

The Gospel Trumpeter

JUSTIFICATION

UNITY & TRUTH

SANCTIFICATION

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

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

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 45 March 2015 No. 3



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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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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Winter 2014 Camp Meeting Report

*"... though our outward man perish, yet the inward
man is renewed day by day."*

2 Corinthians 4:16

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind."

Ephesians 4:23

*"And put on the new man, which is renewed in
knowledge after the image of him that created him."*

Colossians 3:10

A SPIRITUAL RENEWING

What a tremendous benefit the Winter Camp Meeting brought to the saints at God's Acres in December! Our spiritual man was surely renewed and enriched as we feasted on the precious messages delivered from God's Word by the brethren. Once again, we were able to sit in a heavenly place as God's presence filled the atmosphere. The meeting was only four days long, but it was well worth the effort each one put forth to be in attendance.

As our world grows more evil, these special times of renewing are becoming more important and needed for our spiritual well being. Thank the Lord for the opportunity to gather in and have our spiritual minds challenged and encouraged in fighting the good fight of faith. We must always be reminded that it is the "old paths" that God wants us to seek and walk in. It is through the preaching of God's Word that we gain knowledge and instruction on how to be successful in this Christian race that we are running.

Pastor Roger Decker brought the opening sermon entitled "No Room in the Inn." He gave us a picture of how multitudes fail to make room for Jesus in their life,

just as the Jews did when He was born. Unfortunately, too many other things are more important to people than having Christ in their lives. Brother Tim Wilson from Alabama was the evening evangelist for the winter meeting. His sermons were outstanding as he challenged our hearts with inspiring instructions. His first sermon was, "A Warning of the Deceitfulness of Sin." He then warned about "The Terrible Danger of Drifting." His final message was on the subject, "The Power of Choice." Brother Richard Talbot brought a beautiful sermon Monday morning entitled "The Power of Forgiveness." Tuesday morning Brother Allen Polston preached on the subject of "Two Immutable Things." Brother Michael Wilks challenged our hearts with a message entitled "Superficial or Sacrificial."

During each afternoon service, Brother David Stegmeier taught on the subject of "Discerning the Will of God." There were also special sessions provided for the children each afternoon in Bible School. They enjoyed learning about Jesus and His ways, as well as having time to

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John 7:16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be

of God, or whether I speak of myself.

Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The True Israel



Brother Roger L. Decker

A Look at Israel of Old

The doctrines are what amplify the church. I want to talk to you about the true Israel. We will take a look at the nature of Israel by the Word of God, especially today. There is a lot of fighting going on in the Middle East and confusion about the literal nation of Israel. Palestine and Israel have been engaged in battles for years, with neither side giving in. Not long ago, I read that they had a seven-hour humanitarian truce. While they had a truce, a missile flew into somebody's yard; so it is not really true peace. A constant battle is going on.

Because of the false impression that has come across the pulpits of our land, there are people who feel that when ones are engaged in

combat with Israel, they are actually in a battle with God. Jeremiah 3:15 says, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." It is one thing to have knowledge and another thing to understand the knowledge. In 1 Timothy 2:4 Paul wrote to Timothy, saying (he said earlier in the chapter that prayer should be made for all men), "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

First, we want to take a look at Israel of old. When was there first an Israel in the Bible? Where is the first place you read the word *Israel*? We see the word first used in Genesis 32:28, which states, "And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast

thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Most Bible students know the story of how Jacob wrestled with the angel, or the Scripture says a man, and prevailed against him. His name was changed from Jacob to Israel, and from that time on, Jacob himself was a changed man. Jacob had twelve sons, and they were called the sons of Israel. The names of those twelve sons became the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

To each one of the sons, Jacob gave a name that meant something. Each name carried with it a blessing. For example, Judah was as a lion, which meant "praise." Out of the lineage of the tribe of Judah came Jesus Christ. Benjamin meant "a wolf," which meant the son of the right hand. Out of that tribe came

the Apostle Paul. Then there was the tribe of Levi, which was a symbol of blessing, which meant "attachment." It was out of the tribe of Levi that all the priesthood was taken in the Old Testament. The reason that God chose this tribe for the priesthood was that the tribe of Levi was the only tribe that stood up with Moses during the episode with the golden calf.

You can read in Exodus 32:25-29: "And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies:) Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.

"And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves to day to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day."

Of the twelve sons, only two were born to Rachel, and those two were Joseph and Benjamin. It is true that Israel of old was God's people. Throughout the Old Testament, all you read about is Israel of old. Israel was made up of Old Testament Jews. They were directed by ordinances, the Law, and God's chosen leaders and the prophets.

Solomon's Downfall

During Solomon's day, we find that idolatry entered into Solomon's life. It got into the heart of Solomon, but Solomon knew better. Solomon committed a terrible sin against God, and when he committed that sin, it caused severe division. First

Kings 11:1-13 reads: "But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites [every one of these tribes of people were enemies to God's people], Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods; Solomon clave unto these in love. [That is the reason it pays for the Christian to marry in the Lord. When you marry in the Lord, at least you have something in common, and that is serving God. If you marry outside the Lord, you will bring a battle into your home. It may take years, but you will reap that decision.] And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.

"For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab [look where he built it], in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

"And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. Wherefore the LORD said

unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen."

It says that the Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the Lord God of Israel. God had appeared to him twice to get him to turn from idolatry, but Solomon did not. Therefore, God was angry with Solomon. Sin is sin no matter who commits it. God was displeased with sin in Solomon's life, more so than He would be with the vilest of all sinners. Solomon was very wise, and he knew better. His understanding showed him the vanity as well as the wickedness of idolatry. Although God appeared to him twice, it was to no avail.

This was not a secret sin between God and Solomon, but rather it was a reproach for all in the kingdom to see. The Ammonites, the Zidonians, and the Hittites were not as responsible as Solomon was. They did not know the true God, but Solomon was well acquainted with God.

A Divided Kingdom

God had appeared to Solomon in the dedication of the temple. You can read the account in 2 Chronicles 7:12-15, where it says: "And the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray

[and that is still the way to get back to God], and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place."

God warned Solomon about turning away from the true and living God. If you look at the first verse of Chapter 7, you will see that when Solomon had ended his prayer, the fire came down from heaven. God was pleased, and He consumed the sacrifices and the burnt offering. The Scripture says the glory of the Lord filled the house. That was a good time for the people of Israel. Today sometimes the glory of the Lord fills the house of God, maybe through a song or the preaching. When the glory of the Lord fills the house, that is really a good time in serving God.

Again, God was pleased with Solomon at this time, so fire came down when he ended his prayer. Solomon knew what it was to feel the presence of God, and he also knew that if he went into idolatry and worshiped strange gods that God would become angry. God did become angry with Solomon, and He did just what He told Solomon He would do. He did not divide the kingdom while Solomon was alive, but He did rend it from Solomon's son, just as the prophesy said. The kingdom was split. The northern kingdom was ruled by Jeroboam, and the southern kingdom was ruled by Rehoboam. The northern kingdom was known as Israel, and the southern kingdom was known as Judah.

The northern kingdom lasted about two hundred years, and then they were overthrown and taken captive by the Syrians. The southern kingdom lasted about three hundred years and was taken captive. You can read of it in Daniel, the first chapter. The Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar captured them. A remnant from the southern kingdom was allowed to return to

Jerusalem and rebuild in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, when Babylon was overthrown by the Persians under Cyrus the Great.

The Outgrowth of Division

I explained all of that Old Testament history to bring you up to the New Testament. At the time of Jesus Christ, the kingdom was still divided. There were the Samaritans, the Gentiles, and the Orthodox Jews, who claimed to be of the pure lineage of Judah. A Samaritan was considered to be a half-breed. There were offshoots of this division. Once division starts, it is just like a snowball rolling down a mountain: it just picks up more and more. The next thing you know, division will spring up here and there.

God is against division; that is a sinful condition. They were all offshoots of these kingdoms, the Samaritans and the Jews. There were the Sadducees, the Pharisee, and Essenes, and yet smaller groups, such as the Herodians, the Galileans, and Therapeutes. How was God going to bring together these different groups when they would not have anything to do with one another? They certainly could not have sat down at a table and talked things out. They would not have anything to do with one another.

The woman at the well was shocked when Jesus dealt with her, because she was a Samaritan. The hatred was so severe between the groups that to talk to the leaders was out of the question. Every one of them was under the name of religion, and every one of them claimed to be God's people. The Pharisees and the Sadducees, even though they could not stand each other, banded together for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. After the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, they went their separate ways.

Jesus had a plan. First Corinthians 1:19-29 says: "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the under-

standing of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."

Romans 11:33 reads, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" There was no way for God to get ones together until there was first a sacrifice for sin. No doubt, some of the same Jews who stood at Pilate's judgment hall and hollered, "Crucify! Crucify!" were present on the Day of Pentecost. How was God going to get ones together? He was not going to make several different groups, but rather He was going to make one body.

A New Israel

Ephesians 2:1,9-15 states: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. . . . Not of works, lest any man should boast.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope [that would be a terrible place to be], and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace."

The only way God could bring these groups together was through a change of heart, and that is the same way yet today. There has to be a change of heart. I know it is hard to swallow, to think that ones, even ministers, could get out of the will of God and into the flesh, but they did in the days of Jesus, and they did at Corinth. Why could it not happen today? We all subject to human pressures and human thoughts. Now, certainly we do not want to do that, but it can happen. In Jesus' day there had to be a heart change before men and women could get along together in one body.

Amos 3:3 says, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" He was not talking about being agreed with one another. He was talking about agreeing with God. One cannot walk with God if he does not agree with Him. We have different degrees of knowledge and understanding. We may not agree on some subjects, but as long as we both agree with God, we can still have fellowship with one another as long as we both are walking in the

light.

God was going to make a new Israel. God's people are the spiritual Israel. If ones could see that, they would see there is no need of the tribulation, no need of a millennium, no need of a rapture, and no need of having an antichrist. Every one of them are positioned around Israel of old. You need to keep that in your mind. Every time you read about a rapture, a millennium, or a tribulation, you will always find old Israel in there; but God is a God of the new Israel. All those things were centered on Israel of old.

Who is Israel today? When you hear of Palestine doing things and you see protests going on against the Jews, do not let your mind wonder off, thinking that they are God's people. God's people are the church; that is the Israel of today. I am going to prove it by the Word of God.

Romans 9:1-6 says: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law [he was talking about his brethren in the flesh, the Israelites under the old covenant], and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

"Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." Why are not all Israel which are of Israel? Because not all Israel accepted Jesus Christ. What the writer was referring to was the same condition that can get in congregations. Not all the people in a congregation are Church of God. They may attend a Church of God congregation, and they may worship with a Church of God congregation, but not all are Church of God. Not all Israel is of

Israel. The difference is, not all people accept Jesus Christ.

Second Corinthians 3:12-18 says: "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: [Why? Well, he will tell you.] for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The Jews' Blindness

What caused the Jews' minds to be blinded? Their rejection of Jesus Christ blinded their minds. When they read the Old Testament, they just read it as a dead letter. The Old Testament tells you all about Jesus Christ. When was the veil to be lifted? Again, look at what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:16: "Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." That is just the way people look in the Word today. They do not understand the Scriptures, but when they turn to Christ, the Scriptures light up to them. They actually become a part of them.

The Apostle said in Romans 11:16-27, speaking to the Gentiles: "For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree [remember, he was talking about the Jews and the Gentiles], wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of

the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

"Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: [Many people stop right there, but you cannot take a verse out of context. You need to read the whole text.] as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

The New Testament Jew

All Israel shall be saved. When are they going to be saved? They will be saved when the Deliverer comes out of Zion. Under the new covenant, He shall take away their sins. Under the new covenant, we no longer have literal Israel but spiritual Israel. Today Israel represents the Kingdom of God, and you have to turn to Jesus Christ to be considered an Israelite. What is a Gentile?

Anyone but an Israelite.

You have to be saved to be a New Testament Jew. Is that in the Bible? Romans 2:28-29 reads: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly [with the flowing robes and long prayers]; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Galatians 6:15-16 states: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, [Well, what does?] but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, [What rule was he talking about? He was speaking of the new creature.] peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." All those who are new creatures are the Israel of God. You cannot find anywhere in the Bible that God has anything for the literal Jew in the future. You cannot find it unless you take Scriptures out of context. If God were to have something special for the literal Jew, that would make Him a respecter of persons. The literal Jew has to enter the Kingdom of God the same way that you do.

A man came to Jesus named Nicodemus. The Bible says he was a ruler of the Jews. Nicodemus became a member of the Sanhedrin, and he was interested in the teachings of Jesus. The Scriptures say he came to Jesus by night, for whatever reason; we do not know for sure. Nicodemus had to seek Jesus the same way anyone gains access to the Kingdom of God: you must be born again. That is not possible if you do not believe in the Messiah. Jesus Christ was rejected by the Jewish nation as a whole in His First Advent, but that did not stop God's plan.

God still has a new Israel, those who have had the veil of blindness lifted because they turned to Jesus Christ. God does not have two or three different ways to get Israel to turn. The way to the kingdom is the

same way that is laid out for us in the Word of God. Now, Israel had an advantage that many others did not have.

When Jesus came, Israel of old had the Scriptures, which they studied. It was written that the Messiah would come. Israel had advantage over the rest of the world concerning the coming of Jesus Christ. Romans 3:1-2 says: "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles [or the commandments or the Word] of God."

Acts 3:22-26 tells us: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."

Israel of old has no more right to the Kingdom of God than the vilest of sinners. God has a new Israel today: it is those who have been born of the Spirit of God. True Israel is spiritual Israel. God is not going to perform some great work out in the future for those who are unbelievers anymore than He did for you and me when we were in unbelief. When you come to Jesus Christ, you must have godly sorrow for your sins. You must repent and forsake your sins. God is no more interested in the fighting going on over in Palestine and in Israel than He is in the fighting going on in the city of Chicago. There is no special favor for Israel of old, because the literal

Jew is no longer the Israel of God.

Literal Israel will never be God's people again. God now has a spiritual Israel. If you are saved, you belong to the nation of Israel, God's people. If you are not sorry for your sins, then you are going to have to stay with old Israel. When you stay with them, you are going to have to take all the consequences attached to being lost. A lot of those consequences do not show up right away.

That is the deception of sin. Reaping does not always happen immediately. It can go on for years. There were times in the Word of God when God moved quickly on the transgressor, but there were other places where you can read that He did not. Nevertheless, even though He did not move quickly, He did move.

If you need help in your soul, the Lord stands ready to fulfill that

need. If there is something in your life that ought not to be, do not keep carrying that around with you, because the longer you carry it around, you are going to start picking up other baggage. The next thing you know, your burdens are going to get so heavy that you can hardly go. Won't you bring your burdens to Jesus Christ?

(Compact Disc TR-1389)

Fighting the Good Fight of Faith

Paul said, "Fight the good fight of faith." This world is a battleground of spiritual forces. If we are spiritual beings, it is impossible that we should hold ourselves neutral and stand apart from those forces that are in conflict. We must stand on one side or the other of the battle array. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me" (Matthew 12:30). Since we must be in the conflict whether we will to be or not, it behooves us to be on the right side. When we know that we are on the right side, then the thing of greatest importance to us is the method of our warfare. Since we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities and powers of evil, it is not strange that our weapons should be "not carnal" weapons, which are effective against material foes, but those spiritual weapons that are "mighty through God."

One great outstanding fact in this battle of life is that it is necessarily a battle of faith. As I observe some people's methods of trying to fight this Christian warfare, it seems to me that they are rather fighting the fight of unbelief, or of doubts.

Instead of being confident with the confidence that true faith gives, they are all the time fearful. They are never certain that they are going to win. They are never certain that their methods are going to prevail. They are always trembling and uncertain. When they do gain a victory, it seems more like a piece of good fortune than the result of their fighting. When they see a conflict coming, they shrink from it and look for some way to evade it. They are filled with fear of the outcome. Sometimes they fight in desperation and win; and when they see that they have won, they are surprised. They were almost sure that they would lose the battle; they were almost certain of defeat, but in some way they won. That victory, however, does not give them much courage to meet the next conflict. They meet it with the same fearfulness, with the same unbelief, with the same doubt. There is not the joyful note of victory in their song. They do not face the future with confident expectation of winning. They are continually harassed with their doubts; they are constantly troubled

with forebodings. It is better to fight thus than not to fight at all, but there is a better way than this to fight.

Faith is the mightiest of all weapons. When our spirits are armed with faith, we may go confidently into any battle. We may have expectation of winning. We may know before we fight that victory is ours. We may face our adversary with calm confidence and with a consciousness of an indwelling power that is greater than his power. First John 4:4 says, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." If our faith claims that to be so, then God will make it so to us.

We must have faith in God. He is our leader. The army that does not have confidence in the ability and courage of its leader is half defeated before it goes into battle. Most of us, I think have confidence in God's ability as a leader and in His power and wisdom, and believe that He is able to overcome our foes. It is not His ability that we doubt. The only question that confronts us is, "Will He use that power to conquer our enemies?" We see that He has made

[continued on page 26]

Acts 7:20 In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

21 And when he was cast out,

Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

The Heart of Man



Brother Mike Wilks

The Gospel Is Quick and Powerful

The heart is the seat of your emotions and affections, and it is what motivates you. We have heard the expression, "Words are cheap." The motives of the heart are what drive you. As I was thinking about the human body and the complexity of it, I thought of Psalm 139:14, which reads, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works."

Approximately 15 percent of the economy of the United States is healthcare. Why is that? I believe it is because people want to feel good. No one wants to go around feeling sick and afflicted, so we have a huge healthcare industry. What if the

Church of God had 15 percent of this country? Think about what could be done to further the Kingdom of God. We would have to write a second Book of Acts on the works of the church because the efforts would cause a revival outbreak such as we have never seen. That is the reason we must continue to do what we are doing. Just a little service is all that He asks of us. Jesus died for us. Oh, what a Savior!

An enormous amount of money is spent on sick and dying bodies. Why? People do not like to suffer. When people suffer, they will do almost anything to find relief. If pain will move a nation to spend 15 percent of its economy, what should the threat of eternal hell do? We know that hell is a reality for the

unbeliever. What are you doing about it? If people do not want to suffer in this world, what about eternity?

I want to influence my unsaved family to enter the Kingdom of God. I want them to enjoy the depths and the riches of Christ for all eternity. I am marching toward that goal, and what a goal it is!

Just as a precise surgeon can unlock the secrets of the physical heart, the Bible says in Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." If you get under the Gospel and you are not in

the right condition with God, the Gospel will hurt. It will not feel very good. The Church of God does not speak smooth things to the people; we preach the Truth. The Truth is what sets you free.

Sin is bondage. I do not miss living in sin. That life was horrible, and I was bound. I can remember standing through altar calls. I wanted to move to the altar, but self would stand against me. Sin had me bound. I am so thankful that now at almost every altar call, I am thinking, "Thank You, God, for the freedom to walk to the altar and pray when I need help." That is a privilege! This world does not have that privilege, because sin has control over people. I am thankful for freedom in Christ Jesus.

God Wants Your Whole Heart

Man knows about the physical heart, but what about the spiritual heart? In Genesis 1:27 we read, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." We are created in the image of God; that is a miracle. It is something that is special. We are the apex of His creation, and that is the reason He is concerned about each of us. He does not care so much about the extinction of an animal, because all of them are going to be extinct some day. The soul of man is what He is concerned about. God needs His children to work for Him.

How big is God? First Kings 8:27 says, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" That is the reason God never liked to dwell in a temple. He needed something bigger than that. No man and no structure can contain God.

God wants your whole heart. He made every one of us, and He wants to change us completely. Friend, your heart is what He wants. He does not care about some building. He had the old temple and all the rites. However, those things were a

shadow of things to come. God will not dwell in an unclean vessel.

Husband, when your wife gets hold of the household, she will begin to change things. I think something would look good in one place, but my wife thinks it would look better somewhere else. I can tell by the way she looks at me when she does not like my idea. When God gets into your heart, He will change it. Some things have to go because He wants it a certain way. He is God, and He is the final authority. God likes the heart a certain way so that He can work and develop it.

I was thinking of an old stony heart. How would you like to go home to a house with furniture made of stone? Would you like to sleep on a stone bed? God has to change the stony heart because He cannot work with it. Therefore, He has to give you a new heart, a heart of flesh.

Ezekiel 11:19-20 states: "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." God wants to customize your heart to His liking.

The Need of Being Born Again

Once when I attended a county fair, I stopped at a religious tent. I was not there long when a spiritual scuffle broke out. I simply asked a man, "Do you believe in holiness?" The devil does not like holiness, and neither does false religion. That man's heart was hard, and he became angry. He could not believe that I do not sin. However, if we could not live above sin, what would have been the point of Christ dying for our sins? If we were to live as the world does, then all we would be doing is making a religious profession. The world is sick and tired of hearing people say, "I

am a Christian" while living as the world lives. God called us to be different, to be a separate people.

God wants to customize your heart. If you are unregenerate, or not born again, then reading, praying, and going to church will be a struggle. You need a new heart. When God saved me, He gave me a new heart and new desires. He gave me a desire for righteousness. That is the point of being born again. We must have His righteousness, not ours.

People living in their own righteousness think they are doing good works, but they really do not love the Truth. There are many false religions out in the world, and some of them use the Bible. They are deceiving people because they twist the Scriptures. Someone can preach and give people 80 percent of the Truth, and people will be influenced because they read part of it from the Bible. They think: "Wow! He must be telling the truth because there is some Scripture."

God wants a workable heart, one that He can customize. A few years ago, I had no desire to be in church. I was only interested in watching football. Little did I know that I was going to meet Jesus a few days down the road. You do not know when Jesus is going to knock on your heart's door. Salvation was the furthest thing from my mind. As I was sitting and watching a football game, little did I know that my life was about to change dramatically. That is the reason you have to keep pressing. You have no idea what God is working. Sinner friend, every chance God gets, He is going to bring to your remembrance how you are living. He uses these things to work on you.

Spend Time With God

Child of God, when you get down on your knees and begin to call on God for help, He has a hard time refusing you. Why would He want to refuse you? You have given your life for His cause. He wants to

bless you and use you in the Kingdom of God. If you need something, you can go boldly to the throne of grace. God is waiting for you. You can step closer to Him with a healthy desire to know Him.

If you spend more time combing your hair and brushing your teeth than you do with God, it is going to be evident to all. You are not going to be a powerhouse for God. You have to spend time with God to be holy. If you do not brush your teeth or comb your hair, it is quickly going to be evident to all. Likewise, the same is true if you fail to spend time with God. If you let down on praying and reading His Word, it is going to become evident to your friends, to your pastor, and to all around you that for some reason you really do not have a love for God as you once did. This is the reason you have to continue to strive for the things of God. You must make time for the Living God.

Young person, you need to stay with serving God. There is nothing out in the world. The devil is a liar. If I could uncap hell right now, you would think differently about the world. If not for the mercy of God, I could be in hell right now, crying, weeping, and damned forever with no escape.

In almost every case, the devil makes you think you will only sin for a while. That is one of the devil's favorite ploys. Sinning for a while equals being lost. The devil will lie to you, but I do not see too many people leaving sin and coming back to God in hordes, because sin has a power to it. Sin has a taste that the flesh really loves.

Life is short. I do not have much time to get things done for God. None of us do. We do not know our appointed time. Therefore, we have to labor as never before, because Jesus could split the clouds any day. We do not know when He will come. You should not sit around until you think you are at death's door to make your calling and election sure. I cannot find anywhere in my Bible where it says, "If you really

do not want to serve Me, wait until you are on your deathbed and have a preacher come and pray for you; then you can enter the kingdom." There is a parable (Matthew 20:1-16, the parable of the laborers) about people standing idle in the marketplace. Do not stand idle!

I respect young men who come to the altar and pray. That is awesome! You are going to receive blessings that I did not have. Why? When I was that age, I was stiff-necked and stubborn, and my heart was hard. Do not be that way. Let God work with you. It will save you from much heartache and misery out in the world. Many people are lost. All they know to do is work and try to buy lots of things for the house, but at the end of the day, those things do not last. They get old, just like everything else does, everything but the riches of Christ.

The Baddest Man on the Planet

Every heart is like a kingdom, and every kingdom has a throne. Isaiah 66:1 says, "Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." We were made in the image of God, and in every heart there is a throne. Self, the devil, and the Lord would like to sit on that throne. One of those three is sitting on that throne now.

Did you ever play King of the Hill when you were young? Someone takes the top of the hill, and others try to push him off, and it is a battle. Every day when the Christian wakes up, in essence, this is what is happening. Self rises up. He is always awake. When you get up Sunday morning, he is there to face you. He might say: "This bed surely does feel good! Ah, don't worry about Sunday school; just get there in time for the message." The Christian does not do that. You are not going to get to Heaven lying in bed when you should be in the house of God. It takes constant work in the things of God.

Often people talk about "the

baddest man on the planet." This was one of the nicknames given to Mike Tyson, a former professional heavyweight boxer, but in reality the baddest man on the planet is this old flesh. I may never meet someone like Mike Tyson, but do you know who I have to meet every day? I meet this old flesh. He is always warring against my spirit. When it comes to reading the Word of God, the flesh says, "Wouldn't you rather do something else?" This is where I have to stand against the flesh. Self was so tough; he reigned as champion until Christ came on the scene. Christ, single-handedly, without sin, conquered and gave me the power to reign over the flesh and the devil. I am so thankful for that.

Thousands of men who lived before us looked ahead to our day when man could have power over sin. They wanted it. They desired to know what God's plan was going to be, but they never had the power on the inside as we have today. We need to be so thankful that we can serve God and have a conscience void of offense; that is a blessing. There are people out in the world whose consciences are gnawing at them. I know because when I was living in sin, sinful things troubled my mind. If you are living in sin, the same thing is happening to you. No doubt, if you are saved, you still remember those things even though God has forgiven you.

Prepare for Eternity

The carnal man wakes up fresh every day. He always puts up a fight for his own way. Any time you are working for God, the flesh seems to be the most awake. He is ready for you. He may say: "The bed feels good today. Do I have to go to church again?" Friend, What are you going to do in Heaven? There will not be a fishing boat, sports, or anything to accommodate the flesh in Heaven. There is going to be the worship of God. That is the reason we go to church. We are preparing our hearts for eternity. You cannot

do that by watching the television. You prepare for eternity by going to church, by reading the Bible, by working for the Lord, and by visiting the sick and the elderly. These are the best things I have found for me. I realize how fragile life is. I realize that I could be on a bed of affliction or disabled if not for the mercy of God.

None of us is so good that something could not happen to us. It is only the mercy of God that protects us. We have to be faithful to God and to the work of God. I want to be faithful to the end. I want to count the cost of what it is going to take to make Heaven my home. We have witnesses around us, people who have the power of God. Sad to say, some have fallen away from the Church of God. It could happen to any one of us if we are not careful and if we do not remain humble.

The devil wants you to be full of self. He is waiting for a moment when you feel that you have finally attained. Paul, as great a man as he was, felt that he was still reaching forth for those things that were before him, forgetting those things that were behind. We have to press on. There are many lost souls. Even if the whole world were saved, we would still have to keep pressing. Why? Salvation is a continuous work. We do not have eternal security. The plan of salvation does not work that way. When you study the Scriptures, you find that eternal security is not sound doctrine. The Bible does not teach that. You can lose your relationship with God, but you do not want that. The Bible warns of this foe.

Matthew 10:38 says, "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:31 says, "I die daily." Romans 8:13 tells us, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." There is no wiggle room there. If you live for yourself, you are going to die spiritually. You must have the power of God!

The Devil Contends for the Heart of Man

The second contender who wants to sit on the throne of your heart is the devil. Genesis, Chapter 1, takes us back to the beginning of Creation. Many people teach the theory of evolution. Friend, Genesis is the beginning. Young person, when unregenerate men tell you about the theory of evolution, ask them how much they know about God. I did not come from an ape, and neither did you; that is foolishness. The Bible is real. Do not believe anyone who tells you that the theory of evolution is true. Darwin was just an unregenerate man who came up with that theory. I do not know where he is, but wherever he is, he is now a believer in the Almighty God.

Some people are making boastful claims. They need to be careful, because this thing is not over yet. One day when we stand before God, things are going to be cleared up. I do not wish for any soul to be lost. That is not the nature of the Christian's spirit. I am looking forward to when Jesus splits the clouds and we stand before the Savior, the Son of God. I am proud of Him. That is the reason I go to church, read my Bible, and pray. Dear one, look to Him! I am proud of Him because He is my Savior. That is the attitude we each should have.

You need to be careful about what you say about God. You are going to answer to Him one day. You just think you are doing your own thing, but He can take away your breath right now. Something can come on you at any time. It does not take much for God to humble someone. You had better be careful not to boast, because God is listening.

God is such a merciful God. He does not immediately send judgment when someone curses Him or attempts to drag Him down to their level. He is long-suffering. He wants that person to get saved, and that is

the exact same spirit that every Christian should have. We want to see people get saved so that when Jesus Christ comes back, we all can admire this great Savior of ours.

Genesis 3:1-6 reads: "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

Here is the first instance of the devil working, and he loves to work. He used the serpent as his tool. When you get in a situation and something does not feel right, it is the devil. God, working through your conscience, is telling you to be alert, to watch, because the devil will lie to you to get on the throne of your heart.

The devil was reigning in Legion's heart. Consider that poor man. He dwelt among the tombs, cutting himself. He was possessed by the devil, but Jesus delivered him. Mary Magdalene also had the devil cast out of her. These are examples of how the devil can reign in people's hearts. People allow the devil to get in and start bringing thoughts to their minds. How we need God in this world! There is filth out in the world on every side. Christ could come any second, and I do not want to be caught in that, and I know you do not either. As with Legion and Mary

Magdalene, the devil will turn your life into a living hell.

The Faithful Counselor

The Lord is also a contender for the throne of your heart. He wants to sweetly reign in your heart. Does that not sound so much better? God wants to reign on the throne of your heart. He has something good for every one who will submit to Him. Isaiah 9:6-7 states: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." Do you want Him to reign in your heart?

People pay large sums of money to talk to counselors. If a counselor could tell people what God could tell them, there would be a line out the door. We have a divine Counselor, and His name is Jesus Christ. Just because He does not answer instantly, do not stop going to Him. He is a faithful Counselor. Young person, if you need direction in your life, you must keep coming to the Counselor. You must keep talking to Him. He will give you the answer in one way or another. He will tell you exactly what He wants you to do. That is His promise to you. He is not going to let you grope in darkness. He wants you to know where you are going in this life. He has a plan. Every day you make a choice about who will reign in your heart.

You must guard your heart from the influences of the world. Everything has an influence, even the smallest things. The moon is circling the Earth, and it is exerting an influence on the tides. You cannot actually feel it, but it is working. There are things in the world that are working on you right now.

Consider cigarettes. I read that two billion people smoke. The little cigarette has a "kingdom" of two billion people. People are being affected by it. Alcohol has hold of

two billion people. Just a little drink that may seem harmless is destroying people and destroying homes. It causes people to make decisions they would not normally make, but they are under the influence of alcohol.

A little deck of cards looks innocent. Of course, there is more to gambling than that. Statistics state that 1.6 billion people gamble. Think of that! These little foxes are reigning over men now. People who are bound by these habits get into situations where they will do anything to support their habits, such as steal from their families or from their neighbors. Because they have these habits, little foxes are reigning over them. It is a warning to each of us.

Beware of False Religion

Every kingdom that was great had a wall of defense. I think of the great city of Babylon. You may think that your heart is safe, because your "walls" of defense are strong, but some things are working out there, such as false religion and unbelief. These things are working as never before.

Have you ever watched seeds blowing around on a windy day? The seeds of false doctrine are going to blow in upon your heart. If you do not keep your heart with all diligence, those seeds are going to begin to germinate. They are going to grow and choke out the experience that you have in your life. This is a warning to all of us. False religion is working as never before. It is coming against the Church of God because we have the Truth. Many people love false religion because it does not cost them anything.

I thought about the message of Stephen. It is amazing how long Stephen was preaching to those people, but when he boldly declared the Truth to them, he got in trouble. They stoned him. He was preaching a great message. You can read it in Acts, Chapter 7. When he said, "Ye

stiffnecked" that was it.

In false religion they read some facts from the Bible and tell people God loves them, but they only speak smooth things to them. Unlike false religion, the Church of God digs around people's hearts, telling them how the Bible says to live and what they need to do to make Heaven their eternal home. The Truth is what is going to take us to glory. You need to beware of false religion. There is only one true church, and that is the Church of God. I believe that with all my heart. The Truth brings victory in your life.

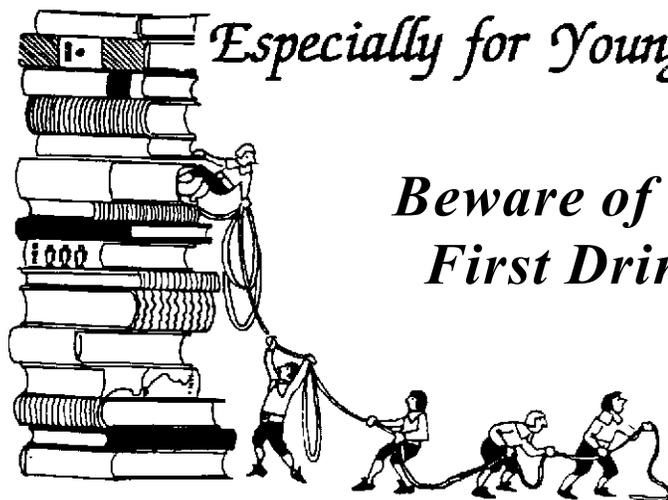
We do not call this country George Washington's United States of America or Abraham Lincoln's United States of America. Likewise, God does not need a name on His church. It is the Church of God. This country was established by God. The United States is too great to have a man's name attached to it. It is the same with the Church of God. God does not need another name on His church. I do not want my name on it. I just want to work for Him. Many men in the past had no say in having their names added to churches. The Church of God will have no part of that because God is the Father, and we are serving Him. Let us be careful of false religion.

Proverbs 4:23 tells us, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Your heart is the most important thing you possess. How you keep it will determine whether you spend eternity in Heaven or in hell. It is a long journey.

Do you get weary or feel tired sometimes? The road to Heaven is long, but it will be worth it. When we get to Heaven, we will look back and say, as the Bible says in 2 Corinthians 4:17, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment" When we get inside those gates, all those afflictions are going to be forgotten, and we will be so glad that we made Heaven our home.

(Compact Disc TR-1045)

Especially for Young People



Beware of the First Drink



In the autumn of the year in which I was seventeen years of age, I planned a western trip and was soon on a train speeding rapidly toward the wheatfields of Manitoba. Usually there were not enough men in western Canada to harvest the immense crops, so the railroads gave especially cheap excursion rates to get men to go there as harvest hands. Thousands of men availed themselves of this opportunity to see the country and to make some money. Extra good wages were paid as an inducement to the men of the east.

On the train with me were three men from my home country. One was my old school teacher, with whom I began the journey. The other two were young fellows, whom I knew to be lively and even rough. Being of a lively disposition myself, I did not enjoy the school teacher's company very well; so before reaching Winnipeg, I had taken up with the two livelier young men.

We arrived in Winnipeg one evening after seven o'clock. These young men had been drinking some along the way, but up to this time in my life I had never taken a drink of any intoxicating liquor. Immediately upon our leaving the train, they proposed to go to a saloon. I went with them. On arriving at the door, I told them I would wait outside, but they insisted that I should go in with them. At last, I yielded to

their persuasions to go inside. However, this did not satisfy them; they urged me to take something "soft." Just as we stepped inside the saloon, the bartender shouted, "All out; it is eight o'clock." (At that time in Manitoba, all barrooms had to close at eight o'clock on Saturday night.) Of course, there was no further time then for discussing the matter; so I told them I would take something "soft." I stepped up to the bar with them and asked for a glass of lemon sour, while they ordered beer.

In the rush of clearing the saloon in time to comply with the law, the bartender either misunderstood my order or wilfully changed it. I was not paying particular attention to what he was doing, so the other boys called my attention to the fact that he was drawing off beer for me. Of course, the struggle between my past teaching and past resolutions and my pride was fierce though brief. On the spur of the moment, I said, "Oh, well, let it go." The beer was placed on the bar, and I took my first strong drink.

The mere drinking of this glass of beer did me no particular physical harm, but somehow, somehow, it seemed to "break the ice" and to bring over me a feeling of "don't care" and "what's the use," so that it became easy for me to yield to the inducements of the future. It was the first step toward drunkenness and ruin, which I most certainly would have reached had it not been for the

providential interference of the Spirit of God.

For some time I indulged in occasional seasons of drinking and revelry accompanied with kindred evils, and one night just before Christmas, I attended a raffle. By the way, I had returned from the west. In company with another young man, I went to a neighboring town to get liquor for the occasion, our hometown being dry. On the way back, we had what seemed to us then a good time. I had drunk so much that when we began to play cards for turkeys and other things, my brain was so badly befogged that I was unable to play with any great degree of intelligence. However, during the course of the evening, I won a turkey.

We started for town about one o'clock in the morning, and I reached my home somewhere near two o'clock. Upon my arrival, I found my mother sitting up waiting for me. I shall never forget that picture as long as I live. She was sitting by the table knitting nervously and waiting anxiously for her boy. She asked where I had been. I would not lie, so I told her frankly. Of course, I did not tell her that I had been drinking; but as she knew the kind of people that frequented the place of these raffles, she guessed the rest, I presume.

There was something about her disappointed tone of voice and wounded look that made me feel

most miserable. I wished that my turkey were most anywhere but there. I was absolutely ashamed of it, but I carried it through the house, hung it up, and hastened off to bed. The next morning, I did not get up with the other members of the family. When I rose, the picture of the night before and the Spirit of God and the shame of it all were so working upon me that I slipped out of the house and did not return

again until toward evening, by which time I had resolved to end it all by giving my heart to God. This I did as soon as opportunity presented itself. Thus, you see how I took my first and last drink.

I am absolutely unable to tell you how glad I am that God in His mercy delivered me from the drink habit, for surely it would have meant the ruin of my life in this world and in the world to come.

It is very dangerous to tamper with drink. In fact, sin of any kind is dangerous, for there goes with it a carelessness and neglect that is intended by the enemy of souls to keep a person dead to his own welfare until it is too late to retrace his steps.

J. R. Tallen

[Camp Meeting Report—cont. from p. 2] singing Christian songs, followed by a time of making craft items.

The song services were rich and inspiring as the saints lifted their voices in the old hymns of the church. As the choir sang, they too brought a great blessing to us. As the special singers sang, it was uplifting and often brought joy and gladness to our hearts. However, in the last service of the meeting, the Lord poured His Spirit out in a mighty way. He used Sister Diana Goins' trio to create an altar call

that brought souls seeking salvation and help from the Lord. What a joy it is to see men and women bowing before Christ and crying out for help for their souls! After faithful laboring through that short meeting, God simply crowned every effort put forth by drawing souls to Him.

Surely, we can again say that this was a beautiful time of spiritual renewing to our inner being. If you were unable to attend this wonderful meeting, we suggest that you order the CD's or the videos of the

services. They may be obtained by ordering them from God's Acres, CD Ministry, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, Ohio 43055 or by calling 740-345-1312.

One last thought that we would like to leave with you is, in June the camp meeting begins Sunday, June 21, 2015. It would be well for you to send your room reservations in early to Brother and Sister David Bush, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, Ohio 43055. May God bless each of you, and we hope to see you at the Spring Camp Meeting.

For His Sake

At the close of a battle, a young man was found dying on the battlefield. A soldier stopped to render him assistance, and as his comrade moistened his lips and made his head rest easier, the dying man said, "My father is a man of large wealth in Detroit, and if I have strength, I will write him a note and he will repay you for this kindness."

This is the letter he wrote: "Dear Father, the bearer of this note made my last moments easier and helped me to die. Receive him and help him for Charlie's sake."

The war ended, and the soldier, in tattered garments, sought out the father in Detroit. He refused to see him at first because of his wretched appearance. "But," said the stranger, "I have a note for you in which you will be interested." He handed him the little soiled piece of paper, and when the great man's eyes fell upon the name of his son, all was instantly changed. He threw his arms about the soldier, and drew him close to his heart, and put at his disposal everything that wealth could make possible for him to possess. It was the name that made the difference. Thus, we stand on redemption ground before God in the Name of Jesus Christ, and He speaks for us as did Paul for the Roman slave Onesimus.

Selected

2 Corinthians 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this [world] we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

6 Therefore we are always confi-

dent, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, wheth-

er present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

The Final Judgment



Brother Richard Talbot

The Court of Judgment

I want to ask you this question: If you were to die now, where would you spend eternity? I mean right now, without another prayer, without another opportunity to talk to God, without another opportunity to make anything right with anybody. Would it be all right with you? Would you be able to say like John, "Even so come, Lord Jesus; I am ready to go"?

I want to focus on verse 10 of our Scripture text, which reads, "For we must all appear before the judg-

ment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." From this verse we want to look at several thoughts regarding this coming event, or this time of awesome judgment. First, we want to look at the Judgment. Second, we want to consider who will be judged. Third, we want to identify who the Judge will be. Fourth, we want to consider what is going to be examined.

The fact is, there will be a final judgment, as taught throughout the Word of God. When you die, you

will not go to the final Judgment immediately upon your death, but you go to a place to await the final judgment. You will be held there until the final judgment of all the earth, because when you die, you have an influence that lives on. You have a reputation that lives on, and people will make decisions in their lives depending upon the influence you had over them.

There may be people who will be saved perhaps because of Grandpa who lived the Christian life before them. Grandchildren and great-grandchildren may become Chris-

tians because they remember what a saintly grandpa they had. It may get hold of their hearts. They may become convicted of their sins and get saved. God will give that grandpa some credit. The man who has been wicked and ungodly has a reputation that lives on also. People may be influenced to live wicked and ungodly lives because of his influence. He, too, deserves some recognition. The final judgment is going to balance everything out.

Just as earthly governments must have courts and judges in order to have any form of civil order, so the eternal Godhead has established its court of judgment. The natural order of things requires it. There must be restitution for all those precious souls who have suffered unjustly down through the ages of time. Often we find in life that the best of men were driven to the worst of straits because they were God's servants. You know, God is not going to let the world go by without their seeing those precious saints of God recognized for what they were.

The Faithful Witness

We find in Hebrews 11:34, 36-38 the list of all those saints who "Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. . . . And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."

Yes, there must be a day of justice or God would not be a fair God, and it is right out ahead of us. Do not get all torn up because you are mistreated and you cannot do

anything about it. God has a day of justice coming. He will take care of that.

The words of our Savior recorded in Matthew 25:31-34 are as follows: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Verse 41 states, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Verse 46 says, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." The final Day of Judgment is out in the future, but it is coming.

In Revelation 1:5 Jesus Christ is recorded as "the faithful witness." The Proverb writer tells us in Proverbs 14:5 that "A faithful witness will not lie." The Word of God is true. God cannot lie because He is God. He is the faithful witness, and He is going to be a witness either for you or against you in that day. When the Lord and Master says He will gather all nations before Him and divide them one from another as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats, that is just the way it will appear. He gives us this illustration to present the idea to our minds that there will be a Judgment and a final separation of the lost for all eternity.

You may inquire: "How can all of this take place? Billions and billions of people have lived since God created the earth. How is God going to do all of this?" I do not have any idea, but He is going to do it in a moment of time. Judgment will be instantaneous. God can do it

because He is God.

Who Will Be Judged?

I want you to read one final Scripture on this question of the Judgment. Hebrews 9:27 states, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Yes, there is going to be a judgment. We are going to stand or bow before the Judge.

Question number two is, Who will be judged? Well, our Scripture text makes this clear, stating in verse 10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Every one in the entire human race will appear. The godly will not be exempt from this judgment. The Christian is going to make an appearance before this Judge. Every pastor is going to be there to be judged. Every Sunday school teacher and every worker in the Church of God is going to be there. They each will be judged on this final day. Nobody will escape it!

You may say: "I don't know why I have to be judged. I know I'm right with God." You are still going to be judged on that day. The Apostle Paul made this very plain. He wrote 2 Corinthians to the church at Corinth and to all the saints in Asia. He was writing this letter to the church to inform them that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Those who make up the Church of God will appear before the judgment seat, as will all the wicked and ungodly.

We must remember what Jesus said in Matthew, Chapter 25, that the sheep are to be summoned to the Judgment seat just as the goats are going to be called to the Judgment seat. Why must the sheep appear if all their sins have been forgiven and covered by the blood? First of all, the church, or the saints of God, have to be judged to show that God is fair. The Christian should have no fear of being judged. Perfect love casts out all fear.

If you are right with God, as you should be, you should not be afraid

of being judged. On that day the saints should have no fear of the eternal Judge. The saint of God should be on very personal terms with the Judge. We should desire the Judgment, saying: "Lord, You will not be able to find anything wrong with me. I am clear before You." Can you testify to that? Is your life clear? Is your record clear?

Do you know the Judge personally? That is what counts. You would not want to be smuggled into Heaven under a cover of darkness, would you? No, you will not be ashamed of going to Heaven. You will want the whole world to know: "I made it! I made it into God's Glory!" You will not have any shame, because you do not need to hide anything. We each are going to have to go through the Judgment where every deed will be made known and every secret will be exposed that is not covered by the blood. If you have everything covered by the blood, you will have nothing to worry about.

Just as the children of Israel back in Egypt put the blood on the doorposts and went to sleep comfortably that night, knowing they were protected by the blood, we can also rest comfortably, knowing we are protected by the blood of Christ. If a father would have said, "I'm not putting any blood on my doorpost; that is foolish," he would have lost his eldest son. When he put the blood there in obedience to Moses' command, his eldest child was spared.

This process removes any accusation by the lost that the saints were never tried, that they never had it hard, or that they were never under any pressure or they might have been condemned. No, God is going to remove all excuses from the unsaved. We are going to be there shoulder to shoulder, facing the same Judge, facing the same scrutiny, facing those piercing eyes. There is going to be eye contact with the Judge who will bring the guilty down in a wailing mass of gnashing about. Those eyes are going to find

the eyes of the saints rejoicing and praising God. Oh, dear one, it is going to be an awesome sight!

The righteous must be there on Judgment Day so that no partiality will be shown in the matter. The verdicts will be clear and straight. The rewards of the righteous will be given without any violation of the most rigorous justice. What a day this will be for the righteous! On this day the righteous will be cleared of all charges by false accusers that they have lived under on earth.

The Vindication of the Saints

Have you ever had anybody falsely accuse you, find fault with you, criticize you, or tear you down? On that day you are going to be cleared in their eyes. They are going to see you received and accepted at the right hand of God. They are going to see you receive the words of the Lord, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, and enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

The unrighteous that mistreated you are going to stand and watch you step over. You are going to be vindicated, cleared, and all those that criticized you and found fault with you falsely will stand back with their mouths open and their eyes wide open. The saints are going to go right on in. God is going to vindicate His children.

On Judgment Day reputations will be reestablished. The saints who have had blemishes brought upon their character will receive from the great Judge more honor than all the world had attempted to withhold from them. I thought about Noah. On that day those eight million souls who ridiculed and mocked him and made his life miserable while he was building the ark will stand there on that day as God calls Noah and says, "Enter into the joys of the Lord." They are going to realize that Noah was right after all, and Noah will be vindicated and brought through to the glory of God.

Those of old Israel who

tormented the prophets and put Jeremiah into a dungeon will see those prophets, along with Jeremiah, march fully vindicated into the glories of God. Yes, dear one, God is going to balance out all things on that day. According to my understanding of what I have read in history about Isaiah, while still alive, he was stuffed into a hollow log and sawed in half, but on that day he will march right on in. Those powerful people who were in authority and power who were able to do that to him are going to stand aside and watch that man receive his full reward. Church, do not be discouraged because you are being put through the wringer here on earth. A day is coming when God will balance everything out.

King Ahab and his wicked wife will stand back while Naboth walks in. Jezebel had Naboth falsely accused and hung, but one day God is going to justify and vindicate him in the eyes of King Ahab and his wife. He is going to step across while they stand aside for the final, eternal separation. It is coming! Nero will be forced to witness the Apostle Paul, whom he had beheaded, being ushered into the glories of the Lord. All those saints that he burned as torches in his gardens and who gave their lives for Christ will be honored on that day in front of Nero, and all his Roman powers will be as nothing. Not one soul that has ever died for the Lord will go in without recognition. God will vindicate.

Pilate will be there. The chief priests and the elders of Israel who gave false witness against Christ will receive their final reward from Him whom they crucified. On that day all the earth will acknowledge the true nobility, the clearing of the righteous, and the vindication of their names. It will be done openly for every eye to behold.

Every pastor whose name has been dragged down into the dirt and stepped on and ruined by false accusations and evil reports will march into Heaven with their heads

held high and the glory of God upon them while their false accusers are going to be separated forever. There is a great day coming, church, when God is going to balance everything out.

No One Will Be Exempt From the Judgment

What a day that will be to see the masses of the human race! It is quite certain that the call will go forth one day, and all will be brought in to stand before this great judgment seat. Every one before the flood, from the days of the patriarchs to the times of David, from the Babylonian kingdom, all the legions of Syria, the host of Persia, the troops of Greece, the vast armies of Rome, the barbarian, the scythian, the bond and the free, the men and the women of every color, race, nationality, and tongue will stand on that last day before the judgment seat of Christ.

On that day kings and masters will be no greater than their subjects or slaves. The princes and the nobles will be there without their crowns and their gaudy robes. The judges themselves will be judged on that day. No one will be able to claim immunity or hide behind titles or privileges. The world will be on one common level, standing together to be tried before that last tremendous tribunal. The wicked and the proud will be there. Herod, who tried to slay the Christ child, will be judged by the very Christ he tried to slay. Judas, who sold his Master, will be there to be judged by Him whom he betrayed. Demas, who deserted Christ for the world, will be there to receive his just reward.

Next will come the long line of the infallibles: the whole line of popes of Rome that held their people in such blackness and darkness are going to take their turn marching up, stripped of their rich robes, their golden mitres, and all their wealth. They will be there just like you and me, without prestige, immunity, or protection, to be judged.

They will have their turn to receive the judgment that awaits them.

Hitler and his men of destruction, along with all other heads of states, such as presidents and prime ministers, will be there. No one will miss the Judgment Day. It is right out ahead of us. What a scene it will be! The groups of people who seemed so large and domineering will shrink to the size of a drop in the bucket on Judgment Day.

Judgment Before the Final Judgment

God has a way of dealing with people even before the Judgment Day. Do you remember the Beatles rock band back in the sixties? One member of that band named John Lennon said: "Christianity will go. It will vanish and shrink. . . . I'm right and I'll be proved right. We're more popular than Jesus now." Also, he said, "Jesus was all right, but His disciples were thick and ordinary." Shortly after that, he said he regretted saying it. Some years later, he was shot six times and died. I believe that God brought him to task for that bold statement.

From Brazil, a bisexual composer, singer, and poet, during a show while smoking his cigarette, puffed out some smoke into the air and said, "God, that's for you." At the age of thirty-two, he died a most horrible death of lung cancer. You cannot mess around with God and get by. A reporter asked the man who built the Titanic how safe the Titanic was. With an ironic tone he said, "Not even God can sink her." We all know what happened to the Titanic on her maiden voyage.

Marilyn Monroe was visited by Billy Graham during the presentation of a show. He said, "The Spirit of God had sent me to preach to her." After hearing what Billy Graham had to say, she said to him, "I don't need your Jesus." A week later, at the age of thirty-six, she was found dead in her apartment.

Another story from Brazil involved a group of friends who

were drunk. They went to pick up a girlfriend. The mother accompanied her daughter to the car and was so worried about the drunkenness of her friends, she said to her daughter, holding her hand after she was already seated in the car, "My daughter, go with God, and may He protect you." She responded, "Only if God goes in the trunk, cause inside here it's already full." Hours later, news came that they had been involved in a fatal accident, and everyone had died. The car could not be recognized as to what type it had been, but surprisingly the trunk was intact. Police said there was no way the trunk could have remained intact, and to their surprise inside the trunk was a crate of eggs, and none of them were broken.

Christine Hewett, a Jamaican journalist and entertainer, said, "The Bible is the worst Book ever written." In June of 2006 she was found burned beyond recognition in her motor vehicle. These people are still awaiting a final judgment. Marilyn Monroe is going to be there, and these others are going to be there to be judged finally and separated forever from the righteous. You cannot do wrong and get by.

Ecclesiastes 3:17 states, "I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked." God will judge the righteous and the wicked. I will be there, my wife will be there, my children will be there, my grandchildren will be there, and you will be there too. No matter how much I love each of my children and my grandchildren, there will not be a thing I can do for them on that day. I will not be able to plead to the Judge: "Have mercy on my grandchild. He did not really mean to ignore You and get into sin. He did not really mean to live as he was living." There will be no pleading on that day. You cannot do anything to help your children or your companion on that day.

Each of us will stand and take our judgment. Nobody will be able to interfere. No plea bargaining, no tears, and no story of hardship will

sway the Judge. Pure justice will be meted out. The elderly will be there. The rich without their finery and the poor without their poverty will be standing side by side on that day. Those who are so bashful that they always hang back in the crowds will be pulled out from their hiding place to stand just as everybody else on that day. Off will come the garments that have hid the real person from the eyes of others. No disguise will be possible on that day.

The Judge of All Mankind

The third question is, Who is the Judge? The courts of law in the United States offer a person an opportunity to be judged by his peers, a group of twelve men and women as close to the same position of life as the one on trial so that they can issue a fair judgment.

Christ left the glory of the Father and came to earth, taking upon Himself the seed of Abraham, becoming one of us. He was human, and He suffered all manner of temptations, yet without sin. His feelings were hurt, and He suffered rejection of those He came to help. He was laughed at, ridiculed, mocked, beaten, and shamed. He suffered judgment of false accusers, and He died a shameful death, all without sin. All of this makes Him a qualified Judge to judge all mankind. He tasted life and death just as we experience it. He suffered temptations, He was tried and pressed beyond measure, ridiculed, scorned, and rejected; but He never sinned, proving that you and I have no excuse to sin. In doing that, He took away our excuses.

If you were to say at the Judgment, "Some people did not treat me right," He may say, "People did not treat Me right either, but I lived so I could show you how to live and survive the evils of this world." Not one young person, young adult, middle-aged person, married person, married person with children, older person, grandparent, great-grandparent, or great,

great-grandparent is going to have an excuse that will survive the Judgment on that day.

We find that this is the will of the Father. John 5:22 reads, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Romans 2:16 says, "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." Acts 10:42 states, "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." He is fully qualified to deal justly with us all.

What Will Be Judged?

The fourth question is, What exactly is to be judged? Our Scripture text says that everyone may receive of the things done in his body according to all that he hath done, whether it is good or bad. We are going to be judged according to what we have done while in this physical body, whether it is good or bad. We all are doing something, and those doings are going to be judged one day as being good or bad. It is not going to be, "Well, he was fairly good" or "He wasn't really all that bad"; it is going to be good or bad. Nothing will be judged as neutral; your works are going to be judged to be right or wrong.

Every day we are involved in doing things. We are thinking thoughts, we have meditations, and we have motivations of the heart. We talk to people, we make decisions, and we make moves in life. God is going to judge everything as to whether it is good or bad. It is either according to God's will or against God's will.

You may say, "You are making this thing so tight that I am even afraid to breathe." Friend, the Judgment is going to be tight, because it is hard for us to imagine pure judgment. We are not used to real judgment. You see, sometimes we can talk our way out of things or slip around things. People can pay law-

yers to plead their cases or even bribe a judge, and sometimes they escape punishment. They may get by with things in this world because they know somebody. A person may talk his way out of a ticket for a traffic violation. The officer may say, "I'll just give you a warning this time."

Nothing like that will occur on the Judgment Day. It will be pure, clear-cut justice. It is not really all that difficult if you live right. I have not found it hard to live for the Lord. If I should stumble or say something wrong or make a wrong move, my loving Savior is right there to help me, forgive me, and restore me if I but ask Him. He is not there to push me down and kick me aside. As long as time stands, mercy is available. However, one of these days, Jesus is going to take His seat beside the Father and deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and He is going to submit Himself to the Father. When Jesus submits Himself to the Father, mercy's door will be shut forever. There will be no mercy on the Judgment Day. Mercy will be over, and it will be pure judgment.

You need to understand that it is not what you profess or what you boast, but it is the actual facts of your life, both secret and public. All will be revealed on that day. It is already recorded, but it will be brought to light so that every eye can see. Every secret sin will be published. Things done in private and things that have been hidden from view will be revealed. Those things that with great care and planning and effort people have concealed will be exposed.

My mind went to 9/11, that horrible Tuesday when those planes crashed into the Twin Towers, the Pentagon, and the Pennsylvania hillside. All of a sudden, death came to thousands of people that day. In my mind I thought: "I wonder what people will find when they start closing down the offices of those people, when they start going through their clothing, their mail, and their desk drawers. I wonder if

any spouses found that things were going on that they did not know anything about, things that people had kept hidden." Some people think, "I'm going to take care of this tomorrow" or "I'm going to straighten that up tomorrow" or "I'm going to stop this today," but death interfered and the record remained.

A man or a woman might have thought, "I'm going to clean out this desk and destroy these love letters." They might have been from a secret lover. It goes on all the time in the world. In the thousands that died that day, I cannot imagine how many companions were devastated, not only over the loss of their loved one but also over the loss of what they thought was a faithful companion. How sad to learn of unfaithfulness as well!

One day all the secrets are going to come out. The Judgment is going to equal and balance the whole picture. The hypocritical lives will be laid open at the Judgment. The Pharisee who devoured the widow's house will find the widow will be there as a witness against him. His long prayers will be shown to have been nothing but vain repetition. The varnish and the veneer will come off, and the real substance will then be seen.

Let us remember that in the account of the separation of the sheep and the goats, the goats were not condemned for what they did, but they were condemned for what they did not do. They failed to recognize their sin and accept Christ as their Savior. How sad that many on that day will stand condemned, not because of great sins, but merely because they neglected righteousness, holiness, and faith. The world has many excellent, good, moral, honest people, but they just will not accept Christ. Unbelief is going to flood the boundaries in eternal damnation. Without Christ you will have no hope of being received on the right hand of the Father.

Many people will stand condemned because they had trouble denying themselves. There are

lots of people hanging around the edges, so to speak. They love the saints and they like the church, but they will not deny themselves of those pet things they want to do and really get saved. Such people are going to pay an awful price for a few years of fleshly living. It would be best to bring yourself to reality now. If you have been living for yourself, do not push the issue too far. It is going to catch you unprepared to meet God.

Many people love themselves too much to surrender to Christ. Jesus told us in Matthew 12:37, "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Be Ready to Meet the Lord

Another thing that is going to be judged is your words—what you speak and how you speak. Let us be faithful to Truth and righteousness. If you are no better than the sinner in your conduct and in your character, you will stand no better than the sinner on Judgment Day. You must have with you in death evidence of your faith in God. You must have all sin covered by the blood. Suppose some dear soul has slipped into wrongdoing on the side, dabbling in a few things he should not have. Do you really think God will not require justice for those things?

Did the Lord not tell Ezekiel that He was fair in all His judgment? If a man lives for many years and in his last years gets right with God, God will forget all those years of wickedness, and he will die justified with God. If a man lives an exemplary, holy life and in his last year sins and loses out with God, God will forget

all those good years and he will die lost.

God is going to deal with a fair hand, a just hand. Sin, in its natural order, always ripens into sorrow and death. Sin will cause a soul to end up in eternal separation from God. Sin will always bring your life down in ruin. There is nothing good about sin. No matter how slight it may be, there is nothing good or justifiable in allowing sin to exist in your life. If it is there, you need to get it covered by the blood. You need to own up to it, confess it, and get it out of the way because Judgment Day is coming. You may suffer judgment in this world as well as in eternity, but be sure of this: you are going to face God's final Judgment. I want to be right with God, don't you? I want to be ready to meet the Lord. I want to live so that at any moment, when God calls me home, I can say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

If you were to die today, where would eternity find you? You are going to face eternity, and you are going to face an eternal judgment. It is going to seal your destiny for time and eternity. I ask you to listen to the Spirit of God. I want you to listen to what God is talking to you about. If you have known sin in your life, you need to own up to it before God, confess it, get it out of the way, and you can rejoice with the saints. Do not play around with your soul. Do not play around with your eternal destiny. I plead with you to take this seriously, because you are just one heartbeat away from it. Won't you let God have His way?

(Compact Disc TR-594E)

The Sun of My Soul

It is said that Tennyson was walking one day in a beautiful flower garden where many flowers were blooming, and a friend said to him: "Mr. Tennyson, you often speak of Jesus. Will you tell me what Christ really means to your life?"

Tennyson stopped, and pointing to a beautiful yellow flower, he said, "What the sun is to the flower, Jesus Christ is to my soul."

1 Corinthians 6:19 *What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

20 *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

Joshua 5:13 *And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he*

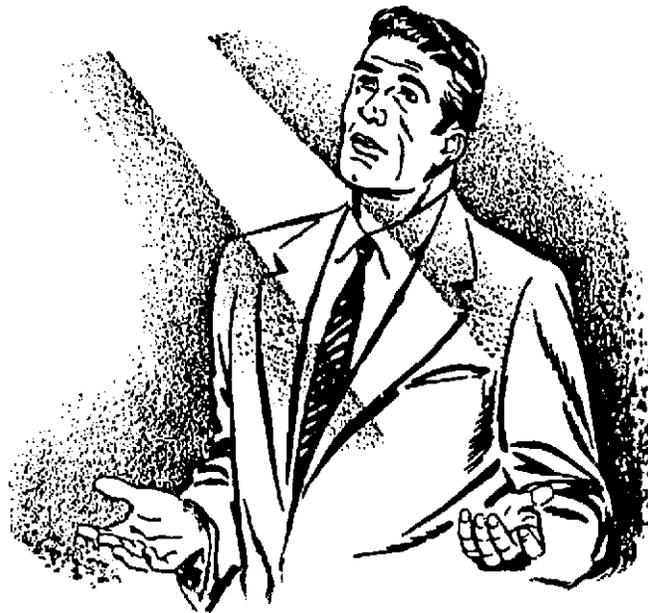
lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?

14 *And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth,*

and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?

15 *And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.*

Lift Up Your Spiritual Eyes



Brother Jeff Wells

"Loose Thy Shoe From Off Thy Foot"

I thought of Joshua's courage in confronting a man with a sword drawn. This was not just any man; this was Jesus Himself. As soon as Joshua was aware of Jesus, he fell on his face to worship Him. Joshua had done everything that he thought was right to humbly worship and give reverence to Jesus. He had

placed himself on his knees with his face to the earth. Then he stated: "What saith my lord unto his servant?" Again, Joshua 5:15 reads, "And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

How often do you think you are right on a matter and act on your own accord? The longer you are in

control of something, the more things have to be your way. James 4:15 tells us, "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." Joshua found that his method of worship and reverence to Jesus was unacceptable until he had removed his shoes. The importance to God of Joshua removing his shoes stood out to me.

I work in a very hot environment. We melt sand and things to

make glass, and those melters hold two hundred tons of molten glass. Sometimes I have to go underneath those melters, and it is dark down there. I have to look for glass leaking out or for hot spots. Everything is extremely hot down there, and we wear really thick, fuzzy palmed gloves and special jackets. The static electricity down there is tremendous, and some say they can even feel their hair pulling up on their arms if they do not have the special jacket on. If we find bad spots down there, we have to repair them. The gloves and the jackets and the other equipment that we have protects us from the heat.

When I look at my equipment, I see my equipment separating me from the heat. The more I looked at Joshua's shoes, I saw a form of separation from God. If my hands or my arms were to come in contact with the hot surface of a melter, I would receive terrible burns. Joshua's shoes represented a separation from the holy ground, or a separation from God.

Spiritual Separation From God

The Lord took my mind to the first separation of mankind from God, and it is found in Genesis 3:1-13, which reads: "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be de-

sired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

"And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou was naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

We read that the serpent was more subtle, or more cunning, than any other beast that the Lord had made. The devil will use any tool that he has access to. That is the reason it is very important to be careful of where you lend your ears. Satan will always direct your attention to a restriction. His motive is to get you to a point that he separates you from God. With Eve the serpent played on words and still stayed really close to the truth. When he said in verse 4, "Ye shall not surely die," he was alluding to physical death, not to the spiritual separation from God that would come.

Separation from God has to be an act on your part. Satan cannot separate you from God. He cannot take your salvation, no matter how much he wants it. This is the reason he will try to find your weakness, and he will hammer and hammer there. He will stay right on that weakness. Eve was no different from you in your senses. She saw that the

tree was good for food (justification), was pleasant to the eyes (more justification), and would make one wise (final justification).

The Importance of Obedience

Your eyes have to be redirected from your desires to the Lord's will to have total obedience to God. The lack of obedience to God will bring separation from God to your soul. Genesis 2:15-17 states: "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

God gave a direct command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God does not hide things from you or want to make life hard for you. This is the reason he said in Matthew 11:30, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." How is the yoke? Is it still easy? When you start to pull and tug at the yoke, it becomes hard. There is a reason this happens. This is a warning that God has instilled to check yourself before the separation comes.

Eve partook of the fruit and gave it to her husband to eat. At that moment, the separation happened, and the eyes of them both were opened. They knew that they had done wrong, because they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons to cover their nakedness and went into hiding.

In the cool of the day, the Lord was walking in the garden and called out, "Where art thou, Adam?" God already knew what they had done, but He said, in essence, "Have you eaten of the tree whereof I commanded you that you should not eat?" In essence, the first words out of Adam's mouth were, "It was Eve's fault." Eve then passed the blame on to the serpent. I call this, "the blame

game." Do you remember a time when you were in trouble with your mother? No doubt, you started to blame someone else, such as your brother or your sister. You knew that you were wrong, but if you could get the spotlight off you, the punishment might not be so bad.

The Scripture says that God will not be mocked. You can blame your sins on others, but the bottom line is, you are responsible for your own sins. Eve could have ignored the serpent, and Adam could have refused the invitation, but they did not. Therefore, God separated them from the garden.

Again, Joshua 5:15 says, "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot." In other words, God wants nothing between Him and us. The shoe represents a separation point between God and Joshua. This shoe is very insignificant as a shoe. However, as a spiritual lesson, the shoe represents something that could be in your life that separates you from God.

If you are in spiritual death, which is separation from God, there is good news for you. God is waiting and wanting you to accept Him. You have this opportunity now. You see, physical death will be coming, and it is a separation of body and soul. This death has no good news, because it takes you out of this life. The invitation is to accept Christ Jesus as your Savior now. The worst news that I can think of is eternal death. The final destination of a lost soul is the lake of fire.

"The Lord Thy God Is With Thee"

Joshua 5:15 reads, "And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." You need to listen and do what the Lord is telling you. He is very clear and very faithful concerning what He wants and what He needs from you.

God had given Joshua a job to do. He was to take Jericho. They had already crossed the Jordan River,

and Joshua found himself up by Jericho. His mind was planning how to do his mission. He knew that there would be many battles yet, because God had told him that. Joshua 1:3 states, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses." If you live a holy life for God, you are going to have battles. Just like Joshua, you will think upon how you are going to conquer this battle. You have to quit relying on yourself. Joshua lifted up his eyes, and that is what you need to do. I am not talking about your physical eyes; I am talking about your spiritual eyes.

Joshua had the battle of Jericho on his mind. He had a battle ready to occur, and Joshua was the leader. He was laying out his plan of attack in his mind when he looked up and saw that he was not alone. Standing before him was a man with a sword drawn in his hand. Joshua advanced toward the man. A man with his sword drawn means danger, and one must be on guard. Joshua was alone with his advancement, but he was a leader. He had thousands of soldiers who would do his battle for him. Why would he advance on his own?

Joshua 1:9 states, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." We can see where Joshua's real strength was coming from. His motivation was God driven. When your battle overwhelms you, where do you turn? God is with you wherever you go. You need to lift up your spiritual eyes. Joshua asked the man, "Are you for us or for our adversaries?" As a child of God, you know the devil is your adversary.

Do Not Be Ignorant of Satan's Devices

This next Scripture is part of your shield and protects your most vital areas. You need to keep it in

front of you at all times. First Peter 5:8 instructs, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Sometimes the devil will disguise himself. Second Corinthians 11:14 states, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." The devil has many ways to try to trap you and to shut you up, but do not let him work.

Second Corinthians 2:11 says, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." The devil can make things look innocent to you. You have to rub shoulders with the world every day. You are not ignorant of Satan's devices. He will use each of your senses on you. You cannot get away from your senses, and he knows it.

What you can do is avoid things that will feed your senses. Often you can tell when a joke is going to be bad, when the teller starts to look around. At this point, you might as well make tracks, because it is not going anywhere but downhill. If the guys at work have their cell phones out and start coming around with bad pictures on them, you have to put your foot down, so they will not come back. There is an old saying that says, "If it looks like a hog, eats like a hog, and smells like a hog, it is a hog." Glamor and glitter is a spirit that combines all your five senses. Satan will start with little things first to break you down. Here is something to think on: Would Jesus do it if He were here, or would you do this if Jesus were here? What would Jesus do in this situation? This is the one I think of the most: Is Jesus smiling on me now?

Unbelief is one of Satan's devices. According to Webster's Dictionary the word *unbelief* means "a lack of belief, especially in matters of religion." Do you know what a synonym to the word unbelief is? It is atheism. The antonym, which is the opposite, is faith. The word *faith* means "belief or trust without demanding proof." Unbelief is a device of Satan. He tries to use it on any-

body who hears and believes regarding spiritual matters. He also uses it on someone who has not received Christ in his soul to keep him from salvation. Satan will put doubts in your mind to break down your belief in the truth.

Power Comes From God

Matthew 14:14-21 reads: "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

"He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children."

Let us consider Jesus and the great multitude on which He had compassion. He healed their sick, and when evening came, they had no food. The disciples wanted to send them away to go and buy food, but Jesus told the disciples to give them food. In so many words, they said, "All we have here are five loaves and two fish." Jesus looked up to Heaven and blessed the food, gave it to the disciples, and they served the multitude.

Jesus was teaching that power comes from God in Heaven. They all ate and were filled, and they had leftovers. They collected twelve baskets full after everyone had eaten. Approximately five thousand men were there, besides women and children. This miracle of feeding the multitude feeds my soul. My faith is strengthened in the healing of the sick and the providing of food in the time of need.

Sometimes Satan comes along to try to break down your faith. Satan's job is to turn your ears from the Truth so that you will not believe. He will try to tell you this wonderful truth is but a tale, a fairy tale. This is a device of Satan to bring confusion to your mind to where you will turn from the truth.

Second Timothy 4:4 states, "And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." First Timothy 4:7 reads, "But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness." The spirit of unbelief starts when you think that the Bible is full of nothing but fairy tales. You must guard yourself against this spirit, because atheism is just around the corner. This is a spiritual battle that everyone is involved in, and you are going to have to take a side. There is no neutral zone. You are going to serve either God or Satan. God is on the winning side.

Look to Jesus

Joshua knew that Jericho was one of many battles. Your battles will rage on until you lay down the spiritual armor after you cross the sea of death. You need to lift up your spiritual eyes and look to Jesus. Joshua saw a man with a sword drawn. He could not tell if the man was a friend or a foe. When you look to Jesus, how is He looking at you?

If you see the sword pointed in an upward, forward manner, the command is to charge ahead. A sword pointed directly at you means halt. What is Jesus telling you?

Are you able to go forward for your Savior or is something blocking your way? The Lord of hosts told Joshua to loose his shoes from off his feet, for the place whereon he was standing was holy. The little things matter. You need to check your attitude to make sure that it is not one of always being right and never being wrong. Christ expects you to strive to be like Him. Are you striving to be Christlike?

Is the Lord blessing you in the worship services? This past fall at harvesttime, the combines were out in the fields, and they were moving the crops. After the combine separates the crops from the fodder, you have a yield. What kind of yield are you giving to God? Good ground yields a lot more than poor ground. This is the reason a good farmer takes a soil test to see what the soil pH level is. That way he can produce the best crop that he possibly can, because after the combine is done, the ground gives no more yield. Is your "combine" still running in the field or do you have ground that has a low yield?

If you are unsaved, Jesus said in John 10:9, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." If you are not a part of the Kingdom of God, you can be. God is so good, and He will take good care of you. There is nothing more in this life that I want to do but serve my Lord. The Lord is waiting for you to talk to Him. He loves you with all His heart. God can take care of all the problems in your life.

(Compact Disc TR-1333E)

**God put the church in the world.
Satan seeks to put the world in the church.**

[*Fighting the Good Fight*— cont. from p. 8]

many promises. It is easy to believe, in a general way, that they will be fulfilled: but when it comes to making direct applications to the situations that we meet, it is there that faith sometimes fails. Will God fight for us on this special occasion? Will God help us now? Will He really make good His Word to us or will He fail us in the critical moment?

If God's promises are true, then the ones that relate to our particular needs are true, and they are true now. If they are true to others, they are true to us, for God is no respecter of persons. And if they are true to us, they are true to us now as well as they were yesterday or will be tomorrow. It is so easy to think that God would help others. They are more worthy than we are. Do you feel this way? Do you feel that if it were somebody else in your place, you could easily have faith that God would help? Then, why not have faith that God will help you?

This brings us to the next important thought: We must have faith in ourselves as well as in God.

We must have faith in our integrity and loyalty. Do we mean real business for God? Have we thrown ourselves unreservedly on the side of God in this battle? Do we intend with all our souls to fight the good fight of faith? Do we have it really settled that we are going to do the right? So many want to do the right, but they are not sure that they will do it. They mean to do it, but they are constantly afraid that they will fail in doing it. This is not faith. Have confidence in yourself: not only in your loyalty and integrity and purpose to serve God, but also in your ability to do it. You can do it! You can do it as well as any one else. That doubt and fearfulness that you have will only be a hindrance to you. You must get rid of it and develop confidence in yourself—not overconfidence that depends upon yourself, but that true confidence that depends upon God helping you and that arms you with courage and trust in God and in yourself.

You must also have confidence in your weapons. Our weapons are

"mighty through God," we are told. God has told you how to win; and just as surely as you follow His instructions and trust in Him for results, He will cause you to wear the victor's crown. Our cause is a righteous one. Have faith in that cause, and know that right must triumph. But remember that you can not win unless you put your faith into your fighting. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Believe that you will win. No matter how weak you are, no matter how great your foe, no matter what may confront you, go into the conflict with that courage that is born of faith. Believe that God will give you the victory. Do not consider defeat at all. Let your faith mount up, and say: "I can win, and I will win. In God I will conquer." Throw away your doubts. Make an end of them. Trust in God. His Word is true. You can believe it if you will, and believing it, you shall be more than a conqueror through Him that loves you.

Selected

Patience

Patience is the guardian of faith, the preserver of peace, the cherisher of love, and the teacher of humility. Patience governs the flesh, strengthens the spirit, sweetens the temper, stifles anger, extinguishes envy, and subdues pride. She bridles the tongue, restrains the hand, tramples upon temptations, endures persecutions, consummates martyrdom.

Always have a good stock of patience laid by and be sure you put it where you can easily find it. Cherish patience; always keep it about you. You will find use for it more often than for all other virtues. Patience is not easily provoked. Be patient with the little child. Be patient with the

aged. Be patient in suffering.

"Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:3,4).

"In your patience possess ye your souls" (Luke 21:19). "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Hebrews 10:36). "But that on the good ground are they, which is an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15).

Selected

Meeting Announcements

MT. PLEASANT, PA
April 18

FELLOWSHIP MEETING: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania 15666
Service time: 10:30 a.m. A meal will be served by the local congregation. Lodging: *Holiday Inn Express*, 724-547-2095 (This is on the same road as the church. Please mention that you are there for the church meeting for a discount.); *Super 8 Motel* in New Stanton, 724-925-8915, on I-70W, (10 miles north of the church); *Melody Motor Lodge*, 724-628-9600 on 119N in Connellsville).
For more information contact: Pastor Paul W. Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666
Telephone: 724-547-2151

MEDINA, OH
April 20-26

REVIVAL: Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, Ohio 44256
Evangelist: Brother David Stegmeier, Canby, Oregon
Service times: Monday - Saturday 7:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.
For further information telephone: 330-769-3827

SUMMERSVILLE, WV
April 27-May 3

REVIVAL: Church of God, 74 Armstrong Road, Summersville, WV
Evangelist: Brother Allen Polston, New Castle, Indiana
Service times: Monday-Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday 6:00 p.m. & Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders at 304-872-4047
Visit our website: www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com

Winter 2014 Camp Meeting Recordings

CD NO.	DATE	MESSAGE TITLE	MINISTER
TR-1462 TR-1463	12-28-2014	No Room in the Inn A Warning of the Deceitfulness of Sin	Brother Roger L. Decker Brother Tim Wilson
TR-1464 TR-1465 TR-1466	12-29-2014	The Power of Forgiveness Discerning the Will of God, Part 1 The Terrible Danger of Drifting	Brother Richard Talbot Brother E. David Stegmeier Brother Tim Wilson
TR-1467 TR-1468 TR-1469	12-30-2014	Two Immutable Things Discerning the Will of God, Part 2 The Power of Choice	Brother Allen Polston Brother E. David Stegmeier Brother Tim Wilson
TR-1470 TR-1471	12-31-2014	Superficial or Sacrificial? Discerning the Will of God, Part 3	Brother Mike Wilks Brother E. David Stegmeier
TM-345	2014	Winter Camp Meeting Songs #1	
TM-346	2014	Winter Camp Meeting Songs #2	
TM-347	2014	Winter Camp Meeting Songs #3	
	2014	Winter Camp Meeting Choir Songs	
	2014	All Messages (includes afternoon teaching services) & Songs in MP3 format	

Recordings are available on CD's for a suggested donation of \$3.00 each & MP3's for a suggested donation of \$10.00 each. The postage is \$3.00 for one CD or MP3 and \$0.35 for each additional one. DVD's are also for most services except the teaching services (Discerning the Will of God, Parts 1, 2 & 3). You may order by writing *The Gospel Trumpeter*, Tape Ministry, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, Ohio 43055, or by calling Brother Sam or Sister Rachel Fowler. Call 740-345-1312, the Print Shop. Please make donations by check or money order in U.S. funds payable to *The Gospel Trumpeter*.

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