decided that he wanted to be a riverboat pilot, so he applied for the job, but she said no because he lacked experience. Eventually she found an experienced riverboat pilot, but she also hired the young man to study under him.

One thing the experienced pilot told the young man was to keep in the center of the river. He said that was the safest place to be because the water there is the deepest. He said along the shores there is undergrowth and sand that cannot always be seen. Another thing that he instructed him to do was to always keep his eyes on the river, constantly looking ahead, watching for floating debris in the river, watching for storms, and watching for large rocks to appear that could be a danger to the boat.

In talking about the rocks, I thought about the icebergs that are in the oceans. One cannot see an entire iceberg because most of it is under the water. The pilot said that is the way it is with rocks in the river. You have to be very careful.

Again, the pilot cautioned the younger man to watch the water for dangers ahead. Also, he said to watch the currents and to watch how swiftly the water was flowing. If it was flowing slowly, that usually meant something was blocking it ahead. If it was flowing too swiftly, it could mean there was water coming in from a tributary, another creek, or even from a storm that could cause problems. He said to watch the color of the water. "All these things are important," he said.

Proverbs 23:12 says, "Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge." Proverbs 1:1-7 reads: "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." Verse 33 says, "But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."

Proverbs 9:9-10 says: "Give instruction to a wise man, and he

will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." That is good admonition for all of us.

It seems that when young people get to a certain age, they are full of steam. They cannot wait to do this and that. One thing the young pilot was told was that he had to be careful of how much steam he gave the riverboat, because he could blow it up.

Young person, you need to take life more slowly. You are not young very long, so take it slow and enjoy life. You should live for God and let God be your pilot. Slow down and prepare yourself for a life with Christ. You should go slow and let God lead you. You need to let him make your decisions for you. God wants you to stay in the center of His will. Stay in the center of the Word of God where the truth is deep. It is there that you will stay away from the things of the world and those things that you might not see that are hidden. That is the reason it is so important to look ahead and watch. If you are not careful, things can creep in on you. Just like those rocks and debris that come up suddenly in the water, problems can come up suddenly in your life. If you are unprepared or not looking for them, they can cause you destruction. You must stay alert to the voice of God.

Have you ever seen that little

cartoon where the devil is standing on one shoulder of a man and an angel is standing on the other shoulder? The devil says, "Do it," and the angel says, "Do not do it." You ought to always listen to God; He speaks in a still, small voice. He will always tell you to do that which is right. If you are ever in doubt about whether something is right or not, do not do it until you pray about it and get an answer from God. When I was growing up, I found that if there was any time that I ever had a doubt about anything, I usually did not do it. That is the best way to go. If you have a doubt, it is usually God warning you not to do it. Listen to God; always listen.

One additional thing that the pilot of the riverboat warned about was fog. Have you ever been in a really, thick fog where you could not see anything? It is a scary thing. One time I was driving my parents through the country and the fog was very bad. As I got close to where I knew there were stop signs, I thought, "I cannot see what is coming. What can I do?" The thought came to my mind, "Lay on your horn and go." Fog can be very frightening.

A brother to whom I told this story told me that where he lived in another state, there were two barges. One barge pushed the other barge down the river in the fog. The barge operator was not sure if he should go any farther, but then he felt a bump and knew that he had better stop. What he did not realize was that the barge had hit the bottom of a bridge. When the fog cleared the next day, that bridge had actually collapsed, and people had been killed.

Young person, have you ever been in confusion in your life? If you have not been there, you will get to a place where you will become confused and will not know which way to go. What is the best thing to do at that time? You should pray and stand still. Do not move until you can see which way to go, what to do, or what way to choose.

Whatever you are confused about, just stand still. If you do not, you are liable to make a very grave mistake. You may shipwreck your boat, and maybe another's boat too. Sometimes the decisions you make affect not only you but also many others. Therefore, when you are confused, just stop, stand still, and make sure that you are letting God be your pilot.

Sometimes young people hit one big rock on their way through life. Do you know what that big rock is? It is self-confidence. Sometimes they get rock hard, because you cannot talk to them. You cannot reason with them, because they are so self-confident that they think they know the right way to go. Others let things bother them, and they get confused; then away they go.

The best thing I can tell you as you go through life is to listen to those who have been through life ahead of you, like the experienced riverboat pilot. Whoever your pastor might be, speak with him. You need to follow the older godly people's example. Many times as I was growing up, older people said, "I wish I would have started sooner so my life would not have been a wreck." You need to listen to those people. You can learn from them. They might help to keep you from floundering, making mistakes, and wrecking your life. You need to avoid shipwreck.

I remember a picture that I saw as a young child growing up. It is a picture of a young man letting Jesus Christ pilot him. Just remember to let Him be in control. You need to let Him be the one to lead you.

Proverbs 14:12 reads, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs 27:12 tells us, "A prudent [or wise] man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished." This is the reason I am saying that you should always look ahead. Some things are not sinful, but they could lead you to sin. You need to be careful as you go through

life. You need to look ahead to see where your decisions might lead, because they may lead you the wrong way. Are you piloting your ship by yourself? This is not the right thing to do. You need to ask Christ to be your pilot to help you, to guide you, and to direct you before your life becomes shipwrecked.

One song comes to my mind. It reads:

*Jesus, Savior, pilot me,
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rocks and treach'rous shoal;
Chart and compass came from Thee:
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.*

*As a mother stills her child,
Thou canst hush the ocean wild;
Boist'rous waves obey Thy will
When Thou say'st to them, "Be still!"
Wondr'ous Sov'reign of the sea,
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.*

*When at last I near the shore,
And the fearful breakers roar
"Twixt me and the peaceful rest.
Then, while leaning on Thy breast,
May I hear Thee say to me,
Fear not, I will pilot thee."*

Are you saved? Is Christ your pilot? If He is not, you need to make sure that He becomes your pilot before you make shipwreck. You need to learn from other people's mistakes. Solomon said to learn, to get wisdom, to get understanding, and to grow. Solomon was a wise man, and he was always willing to learn to take advice and to grow in the things of God.

I hope these thoughts will help you and encourage you as you go through life. Do not pilot your ship without Christ. What a wonderful thing to have Christ as your pilot when you are young! Do not wait until you are old. Start now and let Christ pilot your life.

Sister Judy Evans

Time, Talents, and Treasury

You have three things to give God. They are time, talents, and treasury. Let us think about these for a few moments. God requires your time. Being a true Christian means giving specifically of your time for worship and service, but it also means that one surrenders every hour of every day to the employment of the Holy Spirit. People often say that they work hard all week and that Sunday is the only day they have for this or that. Not to have time for worship on the Lord's Day, not to have time for the Lord's work and will is like a tree having no room for sap, an engine with no room for fuel, or an ocean with no room for water.

When Paul was converted, he asked the Lord, "What will you have me to do?" Paul was ready to serve the Lord with all his time. He was ready to witness: "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also" (Romans 1:15). He was ready to suffer: "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am not ready to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13). Paul was ready to die: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand" (2 Timothy 4:6).

We all have the same amount of time to give to the Lord—twenty-four hours each day. He wants all your time, not just your spare time. When tempted to be a part-time Christian, remember Paul.

God requires your talents—not just some of them, but all of them. Psalm 100:2 says, "Serve the LORD with gladness." The church is not to be a cemetery for talents, a place to bury them. In the parable of the talents that Jesus told, the servant who buried his talent had it taken away from him. The two servants who gainfully used their talents had them doubled.

I want you to notice that in the middle of the word *revival* there is an "i" in it. Revival is a personal thing. I am responsible that a revival begins in me. I am responsible that a revival spreads through me to others, and so are you.

In a certain battle a captain rushed up to the general and said: "General, we can never fight them; they are too numerous. We can never subdue them." The general responded, "Captain, we are not here to count them, but we are here to conquer them, and conquer them we must." We are called upon to be faithful.

God requires our treasury, not part of it, but all of it. Some think this invites bankruptcy, but here success is

measured by the scales of the world. Really this is an invitation to fullness of life, to spiritual adequacy, to purposeful living, to a satisfied life.

God requires a tenth of our income specifically, but He requires that the use of the remainder be dedicated to Him also. This is not that He might reduce us to poverty or that we might be His regimented slaves. Quite the contrary. Good stewardship is a safeguard against covetousness and slavery to materialism. It is recognizing the ownership and sovereignty of God.

Many years ago, a princess in Sweden sold her diamonds so that a home might be built for incurables. She prayed much for the conversion of one particular inmate. One day when the princess visited her, the inmate burst into tears and said: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sins. He has cleansed mine." "In those tears," the princess later said, "I saw my diamonds again."

We see our tithes and offerings again and again when people kneel at an altar of prayer to seek Christ, during a baptismal service, and when attending the funeral service of a faithful Christian.

You have three things to give to God: time, talents, and treasury. You cannot afford to give less. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 16:25). If you cut the hub from a wheel, you have a useless hoop. If you leave Christ out of the center of life, it becomes an empty shell. If you put Christ at the center of your life, you will have abundant life. What more could one desire?

Selected

**Little is much
if God is in it!**

*Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.
6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Trust in the Lord



Brother Fred Barrows

Be a Witness

It often has been said that a person can live a whole lifetime building up an influence, and in only a short period of time, it can all be gone. God wants each of us to be a witness. When the Holy Ghost came on the Day of Pentecost, He told the saints of God that He was going to make them witnesses. You have to be a witness at home, first of all. If you are not a witness in your own home, if your children see you bickering, blowing up, ready to fight, what kind of witness is that? What about your neighborhood? What about where you work or buy your groceries?

You are also to be a witness in other parts of the world. Wherever you go, dear one, you ought to be

God-conscious to the fact that God's all-seeing eye misses absolutely nothing. He sees every move you make, and He hears every word you speak. You need to be careful, because you represent the greatest kingdom that has ever been known: the Kingdom of God. As a Christian, you are an ambassador for Christ and for the Kingdom of God. You ought to live holy and conduct yourself in a manner that manifests that.

Often I think of the condition that our world is in, and especially our nation. When I was a child in grade school, our class used to say the *Lord's Prayer*. We acknowledged God, but today in the schools our children are not allowed to do that anymore. The enemy of souls is making great attacks and too many inroads on our faith. He wants to

destroy our faith, because if he destroys our faith, we will not get anything from God. Hebrews 11:6 reads, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Verse 1 tells us, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

How often do you look at a circumstance and you are ready to throw up your hands in defeat? This is not what God wants you to do. God allows these things to come around to strengthen your faith. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Another way faith comes is through trials, hard circumstances, afflictions, persecutions, and things of that nature. When you are being persecuted by

people at work, or in your neighborhood, if you are ready to hit them in the mouth because they did something that you did not like, what kind of witness is that? That is no witness. You are to build up the Kingdom of God, not tear it down.

Look to God

In our Scripture text the wise man said: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." As I have already said, the enemy is making great attacks. As we look at the government, we sometimes think that it is absolutely impossible for things to change; we are going down. Our nation allows the killing of unborn babies. Can you imagine taking a little child, just about the time it is coming out of the mother, and drawing the brains out of that child? God sees all of that. Many people do not consider abortion to be murder, but that is exactly what it is. They try to rub that in God's face, as if to say, "How do you like that God?" One of these days He is going to show them what He thinks about that. God wants us to trust in Him.

When I was getting ready to quit my job, I had one of my better months that whole year. The boss came into my office, and I told him: "I believe God is ready for me to retire." He could not quite understand it, and he said: "You have had one of your best months. How do you know it is God that is showing you this? Are you sure that God is telling you to leave?"

I pointed to a door that came into my office and said: "When that door is closed and God asks me to go through it, I do not know what is on the other side of that door, but by faith, if God is in it, God will take care of me when I go through that door." Dear one, I am concerned that we live too far beneath our privileges. God has everything to supply every need under every circumstance, but sometimes we look at a

problem and do not see Christ.

When God told Noah to build the ark, He told Noah to put a window in the roof. What was there to look up at? God. If Noah would have put it in the side of the boat, when they looked out and saw all those boisterous waves, no doubt, they would have been very fearful. This is exactly what God wants us to do today. We should not place so much emphasis or too great a concern on what we see going on around us. May the Lord help us to see Him as Isaiah did: high and lifted up. He is the One who is going to bring us through, not our own intelligence or ingenuity.

We must realize that humanism wants to try to make us believe that we can do anything that we set our minds to. That may be true to a certain degree, but why is it that so many men have been sitting around the so-called peace talk tables trying to make peace? How long have they been doing that? They have been doing it for years, and they are not any further along today than they were when they first started. Why is that? Peace is found only in Christ, and He is the very One whom they will not accept.

The answer to America's problems is found in 2 Chronicles 7:14, which reads, "If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." People do not want to do that. Why? Because they like the money they are getting.

Lift Your Eyes Above the Circumstance

God tells you to trust in Him. He encourages you to trust in Him with all your heart. One never goes wrong when he truly places his trust and confidence in the Lord. Sometimes that takes real effort. Because of circumstances, perhaps there is no physical way for you to work out your problems. That is where God

likes to have you, where you are facing a situation with absolutely no way for you to correct it. When you have no way to fix it, then you call on God and He comes to your rescue. Life's problems and situations are far too great for you to handle on your own. Trusting in His power brings an assurance. It brings peace and soul rest when you fully put your problems in God's hands.

Some people say, "We ought to have more divine healing." Healing is a part of the children's bread, but God does not heal everyone, just as He does not save everyone. It is not because He does not want to, but certain conditions have to be met. When those conditions are met, God will do what He said. It is all hinging on the word "if." If you will, then God will; but if you will not, if you regard iniquity in your heart, God will not heal you. He wants to help you, but you have to get the rubbish out of the way first before He will do what He said He would do.

God wants you to trust Him. Trusting God is being obedient to Him, loving Him, and doing what He wants you to do. Too often ones look at the surrounding conditions, and they become afraid. When you are faced with a big obstacle or a big debt, you may wonder, "How am I going to take care of this?" I faced that one time, as many others have. After my wife passed away, I felt as if the national debt was laying on me, so I prayed and asked God to help me. Little by little, God worked things out. What God has done for me, He will do for you. The question is, Will you commit yourself?

When thinking about salvation, I thought of Psalm 37:5, which reads, "Commit thy way unto the LORD." Sometimes God wants you to go through a test for a period of time. The same is true with divine healing. I want to share with you a little about two people: C. W. Naylor and D. S. Warner. Both of those brethren were mighty men of God, but neither one of them was healthy. One of them was afflicted and laid in a bed the greater part of his life. The other,

D. S. Warner, from what we understand, was afflicted most of his life. He was a sickly individual, and on top of that, his wife ran off and took their only child. Can you imagine what you would do if you were in that kind of situation? That would be far beyond what human comprehension could take in. God wants you to trust Him, even though the fact is, you cannot do anything about your circumstance. You need to lift your eyes above the circumstance and let God take care of it.

Trust God's Divine Counsel

Many people turn to every means possible instead of trusting God's promises. They try to work things out themselves. You probably have never done that, but I have. You work, you scheme, and you try to rearrange; but when you turn it over to God, it is amazing how God can work things out. Many men seek every avenue to get their problems solved but going to the place where they need to. They will ask this one and that one: "What do you think about my situation? What would you do if you were me?" The Scripture does say there is safety in the multitude of counselors, but you had better make sure that your counselors are spiritual people.

Sometimes an individual will run to this one and ask, "What do you think about this?" Then he runs to somebody else and asks, "What do you think I should do?" and that person gives him his opinion. Then he runs to somebody else. Do you know what that does? That brings a state of confusion in his mind, because he may not tell the same problem in the same identical way to each person, so he may get four or five different answers.

Psalms 118:8 says, "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man." This is not saying that you should just bypass the religious leaders, the pastor, or religious counselors that have been approved. However, sometimes you

may be ready to put your confidence in what somebody else says instead of what God tells you.

Friends, family, and neighbors may desire to see you prosper, but they have been known to err on sound judgment matters. Although they may mean well and have good intentions, trusting God's counsel and direction will never lead you astray. This is something that you can count on. Romans 10:11 tells us, "For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." If you truly put your trust in God, you will never be ashamed.

For those who would say, "What if I trust God and die?" what would be wrong with that? You would be moving from heartache, trouble, and a sick body to having something that you would never have problems with again. Sometimes we think that the Gospel says we have to believe God and He is going to heal everybody. There are still conditions to be met. You cannot regard iniquity in your heart and expect God to heal you or to answer your prayer.

The Gospel is not made up, and faith is not made up on divine healing. There is more to the Gospel than divine healing. What about living a holy life? What about the standards of God's Word? You are not going to get your prayers answered if you are in direct opposition to or in rebellion against God's Word or God's man. It is not going to happen that way, dear one.

You need to get your thinking changed along some lines. If you want God to do something for you, then you had better start making yourself more available to do more things for Him. It works that way. You reap what you sow. Many times we say, "You always reap what you sow," and think about that in a negative way. What about sowing in the good way? If you sow righteousness, you are going to reap righteousness. If you sow sin, you are going to reap sin; that is the way it works. That is what the Scripture lets us know.

By trusting God's divine guidance and counsel, you will never be ashamed. If your steps are always ordered by Him, you will not err. That is exactly what the Scripture tells us. Psalm 37:23 says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD." Following what others think or say may bring embarrassment to you at a later time.

Seek God Wholeheartedly

Sometimes people get things fixed in their minds: "This is what I want," and they do what they want; then they ask God to bless it. It does not work that way. What you need to do is ask God for divine direction: "Lord, what would You have me do in this situation? Would You have me go here? Would You have me buy this?" There are many things that you may like to do. The Apostle Paul said that he could do anything, but some things he would not do, not because he could not, but because it might hurt his influence with a weaker brother or sister. We need to be careful of those things, dear one. This all falls under the heading of trusting God and trusting His judgment. He has given us pastors to guide us.

Sometimes you run across problems that are not easy to answer or to work with, but you have to trust God. Sometimes only God knows how to help you. Do not allow Satan to sow doubt and unbelief in your heart and mind. He will use every means possible to lead you into confusion. He is hoping to kill your confidence in God. The Scripture says that Satan is an accuser of the brethren. He also accuses us to God and he accuses God to us. He says, "If God really loved you, He would help you." That is not altogether true, dear one. You have to find a balance. God wants to help you, and He will help you. However, there are conditions that you have to meet.

Jeremiah 29:13 tells us, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your

heart." Sometimes people say, "Lord, I want You to heal me; I want You to take care of this." I want to do my very best to trust Him in the smaller things, and when the greater things come, God will help me to trust Him then. It is amazing how God takes care of you. You need to be wholehearted when seeking Christ for your great situation. To come to Him with a nonchalant attitude will be disappointing to you.

The Bible is God's will; it is His last will and testament. It is His will to help you and to supply all your needs according to His riches in glory. The question is, Will you really trust God to help you? You must reject the thought that it does not matter if this does not work out right. I have heard people say, "Lord, if You do not heal me or if You do not work this situation out, I am going to go some other way or use some other means." If that is your attitude, do you know what God is going to do? He is going to stand back and fold His hands and say, "Go ahead and do it." When you come to God, you have to come to Him wholeheartedly. You should have the attitude: "God, if You do not help me, I will not be able to stand" or "If You do not heal me, God, I am going to die this way" or "If You do not work out this problem, God, it is not going to get worked out because I do not know how to work this out. I am at my wit's end." Sometimes God puts us in those situations.

Total Submission to God's Will

My desire is that God's church be encouraged along the line of faith, not just for divine healing, but in every avenue of life. You need to see God bigger, greater, and able. Too many people look at the surrounding circumstances. Many hearts are failing because of fear, as Luke said, of things coming on this earth. God wants you to be encouraged. He wants you to see Him bigger than any problem and bigger than any situation. With the present

political system that we have going on right now, it seems totally impossible for God to turn this situation around. God has that power, but do you have the faith?

You need total submission to God's will and His way. Too many times people are not willing to submit to God's will and His way, yet they want Him to do something for them. They want to gain something from Him. It is the same way with salvation. When you come to Christ, you have to totally unload sin, self, and every possession, just as Zacchaeus did. He was willing to unload everything and totally submit. If you hold the thought of going an alternate way, it will only spoil things. You should never be so foolish or so ignorant as to give God an ultimatum, "If You will, I will." You cannot get saved, healed, or get your needs supplied by offering God an ultimatum. If you tell God, "If You do not move in such-and-such a time or in such-and-such a way, I am going to take this matter into my own hands," He will let you do it, and you will usually end up failing. Such an endeavor usually ends up being spoiled. This choice will only cause God to stand back and let you do what you want to do.

Philippians 4:6 says, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." It is more beneficial to willingly be patient and to allow God to work in your life as He sees fit. Do not forget that He operates on His time schedule, not on yours. Getting overly anxious only frustrates matters and brings unbelief.

Let us look at the part of our Scripture text that says to lean on His understanding and not your own. Proverbs 14:12 states, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Often as a human being, you may struggle to work out your own problems in life. You can become overconfident in yourself, in your ability, and in your education.

When you come to your wit's end and realize that you need help, it is then that you turn to Him for the wisdom, the strength, and the direction that only He can give. This is the place where you have to come to, dear one.

Humanism Rejects God's Superiority

Humanism is always trying to make an inroad into the Christian's life. It will cause you to think that you can do anything that you want through your own intellect and through your own abilities. Sooner or later, something will come along that you will not be able to work out. Humanism rejects God's superiority and puts man above the Lord. When you think that you can do things on your own and get by, you are only fooling yourself. In our political system, there may be a few men that acknowledge God, but the majority of the politicians and the highly educated people do not think about God and what He can do.

In the Old Testament you can read that King Nebuchadnezzar looked out over Babylon and said, in essence: "Look at what I have done. My hands have done all of this." God struck him down, and he was put out in the field. He became as a beast, eating grass. Finally, he woke up to the fact that God in Heaven is the One who allowed him to be king.

Dear one, it is not by might, not by power, but by God's Spirit that you can accomplish things. You should acknowledge God in all your ways. Psalm 143:10 tells us, "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness." When you truly believe that and truly follow after that, then you are looking to find God's way and have Him lead you. You are acknowledging His greatness and letting Him know how depleted you are. You are letting Him know how insufficient you are. You need to let Him know how desperately you need Him.

Too many times people are so used to doing things on their own, as if to say, "I do not need God," until some great problem comes along; then they are made to realize how much they need Him. God loves to hear you acknowledge your great need of His help. Should He deny giving you the attention you need, you would be lost. There is no other source outside God in Heaven that can provide the help that you stand in need of. You need to just get yourself to a place where you realize that you need God in a greater way than you have ever needed Him before. It is a shame that so many people walk around and do their own thing. God is last on their minds. God wants His church to have faith in Him.

Increasing Faith

The enemy is so encroaching on the church. The enemy is encompassing the saints. We are coming to that place right now. Our government is trying to take guns away, and they are trying to force us to accept certain lifestyles. If you want to have a perverted lifestyle, I guess that is your business, but when you start telling me that I have to accept your lifestyle, somebody is being encroached upon. That is what it is coming to. As the world continues and sin continues to box in the children of God, do you know what the Scriptures say? When you see these things begin to happen, lift up your eyes, because your redemption is drawing nigh.

My heart's desire is to have greater faith. You may say, "I would like to have greater faith." The disciples asked the Lord to increase their faith. Now, God does not just dump faith on you, but He allows certain circumstances to come so that you can lean on Him and trust in Him. Sometimes people have been afflicted for many years. Live or die, sink or swim, by the grace of God I am going to stand true to Him. I want my spiritual eyes to always be able to see and recognize truth the

right way.

Our Scripture text says, "He shall direct thy paths." Jeremiah 10:23 says, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." With all your education and all your intelligence, you are not wise enough to direct your own path. You might be able to do lots of things on your own, but you cannot handle the really deep problems of life. You need that higher power bestowed upon you. You need to seek God's face and plead for Him to help you, whether you need healing, financial help, or grace to stand in the midst of persecution coming against you in the neighborhood, in your home, at work, or whatever the problem is.

Two of my favorite characters in the Old Testament are Hezekiah and Jehoshaphat. They were both faced with an obstacle standing in front of them, but they had no might. That is what Jehoshaphat said. In 2 Chronicles 20:12 he told God, "We have no might against this great company that cometh against us." They prayed and fasted, and God turned the whole situation around. That is where God wants to bring the church today, to a place where they fully lean on Him, and fully trust in Him.

Sometimes people's faith is so weak, because when they want something, they expect it immediately or they give up. We live in such an instant society that if we want something, we just go buy it. However, God wants to see His people's faith grow. One way faith grows is when you are going through adversities totally beyond your control and yet you say: "Lord, I don't know what's going on and I don't see a way out, but I'm going to trust You. I know Your Word tells me that You will never leave me nor forsake me. There is no temptation too great for me, but You will take care of it." God has promised to be your helper in every situation of life. The question is, Will you trust Him?

Submit Yourself to God's Plan

God only knows what we are going to face in the future, but God will bring us through. As the strait gate becomes narrower, more people will go astray. In Revelation 3:21 when Jesus was writing to the seven churches, He said, "To him that overcometh. . . ." I want to be an overcomer. I want to have my faith inspired. Sometimes the enemy comes in like a flood and tries to get me to doubt. He says: "Are you *really* saved? If you were saved, these things would not be happening to you." That is exactly what Job's so-called friends told him. Job even told his wife, in so many words: "You talk like a foolish woman. Should I accept all the good that God gives me and not allow some evil to come upon me?" Job did not sin in all of that. Sometimes a spouse or a child or another family member can be your worst enemy. Someone that you think highly of can be your enemy. If you make it through this life victoriously, it is not going to be due to your own power; it is going to be due to God's power. It is going to be because you submitted to God and allowed Him to work through you as He wants to.

How can you prove your love to God? It is easy to say, "I love God," but how can you really prove that you love Him? Jesus said in John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I do not want to suffer, and I do not like to suffer a bit more than you do; but if I had to make a choice between suffering here in this life and making Heaven, I would much rather suffer here and make Heaven than to have all the pleasures of this life like the rich man did and end up in hell. Eternity is a much longer time. The normal span of life, according to Scripture, is three score and ten; I am six years past that. In Psalm 37:25 David said, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

God has a storehouse that is full

and running over, but some have such little faith that they cannot even pray in a hamburger, so to speak. God wants to be our all in all, and we must let Him. We have to submit ourselves to His plan. We must be obedient to His Word and do what He wants us to do.

Divine Direction

Psalm 37:23 says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way." When you talk about the Lord doing great things, He expects you to do what you can do. He gives you a portion to do, and you are to do that. When you have gone as far as you can go, then He will take over from there. In the old barn on God's Acres there hangs a large yoke. One side of the yoke is bigger than the other one. Do you have any idea who takes the

bigger yoke? Jesus does. We are workers together with Him. He gives us a portion to do, but we are in the smaller side of that yoke. We are pulling, but He is the One taking the big heavy load out of life.

God is ready to give you the divine direction that you stand in need of. We are facing dark and perilous times in our world today, but only He has the capability of bringing us through with victory. Let us not faint or fear those things that lay ahead of us. Let us allow God to reassure us of His divine ability and take us through. Let us not be afraid.

I would like to ask you to submit yourself to God. Tell God, "Lord, I want to be everything that You want me to be." You may be striving to do just exactly that, but this is a progressive salvation, and He wants you to continue to move

on. Today you might have been your best, but tomorrow you will have to go a little further, and the next day you will have to go a little further. The more you submit yourself, the more time that you spend with Him, the better the love affair between you and Christ will be. The closer you get to Him, the quicker, I believe, God will answer your prayers. The more you give to Him, the more He will give to you. I want to encourage you to trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not try to lean to your own understanding, but in all your ways always acknowledge Him. Let Him know, "God, if You do not help me, there is no help to be gained." The Scripture says that He will direct your paths. Won't you strive to be more of what God wants you to be?

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[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2] to Him. Please do not feel that your efforts or your help is unneeded, unnecessary, or insignificant. Many hands are needed to accomplish the task, along with much prayer and financial support for this work.

When this life is finished and the rewards are given, each one will

be grateful to have had a part in winning men and women to Christ and to His true church. Our desire and intention is to use this publication as a means "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isaiah 61:1), to cry aloud, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city"

(Revelation 14:8), and to see the people of God "stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God" (Revelation 15:2).

If you are not already carrying a burden for this work of publishing the good news, we sincerely ask you to join us now. Your efforts will be much appreciated!

God's Word Declares . . .

"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. "

Matthew 24:38-39

Are You Ready?

What Kind of Salesman Are You?



Brother James Presley

The Pearl of Great Price

As Christians, our duty is to try to convince people to buy the Truth. We want the world to buy the Truth. We want them to have this glorious Gospel that God has entrusted to us through salvation. We want the world to be saved.

You should not be ashamed of the Gospel. You should be proud to be a Christian. If you are saved, you want to see others buy the Truth because the Truth is worth more than anything that this old world has to offer. Nothing in this world is more valuable than the Truth of God's Eternal Word. Nothing is more powerful than God's Eternal Word. You need to hold on to the

Truth and tell others. You need to show people there is a better way to live.

Matthew 13:45-46 reads: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." This man was a merchant man, a businessman, and a good businessman knows when he has found a good buy, so he does everything he can to procure it. This man sold everything he had. When you got saved, you sold everything that you had for salvation. You gave up your worldly ways.

This man was looking for a few goodly pearls, but he found that

pearl of great price, symbolizing the Truth. There are still people in the world today who are looking for Truth. They are looking for the true Church of God that Jesus founded. When I got saved, I was looking for the true Church of God. I was not just looking for a church, but I was looking for the church that God told about in the Bible. There are people who are still seeking the Truth today. This pearl is worth more than everything we have. Jesus Christ is the Truth that people are searching for. You need to reach out to people and tell them about Jesus Christ.

We read in John 14:6, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." That is

the Truth that you need to tell people to buy. To be able to buy something, there has to be a salesman, and as a Christian, that is what you really are. Any salesman would love to find one item of great value, one item that could change the world. Have you ever thought about this? If you could find one thing that everybody who drives a car could use, it could change the world. Suppose one device could make your car run without gasoline. Think of how many people would want that. If you found something like that, what would you do? You would probably be out selling it.

Salvation changes the world. It changes people for the good and will enable them to go to Heaven one day. It gives them liberty here on earth so they do not have to give in to sin anymore. They have the victory in their hearts. A good salesman would do everything in his power to sell that item. He knows it will change lives, and he will also benefit from it. When you witness to souls, people will change, and you will receive a blessing from it.

Be a Partaker of Salvation

Matthew 28:19-20 tells us: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Jesus tells us to go out and sell this product of salvation. My question is, What kind of salesman are you? If you have salvation, you are to be a salesman for the Lord. You are to sell this great salvation to others. To accomplish a lot for the Lord, you must work at it. Yes, you will be turned down. Some people will say maybe, but others will accept it.

You should not just sit at home and say, "Oh, I cannot sell this product." You are not selling it if you are not out there working. You need to get busy in the work of the Lord. No

one knows how much time is left, and many souls need to be saved. You need to be a salesman for the Lord. The kind of salesman you are will determine the amount of success you have. If you are a lazy salesman, you are not going to see many souls saved. You need to get out there and work with people and look for an opportunity to talk to them; then you will be successful as a salesman.

I found out personally when I tried to sell some things that the first thing people ask is, "Do you have one?" If you have one, then you can tell them how good it is. That gives people more confidence in the product. However, if you tell them you do not have one, but it is a good product, they are not going to believe you. It is the same with selling this Truth. You have to be a partaker of this salvation. You have to be saved and living for the Lord. You cannot tell them about the greatness of God if you do not know what the greatness of God is.

Second Timothy 2:6 says, "The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits." You must be saved or you will never convince the world that salvation is what they need. You have to show them that salvation has changed your life. Sometimes I tell my children how I used to be in the past, and they look at me in wonder. They can hardly believe that Daddy was like that. That is how it is when you tell someone how great salvation is, especially people who knew you in the past. They see the change in you. Salvation makes a change, and you must have it to sell it to others.

In 1 Corinthians 9:10 Paul said, "Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope." You need to be a partaker of this great salvation to be an example to the lost and dying world. You have to possess the product you are trying to sell them. I used to sell water softeners,

and I had a little replica of a big unit. I showed how the water softener worked, but because I did not have a water softener, I could not sell them. Many people turned me down because of that.

You need to show others by example what Christ is in your life. They want to see the product in action. People want to see that you can live free from sin. They want to see that you do not have to listen to the devil. They want to see that God gives you the grace when you are going through hard times. You need to show them how God gives you the grace to face the trial, because trials are coming. That is exactly what you need to do as a Christian. Second Corinthians 3:2 says that we are "known and read of all men." People are watching you. If you are dealing with souls, they want to see how you live. It is up to you to show them by example.

Are you a partaker of this great salvation? Do you have the product inside you so that you can show others what it is like to be a Christian? Is anything hindering you from showing them this great salvation? Maybe you have been slipping up on something or becoming slack. The devil is always striving to win some battles in your life. You need to keep this great salvation fresh in your soul. God has a great work for you to do. He has a plan for each one of our lives. Will you allow God to work through you to see others saved?

Perseverance Through Opposition

What is another characteristic of a good salesman? He has not only the product but also the determination. Without determination you are not going to be a good salesman. The definition of *determination* is, "the power to pursue objects with self-motivation and perseverance." The object you are selling is the Truth. Self-motivation will enable you to get yourself going so that you can talk to people and deal with them. You should look for

opportunities to speak to people.

Perseverance is essential. You are going to be rejected, because not everyone will accept the salvation of God. When you first got saved, you probably thought everyone else would want salvation too. What was the first thing that happened? Most likely, you were rejected and persecuted; therefore, you need to have perseverance to make it. You are not going to be effective without perseverance. Do you have the determination to put up with persecution? Can you persevere through anything the devil throws at you? He definitely is going to work against you. You do not know how the devil is going to work. Are you able to persevere through his opposition?

When you try to sell the Truth, you will suffer some things. We read in 2 Timothy 3:12, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." You are going to suffer some things when you live godly and tell people about Christ. Some people are going to make fun of you. You are going to have your feelings hurt. People may talk about you behind your back. Once you expect it, you will be able to handle it much better.

Are you self-motivated? Do you dig deep into the Word of God? A salesman cannot sell a product unless he truly knows the product. You cannot tell someone about a product if you have no idea about what it is or how it works. You need to dig deep and learn about it, and then you can go out and sell it. Likewise, you need to know about salvation. You need to experience it. The Bible tells us to learn about Christ.

Be Determined

You need to dig deep into the Word of God, study it, and live it as you learn it. Do you look for doors of opportunity to talk to people about God? When you see a door of utterance open, do you move right through it or do you hesitate? You must have the determination to speak when God says to speak. If

God impresses you to say something, He has a reason for telling you to say it; that person needs to hear it. Maybe God is dealing with his heart and that one little thing that you say could bring him to salvation.

When God tells you to say something to someone, you should say it. You need to be determined, no matter whether it is a little old lady or a big, burly man. You need to be determined and talk to that person no matter who it is. Do not let fear get hold of you. You can overcome fear through the help of God. Do you look for doors of opportunity? Do you have the determination to sell this Gospel? If you truly love this Truth, you will have the determination to tell people about it. When you first got saved, you were excited and wanted to tell everyone about it. The sad part is, lots of times that excitement dwindles. You lose the enthusiasm that you had when you first got saved. You need to be reminded of what God has done for you. He saved your soul.

If it was not for God, I would probably be in hell or in jail. I know I would be in one or the other. Only the grace of God could save me and help me through difficult situations. Why should I not want to tell others all about what Christ has done? I am determined to sell the Truth. First Corinthians 2:2 says, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Is your determination to know Christ? That is a good determination to have.

Do too many worldly things fill your mind? I believe that the world is closing in on the Christian really tight. It tries to occupy your mind and take your spiritual life. The devil may not tempt you to commit sin, but he will get your mind busy with worldly things. There is nothing wrong with going out and enjoying yourself, but beware lest you become careless. Even if something is not sin, you had better not let the world get a hold on you.

Disconnecting Yourself From the World

Second Timothy 2:4 reads, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." You cannot be entangled with the affairs of this life. You cannot allow the things of this world to keep you from witnessing for the Lord. You must keep on selling salvation to the lost and dying world. You cannot allow things of this world to entangle you. You have to keep yourself disconnected from the world. You get a little too connected when that is the only thing you think about.

When it gets around football time, is that the only thing you think about? Is your mind enthralled with who is the best running back in the big ten or such things? Your mind can be overtaken with those things. You dare not get entangled. Sometimes you need to disconnect yourself. There is nothing wrong with saying, "I hope my favorite team wins," but it is wrong to be so enthralled with it that you sit in the service and your mind is constantly on who is winning the game.

I used football as an example, but your mind can be overtaken with other things as well. The devil wants to control your mind during the church services. He does not want you to think on the things being preached, but he wants your mind to think on other things. When he does that, he can do a destructive work on your spiritual life. Who knows who you may affect? You need to keep your mind disconnected from the world.

Do you have a determination to be a good salesman? If you have ever tried to sell anything, you have found that it takes determination. You may get turned down a high percentage of the time, but you should not give up. Telemarketers have a list of phone numbers that they call, but what response do they get most of the time? People do not want to hear them. Sometimes that

is the way it is when talking to people about their souls. What should you do? You can pray that the Lord will give you someone else. Do not become dejected, because God has someone out there. You need to keep praying and ask God to send you to honest souls.

Inspiring Trust

Another characteristic a good salesman has is the capacity to inspire trust. You must trust in the company and in the product that you represent, and you need to have the capacity to inspire trust. If you do not inspire trust between you and another individual, you are not going to get very far with him. You have to build a rapport with people. As a Christian, you need to inspire trust in the Church of God, that it is the church that is standing true, that it has power, and that it preaches the Truth. You need to inspire their trust in salvation. Trust comes by your example. You need to inspire trust with people, connect with them, and be friendly.

When I was in training to sell water softeners, the salesman who was with me said, "I'll do the first house and you do the second one."

I said, "Okay."

We went to the first house, and he went through the demonstration. As he was talking to the woman, I could see her putting up a wall between them. He had to go outside to make a phone call, and while he was outside, I happened to make a comment about a picture of a little child on her counter. She asked if I had children, and it just opened a big door. When we left there, the other salesman told me: "I wish you would have done that one. You connected with her." That is the way it is with selling this Gospel. If you want to make a connection, you must be a friend to an individual. You cannot get anything done by shoving the Word of God down people's throats, so to speak. They are not going to accept it that way. They have to be dealt with slowly,

but you need to make that connection.

Proverbs 11:30 says, "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise." It takes lots of wisdom to deal with souls. A good salesman never sells anything by forcing it on someone. They will turn him down in a heartbeat. A good salesman builds a relationship with people; he gains their confidence and trust. Trust is not given; it is earned.

We have had people come to church with us, but it did not happen overnight. We worked with them for weeks or months, and we built up trust with them. There are a lot of bad salesmen in this world, especially along the line of spirituality. People get a bad taste in their mouth when they deal with a bad salesman, and it is going to be extra hard to sell them anything about God. I have dealt with a few people like that.

I had a second cousin who used to be part of a certain church, and the preacher got up and preached against cigarette smoking. (We all know that is bad, and we can agree with that.) After church, they left. However, my cousin left his Bible at the church, and he had keys to the church, so he decided to go around to the back to get in. He went around back and there was the preacher, who had just preached, smoking a cigarette. That experience left a bad taste in my cousin's mouth, and he has not been back to church anywhere since then. He does not trust church people anymore. He does not want to talk about salvation. You need to build trust with people and make sure that you do not have anything in your life that will cause them to be leery of buying what you have to sell.

Having a Love for the Truth

A good salesman also loves his job. He loves to talk to people about what he is trying to sell. He loves and uses the product himself. A

good salesman knows it will change people's lives for good. That should be the reason he is out there trying to sell it. The Christian loves to tell about God and what God did for him. My wife and I used to have a good neighbor, and if that brother found something he liked, he was a good salesman for it. He would advocate it and declare it to be the best product on the market. It is the same way when you truly get salvation. There is nothing in this world like it. When God brought us to the Church of God, He spoiled us for everything else. It is the highest on the mountain.

A good salesman for the Truth loves to talk to people about Truth. He wants to be out there talking to people, dealing with them, praying with them, and praying for them. What are we here for anyway, church? We are not here just to say we came to the services and enjoyed ourselves. One purpose of getting saved is to see others saved. The purpose of buying this Truth is so that we can sell it to others.

When you get saved, you want to tell the world about it; you want others to be saved. A good salesman loves the Truth, and he loves to tell others whenever he can. He looks for opportunities. He knows how it changed his own life, and he wants the same for others. A good salesman does not have to be prodded to go to work. I used to work with some people that had to be prodded to go to work, and once they started, you had to stay on them to get them to keep working. A good salesman does not have to be prodded. He has a good product, and he knows it is going to be profitable.

Good Christians do not have to be prodded to witness to the world. They do not have to be prodded to call and invite others to church. You should look for opportunities to invite ones to the camp meetings, to revivals, and to regular church services. A good salesman should not have to be prodded to do work for the Lord; he is always on the job, always ready to work.

Always Be Ready to Give an Answer

First Peter 3:15 says, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." Have you ever been asked why you go to the Church of God? Are you ready to give an answer when they ask you? You need to tell them it is the only church mentioned in the Bible. Do not be bashful; tell them the truth.

Can you tell someone the reason that you have this hope in you? Can you tell someone why you are saved and why you chose this life? The Bible says to always be ready. Can you tell someone why you trust in God? He is worthy of your trust. You should always be ready to tell why you got saved. Look for an opportunity. Are you ready right now if someone were to ask you why you have this hope in you? You need to always be ready to give an answer. What do you think the effects would be if you were unable to give them an answer?

I want to tell you of my experience. Years ago when I first got saved, I was excited about the Word. My brother-in-law and sister went to a Babylonian church, and we went to visit them. I was going to talk to them about the one church. My brother-in-law started to question some things, and I found myself backed into a corner. I did not have the answers to his questions. The Bible says to rightly divide the Word of Truth and not to be ashamed. It embarrassed me that I could not answer all his questions. I was not ready to give many answers, so what did I do? I studied. I dug into the Word. If you cannot give an answer, you need to dig into God's Word. You should always be ready to give an answer.

How has your work for the Lord been lately? Have you been selling good tidings? Have you been dealing with souls? Have you been a good example for the world to see?

You need to get busy, because souls are dying and going to a devil's hell. You need to have the courage to ask them for a commitment. It is one thing to ask: "Will you go to camp meeting with me? We have three services every day, great food, and good fellowship."

They may say, "We will get back with you." That is not a commitment. You need to ask, "What day will you come?" If you have ever had a good salesman work on you, you probably bought the product whether you wanted it or not. He can really sell a product. As they say, a good salesman can sell ice cubes to an Eskimo. If you are a good salesman, you will not take no for an answer. You will deal with and work with a potential buyer.

There comes a time when you have to ask if they would like to buy your product. You can talk to people and have good communication with them, but there comes a time when you will ask, "Are you interested in buying it?" Likewise, there comes a time when you have to say: "Are you interested in salvation? Are you willing to live for God?" There comes a time when you will want to invite people to church. You may say, "We are having a revival" but that will not cause someone to be excited and want to come. You are going to have to get on the phone and say: "Would you like to come to the revival with me? I will pick you up." Most people are not going to walk through the door without an invitation.

Putting Forth an Effort

If you are not careful, the devil will make you lazy, and you will say, "Someone else can invite him." No, it is not up to someone else. We each have a circle of influence that no one else can reach. It is up to you to talk to that individual in your life. The Truth of God's Word is the product that we are trying to sell. Our Scripture text says, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." You can trust in God to help you. You may think

that selling is so hard, and you may not think you can sell the Gospel to others. You can if you trust in God. We have something that will last forever and will give us eternal life. It is something that will help you in the hard times, something that will heal your body, and something that will strengthen you in the weak times. You can be confident in selling the Gospel.

You need to be comfortable telling others about God. Mark 13:11 says, "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." Dear one, you have Someone speaking for you. You have Someone to put the thoughts in your mind. When you talk to someone and leave him, you will say to yourself: "How did I think of all those Scriptures? How did I think of saying that?" It was the Holy Ghost speaking, and giving you the words to say. When you get the opportunity to talk to a soul, you should be confident that God will help you. Do not be afraid to ask someone about his soul. He may say he is fine, but his countenance will tell on him. God will give you the words to say.

One time I asked a girl how her soul was, and she started to cry. It gave me an opportunity to talk with her. She came to church a few times. Sad to say, she never made a commitment. Nevertheless, you should still ask. Where would you be if someone had been afraid to talk to you about your soul? Christian friend, where would you be if someone had not invited you to church? I was not privileged to be raised in the church. Someone spoke to me about church and showed me an example. Where would you be if someone had failed to invite you? I probably would be lost. Where would you be if someone had been too scared to speak to you? You would not be saved.

If that individual was more than

willing to put forth the effort, you also need to put forth the effort to help lost souls. You would not be where you are today if it was not for God using some individual to talk to you and to pray for you. You will never know the impact of your getting saved. It may be that one individual or many people were praying for you. One thing for sure is that someone put forth an effort, and that is what you need to do.

Passion for the Work of God

Matthew 10:27 says, "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." You should never be afraid of what people might say. If God tells you to say something, you should say it. You will never go wrong in listening to God. God has a reason for you to say those words.

A good salesman, if he truly wants to sell the Truth, has to have passion. The word *passion* means "a strong, earnest feeling or desire." You must have a strong desire, a love for people, and a love to see souls saved.

To be a good salesman, you need to have a strong passion for

what you sell. A Christian will care about this great salvation that God has entrusted to him, not just so he can be saved, but so he can pass it on to others. To sell the Truth, you must have a strong passion for it and a longing for more of it. I want more of God and more of the Spirit of God in my life.

You need to desire to see other lives changed. A Christian wants to see the world saved. Have you ever thought what it would be like to live in a world where everybody was saved? That would be like Heaven. I had the privilege the other day to see a brother who has been coming to church for a while finally give his life to God. That was a blessing! God moved in a great way. That ought to give us a more sincere desire to reach souls than ever before. To see souls saved from the bondage of sin ought to give you a greater passion for the work of the Lord.

The only way we are going to see souls won to the Kingdom of God is to get out there and work. We need to be good salesmen for the Lord. We need to sell this Truth to souls. We need to tell them that God can save them and keep them and help them in the hard times. He is more than able.

What kind of salesman are you? Do you have a passion for the work of the Lord? Can you inspire trust in individuals? Do you have the determination to press on? Do you love the truth enough to share it? Do you need to improve on some of your abilities? Are you bold enough to ask serious questions to individuals? When was the last time you talked to somebody in person or on the phone about his soul? Do *you* possess this great salvation? You can be a good salesman for the Lord. We each have a job to do. We each have different capacities, but there is one thing that we all have in common: we are salesmen.

Have you been doing your part? Have you been witnessing to souls as you ought to? Do you have a burden for the lost and dying world? I wonder how many souls have died and gone to hell because somebody who was a Christian did not put forth an effort to talk to them. This is serious. We are dealing with souls who are heading for a devil's hell. I believe there are souls out there who desire to be saved but do not know where to go. It is up to us to lead them to Christ.

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December 27-30

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September 8-14

REVIVAL: The Church of God, 400 N. Meridian, Newton, Kansas 67114
Evangelist: Brother Irwin Seshier, Heath, Ohio
Service times: Monday-Saturday 7:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:45 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.
For additional information contact: Pastor Sandy Killfoil @ 316-587-5275

New Castle, IN

September 14-19

REVIVAL: 9th Street Church of God, 125 South 9th Street, New Castle, Indiana
Evangelist: Brother Allen Polston, New Castle, Indiana
Service times: Sunday 6:00 p.m.; Monday-Friday 7:00 p.m.
For additional information contact: Pastor Paul M. Featherstone
Telephone: 765-617-6837 or 765-749-0286

Minerva, OH

September 14-19

REVIVAL: Mount Zion Church of God, 13353 Lincoln St. SE, Minerva, Ohio 44657
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
Service times: Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.; Monday-Friday 7:00 p.m.
For additional information contact: Pastor Leamon Whitehead,
402 Chestnut Street, Minerva, Ohio 44657
Telephone: 330-868-1016

Summersville, WV

October 20-26

REVIVAL: The Church of God, 74 Armstrong Road, Summersville, WV 26651
Evangelist: Brother E. David Stegmeier, Canby, Oregon
Service times: Monday-Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday 6:00 p.m.;
& Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For additional information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders.
Telephone: 304-872-4047
Visit our website at: www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

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