

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 45 June 2015 No. 6



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.

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"And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

Micah 4:2

LET'S GO UP TO GOD'S HOUSE

If there was ever a time that men and women needed the sound teaching of the Word of God, it is surely today. We are seeing sin and ungodliness turned loose right before our eyes. The reason these conditions exist is due to the lack of godly instruction. In addition to that is the fact that many people are failing to walk in the light that they hear and know. Micah was encouraging the people of his day to get to God's house and to learn more perfectly of His way. By sitting in heavenly places, we are exposed to the old paths, wherein God desires us to go.

The month of June has finally arrived, and it is time for another camp meeting to begin on God's Acres campground. On June 21, Sunday morning at ten o'clock, we will gather together to hear the Word of God. It will be a time to worship together with the dear saints. As always, this is a special time when we can enjoy a wonderful, godly atmosphere. It is a time when the saints can escape from the hassles of life, and for a little while, have our souls refreshed. What a wonderful opportunity is given to us to feast on the manna that He is preparing for us! Our hearts will be enlightened to greater understanding of His will and ways. God wants His people to be prepared to face the troublesome times we will encounter and to press on.

It is no wonder that the psalmist said in Psalm 122:1, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD." David knew the importance of going to God's house. It was there that he received help and instruction for spiritual needs. We surely believe the psalmist looked forward to joining with others to fellowship and to hear the Word of God proclaimed.

All things are made ready for your arrival. The saints have been hard at work getting the campground and the facilities ready for your stay. The appearance of God's Acres is certainly important, but that is not our highest priority. Having a spiritual atmosphere for people to come into is our greatest desire and purpose.

Our burden and our prayer is for the Holy Spirit to be free to work and to do as He pleases in the services. When He is in the midst and able to have His way, needy souls can find help and hope. Camp meeting is for not only the lost and down trodden but also the saints of God, so that they might have their strength renewed and their souls encouraged.

We live in a troublesome time, a time when the forces of evil have been turned loose against the people of God. The forces led by Satan are determined to destroy our faith and defeat us, if

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Joshua 24:14 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

16 And the people answered and

said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods;

17 For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

18 And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the LORD; for he is our God.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.

22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, we are witnesses.



The Importance of a Godly Father

Brother Roger L. Decker

Honoring Fathers

Father's Day is this month, so we want to consider the thought of a godly Father. I want to begin the message by saying this: a good father is one of the most unsung, unpraised, unnoticed, and unappreciated heroes in all humanity. There are lots of funny stories about fathers. One time a little boy was asked to define Father's Day, and he

said this: "Well, it is just like Mother's Day, only you don't spend as much on the presents." I read that the greatest number of long distance phone calls are made on Mother's Day, but the largest number of collect calls are made on Father's Day.

Many fathers have favorite sayings. I can remember my father having sayings that he often repeated, such as, "Go ask your

mother" or "Just wait until I get home" or "When I was your age, I used to walk to school in the snow."

The idea of creating a day for children to honor their fathers began in Spokane, Washington. A woman by the name of Sonora Smart Dodd thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Having been one of six children raised by her father after her mother died, Sonora want-

ed her father to know how special he was to her. It was her father that made all the parental sacrifices and was, in the eyes of his daughter, a courageous, selfless, and loving man. Her father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington, on the nineteenth day of June 1910.

In 1924 President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. I understand from what I have read that many people did not pay much attention to that. So another president who came along later proclaimed it to be a federal holiday.

Roses are the Father's Day flower. Red is to be worn for a living father, and white if the father has passed away. I read a poem about fathers that I want to share with you. It is entitled "A Father's Day Prayer." It reads:

*Mender of toys, leader of boys,
Changer of fuses, kisser of bruises,
Bless him, dear Lord.*

*Mover of couches, soother of ouches,
Pounder of nails, teller of tales,
Reward him, O Lord.*

*Hanger of screens, counselor of teens,
Fixer of bikes, chastiser of tykes,
Help him, O Lord.*

*Raker of leaves, cleaner of eaves,
Dryer of dishes, fulfiller of wishes –
Bless him, O Lord.*

I heard about a little girl who walked out of a service when it was over, and she said to the pastor, "When I grow up, I am definitely going to give you some money."

The pastor said, "Well, thank you, dear, but why?"

"Well," she said, "My dad said you are the poorest preacher we have ever had."

A Spiritual Leader in the Home

We want to consider a father in the Old Testament that we can look

to as a good example. At the age of one hundred ten, Joshua summoned the leaders of Israel to a place called Shechem for a farewell address, and he charged them to obey the Lord who had fought for them and had given them an inheritance. He warned them of the dangers of apostasy and said, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15). As Joshua spoke, he did so with the authority of experience, for he had walked with Moses for more than forty years and led Israel to the conquest of Canaan for another twenty-five years. He reinforced his life with the power of a good example. He said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

Joshua was a man of God, and he was a man with backbone. This was evident at Kadesh-Barnea when he was in the minority. He and Caleb stood against ten others. He never wavered, nor did he recant. He stood against the pressure of the other tribal leaders and stayed true to the promises of God. As a father, have you stayed true to the promises of God?

It has been said that a boy loves his mother but will follow his father. The godly father is a man of prayer. He goes to God often. Many times he goes on behalf of his family, asking for wisdom and courage for himself and for protection for his wife and children. We have an example of that in the Bible. We read in Job 1:5, "And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually." What was Job saying? Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking that perhaps one of his children had sinned and cursed God in his heart. This was Job's regular custom.

Abraham was a spiritual leader of the home. When he spoke, he

spoke for the family, and he declared their intent. Mothers have a very strong influence in their home; they have a strong influence over their children. However, fathers should still be the guide in spiritual worship. It should not have to be the mother who leads in worship in the home.

In Genesis 18:19 God said this about Abraham (and it is quite a testimony for God to give about somebody): "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." The Lord said, "For I know him. . . ." The Lord knew Abraham with a special knowledge, a peculiar love and affection. God loved Abraham deeply; therefore, He was going to reveal future secrets to him. God knew who Abraham was and what he was. He was a holy, godly man.

The Lord knew that Abraham would command his children and his household after him to serve and to worship the Lord. What a wonderful thing for God to know about a father. Abraham commanded his children, his servants, and all that were within his authority. He used his authority and gave them all needful instructions to propagate and preserve true religion even after he had passed away.

As a father, are you the leader in your household? If not, that could be the reason that you might be having some problems. Do your children ever see you take a Bible in your hands and read it? Do they ever hear you lead in prayer? Do you ever study the Sunday school lesson with them? God said He knew Abraham, and what He knew about him was so good that He was going to reveal to him the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Abraham was called a friend of God. You might have friends, but there is no friend like God. Second Chronicles 20:7 states, "Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the

inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?" In James 2:23 we read, "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." That is quite a testimony to be called a friend of God.

Being a Good Provider and Protector

A father is to be a provider. We read in 2 Thessalonians 3:10, "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." According to this Scripture, if you are a father and you will not work, you should not eat. That is very strong. The word *work* means "toil; labor; employment." A man who is able to work should not sit at home and live on welfare or let the wife work. It is alarming when a husband or a father can just sit in a recliner while the wife works and brings in the money and they have to live on welfare and food stamps. That is not because of a need, but because of laziness. A man who does that is lazy, and he should not eat, the Scripture says, but he is probably the biggest eater in the household.

A father who has boys should teach them how to work. He should not depend on the wife's wages to support the family. Now, there are exceptions when a man is injured or sick or handicapped. When a young couple marries, they should not marry with the thought of two incomes to support their family. I know this is kind of old-fashioned; nevertheless, it is according to the Word of God.

I am a firm believer (and I believe I have the Lord's blessing regarding this) that the man is to be the one supporting the family. What is the wife's job? She is to be a keeper at home, not a keeper of the home. Maybe the family will not

have all the fineries and luxuries that couples have in their later years, and maybe they will have to get along with only one vehicle. Perhaps they will not have an automatic dishwasher, but God has a way of taking a little and making it stretch so your needs are taken care of. When you do it the Bible way, you have time to serve God.

Young lady, when you are old enough to marry, you need to make sure that you consider the young man's maturity and spirituality. You should not go with somebody just because you think he is good looking. There is more to it than that. Looks can change. He could have an accident that could disfigure him or he could develop a disease. Marriage has to be based on much more than a person's looks. It ought to be based on a person's maturity and spirituality. When you are around him, do you feel like serving God more or less?

When I got married, I was older than my wife by one year, but I was not as mature as she was. She was ready to be a wife, and she knew how to keep a house, how to take care of children, how to prepare meals, and how to make the home presentable. I was unprepared to grasp the big step of marriage.

I repeat, the husband needs to be the provider and the protector. Also, he should be the leader in worship and a teacher of good things in the home. Father, does God know good things about you? Does He know that you are a leader in spirituality in the home? Could God actually reveal to you His plans for your home? Are you close enough to God that He actually communes with you?

Godly Influences in the Home

Father, do you pray for your children, that they will have successful lives, not just for employment in the sectarian world? Do you pray that your children will be successful in their spiritual walk with God? Many people seem to think that all

there is to raising children is to raise them up and get them out of the home, to see that they get a good job and away they go. If that is what you think, you are missing the whole point. You are to command things and teach them the law of God. When we read in the Bible about teaching the commandments, we are talking about the Old Testament. The New Testament was not written yet, but it is a carry over. We should teach our children spiritual things in the home. Fathers and mothers should be prime examples to their children. When things do not always go well in the home, the children should see their father and mother crying out to God for help.

Do you pray for your children as Job did? Do you pray that God will keep them in their daily walk? To really have a home, there ought to be both a father and a mother. I know things can happen, but that is not what I am dealing with. There are some sinful lifestyles out in the world of two men or two women, but there needs to be a real father and a real mother when it comes to raising a family. These other lifestyles did not come out of God's Word.

State after state is crumbling and giving their allegiance to same-sex marriage. Those who are in favor of it may get defeated a few times at the ballot box, but they will be back. The Church of God should never accept it. At the ballot box, you should be very, very careful of voting for somebody who backs it, no matter what his political views are. Homosexuality is a sinful lifestyle. God wants a man to marry a woman. The ones who were struck blind in the days of Lot (Genesis, Chapter 19) tried to find the door of Lot's house, even though they were blind. That spirit had such a hold on them that they wearied themselves hunting for the door.

Some people who say the marriage vows do not even realize what they are saying when they take those vows. Those vows are sacred. They are spoken not only before a

waiting audience but also before God. When you make a vow, you are to keep it.

Psalm 78:5-7 says: "For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." God has commanded fathers to teach their children and to point them to Him so that they might have confidence in God, hope in Him, and keep His commandments.

Deuteronomy 4:9 reads, "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen,

and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons."

The New Testament tells us in Ephesians 6:4, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The word translated admonition means to put something in someone's mind and to give good advice. As a father, you should be putting the Word of God in your children's minds.

Godly influences in the home build a wall of protection around the household. The home should be a place of religious training, discipline, and government, where children can be taught good manners, obedience, and good work ethics.

Father, when you leave this world, you should leave behind a rich legacy, not of dollars and cents, but of Christian example and godly influence. This is a legacy that not

many parents strive for. They strive to put money in their bank accounts and strive for this and that, so that they will have something to pass on to their children.

Funerals bring out all kinds of relatives, especially when they know there is an inheritance. There is a much greater legacy that you can pass on to your family. One of these days, you are going to leave this world, and you can leave behind a legacy of spirituality that supercedes anything else you could leave them. Does God have confidence in you as the head of the household? Can He say, "I know him?" Are the things He knows about you good things? Proverbs 17:6 says, "Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers."

(Compact Disc TR-1354)

New Book Coming Soon!

The Worshipers Once Purged

Are you confused by the various teachings concerning works of grace?

Is there one? or two? or more?

What about blood cleansing? What does the Bible teach?

What about inherited sin and carnal nature? Do we inherit it?

Are you open to consideration of seventh seal light?

These questions & many more are addressed in this book.

(We unchristianize no one & desire to enlighten everyone.)

Authors: Brother Roger L. Decker & Brother Earl R. Borders

We anticipate the book to be available by the June Camp Meeting.

Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband

are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

The Danger of Playing Church



Brother Larry Dishman

Failing to Be Honest

I do not think it is wrong for little children to play church. When I was a little boy, my brothers and sisters and I played church. Our home adjoined a grocery store. There was a lady who worked for us, and she helped clean the house.

One day my mother came in the house to check on us children, and the lady was washing dishes and crying. My mother asked, "What's wrong?"

She said, "Those little children are putting me under conviction in there playing church." Again, I do not believe it is wrong for little chil-

dren to play church, but there is something wrong when grown-up people play church.

Ananias and Sapphira were playing church, and I feel some people today are playing church. At some point in their lives, some people in our world obviously consider their involvement with the

church an adequate cover from the wrath of God. These individuals, who might have been a part of the church at one time, really are not believers. In the Book of Acts, Chapter 5, Ananias and Sapphira were doing nothing but playing church.

In the Word of God, we read about some others who played church, such as Simon the Sorcerer. In Acts, Chapter 8, Simon offered the man of God money so that he, too, might have the power to lay hands on people and they would receive the Holy Ghost. Acts 8:20-23 reads: "But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Simon was playing church, and he thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money.

In Acts, Chapter 5, what can you learn from this remarkable incident in the history of the early church? I would like for you to take a closer look at Ananias and Sapphira. Again, verse 1 of our Scripture text tells us, "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession." Barnabas gave a generous gift, as noted in the closing of Acts, Chapter 4. No doubt, those two thought, "If we could make an offering like that, we could receive some recognition." We read of the dishonesty of the couple in keeping back a part of the price. Here we find the sin of pride, the sin of dishonesty, and the sin of greed. Barnabas sold his land and possessions, and he gave the proceeds to the church. He was not hypocritical about it. There were types of gifts like this that did not go unnoticed, and no doubt much honor was given to such acts of benevolence and sacrificial giving.

Nothing Is Hidden From the Eyes of God

Ananias and Sapphira were interested in the praise that they might receive if they made an offering like Barnabas' offering. They wanted the same honor that was given to Barnabas, but the Bible says they kept back a part of the price. In verse 3 of our Scripture text, Peter said, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" They lied about how much they had given. If you have to lie about how much you are giving, then that is proof your giving is not acceptable to God. They were materialistic, worldly, and greedy. They were concerned about the things of this world.

Peter said in verse 4, "Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." The selling of homes, lands, and possessions was a free-will offering. They did not have to sell their possessions and give 100 percent of the proceeds to the church. Peter was not dealing with tithing; the tithe already belongs to God. God already owns 10 percent.

Many people would be ashamed if others knew how little they give to the church. They say, "I cannot afford to tithe," but they can afford to do everything else they want to do. They spend money on their hobbies and their pleasures, but they say they cannot afford to tithe. The Bible teaches that if you do not tithe, you are robbing God.

There is a recitation about a telephone call from God. When God got around to asking the man about tithing, he said: "O Lord, I'm so glad You asked that question. I gave fifty-eight dollars to the church last year."

God said, "I don't think you understand tithing too well."

What can you learn from this? You can be sure your sins will find you out. If you are involved in some

type of sin, your sins will find you out.

No doubt, as Ananias and Sapphira talked about this, they thought they had it all set up and there was no way anybody would ever know. The person that they sold their possessions to was not going to be around, so they thought it was all sewed up, but their sins found them out. God knows all things; He knows everything about me and everything about you. Nothing is hidden from God's sight. There is nothing in our lives that God does not know about. God knew all about the sin of Ananias and Sapphira, and He exposed their sin in front of the entire church. It is still being exposed two thousand years later. People are still talking about the sin of Ananias and Sapphira.

A Cautionary Example

Peter's discernment of Ananias' and Sapphira's lie tells us that those who walk close to the Lord will have discernment of what others are doing. "Whiles it remained, was it not thine own?" It was theirs before they sold it, and it was theirs after they sold it, but they lied. The man of God made it clear: you did not lie to man but you lied to God. You have lied to the Holy Ghost. It reminds me of what Jesus said in John 12:43, which reads, "For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

Verse 5 of our Scripture text states, "And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost." The young men there arose, wound him up, carried him out, and then buried him. A few hours later, along came his wife. In verse 9 Peter said, ". . . behold the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out." It does not pay to play church. Do you know what they wanted? Ananias and Sapphira wanted to have their cake and eat it too, so to speak. They wanted to be perceived as generous people. They sold their

land, and they said they were going to bring every penny of the money from the sale and give it to the church.

Their situation was compounded by the fact that they lied and claimed that the money they presented to the Apostles was the entire amount, but it was not. Do not lose your focus on what is really important. Even though you will be tempted to prioritize other things through the chaos of life and the temptations of the enemy, the Truth has a balance.

A successful life is one in which you are always pointing toward God and trusting God to provide guidance for the future. Ananias and Sapphira are powerful cautionary examples, but only if you learn from their mistakes and do not repeat them will you gain the advantage. As a child of God, you cannot hold anything back from God. There is absolutely nothing that you can hide from Him. As an individual and as a part of your community, you need to embrace your Father and always look to Him for guidance. As a servant of the Savior, the worst mistake that you can make is to play church with God.

A Serious Warning

From the beginning of the Book of Genesis all the way to the Book of Revelation, the very last chapter and the very last verse, there are constant reminders that you had better not play with God. God does not play church. Not taking that revelation seriously, many people have conjured up a grandfather image of God as being a playful and loving old man who has neither the disposition nor the strength to raise His voice in anger or to punish disobedient children. That is what is wrong with our day.

Too many people look to God as One who is loving and One who never gets upset. On the contrary, God is also the God of wrath and anger. The Bible says He is angry with the wicked every day. Num-

bers 23:19 tells us that "God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent." Galatians 6:7 says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

To warn us that He is not a playing God, Ezekiel tells us in Ezekiel 18:4, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Despite reading this verse of Scripture, many people are still prone to play with God. They try to outwit Him by offering Him partial surrender and expecting to find total blessings. If you do that, you are playing church, or playing with God. In defense of my argument, I offer my Scripture text, as a case in point, because in verses 1-10 of our Scripture text, we are confronted by a husband and a wife who learned the hard way not to play church.

I do not believe that Ananias and Sapphira ever had a saving, life-changing experience with God. Nowhere in the Bible is it stated or even hinted that those two were members of the household of faith. All that we are told is they were in the number of those who came publicly to the house of worship in order to lay money from the sale of land at the Apostles' feet, but this certainly does not prove that they ever had salvation.

When we read what our Lord said in Matthew 7:21, we are reminded of the danger of playing church: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Here were people who played church. Verses 22-23 read: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." What were these people doing? They were playing church and thinking they could get by with it.

Christ commanded John to write

to the church at Sardis. He said in Revelation 3:1, "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." What a commentary on most churches today! They have a name that they live, but they are dead. They are dead initially because the people within them are dead spiritually.

The great majority of church members in America do not even know what it is to be an old-time Christian or to be made a new creature in Christ, where old things pass away and all things become new. They do not know what it is to be a real Christian because they are dead in trespasses and sins. Consequently, dead people are going to constitute a dead church. The church is not suffering or dying because of attacks from the outside. Satan would not even waste his power on most churches because they are dead from the inside. What about you? Are you alive spiritually?

No Other Name

A vital church, a living church, a church that really knows Jesus Christ and proclaims the true Gospel of Jesus Christ is a church that is always going to be under attack. A church that is alive, a church that is proclaiming the message of salvation and holiness, is going to become an issue in the community.

In Luke 6:26a Jesus said, "Woe unto you, when all men speak well of you!" The church and the world must always be at opposite poles because light and darkness have no fellowship. There is never going to be a time in history when the church and the world are going to be at the same pole. God did not predestinate a certain group to go to Heaven and a certain group to go to hell. God predestinated that His church would be conformed to the image of the Son of God. If you claim to be a part of the Church of the Living

God, you had better allow the Word of God to conform you to the image of the dear Son of God. This is the only way that you can continue to be a part of God's great church.

Biblically, there is no way under the sun that the church can court the world. If the church were to court the world, she would die. This is a warning to you who are involved in the church: be sure that you are genuine and that you are real. You may go to church but not know Jesus in a vital way. Perhaps you might have religious sensations from time to time or sanctimonious emotions, but you do not know Jesus Christ. This is the reason that you need to examine yourself. Second Corinthians 13:5 says: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

John 5:39 says, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." You can see that it is not necessarily those who wish to enter the Kingdom of God who get in. It is not necessarily those who even ask to get in the Kingdom of God who get in. It is not enough to ask or to wish to be in His kingdom of God. God has certain rules for entrance into the Kingdom of God, and the rules must be obeyed or you cannot enter the kingdom. You may want to enter, and you may go to church and get involved, but not too involved. Unless you come by the way of Jesus Christ, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God.

All your religious operations are meaningless until you come to Jesus. Acts 4:12 tells us, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is no other name than the name of Jesus Christ.

I read one time about a blind man sitting on a bridge in London. He was reading his Braille Bible aloud. As he was reading Acts 4:12, his fingers were running over it, and

he lost his place. Being oblivious to anyone around him because of his blindness, he kept running his fingers over the same phrase "none other name." A group of people had gathered close around him to watch the river go by. Some were watching this man and began to mock him. They began to laugh at him as he repeated those words "none other name."

A man standing on the edge of the crowd was not mocking, but he was listening. That man walked away from there and went home. He fell down on his knees, repented, and invited Christ into his life. He testified in a meeting about what had brought him to Jesus. It was a blind man on a bridge, stumbling over the words "none other name."

It is only through Jesus Christ, old-time repentance, and faith in His name that you can truly be saved and enter the Kingdom of God. It is not enough to join a church. It is not enough to get baptized in water. It is not enough to become religious and start doing better. If that is all you are doing, you are just playing church. If you are not being obedient to the Word of God, you are playing church.

Do You Know the Shepherd?

Lip profession is no good. There must be obedience. In the statement of the Lord as you read "Lord, Lord. . . ." you get the idea of some kind of surprise, as though they are shocked when they cannot enter in. Jesus said in Luke 6:46, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Why do you call Him Lord and do not the things that He says? Anything else is not enough. You must do the will of God and be obedient to God.

I ask you, Do you have only a form of godliness? Do you have a real experience with Jesus Christ? I read where there was an actor at a drawing room function who was asked to recite. He stood up and wanted to be gracious to his audience, so he said, "I will recite any-

thing you would like me to recite." No one suggested anything, and then an old preacher who was sitting in the back stood up and said, "I would like for you to recite the Twenty-third Psalm." The actor was a little shocked at that, but he had thrown himself open, so he had to do what the man asked him to do. He repeated the Twenty-third Psalm with complete eloquence, masterfully interpreted, and the diction was beautiful. When he was done, there was spontaneous applause throughout the entire room.

The actor, figuring to get back at the old gentlemen, said, "Now, sir, I would like to hear you recite the Twenty-third Psalm." Well, the old gentlemen had not bargained for that, but because of his love for Christ, he stood up and repeated the Twenty-third Psalm. His voice cracked and broke, and it was not very beautiful at all. The interpretation was not really that good, and when he got done, there was no applause. However, there was not a dry eye in the house; everyone was crying.

The actor, sensing his own emotion, stood up and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I reached your eyes and your ears, but he reached your hearts." He said, "The difference was this: I know the Psalm, but he knows the Shepherd." How about you? Do you know the Shepherd? Friend, until your heart has been changed, you are merely religious. If you are just going through the motions, you are playing church. God's desire is to reach your heart.

Have You Surrendered All?

Someone may ask, "Why would you spend your time on a subject like this?" Maybe you would not sell your property and hold back a part of the price and act as if you were giving everything, but there are other ways that you might hold back from God. If you are paying your tithe and not holding back your money, maybe you are holding back when it comes to consecration. One

of my favorite songs is about consecration. It says, "Since Jesus gave His life for me, Should I not give Him mine?" If you were to say from your heart the words to this song, "I'm consecrated, Lord, to Thee, I shall be wholly Thine," would you know what that means? It means that you are completely God's. The song continues:

*My life, O Lord, I give to Thee,
My talents, time, and all;
I'll serve Thee, Lord, Thine own
to be,
I'll hear Thy faintest call.*

*I care not where my Lord directs,
His purpose I'll fulfill;
I know He everyone protects
Who does His holy will.*

*Though He may call across the sea,
With Jesus I will go;
And tell the lost of love so free,
Till all His pow'r may know.*

What if Jesus were to say, "I want you to go next door and talk to your neighbor about Me"? Would you say: "Lord, he does not want to hear from me. I talked to him before, and he just made fun of me. He will get angry if I go over there and talk to him"?

I fear that many people are holding back when it comes to consecration. They say they give everything, but they are holding back on God. There are many songs that we sing. One says, "In this world I found no rest, Sorrow filled my aching breast, Till I turned to One who loved me best of all; Oh, what sacred peace I find, Since my all I have resigned! I have left all the world to follow Jesus."

Have you really left all the world? Maybe you have held back a part. Maybe you have left some of the world or a large percentage of it, but there are still some things that you have hold of. Maybe you are playing church. If you give 99 percent and withhold one hundredth, it undoes the whole transaction. Oh, you may go to church and sing beautiful songs, but are you really

consecrated? You may sing, "All to Jesus I surrender, All to him I freely give. I will ever love and trust Him In His presence daily live," but have you surrendered all?

You want everybody to think that you are consecrated. Are there things that you have not surrendered? There is a danger in playing church. Some people are prone to play with God, trying to outwit Him by offering partial surrender and expecting to find total blessings.

Playing church is a serious thing. If you are just going through a form, the Bible says in 2 Timothy 3:5, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." It is not enough to have a form of godliness. When you are in and out of church, up and down all the time, that means you are playing church. You need to be really serious about living for God.

The consequences of playing church will catch up with you. This is serious. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says, "Because sentence against an evil

work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Some people feel that they are getting by, because what happened to Ananias and Sapphira may not happen today like it happened to them. However, the end result will be the same. You will be lost in the end if you play church. I have not been around nearly as long as some other brethren, but over my years of traveling and pastoring, I have watched many people play around. Then when they get down to death's door, they find out they have played too long.

I have been there when people were trying to get saved at the last minute, and they did not have the faith to believe because they played church too long. There is a danger in playing church. It is time to really get down to business and get serious about living for God. If there was ever a time to get serious about living for God, it is right now.

(Compact Disc TR-1220E)

CHOOSE YOUR SIDE

"Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me."

Exodus 32:26

In the moral and spiritual realm, there are two contending forces: the Kingdom of God versus the forces of evil.

There can be no neutrality or straddling. You are either for or against Christ.

The Lord's side will triumph in the end.

Hebrews 6:11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will

multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to

lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.



The Anchor of the Soul

Brother Richard Talbot

The Purpose of an Anchor

I would like to focus on verse 19 of our Scripture text, which reads, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." As we look at this verse, we find that we are given hope as an anchor of the soul. This is not just any anchor or just any hope, but it is a specific hope issued by the Word of God and by the Spirit of God. This is a hope sealed by an oath, a

hope guaranteed by Heaven itself, a hope guaranteed by the very Word of God, which is both sure and stedfast.

I would like to focus on the purpose of an anchor of the soul. We know that the only thing that is sure and stedfast is Jesus Christ; He is the anchor of the soul. It is the desire and the intent of God that His creation has this wonderful fellowship that we have, not just with one another, but first with God Himself. God desires to have constant com-

munion with those who have given their lives to Him.

God wants to be involved in your life. He wants to be the most important part, the most important ingredient, and the very center of all of your earthly existence. As a true Christian, everything in your life should revolve around Jesus Christ, God, and your desire to live holy, righteously, and godly. Nothing else should really matter to you. Nothing can be of greater importance than your relationship with God.

I desire to go to Heaven. I intend to die with victory in my soul. In order to do that, I have to stay focused through all the daily tests, the trials, the troubles, the persecutions, the hardships, the disappointments, and whatever comes to me in my life. I have to patiently endure. Some people have had to endure lots of things to which I have never been subjected.

Whatever your lot in life, God expects you, by His grace, to endure it and to be victorious. He is to be the center of all conscious living. Even though all of this is true, that you are to be saved and filled with the Holy Spirit of God, you should desire nothing in this life but to please your Heavenly Father. You are still in a physical, fleshly body. You still have a human mind that is subject to thoughts and the fiery darts of the enemy of your soul. You must use the shield of faith and put on the helmet of salvation.

Beware of Drifting

In order to guard your heart, you need to take good care of your mind. The enemy can get into your mind and find a lodging place and thereby have direct access to your heart. The biggest part of the battle is in the mind. I thank God for a real anchor that is both sure and steadfast. There were times in life that I drifted and my mind began to wander. I got a little further away than I should have. Then the storm came and a trial hit me, and suddenly I felt a tug on my anchor, and that anchor was still holding. Thank God, it let me know that I had too much slack in my line and needed to tighten it up, so to speak.

I thank God for an anchor that is both sure and steadfast that will pull a vessel back to the center of where God wants it to be. There may be times when you drift a little too far from the presence of God. The way back is through earnest prayer and a desire to seek God. The more you pray, the more you earnestly seek God, the closer to Christ you will be

living. The less you pray, the less you desire God, the less you hunger after the Lord; the further away from Him you are going to go. You need to stay close to that anchor, dear one. Do not let the enemy take control of your mind.

The devil will tell you that you do not have to go out into deep sin. He may not trip you up and cause you to go back out into the world, but he can get you to wander, drift, and become careless. The Spirit of God is faithful to your soul. My mother was a faithful saint. If she saw me wandering off somewhere, she would sit me down and give me a good talking to. Sometimes she would get hold of my ear and give it a twist and say: "Son, you need to sit down and listen to me. I want to tell you some things." Sometimes that is what God has done to me. He has given me a tug on that rope that holds my anchor, saying: "Son, you have drifted a little too far. You need to come back and get where My presence is." I believe many have drifted from the reality of the real presence of God in their lives.

The vital feeling that God is in you lets you know His relationship with you is on a very personal basis. As you become more attuned to God's presence, the length of the rope on your soul's anchor becomes shorter. Your mind will then only wander a short distance before feeling that inner tug. You do not have to go far. God gets hungry for having a close relationship with you. He does not want you to drift away from Him. He always wants to draw you close to the warmth of His divine presence. Earnest prayer will bring God closer to your soul. Diligently seeking God will make Him real in your life, in your heart, and in your soul. There will be times when you need encouragement and when you will need uplifted.

Types of Anchors

In boating there are many types of anchors. There is an anchor for

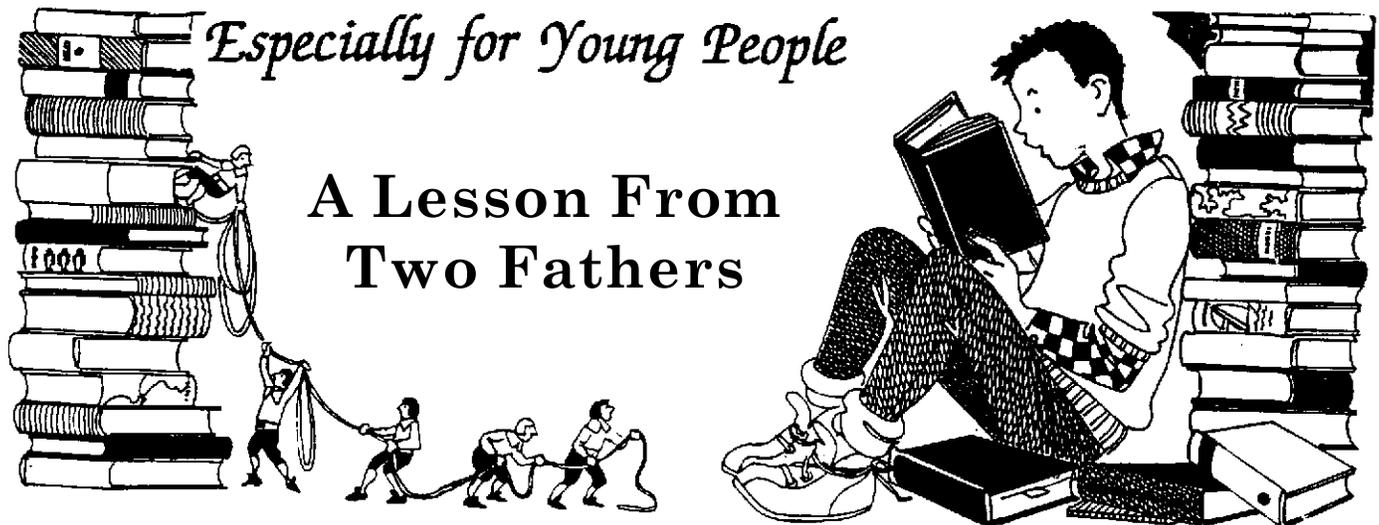
every imaginable purpose. When I began looking up information on anchors, I was shocked that there are so many types. For ships there are anchors for sandy bottoms, for gravel, for rock, and specially designed anchors for hard ground. Anchors designed for rock will not work on a sandy bottom. You need a special anchor for sandy soil.

I spoke with a carpenter and asked him what came to his mind when the word "anchor" is mentioned. He replied, "Anchor bolts." You cannot anchor a ship with anchor bolts, but you can anchor the framework of a house with anchor bolts. I spoke with a Navy man and asked him what his idea of an anchor is, and he described a huge ship anchor that has a shaft that curves up on the ends. I spoke with a mason, and his idea was also anchor bolts, but buried in concrete to secure something.

In most trades there are various sorts of anchors. Iron workers have theirs, and welders have theirs. Anchors are needed everywhere. On the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower there are two anchors, and each anchor weighs 60,000 pounds. The anchor chain is 1,082 feet long. Each chain link weighs 365 pounds. Each anchor, including the chain, weighs 735,000 pounds. It must be an awesome ship to carry two anchors of that size. The three anchors on the Titanic weighed a total of 31 tons. Anchors are an important part of survival.

Consider the foundation of the Empire State Building. It sits on pure granite bedrock, which is considered nature's sturdiest structural support. The base of the building is anchored in two square acres of solid concrete, and the foundation is 55 feet below street level. The first steel columns buried in this space are massive, and they rest on a concrete base buried in bedrock. They are 16 feet tall and weigh 44 tons. Each is required to support 5,000 tons of skyscraper. That is quite an anchor. To go high, they need to go deep.

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One of my earliest interests was my father's bookcase with all its delightful volumes. Daddy often read aloud to his family, but I looked forward to the day when I would be old enough to go to school and learn to read, so that I might better share in his pleasure in the books.

No doubt, Daddy was just as eager for that day of more complete sharing as he let me look at the pictures and illustrations in some of the books, somehow trusting my childish fingers to use the necessary care for proper handling. Of course, I was taught that certain rules went with this privilege and that I must abide by them.

One of my favorites was a book that was profusely illustrated by a then well-known artist whose drawings even a child could enjoy. I looked through this book often.

A pencil was another thing that I needed to make life complete. I needed one to make endless scribbling and to try to balance it over an ear as I had seen my daddy do. Again, my parents granted my wish and gave me a tiny stub of a pencil and the necessary rules to protect the walls and other things from my "literary" efforts.

All went well for some time, and then one day while looking at my favorite book, I was overcome by temptation and marked on several of the illustrations, and even on some of the text.

My act was immediately discovered, and the book was taken away. Daddy took the pencil from my guilty fingers and said, sadly, "Pearl is just not old enough to know how to use a pencil properly."

He tossed the poor little stub into the fire, and it was consumed before my eyes. I did not know that on a recent trip to town he had purchased a new pencil especially for me. At that very moment, it reposed in a compartment of his desk, waiting for the moment when he could present it to me, but this was certainly not the time.

Like Cain, I thought my punishment was more than I could bear, but even greater than the loss of the book and of my cherished pencil was the knowledge that I had broken my father's rules and betrayed his trust in me.

At my first opportunity, I got the book down from the shelf again and tried to erase the marks that I had made. I had no eraser but used a dampened fingertip to rub the spots. I succeeded in removing some of the marks—along with the print and even some of the paper. My mother rescued the book at this point and explained that the marks must remain just as I had made them, lest I do even greater damage.

Only a few days later, Daddy seated himself at his desk and opened it to reveal all the fascinating pigeonholes, nooks, and crevices

that so enticed me. As usual, I gravitated toward this center of interest, and he had only to speak to have me up in his lap. He asked if I had learned my lesson, and I assured him that I had. Then he gave me the new pencil that he had so desired to give me all that time. Perhaps his joy was even greater than mine, but my joy seemed complete. I had been restored to Daddy's confidence, for he had demonstrated his forgiveness by trusting me again with his books and a pencil of my very own.

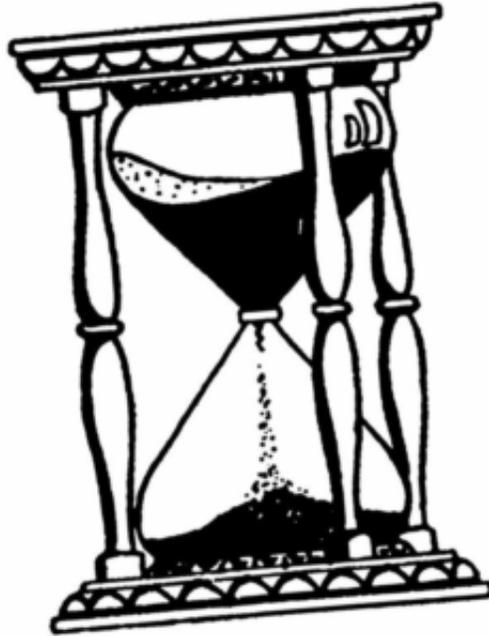
A few years ago, when it became necessary to divide the household things after the death of our parents, you may be sure that one thing I really cherished was that battered old book. Today those pages still bear the scars of my disobedience, but they also call to mind the memory of a loving and forgiving father.

What a picture, in a small way, of our loving Heavenly Father! He, too, is eager for the day when He can share the blessings of His kingdom with His children. He grants us daily previews of some of those blessings while we are not yet able to grasp the whole of them. He has provided the Unspeakable Gift for us and eagerly awaits the time when He can bestow it on our penitent hearts.

How useless it is for one to try to erase his own sins! Though some

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Time Is Moving On



Brother Walter Bergenthun

Life Is a Vapor

Throughout life we hear many sayings about time and the brevity of life. It is rather depressing to think that we are all traveling toward the graveyard. We do not know when it will be our time to die. The obituary columns list all age groups. Some die young, some in middle age, and some later. Many do not attain old age. We are allotted only so much time in this world.

Philosophers talk about time, and they all agree about one thing: compared with eternity, time on earth is short. Your lifetime can be a life of fruitfulness or a life of wasted time. Living in sin is a waste of time. Many have wasted their time on frivolous things and the vanities of this life. In high school we were compelled to read some of the writ-

ings of William Shakespeare. I thought he was very wise in some of his sayings. I believe he borrowed his wisdom from the Book of Job. Shakespeare said:

*To-morrow, and to-morrow, and
to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to
day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted
fools
The way to dusty death.
Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor
player
That struts and frets his hour upon the
stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury
Signifying nothing.*
(*Macbeth*, Act 5, Scene 5, lines 19-28.)

This brief scene from *Macbeth* describes a life of living in sin. Certainly it is not a Christian's life. The Psalmist David, in Psalm 103:15, said, "As for man, his days are as grass." Grass is a seasonal plant. We are likened to grass because we are here only for a season.

Someone once said, "Life is but a fleeting moment." Job 14:1 reads, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." I do not know of anyone who does not have some troubles, from the beginning to the end of life. Thankfully, we have a God, a Deliverer, Who helps us. He is a present help in the time of trouble. I am thankful for God and His faithfulness.

James 4:14b states, "For what is your life? It is even a vapor." He did not say it is *like* a vapor, but he said it *is* a vapor. Have you ever watched

the smoke from a fire move around and noticed that soon it is gone? Life is likened to that. It is a metaphor, or an illustration. We do not like to think about how quickly life can be over. When we are young and vigorous, we think we are going to live forever. We think that we are almost indestructible, but life is not that way. Death can happen early in life.

The Apostle Paul said in Philippians 1:21, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Life is short. A fellow named Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Life is short, but there is always time enough for courtesy." Even though life is short, we can still take time to be courteous to one another. Job said in Job 7:6, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle." Job likened it to something that is over quickly.

Most of us do not look forward to dying, but we know it is going to happen. We can look at a yearbook from twenty-five or thirty years ago and see that many of those people are no longer living. This shows that we are just temporary travelers. We are pilgrims here. We are just here for a little while, and then we will step into eternity. This is a very sobering thought. We do not like to talk about dying and funerals.

Be a Wise Steward of Your Time

Many things can take up our time. We live in a highly materialistic world. Some things are very absorbing, especially in this electronic age in which we live. Computers and other fascinating electronics can steal your time. You need to be aware that if the devil can steal your time, he can also steal your soul.

Most people do not lose out with God by simply waking up one morning and saying, "I am going to backslide." They do not think in those terms. The devil does not approach them that way. He is determined to keep them so busy that they neglect their souls.

Houses must be maintained or

they will fall apart prematurely due to neglect. Likewise, you need to maintain your salvation. In order to do that, you must take time to read your Bible, meditate, and talk to God in prayer. You can decide what you are going to do with your time. You can spend it on yourself or you can use it in living for the Lord.

Colossians 3:1 says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." The enemy would like to get you to think only about yourself and to do your own little thing. He would like you to go to sleep spiritually. Then you would become insensitive and unaware of what was going on around you.

Several years ago a dear old saint would always start the prayer service in the morning with the song, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." He was a wonderful man. I talked to him one time when he was in a nursing home, and he said, "When I got to be fifty years old, I looked back over my life, and I do not know where the time went; it went so fast." I can relate to that, can you? Time does go fast.

You need to be careful of how you spend your time, because you are a steward of your time. You need to consider how much time you spend on the basics, such as reading the Bible, praying, and attending the church services. When you get salvation, a wonderful thing happens to you. God changes your affections, and the things you once hated, you now enjoy. Most people do what they enjoy. That is the way we are made. Even a fool goes after the things that he likes to do best. A child of God enjoys salvation, but if he is not careful, he can become lukewarm, neither hot nor cold. One can become really comfortable and drift away from God.

The Program of Life

You may ask your neighbors or your friends to come to church or a revival, and they may say, "Well, I'm just too busy." I hear that a lot. People are so wrapped up in the

program of life. They get caught up in the fast lane, so to speak, and cannot seem to get out of it. Sometimes time seems to drag, and other times it seems to go very fast. Have you ever noticed that? When you are enjoying yourself, time seems to move quickly.

When I was in school, I had a teacher who used to say to the class, "Time will pass, but will you?" When he said that, I used to think that maybe I was going to fail. Time is something that you have to deal with every day. You get up in the morning at a certain time, and you have to go to school or to work at a certain time. You might have a certain time to do chores, to eat, to sleep, and so on, but do you take time for God?

Time means nothing to a baby. When a child becomes five or six years of age and begins school, he becomes more aware of time. Birthdays remind you that you are getting older. You cannot stop time or slow it down. It is a commodity. God has given each of us a time frame to prepare for eternity. One day time will be no more, and we will enter eternity. Therefore, we need to be wise stewards with our time.

Young people enter high school and feel that they are really moving up in the world, and they look forward to the next step. Progress is a part of life. Many look forward to getting their driver's license, some want to join the military service, and others want to get married; so goes the program of life.

One young fellow did not like his parents' restrictions in the home. He was not a Christian, but his parents were, and they required him to obey certain rules while he lived under their roof. He did not like to hear that he could not do this and that. He said, "When I get to be eighteen, I am moving out." He was just like the prodigal son in the Bible who wanted what belonged to him, and he decided to go out on his own. You can read what happened to him in Luke, Chapter 15. He

ended up broke, hungry, and feeding the swine.

After a while, you may want to get married. Young man, you need to get a good job before you even think about getting married. It takes money. They say two can live as cheaply as one, but that is true only if one does not eat. Some years ago, a young man wanted to date a man's daughter, so her father asked, "Do you have a job?"

He replied, "Yes, I have a job."

"How much do you make?"

He replied, "I make three dollars an hour."

The father said, "There is no way that you are going to date my daughter if you make only three dollars an hour."

It is important that you learn responsibility and get a good job. As you grow older and have worked thirty or forty years, you will look forward to the day when you can retire. You hope to have a life of luxurious ease. Perhaps you think about all the things that you could do when you have the time. However, most people do not look forward to dying. That does not really fit into their program, but it is a part of life. It is there in the future waiting for every individual.

The Importance of Time

We read about time in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, which says: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a

time of war, and a time of peace."

You may need to ask the Lord to help you to know what time it is, because you can get distracted if you are not careful. Time is very important. Time is of the essence if you work on an emergency squad or in the medical profession. Sometimes you have to move quite fast when trying to save a life. If your heart quits beating, medical doctors say that in seven minutes your brain will be dead, so time is critical. Sometimes time is very critical with the police department. They have to respond quickly to some calls or it may be too late. Other people also work with deadlines. For example, building contractors have a certain time to complete their work. We all have to face time constraints day in and day out.

How does time fit into the Christian life? This is what you need to think about. You are given so much time to get saved. You are to seek those things which are above. The Lord requires you to be available. Sometimes the Lord calls upon someone to do something, but they are unavailable. Why are they unavailable? Perhaps that person is working two jobs to pay for all the things he has bought and put on credit cards. Maybe he has to work two or three jobs to make the payments.

You may have hobbies, and there is nothing wrong with that if they do not consume all your time. You must be a wise steward of your time. You have to do certain things at certain times. For instance, you attend church at certain times. None of us knows when time will end.

Once I asked a man, "What do you do with your time on the weekend?"

He said, "I have a 'honey do' weekend."

I asked, "What is that?"

He replied, "My wife gives me a list of things that she wants done."

Certainly we must find time to perform maintenance on the car, the home, and the yard, but we must also make time for God. We have

only so many hours in a day. It seems that we are very busy. Busy schedules are not all bad, because they keep us from being idle. However, it is important that we keep the Lord in perspective at all times. We must take time for the Lord. Lots of people do not make room for the Lord in their daily schedules.

The devil works to try to see that you get so busy that you do not have time for reading the Bible, praying, and worship. That is the way he works. Then slowly, you will become weaker and weaker in your spiritual life. The Apostle Paul talked about redeeming the time in Ephesians, Chapter 5. The word *redeem* means "to buy back." That is not always easy. As a Christian, you must work continually to make time for the things of God. It just does not come automatically. You cannot rest on a bed of ease and coast into Heaven. It is an uphill battle. Sometimes you have to go against the tide, so to speak. You have to understand that life is not always easy, but you can make it if you stay on the highway of holiness.

Now Is Your Opportunity

Sometimes people talk about having time to kill. Time is like the tide: it does not wait or stop for anybody. It is relentless, whether you like it or not. We do not know how much time we have left here on earth. No one can guarantee that he is going to be here another year. Only the good Lord in Heaven knows that. Some people go to an early grave because of their lifestyle. They did not take care of themselves. They abused their bodies with alcohol, drugs, and reckless living. Since you do not really know how much time you have left, it would behoove you to use it wisely. God will require you to give an account of how you have spent your time.

Many people are like Felix, as recorded in Acts, Chapter 24. The Apostle Paul talked to him about righteousness and judgment to

come. In so many words, Felix said, "Paul, when I have a convenient time, I will call for you." Felix procrastinated, and unfortunately we do not read in the Scriptures where he had another opportunity, or a convenient time. He was given an opportunity right then, but he failed to seize it.

You can read in Matthew 23:37 that Jesus wept for the Jews in Jerusalem, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" He wept over them because they did not know the time of their visitation. Just like those Jews, many people today are given opportunities to repent, but they do not harken. Often people think they have plenty of time. I know of a person who said he has two things to accomplish before he comes back to church. He is gambling with his soul. How much time does that person really have? He may get cut off before he returns to God.

The devil wants you to put off getting saved. He wants you to be like Felix and wait for a convenient season. You need to deal with getting saved now. The only time you have for certain is now. You do not know what is going to come tomorrow or the next day. It would behoove you to use your time wisely. Once it is gone, you cannot call back one minute.

God told King Hezekiah to set his house in order, for he was going to die. He did not want to die, so he turned his face to the wall and, in essence, said, "Lord, remember how I have walked before you." God heard his cry and saw his tears. God told the Prophet Isaiah of a remedy for his disease, and God gave him fifteen more years. However, those extra fifteen years were to his demise.

Time Stealers

We all are creatures of time, and the only time we have is now. We

have many time stealers that we need to guard against. One of them is laziness. Sometimes we do not do some things that we know to do simply because we do not feel like it. Some are too lazy to read and to pray. It is not always easy to pray. There is work to praying. You have to battle tiredness and thoughts coming into your mind. You need to get up in the morning and tell the Lord: "I need You. I don't know what I'm going to face today, and I need Your help with my problems. Set a guard over the door of my mouth. The wicked are before me, so help me not to say anything that I should not say. I need wisdom." You need to depend on God. You do not have to lose out with God by neglect. Neglect is a terrible thing; it is sneaky. You may not realize what is happening to you. I used to have a rheostat on my wall. I could dim the lights a little at a time. Before I knew it, I would get used to the dark. The devil is sly, and he will work on your humanity; he will work on your tiredness. He will put thoughts in your head that you do not want there.

Computers and cell phones can be big time stealers. Television can also be a time stealer. Many people sit and watch it for hours and hours. It will steal your time when you should be reading your Bible or witnessing to a lost soul. It is a robber of souls, showing things that Christians should not feed on. That does not glorify God in the least. Some get hooked on reading fantasy novels. Then there are sports. Today we live in a sports-crazed society. That is all some people talk about. There is nothing wrong with sports, but you should not get carried away with them. Many people drive hundreds of miles just to see a game.

Some people today are mad pleasure seekers. The Bible talks about pleasure seekers. Our society is likened to the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. Today many places allow same-sex marriages. What happened to the city of Sodom and

Gomorrah? It was destroyed, and the thing that triggered it was homosexuality. That is where we get the word sodomy. Sodom was destroyed because God was provoked with them. They got to a point where they pushed God too far and His patience ran out. God is long-suffering, but there is a limit to what He will put up with.

We read in Ezekiel 16:49, "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her." A certain amount of pride is good. You know that you need to get up in the morning and comb your hair and brush your teeth. You should not want to go about looking like a bum. You should be clean, dress right, and use deodorant. There is nothing wrong with that kind of pride. However, there is also sinful pride. Some people are full of sinful pride. They think that they do not need God and that they are better than everybody else. The prophet also mentioned an "abundance of idleness." Many people have a lot of idle time, and the old saying is, "Idle hands are the devil's workshop." There is some truth to that.

Today we have many electronic gadgets and all kinds of video games that children play. They take up much of people's time, and they become completely absorbed in them. We have many things to distract us.

Put Your Priorities Where They Belong

Many things are legitimate, but the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:23, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not." The word *expedient* means "having an effectual desire; advantageous." In other words, there is no profit in them. We can get into these things, but there is no spiritual profit in them. People can waste precious time on things that the devil throws in front of them to

consume their time. If he can get your time, he can get you. This is something that you have to be careful of. It is nothing to be taken lightly. Sometimes you have to say, "Lord, help me to be a wise steward over my time."

You have a weakness, and the devil knows what it is. He knows how to appeal to whatever your interest is and get you too wrapped up in it. Before you know it, you will not read the Bible as much as you ought to. Next, you will miss church more and more because your time is being used with something else. You need to put your priorities where they ought to be, because your soul is more important than anything. You can gain the whole world and lose your soul, but what would it profit you? These are the words of Jesus which He spoke in Mark 8:36.

When I wake up in the morning, I say, "Lord, what would You have me to do today?" I have work that I can do, but I try to put the Lord first in my life. Years ago, somebody said that the formula for joy is, Jesus first, Others second, and Yourself last. Basically, sin is selfishness—living the life you want to live and disregarding what God requires. Remember, there is a law of sowing and reaping. To be spiritual, you must be a good steward over your time. This demands sacrifice. Sometimes you have to give up what you want to do.

Your affections change when you become a Christian. When God saves you, you love the things that you once hated and hate the things that you once loved. Salvation changes the way you spend your time. Salvation will change the inside man. At one time I did not care about going to church. That was not what I enjoyed. I enjoyed sinful things because I was a sinner; that was my nature. You have to have a change of nature. Religion cannot do that for you, education cannot do it for you, and your will power cannot do it for you. God has to change your heart, and He makes the

change in a wonderful way. You will not be the same person after God changes you.

You must put time into your Christian endeavor. You have to put God in your plans. In Colossians 3:1-2 we read: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." You need to watch your affections, or what you crave.

An Inexhaustible Treasure

Jesus said if you follow Him, you have to deny yourself. We read in 1 Timothy 6:11, "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

Paul said in verse 9, "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare." Money is not evil; it is the love of money that gets a person into trouble. It is full of temptation and a snare. Someone once said, "People tire of this world and its activities because the newness soon wears off." Often when people buy a new car or something else new, it is wonderful for a while, but in time that newness wears off. I have found this to be true. Children are like that with new toys. They are really excited about something at first, but after a while that new bicycle becomes tiresome to them. The newness wears off, and they want something else.

Our society is hunting for pleasures, something to thrill them, something that they think will make them happy. However, happiness is not found in materialism; true happiness comes only from God.

Knowing the will of God is an inexhaustible treasure, and it is a treasure that never wears out. Christianity does not get old. It is just as good today as it ever was. It will captivate your time and your attention if you give yourself over to it. It will satisfy your soul throughout this life and in eternity. A life of true enjoyment cannot be found outside

of Christ. "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God" (Psalm 146:5).

The Apostle Paul stood before kings and rulers, and he was permitted to speak for himself. He was brought in chains before the nobility and aristocracy. Although he was bound and in prison, he counted himself happy to be a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. The only thing of value is that you are available for the service of the Lord. If you are not available, God cannot use you. You are a volunteer in the Lord's army.

You must guard against the love of material things. The Bible tells us that godliness with contentment is great gain. That is a great blessing. Some people can be content with very little. One brother made a statement that I thought was worth quoting. He said, "When it is all said and done and we have lived and died, all that was really gained was room and board." The most that even the richest billionaires can hope for when they die is room and board. No one can take anything that he has acquired with him, not one nickle. Job said he came into the world with nothing and he would leave with nothing.

Redeem the Time

In Ephesians 5:15-16 Paul said: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." We were sold in sin, but Jesus bought us back. You cannot pay Jesus back with literal money, but you can give Him some things. You can give Him praise and glory. You can endeavor to live right and give Him your time. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of giving your time to Him. Whatever He asks you to do, you need to do it in a humble and meek way. He did so much for me, so this is the least I can do. I feel like I am deeply indebted to God no matter what I do. He paid a price that I could not afford to pay.

A song we often sing says:

*I cannot be idle, for Jesus says, "Go
And work in My harvest today;
And then at the evening, when labor
is done,
Whatever is right I will pay."*

*I cannot be idle, the fields are so white,
And numberless sheaves will be lost;
They perish for want of more reapers
to save,
How awful to think of the cost!*

*I cannot be idle, soon time will be o'er,
And reaping be ended for aye;
I'll gather the lost from the byways
of sin
To walk in the beautiful way.*

*I cannot be idle, no time for repose,
My resting shall be over there,
Where all of the faithful in heaven above
A crown of bright glory shall wear.*

Are you having trouble appropriating your time? If so, you need to ask the Lord what He would have you to do. Are you caught up with the affairs of this life so much so that you cannot seem to get unstuck? There is victory for you. If you need help, God can help you and cause you to be a good steward over the time He has given you.

(Compact Disc TR-1344)

***He stands best who
kneels most.***

[Esp. for Young Peo.—contin. from page 14]
scars may remain as reminders, our Heavenly Father forgives and forgets the repentant one and restores him to His confidence and trust. All praise to His matchless name! A special thank you for the Christian fathers in this world who help us all to better understand the love of the Heavenly Father!

Selected

[Guest Editorial—continued from p. 2]
possible. Satan's purpose is to turn as many away from the path of holiness and true righteousness as he can. Dear one, we need all the instruction and direction we can receive of the Lord. Learning about the good old paths and understanding those things that please God are more needful today than ever before. The Hebrew writer instructed us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together in Hebrews 10:25. It is through the hearing, believing, and obeying of the Word of God that brings victory to the soul. James proclaimed good admonition when he said to "be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). This is no time to relax your efforts or to become indifferent, but rather it is time to do as Paul said in Philippians 3:14 when he said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." If you expect to make it through with victory, you

must press firmly against the odds.

Camp meetings are designed with your spiritual welfare in mind. Our deep desire is to provide a spiritual atmosphere for those who come to God's Acres. We encourage all who can to be at camp meeting and have your soul fed and your spirit refreshed. Every effort and sacrifice made will surely be amply repaid.

Brother Decker extends a special invitation to each of you to join us here at God's Acres for the camp meetings this year. If you have not been here for a while, we will be eager to see you. Last but not least, if you have not begun to pray for the camp meeting as of yet, we earnestly ask you to do so. God's direction and presence is most certainly needed in every service. Please pray for God to send the messages we need to hear. Having Him in our midst as the Honored Guest is of utmost importance. He is the only hope of redemption for those who are lost.

THANK YOU, LORD

Lord, I want to come to You to simply say, "Thank You"

For Your forgiveness when I fail.

For the sheer joy of sleep when I'm tired.

For the silent strength of humility.

For the justice of Your laws when men are cruel.

For healing for sickness when I'm ill.

For the simplicity of orderliness when I face confusion.

For the assurance that You have made a place especially for me
when I feel inadequate.

For the joy of helping others when I see people in need.

For the earthly evidences of Your will.

For the reality of the experience of salvation.

For the righteous way of living that You have laid out in
Your Word.

For the comfort of the Holy Spirit that refreshes me when
life gets too difficult for me to handle.

Thank You, Lord, for all these things. But most of all, thank You for
Your abiding presence that makes every day I live a day of
thanks!

[The Anchor of the Soul—contin. from p. 13]

Luke lets us know that we must dig down deep in the rock and build upward. What good is a super structure above ground that is beautiful to see but will not last? It must sit deep in the bedrock. Paul taught about an anchor that has been cast over into the holy of holies, an anchor cast over into the presence of God, an anchor buried in Christ, both sure and steadfast. It is cast out of sight; you cannot see that anchor. It is one of those things that you can only see with the spiritual eyes. The natural eye cannot see where your spiritual anchor is anchored. How do you know it is there? There is that tug on the soul. God will not let you drift. He witnesses that you are His child because of the anchor connection that you have with Him.

A Drag Anchor

There is also what is called a "drag anchor." It does not fasten the boat securely. A drag anchor is usually used as a means of slowing down a boat. Many fishermen use a similar anchor. Old sailing vessels used an anchor of sail. They designed a sail on a framework with heavy weights on the bottom, and then they dropped it overboard. That sail would catch the water and slow down the sailing vessel. It would not stop it, but it slowed its progress.

Lots of people are tied to an anchor in life, but it is not a secure anchor. It moves with the current. It slows them down in many things so they cannot go as fast as they might. They have some ideas about what is right and what is wrong. That anchor just does not tie them to anything secure. It drags along through life, and they never have anything secure to anchor their souls to. A drag anchor has its use in some things, but it is of no value if you intend to go to Heaven. It is of no value if you desire to live a holy life. You see, a drag anchor is unstable, and you can get very far away.

One may still feel the tug.

Someone may say, "I still feel the tug; I'm still anchored." However, he does not realize how subtle, cunning, and crafty Satan is. He feels that he is still saved. Many people profess, pray, and talk about God, but their anchor has allowed them to drift away from everything they were taught and believed in. They have left the Bible standards and the life of holiness, yet they still feel anchored. It is a deceptive anchor. It lets them go wherever the current is going and wherever the wind is blowing.

The Apostle Paul said not to be blown about by every wind of doctrine or the cunning craftiness of the world around you. The elements of the world will push you away from the things of God just a little at a time so that you do not really feel that you are moving away. A drag anchor has no value if you are on your way to Heaven. You need something secure, something that will not let you move.

I thank God for the Holy Spirit that draws me to Him. As a Christian, the Holy Spirit keeps drawing me close to Him. Something in my soul cries out, "Abba Father, Abba Father." I want God in my life more than anything else.

We all know that the world around us is like a sea—a sea of treacherous waters, a sea of uncertainty, a sea of temptation, a sea filled with many dangers. Life is likened to a vessel traveling on the sea. It is subject to the winds of time. Oh, how they blow and how! Ephesians 4:14 says, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

I am concerned that too many Christians are anchored only with a drag anchor. They feel that Christ is not real. They would never deny Him, but they feel that He is not there. In the reality of their lives, the power and presence of the glory of God is lacking. I am talking about the reality of a genuine, constant

feeling of having God in their souls. Sometimes they get out into the busy work world, and they seldom think of God. They get wrapped up with everything else in life. God wants to be a part of their day.

Give More Earnest Heed

God wants to be the food in your mind. Even if you cannot get on your knees and pray a fiery prayer like you want to, He wants you to talk to Him. He wants your mind to think about Him. He wants your words to be filled with the things of God. You can think about God, dwell on the Lord, and feed upon Him, and He will nourish your soul. He can fill your mind while you are driving and while you are at work. You can think and believe and feel God in your soul.

If you are anchored with a drag anchor, your life is tossed to and fro, and you have drifted from having Christ as the center of your life. Your mind is prone to wander from the satisfaction that comes from the fulfillment of Christ to the need of other things to bring you satisfaction. You are going to seek satisfaction, because you want to be satisfied. You want a life that has meaning. If you plan to go to Heaven when you die, you need to have your satisfaction fulfilled in Jesus Christ. You need to feel that tug on your soul.

Feeling God with me and knowing that I am not far from Him is a really present help in the time of need. I am so glad that I threw away that drag anchor and got one that grips the Solid Rock. Consider the warning in Hebrews 2:1-3: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by

them that heard him."

In our Scripture text I want you to read verse 17 again: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly [Paul was writing this to express the powerful desire of God to more abundantly give assurance to the saints of God] to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." The word *immutability* means "unchangeable, or unchanging." In other words, it cannot be altered. No lawyer can revise it. This is an unchangeable covenant that God made with His people, and He assured it by His own oath upon Himself. God cannot lie.

We have an anchor both sure and steadfast cast into the presence of Almighty God. Are you one who needs to change anchors? You need an anchor that truly grips the Solid Rock. One songwriter wrote:

*In times like these you need a Savior,
In times like these you need an anchor;
Be very sure, be very sure
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid
Rock!*

*This Rock is Jesus, Yes, He's the One;
This Rock is Jesus, the only One!
Be very sure, be very sure
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid
Rock!*

Our Scripture text says in verse 18, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation." This is not just a consolation but a *strong* consolation. I like the adjective used here to describe what kind of consolation it is. It is not merely a weak feeling, but a strong one. Our Savior gives us a strong consolation. He is interested in each of us. He will take time to listen to you. He is concerned, and He desires a relationship with you more than you desire it yourself.

A Place of Refuge

Jesus gave His life on Calvary to bring about this wonderful relation-

ship that your soul can enjoy. He does not take this lightly. This is available to all who need a refuge. You can lay hold on the hope that is set before you. It is this hope that is an anchor to the soul. Psalm 146:5 reads, "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God." This hope is an anchor, and this anchor is fastened to the presence of God. I am assured of Heaven because of my hope.

A ship in the midst of a storm can drop its anchor to hold that ship steady in the waves as it rolls and bounces in the storm. Some storms are quite fierce. In Acts, Chapter 27, the Apostle Paul experienced stormy weather for fourteen days and nights without seeing daylight. The storm raged, accompanied by thunder and lightning. After being alone with God, the Apostle Paul came out on deck. I can just picture in my mind the Apostle Paul trying to get the sailors attention to quiet them down so he could talk to them. I can imagine the conversation went like this: "Be of good cheer, men. I was with God, and He told me that everything is going to be all right."

Paul believed that. He did not have any evidence of it, but he believed it as if it was already so. He told them there would not be any loss of life. God had assured him. They dropped the anchor and held steady overnight, and in the daylight they saw the answer. There was a haven there. They could not see that in the darkness of the storm, but it was there all the time. It took the light of God shining through to bring them to a place of refuge.

Dear one, you can have a refuge in God. Sometimes you will not be able to see it. There are times when you will be caught up in the storms of life, but you can be assured of this: you have a hope, an anchor that will not fail. You need to believe it, trust it, and stand on it. God cannot lie. He promises to be an anchor. You can have an anchor into the presence of God. You can hope in it because it is both sure and steadfast.

An anchor may be securely fixed in the bottom of the sea, but if its chain is not fastened to the ship, that anchor is useless. Oh, yes you can say it is hooked into something on the bottom of the sea, but if it is not wrapped around your heart, holding you to it, there is no use for that anchor to be there. You need to keep the chain of hope and faith holding to that anchor. The important thing about all of this is that the anchor must be attached to something on both ends. A soul can boast of an anchor, yet if that connection is broken or has too much slack in the chain, it will be of little use in holding the soul steady in the midst of temptations and the storms of life.

Prayer Is Essential to Spiritual Success

If your anchor chain is slack, lots of things can happen to you that you have no control over. You need to keep that chain taut by prayer. Prayer is the source that strengthens hope and faith. The more earnestly you pray, the more you get hold of God, the closer His presence will be to you. I am not talking about bedtime prayers, prayer over your food, or empty words. I am talking about prayer that comes from the heart. There will be times when you must get alone with God until it seems like Heaven comes right down to lift you, strengthen you, and encourage you. You can go forth from that place of prayer a new man because you have been with God. It is real, saint.

Real prayer does wonders for the ailing soul. You do not want to play around with a drag anchor. You need your hope anchored securely within the veil, anchored in the very presence of God. This connection is secured mostly by prayer. The less one prays, the more the soul will be prone to drift. The praying Christian will find the security and the holding power of eternal hope being held secure in the midst of the storm. You also need to consider what your anchor is fastened

to. It should not be anchored in earth, in self, or in any object or thing. It must be anchored in God.

A story tells about a man on a ship in the midst of a storm who was found hugging the anchor. A sailor walked by and asked the man what he was doing, and the man replied, "I am holding onto hope." The sailor said the only way that anchor could be of any hope to him would be to have it tossed over the side. Many folks can only bring themselves to hope in things they can touch and see. If they can see it, they hope in it.

In essence, the Apostle Paul asked, "Why do you ask for hope if you already have it?" If hope is already in your possession, you do not need to ask for it. You hope through faith for that which is within the veil, and that is in the presence of God. You can see things that no one else can see. You have eyes to see the invisible things of God. When the world is looking for a reason to believe, you can have a faith that believes in the hope set before you.

Proverbs 3:5-6 reads: "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."

The wisest man, Solomon, could never think his way to peace. His vast understanding resulted in feelings of futility rather than fulfillment. Finally, he lost his way and succumbed to the will of his wives by worshiping their idols. Although he was a wise man, his knowledge was not an anchor. His knowledge failed to tie him to God. His knowledge failed him in the midst of his temptation and his trial.

Do not think you have the wisdom to handle your own affairs. You do not have the means within yourself to make Heaven your home. Only as you are anchored in Jesus Christ can you make it to Heaven. Christ has the wisdom of God; it is not in your thoughts or feelings. Time spent in cold, unfeeling prayer leaves the soul subjected to the whims and the temptations of

the flesh. On the other hand, time spent in earnest, heartfelt prayer will result in spiritual strength and the reality of the presence of God. You need to be a praying person. Only prayer can secure the presence of God in the soul of man. Prayer brings confidence, enhances your upward view, and enables the mind to rest in the peace of God.

Prayer is essential to spiritual success. Where is your anchor? Are you anchored securely in the Rock or are you attached to a drag

anchor? You may tell yourself that you are anchored, but that is a foolish statement when you can see where you have drifted. You need to realize that you are drifting. Sometimes the only way you can tell is by looking at something stable and secure; then you can see yourself getting further and further away. Do not be fooled with a drag anchor, but be anchored in the Rock, Jesus Christ.

(Compact Disc TR-1403)

A Godly Father

God had something special in mind when he made the first father. He assigned him a special role in life. All of a father's activities are measured against that standard.

A little boy needs a father. He needs someone to teach him to be a man, to take him by the hand and lead him through the maze of life, to teach him to be strong, gentle, and loving and to be a defender of the right.

A little girl needs a father too. She needs a father to protect her, to counsel her on life's problems.

The home needs a father to serve as provider, protector, spiritual leader, and counselor. While the world seldom hears what a father says to his children, the effects of his counsel will be felt by the next generation, and the next, and the next.

The Bible has these words of instruction for fathers: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church" (Ephesians 5:25). "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

Selected

Old-Fashioned Camp Meeting

Canby, Oregon

July 6-12

FIRST SERVICE MONDAY AT 7:00 P.M.

Two Services Daily
10:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.



We Welcome Everyone

*We extend a cordial invitation
for you to come and worship
the Lord with us!*

For reservations contact:
Pastor E. David Stegmeier
103 Main St., Canby, OR 97013
Telephone (503) 266-9297

**(Please make reservations
in advance, if possible)**



The Value of Our Light

Some years ago, in the state of Kansas, a blinding snowstorm was raging. The stinging winds were silently but furiously piling high the snow drifts, making the wide prairie a stretch of valleys and hills.

As the twilight grew into darkness, the blizzard steadily increased its forces until it was impossible for a wayfarer to keep a certain course. In the midst of this cold, bleak scene was a lonely little one-roomed house which had been dug out of the ground, and so was called a dugout. It was much like our outdoor cellars, the roof being about three feet from the surface of the earth. The small window at the back of the room was its only source of light. On this night a bright fire was glowing in the little stove, which sufficiently heated the small room, and in comparison with its cheerless surroundings, this little dugout bore an aspect of coziness and comfort.

A young man, George by name, was the sole occupant of this house. That very morning he had come from a town eight miles distant to "prove up" the claim on which it was located. Fortunately, he had furnished himself with provisions enough to keep him supplied for several days.

As this storm had been predicted, George busied himself during the early part of the day by carrying water, and by laying in fuel and such other provisions as he would need while shut in for perhaps two or three days. This done, he next stopped up the cracks and crevices which admitted the snow. This was no easy task, for the fine, whirling flakes would insist upon entering through some opening.

Early in the afternoon a few snowflakes told of the approaching storm, and ere long the blizzard had begun in earnest. By this time George had succeeded in making

himself very comfortable, and with a feeling of security, he thankfully settled himself in his place of shelter.

Late in the evening George made ready to go to bed. He went to the window, where the candle was shedding its light out across the snow, and was in the act of putting it out when a low, distressed cry met his ears. With anxious interest he paused and peered out into the night, endeavoring to determine the source of the sound; but in vain. What could it be! Perhaps it was the call of a young wolf whose home was on the prairie and whose howl he had often heard during the day, but no. As he intently listened, the stillness was again broken by the same cry, which George now recognized to be the voice of a human being. Guided by George's little light, the wanderer had at last found his way to his only hope of shelter. Realizing the danger and suffering of one who was out on such a night, George immediately answered the stranger and welcomed him into the humble but much appreciated abode.

The poor man was very numb and fatigued from the blinding, whirling snow. After putting his horse in a small shed standing near, George at once set to work making the stranger warm and comfortable, while the latter told him an interesting story. He said that he, with his faithful horse, had endeavored to follow an old trail, but that as the storm became more blinding, he had lost his way. He also told how his hopes for safety had been blighted just a while before. He had seen a light ahead of him, and with joy was working his way toward it as quickly as possible when, to his dismay, just as he came within calling distance, it suddenly went out, leaving him in a most fearful plight. How-

ever, he stumbled on, and through the mercy of Providence, finally noticed the light in George's window, which had been the means of saving him from a terrible death.

My dear young friends, we can learn a valuable lesson from this incident. We who are in the fold of the Good Shepherd, safely sheltered from the cold, sinful world, are lights to those who are still wandering outside. Our light may be small, yea, even as small as a candle; but if we diligently keep our lamp trimmed and brightly burning, God will permit us to be the means of leading some lost one into the fold of Christ.

Under discouragement and temptation, we are liable to neglect the precious light which has been committed to us. The enemy suggests to us that it matters very little, for we are so unnoticed that we will not be missed. But think of that small light out on the wide, dismal prairie, seen only by the one lost man and of the keen disappointment and bitter despair he experienced when it faded from his view. Our light may influence only one soul, but is not that one worth more to Christ than this whole world, and should it not be worth more than the world to us?

Perhaps those whom we least suspect (schoolmate, brothers, or sisters), are watching our lives with all confidence. Our faithfulness in keeping our lights shining brightly will prove to be of untold value, not only to ourselves but also to those who are depending upon us.

Remember, the world is greatly in need of people, especially young people, who are lights to bring souls to Christ. Can God depend upon you?

Selected

Camp Meeting

July 15 - 19

*The Ninth Street Church of God of New Castle, Indiana,
invites you to attend an old-fashioned Camp Meeting at
Central Friends' Campground*

5601 E County Road 650 S, Muncie, Indiana 47302

Two services daily: Thurs.-Sat. 9:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m. & Sun. 9:00 a.m.

(The first service begins Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m.)

Three meals served daily, including continental breakfast.
Snack stand will be open after the evening services.

Air-conditioned dining hall. Age appropriate
activities during non-service times.

Limited Space Availability

Campers & Tents are welcome.
Please do not forget to bring your own bedding & towels.

We welcome everyone!

For reservations contact: Sister Michelle Gingerich @ 765-808-8705

**For further information contact:
Pastor Allen Polston
2020 Ralph Street, New Castle, Indiana 47362
Telephone: 765-521-8284**

Spring Camp Meeting
is right around the corner
June 21-28

*We welcome you to attend our
old-fashioned camp meeting at
God's Acres, Newark, Ohio*

Three Services Daily: 10:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
(The afternoon services will be teaching services.)

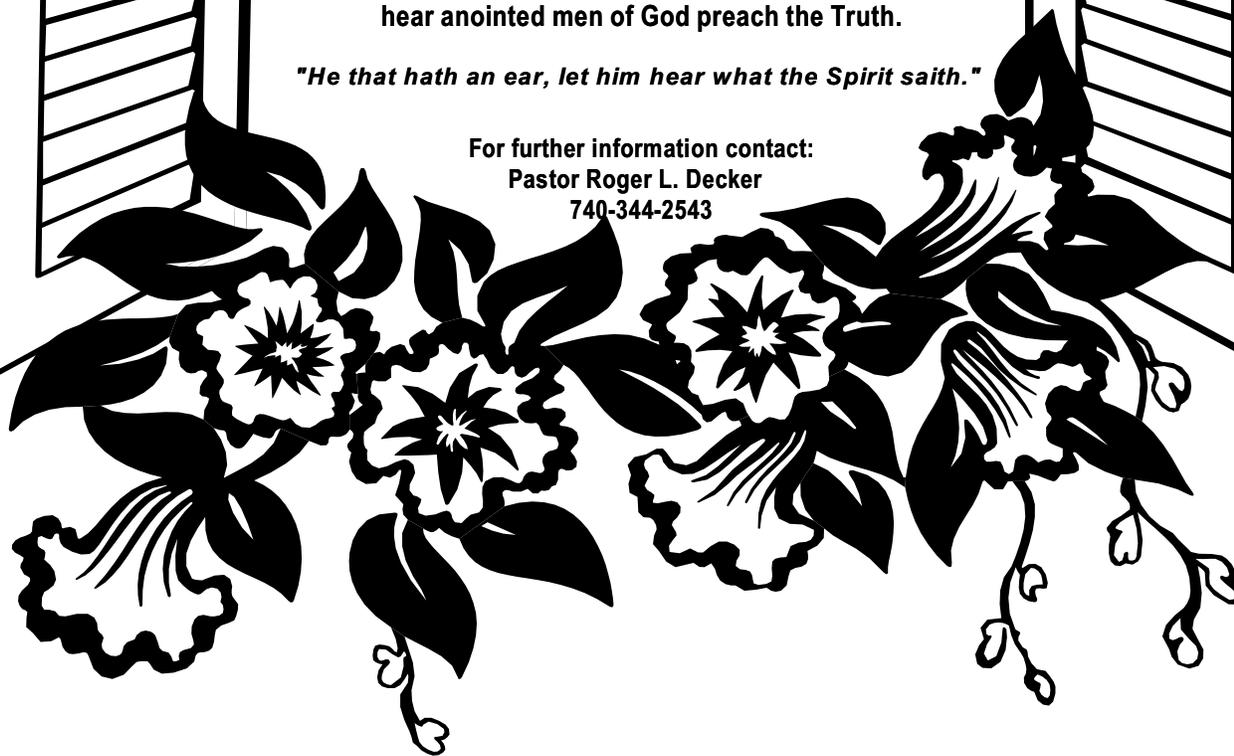
We have special services for the children,
youth services, morning prayer services,
inspirational singing, Holy Ghost preaching,
divine healing, and fellowship with the saints.

The saints of God prepare hot, delicious meals and
freshly baked desserts in a large, air-conditioned
dining hall. Meals are reasonably priced.
Snack stand will be open after the evening services.
Rooms, dormitories, book store, and so much more.

We invite you to bring your Bible and come to
hear anointed men of God preach the Truth.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith."

For further information contact:
Pastor Roger L. Decker
740-344-2543



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