

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 45 May 2015 No. 5



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

*Psalms 122:1*

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

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PRAYER: If you need prayer, please phone or write:

Roger Decker, Pastor  
83 Decrow Ave.  
Newark, OH 43055

Email: pastor@godsacres.us  
Phone: 740-344-2543  
Fax: 740-344-4737  
Print Shop Phone: 740-345-1312

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 (erJohn 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. We are not responsible for unsolicited articles or items.

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# Annual Financial Report

*Ezekiel 33:1-11 states: "Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live? Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"*

The Prophet spoke very sobering words that still ring true. An awesome responsibility lies at the feet of God's people to get the Word to a lost world. To this end was *The Gospel Trumpeter* born. The single purpose remains today to reach out with a burden for lost souls and to speak the Truth to a religious world who is caught in the confusion of sectarian division.

To accomplish this task, messages must be preached and transcribed. Next begins an editing process. Once edited into its final form, it is then organized to fit into the pages of *The Gospel Trumpeter*. Following this, it is sent to the printer to be printed, collated, stapled, labeled for mailing, and bundled for shipment. In all, it is a great labor that requires hundreds of hours of work and thousands of dollars to operate. Since the very beginning, *The Gospel Trumpeter* has been mailed to subscribers without a given subscription price, so as to make it available to all who wish to receive it. Many send regular contributions for this endeavor, and the local congregation pays all the costs that exceed the contributions. We truly appreciate the Lord for His help as well as those whom He has laid on them a burden to work in this ministry.

## Statement of Condition for 12 months ending January 31, 2015

|   | Income             | Expenses            |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Donations/Offerings</b>                        | <b>\$36,186.00</b> |                     |
| <b>Wages</b> .....                                |                    | <b>46,360.00</b>    |
| <b>Payroll Taxes/Insurance/Workers' Comp</b> .... |                    | <b>23,506.00</b>    |
| <b>Supplies</b> .....                             |                    | <b>\$ 34,854.00</b> |
| <b>Equipment Purchased</b> .....                  |                    | <b>6,211.00</b>     |
| <b>Postage</b> .....                              |                    | <b>73,205.00</b>    |
| <b>Maintenance &amp; Repairs</b> .....            |                    | <b>5,180.00</b>     |
| <b>Miscellaneous Expenses</b> .....               |                    | <b>5,861.00</b>     |
| <b>Subtotals</b>                                  | <b>\$36,186.00</b> |                     |
| <b>\$195,177.00</b>                               |                    |                     |

# The Great Tribulation



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

## **Suffering Tribulation**

There are lots of false doctrines running rampant in the pulpits and on the airwaves. Many people seem to believe almost anything that is heralded across the pulpits today, such as false millenniums, false eternal security, prayers for the dead, raptures, tribulations, and a thousand year reign. This is just to name a few that seem to get the attention of the masses in religion.

First, we want to look at what the word *tribulation* means. It means "suffering, misfortune, pain, and distress." Another word that you often hear with it is *great*, and that means "enormous, huge, large, grand, or big." Putting the two

words together would mean huge suffering and enormous distress.

Now we want to look at the subject of tribulation and ask this question: Will there be a great tribulation in the future? The only way to find the answer is to study the Word of God. Jesus said there would be tribulation. He said in John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

The church of the morning time lived in tribulation. Acts 14:22 says, "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into

the kingdom of God."

The morning church suffered much tribulation. In 1 Thessalonians 3:4 Paul wrote, "For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." Tribulation, suffering, and persecution was a way of life for the early church.

One of the greatest persecutors of the Church of God was Saul, who later became known as Paul. You can read in Acts 9:1-2: "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were

men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." Saul was one who breathed out violence, threatenings, and cruelty. This shows the inward rage, or the disposition of his mind, his wrath, his malice, his envy, and his blood-thirstiness. He illustrated the riches of divine grace in his conversion.

In the Amplified Bible David said in Psalm 27:11-12: "Teach me Your way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain and even path because of my enemies [those who lie in wait for me]. Give me not up to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen up against me; they breathe out cruelty and violence."

As the church today, we have never witnessed what the morning-time church went through. So far in this country, we have been protected by laws that govern the behavior of most people. However, as the lawless gain control, things will begin to appear. Proverbs 29:2 says, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." As a nation, we are losing our respect and the things that made this nation great. These things are gradually slipping away, one by one. The state of Ohio is still against same-sex marriage, but it is being challenged. Those in favor of it will probably get an activist judge somewhere to overrule the will of the people.

### Confirming the Covenant

Doctrinal messages are necessary to build the Church of God. They are what solidifies and amplifies the church; they bring the church to greater heights. The Church of God is not just a church among churches. She is separate and distinct, and she is the only one that can take the cardinal teachings of the church. She is the only one who can abide by every one of them.

Daniel 9:27 says, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and

the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

False religion refers to the "he" in the first part of this verse as an antichrist. However, the word antichrist is not found in the Old Testament, but it is used by only one writer in the New Testament, and that is John. He used the word "antichrist" three times in 1 John and once in 2 John. The false teaching is that "he," or the antichrist, will confirm the covenant with the literal Jews, or Israel of old. They say that "he" will confirm the covenant with the literal Jew and Palestine during the seventieth week mentioned in the Book of Daniel, and those in false religion still put that seventieth week out in the future. However, the "he" mentioned in verse 27 is the same one mentioned in the rest of the verses, and that "he" is Jesus Christ. The only One who can confirm the covenant is the One who gave the covenant.

Mark 16:19-20 reads: "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." The word *confirm* means "to prove, to back up, to authenticate."

Romans 15:8 tells us, "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." So we can see that Daniel 9:27 is talking about Jesus Christ. When the Gospel is preached under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the witness of God is there to confirm it.

It is necessary to digress to look at what is taught by most of the religious sects in our world. Most commentators agree on the first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel. They have that straight, but they differ on the seventieth week. They say there is a break between the sixty-ninth

and the seventieth week. They say the Holy Spirit is gathering out the church, and when this is complete, God's clock will start to tick again, because He will be dealing with the Jews again.

### Who Is the New Testament Jew?

Romans 2:28-29 states: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Anyone who is not a New Testament Jew is a Gentile. You are a New Testament Jew if you are saved. If a person was going to bring the literal Jew back into the picture, then he would have to go back to the letter of the law. We read in 2 Corinthians 3:6, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter [he was talking about the old covenant], but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Romans 7:6 states, "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

You should not entertain the Jehovah Witness or the Seventh Day Adventist people who knock on your door. These Sabbath keepers will tell you that if you keep one part of the law but do not keep the other part, you are guilty of not keeping the whole law. If you went back to the letter, or to the Old Testament, you would also have to go back to the old temple.

In Matthew 23:38 Jesus said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." It did not used to be their house; it used to be God's house. However, when God moved out of that old temple and called it "your house," He said it was "left unto you desolate." He was talking about the place of worship for old Israel.

How do we know that Jesus was talking about the old temple?

Matthew 24:1 says, "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple."

### "The Abomination of Desolation"

The words "great tribulation" are used three times in the Bible, although the word *tribulation* is used more than that. The words "great tribulation" are recorded once in the Book of Matthew and twice in the Book of Revelation. Revelation 2:22 reads, "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds."

John was writing, uncovering the true condition of Babylon, that seduces people into committing spiritual fornication. Now we know that literal fornication is wrong, but spiritual fornication is just as wrong. When you are married to Christ, you must not commit spiritual fornication. In 2 Corinthians 11:2 Paul wrote, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Because of the Jews lack of repentance, Paul was going to go through much tribulation.

Revelation 7:13-14 reads: "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." John saw a picture of a great host of people coming through the masses of religion and confusion and great tribulation and finding their way back to Mount Zion and the unity of God's people.

We read in Matthew 24:15-22: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them

which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Matthew used two words that stand out, and they are "abomination" and "desolation." The word *abomination* means "a dislike, a disgrace, a hated thing." The same word is also used in Proverbs 6:16-19, which reads: "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

Let us look at the word "abomination" in another Book. Jesus said in Luke 21:20-23: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, [Luke wrote to the Gentiles, but Matthew wrote to the Jews. I want you to notice their expressions. Although their words are different, both mean the same thing. Luke was very plain about what he was speaking of.] then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath

upon this people."

What was "the abomination of desolation" that Jesus warned the people about? It is very evident. Luke tells us it was the Roman army, which was hated by the Jews. Again, Jesus told the Jews, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh" (Luke 21:20).

### The Time Element

Now let us look at the time element and to whom Jesus was talking. Is this event still out in the future? Some teach that it is, but you need to let the Word of God speak. Matthew 24:1-3,15 says: "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him. . . . And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately [notice that He was talking to His disciples], saying, Tell us, when shall these things be [or take place]? . . . When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation. . . ."

This was something that people could see. The old temple of God, used by the Israelites of old, was left to them desolate. In other words, God was no longer going to accept worship according to the old law. Luke 16:16 says, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

History lines up with the words of Jesus, and there was a desolation that took place in Jerusalem in A. D. 70. Jesus said there would be great tribulation. In Luke 21:22 He said, "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." Jesus said in Mark 13:19, "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall

be." God is through with old temple worship, and He does not have any plans to restore it.

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

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

### **Vengeance Without Mercy**

In the literal destruction of Jerusalem, blood was as common as water, and it was poured out like water. Matthew 24:21 tells us, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Many have read the account of this written by Flavius Josephus, who was a Jewish historian. Josephus and Eusebius (a Roman historian) wrote a lot of history of the church that we otherwise would not have known. Josephus said the number of those carried captive during the whole war was ninety-seven thousand, and the number of those who perished during the siege

was eleven hundred thousand.

During this time, before the war began, Josephus wrote some interesting things. He said there was a man who walked about Jerusalem every day and uttered this phrase as if it was a premeditated vow: "Woe, woe to Jerusalem." Some actually beat him up, but he did not speak to those who beat him up. He did not even say anything to those who gave him food. This was his reply to every man he talked to: "Woe, woe to Jerusalem." God was using his voice to keep reminding the people that a woe from God was coming upon them. Josephus said he cried that way for seven years and five months, even at festivals, where his cry was the loudest. He never grew hoarse, and he never grew tired; he kept it up until he saw his message fulfilled at the scene. When dying, he uttered those words as his last words: "Woe, woe to Jerusalem"; then he gave up the ghost.

We have read in history and heard in our present day of terrible dictators and terrible methods of cruelty, but nothing ever came close to the destruction of literal Jerusalem. Hitler was a well-known dictator who killed millions of Jews, but even the Holocaust could not be compared to the desolation of Jerusalem. There was torture like there has never been on this earth.

Some tried to escape the siege after Jerusalem was surrounded. They actually swallowed pieces of gold so they would have a means of living if they could escape. When the Romans heard of the plan, they began cutting them open to get the gold. Josephus said in one night, two thousand people who tried to escape were cut open. Many were destitute of food and water, and they would go outside the walls to search for food only to be captured. Some mothers on the brink of starvation killed their own infants, roasted them, and ate them. An average of five hundred people were killed and crucified every night. Several were nailed to each stake.

Joseph Stalin and Saddam Hussein were both well-known dictators, but they never did anything that was as devastating as what happened to Jerusalem. Jesus said in Matthew 23:37, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Old Israel killed the prophets and tried to stomp out the message. They ignored the Law, and they ignored the Messiah. When they did that, they filled up the measure, and that was not going to be ignored, because the wrath of God was going to be poured out without mercy.

God help you never to see the wrath of God poured out without mercy in your life. Too many people discount the Word of God. They feel there is not going to be any retribution, but they need to read the Word of God. Ecclesiastes 8:11-13 says: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God."

Dear one, if you are not saved, a day is coming when you will wish you would have allowed the Spirit of God to "gather" you. Daniel 9:24, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."

What is the "holy city"? Isaiah 52:1 tells us, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the

holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Revelation 21:10 reads, "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."

### The Cup of Wrath

Again, Jesus said in Matthew 24:21, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time [to the time of Jesus], no, nor ever shall be [that means in the future]." Such cruelty has never been nor ever shall be since the great tribulation. Prince Titus reportedly refused to accept the wreath of victory after the war was over. He said that the victory did not come through his own efforts, but that he merely served as an instrument of God's wrath.

I read an account in Josephus where Titus and one of his soldiers searched the city. They went to see how the city was fortified and to see what would be the best ways to attack. As he and one of his officers were riding down the road, the road was empty. Suddenly a group of Israelites jumped out from the bushes and surrounded them. Prince Titus told his lieutenant, instead of running, to go right straight at them. So they turned their horses and ran straight at the army of Israel. Israel, with their spears, darts, and swords, did not lay a hand on them; they went right through the midst of the army as if God was protecting them. Titus went back, gathered his armies, and told them what he had seen.

Prince Titus was merciful. It was recorded that he delayed the attacks on the city to allow the Jews time for repentance. I want you to read an excerpt from the book, "The Wars of the Jews" by Josephus. Josephus, who was a Jew himself, was sent by Prince Titus to try to convince his own countrymen to give up.

*"While Josephus was making this exhortation to the Jews, many of them jested upon him from the wall, and many reproached him; nay, some threw their darts at him: but when he could not himself persuade them by such open good advice, he betook himself to the histories belonging to their own nation, and cried out aloud, O miserable creatures! are you so unmindful of those that used to assist you, that you will fight by your weapons and by your hands against the Romans? When did we ever conquer any other nation by such means? and when was it that God, who is the Creator of the Jewish people, did not avenge them when they had been injured? Will not you turn again, and look back, and consider whence it is that you fight with such violence, and how great a Supporter you have profanely abused? Will not you recall to mind the prodigious things done for your forefathers and this holy place, and how great enemies of yours were by him subdued under you? I even tremble myself in declaring the works of God before your ears, that are unworthy to hear them; however, hearken to me, that you may be informed how you fight not only against the Romans, but against God himself."*

Great tribulation followed, and bodies were piled up. They suffered starvation as never seen before that time. Titus cut off all their supplies, including all the water and food supplies. He knew it would not be long before all the food inside the city would be gone, and they would become too weak to even fight. However, Titus kept hoping that a white flag of surrender would come up.

Once when he went to attack, he just backed away as to give them time. He thought surely they would surrender, but that did not happen. Barbaric conditions, such as mothers eating their young and people turning on one another, prevailed as hunger became stronger. Those who hoarded food were found and killed. Titus' army captured and killed

those who tried to get away during the night by going over the wall. Conditions were so barbaric that some things that happened are too graphic to repeat.

Why did this happen? Why would such a loving God turn upon His own people whom He loved, guided, and delivered so often from the enemy? Well, the Jews stoned the prophets, despised God's law, and turned down the Messiah. They filled up the cup of wrath, and when the cup was full, mercy was no longer extended to them. Mercy comes through Jesus Christ.

### The Sin of Unbelief

We read in Romans 11:16-19: "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, 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."

Why were the branches broken off? They were broken off because of unbelief. One sin that besets people yet today is unbelief. Jesus said in Luke 12:48, "But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." What was He talking about? He was speaking of the knowledge and understanding in the light that those Jews had and rejected: the light of the new covenant and their rejection of the Messiah. Where you have much truth, the judgment is going to be much tougher than with someone who has little light and understanding. God had given the Jews so much.

The ugly sin of unbelief works today as much as it did in old

Israel's day. We are going to live in tribulation. We are still living in this present world; therefore, we are subject to many surrounding conditions. The man of the world without Christ does not have it better than the Christian has it. The truth is, you and I have it quite good. The Lord wants us to be settled, to be grounded in the Truth, and to obey and walk in the light that He has given each of us.

You may ask, "Did all the Jews perish in the siege?" No, thank God, God always makes room for obedience. Matthew 24:15-16 tells us: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains." Those who obeyed the words of Jesus escaped the terrible siege that was to come. Where did they escape to? They escaped to the mountains, and that is where God's people are secure today, in Mount Zion, the Church of the Living God.

Whenever you hear the words "great tribulation," you can always say, "Yes, that was terrible, but thank God, there will never be one like it again." The morning-time church lived in tribulation; it was a way of life to have their lives threatened for being Christians. We do not live under such conditions today. We have laws prohibiting that. However, the Roman law was different. They took the law into their own hands and persecuted the Christians. Tribulation was at an all-time high. Saul, one of the greatest converts to the church, was a leader of persecution. The name *Saul* means "destroyer," so God changed his name to Paul.

There was a great tribulation. If people try to point out the tribulation under Hitler and the Holocaust, you need to remember that the Holocaust was not like the great tribulation that took place at Jerusalem. There was much suffering during the Holocaust. People were marched to the gas chambers, and the soldiers told them that they were

being sent there to shower; then the gas was turned on, and they were killed by the thousands. However, the torture of the great tribulation was even greater. Women were cut open alive by being slit down the stomach with a sword; that was terrible torture. Undoubtedly, many of them did not die right away.

Along with the false teachings about the great tribulation comes other teachings like the antichrist. You need to study who the antichrist really is. John told us there are many antichrists in 1 John 2:18. John told us in 1 John 2:19, "They went out from us, but they were not of us." Who was the "us" that John was speaking of? He was talking about the Church of God and himself. The great tribulation has come and gone. Those who fled to the mountains escaped the siege. Josephus said those who believed the words of Jesus and fled to the mountains were safe.

*(Compact Disc TR-1392)*

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Are you open to consideration of seventh seal light?

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These questions & many more are addressed in this book.

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

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

**Availability to be announced!**



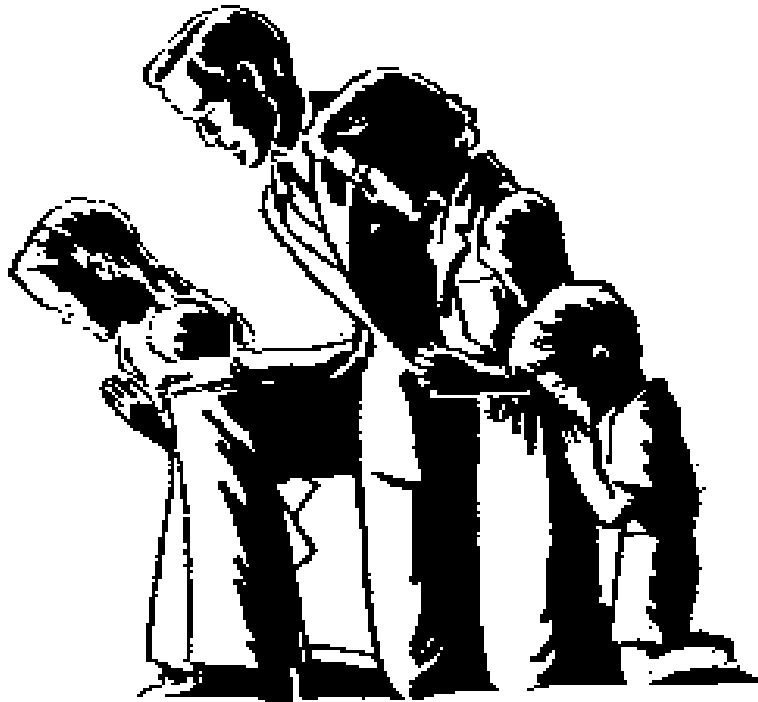
2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done

foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

Hosea 14:9 Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of

the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

# Doing Right in the Sight of God



*Brother Irwin Seshier*

## **The Seriousness of the Time**

I believe that every child of God wants to do the things that are right to please God. We are living in a world where many people want to have their own way. They want to have what others have. Saint of God, you must be careful not to want what others have, but you must be

thankful for what God has blessed you with.

I was talking to an individual some time ago, and he and his wife had just gotten back from Cuba. He said the people there do not have very much, but they are a clean, thankful people. Are you truly thankful for what you have? God has given us much, speaking of the

material side, but the spiritual side is much more important. We must not let spiritual things slip. We need to keep those things right before us, because if we do not, most likely those things are going to slip away.

Saint of God, you must be very careful that you do not allow too much of this old world to interfere with your walk with God. The Lord

hates it when you place other things before Him. He wants to have first place in your heart; He wants first place in everything. Letting material wealth overrun your soul is so easy. We live in a country where people want lots of things. There is nothing wrong with wanting things, but do not let a desire for this old world's material goods interfere with your walk with God. Many people will work and work to gain this and that. As they work, who suffers? Their children suffer. They do not get the basic things that they need.

Your children are small for only a short time, and then they grow up. If they see that you put material wealth first, you will fail to win them as they get older. We all have cares, and letting the cares of this world overrun your soul is so easy to do. God wants to help you with those cares. He wants to give you guidance to solve the problems in your life. Many people want to turn to other things, and then they turn to God as a last resort. You should put God first to take care of those cares.

The enemy of souls will entice you to indulge in all kinds of worldly things. He will let you partake of things that are not really sinful but time consuming. There are many things in life that consume a lot of time, and if you are not careful, those time-consuming things will interfere with your walk with God. It is past time to get serious with God.

Friend, this world is not going to last much longer. We are on the downward slope, so to speak. You need to get serious about doing the things that are right in the sight of God. It is time to be serious. The enemy is having a heyday with young people. He is getting them involved with time-consuming things, things that take their minds off taking care of their souls. As a parent, you need to step up to the job that God gave you to do. You need to direct your children so they will know what they should and should not do. Too many parents

want to be friends with their children instead of parenting them. God wants you to direct, to mold, and to show your children exactly what they need to do in the home.

### **"Harden Not Your Heart"**

When I was growing up and it was time for church, I did not tell my parents, "I don't think I want to go." They said: "Get in the car. We're going to the house of God." I am thankful for parents who did that. I am glad that my parents told me exactly what I should and should not do. They had God in their hearts. They could see that I was going to be an adult one day and that I was going to have a family of my own. If I had not gotten that guidance as a child, I would not have the benefits of that guidance today. I thank God for a godly heritage.

The enemy wants to get young people involved in worldly things. They may say to themselves, "Well, if I don't do this, I will not have any friends." Young people, some young people want to get you involved in sinful habits. They will lure you to do things that you are not comfortable in doing. It is better not to do certain things than to do them and split hell wide open. Exodus 23:2 says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment."

I am concerned that many young people are following others and getting themselves deeper and deeper into the things of this old world. The deeper you go into the things of this world, the harder it is to find the mercies of God. Too many people have become careless when it comes to their worship of God. They think they can turn back to God any time they please. Friend, you are not going to turn back to God unless He speaks to you. God has to speak to you. You may think, "I am going to do this, and then I will get right with God." You do not know when you are going to leave

this world. You do not know when the Lord is going to take you into eternity. You may not have a chance to make things right.

Many people in sin think the mercies of God are hard to find. Why is this? Their hearts have become hardened. Friend, do not let your heart become so hard that God cannot talk to you. Many people have become hardened to the Gospel. There is a real danger in hardening your heart. If you harden your heart, you are exposing yourself to lots of terrible things down the road. Psalm 95:8 says, "Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness."

Many people think that wealth will take care of all their problems. Wealth is not the answer. Working and trying to accumulate as much as you can is not the answer. It is a fatal mistake to assume that God's goal for your life is material prosperity or popular success as the world defines it. The world bases popularity on what you do, where you go, and how much money you have. The world does not care whether or not you are saved. All the world cares about is how many educational degrees you have, who you know, and what you know. If you tell most people that you are a born again child of God, they do not want to talk to you. They do not want to have anything to do with you.

### **"Abstain From Fleshly Lusts"**

The world gauges success by materialism. Abundant life has nothing to do with material abundance. Faithfulness to God does not guarantee success in a career or even in a ministry. You should never focus on temporary crowns. You need to seek those things which are above, spiritual things that are going to last eternally. Too many people are living far below their privilege. There is a God in Heaven who cares about you. He wants to see you do well. God wants you to

tap into spiritual things. When you start doing the things that the flesh wants to do, you are shutting off God's power. It is very important that you keep your heart, your attitude, and your behavior right.

First Peter 2:11 says, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." Things of the world will war against you. The enemy wants you to think about negative things. If you focus on negative things, that is all your mind wants to feast on. I like to be around people who are positive and uplifting. If you are around people who are negative, you are going to start having a negative attitude. You need God's protection for your soul.

The power of God is awesome, is it not? The power of God is very powerful! When you have made a commitment that you are going to follow God, you must protect your soul. Today lots of people have protection around their homes. Crime is on the increase, and many people have alarm systems and surveillance cameras. They protect their property, but they leave their souls exposed. You need to protect your soul. You need to be careful of what you look at because your soul is at stake. God can give you strength and power, and He answers prayer. Oftentimes people are not really where they need to be spiritually to receive these things.

Psalms 136:1 says, "O give thanks unto the LORD; [Why should you give thanks to the Lord?] for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." When you come across a temptation and the enemy is really working you over, you need to say to yourself, "I am going to give thanks to the Lord because He is good, and His mercy endures forever." Many people are taken down by the enemy because they do not come back at him with a Scripture. The devil hates it when you respond with a Scripture or a good, old Church of God song. If you are around individuals who are doing things that you feel uncomfortable

in doing, you should get away from them and then give thanks to the Lord.

You do not have to give in to the enemy or go his way. You can go God's way, and you can do it with His power. You cannot go God's way in your own strength, but you can do it through His power. You can overcome all things through God's strength. The enemy will bring fear, doubt, and discouragement upon you. We all have gone through discouragement, but we do not have to dwell there. We must move on. There are better things to think about. God has been good. Those good things far outweigh the negative things.

### **Redeem the Time**

Too many people want to dwell on the negative. What do you see when you look at the newspaper? You do not see good news. It is the negative news, or the bad news, that sells. If you are not careful, you will let negativity slip right into your walk with God. I am thankful that God is much stronger than that. Fear is a terrible thing. Lots of people have different kinds of fears. The Lord knows all about those fears, and He can help you to overcome them.

We read in 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." I thank God there is power in the name of Jesus.

You can call on the name of Jesus when you are down. If you are going through the valley of decision, you can call on His name. There is power in the name of Jesus. Lazarus experienced that power. The blind man, the lame man, the lepers, the one who was possessed with demons saw the power in that name. Have you tapped into that power?

Many times people use other means to try to serve God. Money has the greatest potential to replace God in your life. Materialism sidetracks more people from serving God than anything else. People may

say, "After I achieve my financial goals, I'm going to serve God." That is a very foolish statement. When Jesus is your Master, money serves you. On the other hand, if money is your master, you will become a slave to money. Being wealthy and having money is not a sin, but failing to use it for God's glory is.

God has blessed us with many things in our lives. He knows exactly what it takes to be content. No doubt, you would like to have more money, but God knows exactly what would happen if you had more and how it would affect your church attendance. How would your walk with God be? How would your service to other people be? Would you be the same type of person that you are now if you had millions of dollars? God knows. This is the reason that He gives you exactly what you need.

Servants of God are always more concerned about ministry than money. We are more concerned about people's souls and where they are going to spend eternity. The child of God wants to see people saved and bodies healed.

The Bible lets us know that God uses money to test a person's faithfulness as a servant. Luke 16:11 says, "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" How you manage your money affects how much God can bless your life. Are you receiving blessings in the way you should? Are you doing right in the sight of God? You need to take a look at where you are spiritually. How does the Lord see you? Are you using your time wisely? Ephesians 5:16 reads, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." We are living in evil times. So many evil things are happening in our world today. Freedoms are being taken away. As the Church of God, we have a job to do. We are still the light set upon a hill. We are the people who need to be a light to the whole world, to let others know there is hope and joy in serving Jesus.

The enemy will get you so occupied with the things of this old world that you will begin to believe that you do not even need God in your life. You do need God in your life each and every day. Friend, if you do not take the time to be with God, He will not take the time to be with you. You must not forget God. You must keep His glorious and marvelous ways in the forefront of your life. You need to remember what He has done for you and how He has protected you. We live in such a restless world. People are dissatisfied with many things in their lives. We need to be thankful for what God has given us.

### **Do Not Be a Quitter**

Complaining will not get you anywhere with the Lord. You need to stay right with God. You are responsible. A great many people out in the world are selling their souls for practically anything. People think that the Lord will overlook this or that. They think that because several years go by, God has forgotten everything. You need to ask, "Lord, is there anything in my life that I need to make right?" If you ask the Lord that question, He will point out whatever needs to be corrected in your life. Too many people think, "Well, the Lord has forgotten." People may forget, but God does not forget. People are exchanging their souls for the habits of life, the lusts of this old world, and the pride of life.

In Matthew 16:24 we read, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Many people do not want to follow Christ because they have too many hindrances in their lives. In order for you to follow Christ the way you need to, you may need to discard some things. You may need to get things out of your life that drag you down.

Matthew 16:25-26 says: "For whosoever will save his life shall

lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Many people are doing some exchanging, and it is getting to a point where they are running out of time. God has shown them things that they need to do, and they are still trying to exchange. Friend, if the Lord has pointed out anything in your life that you need to take care of, you need to do it now. Why? You have no guarantee of tomorrow. God is a good God; He is a faithful God who will point out things in your life that you need to do, if you will only ask Him. It is a waste when people will do all these things out in the world and refuse to follow Jesus Christ.

I do not know any other life. I was raised in a family where my mother and father always tried to find a Church of God congregation. I am thankful that the Lord had His hand on our lives. It is so wonderful to be in the will of God. We could have been rambling around in false religion, but my parents would never have been satisfied with nominal religion. I am glad that they were dissatisfied with it.

Saint of God, do not give up seeking honest-hearted individuals. There are still ones seeking the true Church of God. There are still people out there who really want the Truth. They are sick of what they are in. That puts even more responsibility on us to live right, to dress modestly, and to be a true representation of the Church of the Living God, not an imitation, not something like the Church of God, but true Church of God. There are many imitations. That is the reason people are so dissatisfied. They see a name, but they do not see the true representation. We are responsible. We should never want to quit. There is still a work to do. There are still people out in the world who need help. Here is an inspirational poem entitled "Don't Quit."

*When things go wrong, as they  
sometimes will,  
When the road you're trudging seems  
all uphill,  
When the funds are low and the debts  
are high  
And you want to smile but you have to  
sigh,  
When care is pressing you down a bit,  
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.*

*Life is strange with its twists and  
turns,  
As every one of us sometimes learns,  
And many a failure turns about,  
When he might have won if he'd stuck  
it out.  
Don't give up, though the pace seems  
slow –  
You may succeed with another blow.*

*Often the goal is nearer than  
It seems to a faint and faltering man;  
Often the struggler has given up  
When he might have captured the  
victor's cup,  
And he learned too late, when the  
night slipped down,  
How close he was to the golden crown.*

*Success is failure turned inside out –  
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,  
And you never can tell how close you  
are –  
It may be near when it seems so far;  
So stick to the fight when you're  
hardest hit –  
It's when things seem worst that you  
mustn't quit.*

I do not want to be a quitter. I want to go forward with Jesus Christ. I want to go to Heaven, and I want to take others with me. Every true child of God wants to take others with him. I ask you, Are you serious about the things of God? Do you want to be a better child of God? Do you want to be exactly where God wants you to be, doing the right thing in the sight of God? That is the question that I want to leave with you. Are you doing the things that are right in the sight of God?

*(Compact Disc TR-1173)*

# My Personal Testimony

When I was young, I lived in the country, and we went to church only when my mother allowed this one lady to pick up my brothers and sisters and myself, which was maybe three times a year. As a result, I did not know anything about God. One day when my mother let me stay with my aunt, who was a Seventh Day Adventist. She gave me a Bible, and I treasured it very much.

When I got home, often I took the Bible out in the backyard and sat down and read it. I could not understand it, but for some reason I still read it. I remember when I read Matthew 18:2-6: "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

I did not understand these Scriptures, but I loved them. I was only about fourteen or fifteen years of age at the time, but I thought to myself, "I would like to see Jesus and be with Him." I did not know that some day I was going to get saved and learn more about Him. One day when I became older and was babysitting, my twin brother got saved. He told me how he put his cigarettes on the altar and gave up his drinking. He was so thrilled, and he told me I should go to church too. I

hate to say it, but he died lost. His buddies got him to start drinking again. He told me they all bought him a beer, but when he started drinking regularly again, he said they would not buy him any more beer.

My mother was against my going to church and told me to stop wearing dresses. In later years, she started attending out of town revival meetings with me. She was under conviction once, but sad to say, she would not give her heart to God.

I had no way to go to church because I had no car, and I was living with the people for whom I babysat, cooked, and cleaned house. The people for whom I was working lived close to Frazeytsburg, Ohio. I was making \$30.00 every two weeks, but I had to give my dad \$15.00 when I got paid. My dad would come to see me on my payday because he wanted the money so he could drink; he was an alcoholic. When I came to my twelfth year of school, the lady for whom I was working told me that I did not have to give him any more of my money because I was not living with them, and I was buying all my school clothes and books. So I told him I could not give him any more money because I had to buy my school clothes and my own books, so my parents never came to see me there any more.

While I was in high school, I dated a Catholic young man. I told myself that I would go to church with him, but thank God, He did not let me get mixed up with that religion. Soon I started going to the Church of God and got saved. I remember one day while I was babysitting that I was hanging clothes on the line, and the lady's husband that I baby-

sat for came by on the tractor. I was wearing my shorts, and I began to feel as if I was naked, so I went in the house and changed clothes. When she came home for dinner and we were sitting at the table, the husband said to me, "Didn't I see you in shorts earlier?"

I said, "Yes."

He asked, "Why did you change?"

I could not answer him then, because I had just gotten saved and I had never heard any preaching on shorts at that time. God had shown me that it was immodest to wear shorts.

My aunt and uncle talked to my brother and told him they would take me to church. I rode with them for years, until after I graduated. We had some good times talking about God and singing songs while they were taking me home. Then I heard that Brother and Sister Eddie Evans lived down the lane from where I was babysitting, and they started taking me to church. God always made a way for me to get to church.

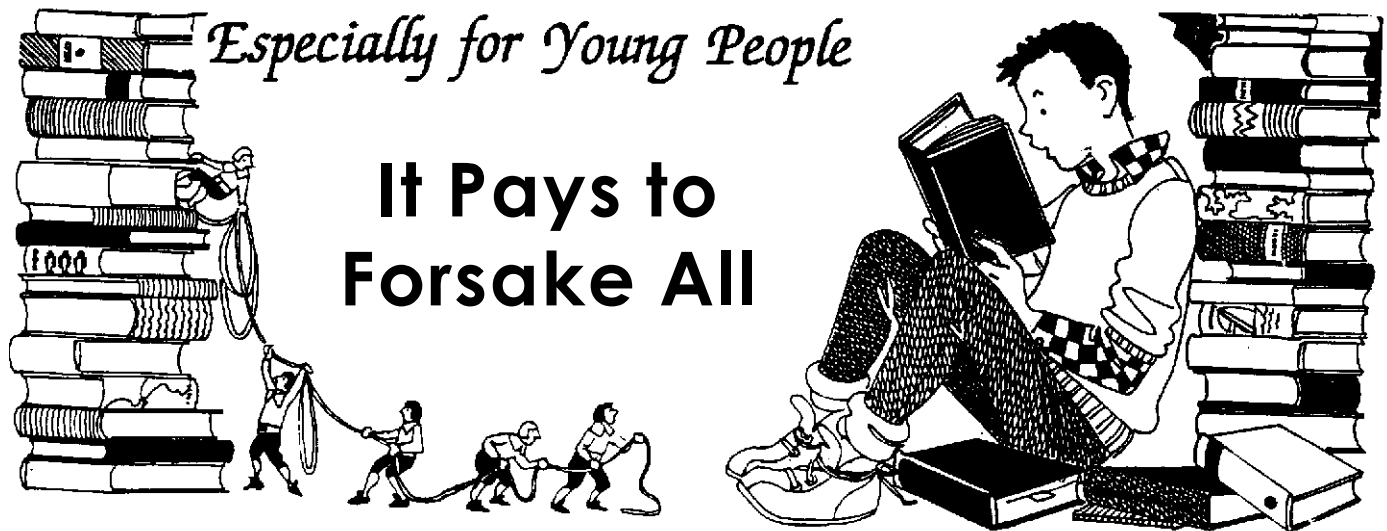
God has been very good to me through all my years. He has answered many prayers for me and protected me from many, many things. I never did drink, smoke, or cuss. I think I did not do these things because I had seen and heard all of this when I was growing up and hated it.

Young person, you need to listen to God when your pastor preaches about marrying without seeking God's will in the matter. When I got married, I thought my husband was saved. He sang in the choir, but not long after I was married, the hardships began. Had it not been for God, I would not be saved today.

Many times I cried at night and just wanted to run away, but where could I have gone with three young children? Often I would remember that Brother E. A. Wilson preached you cannot run away from trials, so I had to pray a lot. Had it not been for God's mercy, it is hard to say where I would be today.

I heard Brother Emerson Wilson preach against women cutting their hair, but I did not understand that at the time. One day I went to have my niece cut my hair, and as I sat on the chair waiting,

*[continued on page 25]*



*Especially for Young People*

## It Pays to Forsake All

At the age of eighteen, I had a longing in my soul to be saved. My father and mother were not Christians; therefore, I had no encouragement to live for Christ in our home. A lady in the community in which I was reared heard of a great revival conducted by two well-known evangelists. She wrote and asked for them to come to east Tennessee to conduct a revival meeting. They came to a schoolhouse that was used for a church, located not far from my father's home, and started services. The meeting was widely advertised, and the attendance was exceedingly large. All the seats were taken and we did not have standing room. The songs were beautiful and the preaching wonderful. This revival appealed to me very differently from any other revival I had ever attended. I could hardly wait until the hour came when I could return to the dear old schoolhouse to listen to the sweetest songs I had ever heard.

I enjoyed the preaching, but I was especially impressed with the singing. The room was filled with the glory of God, and a number of my friends were gloriously saved. They came to me and lovingly put their arms around me and invited me to come to Jesus. I stood by my seat in the congregation, trembling

and weeping, as they sang the old song, "Lost Forever." I wanted to be saved. I desired to go with my friends and kneel before the Lord for prayer and consecrate my young life to Jesus, but my dear father whom I loved so much—he was near to my heart, he cared for me when I would not care for myself—unexpectedly forbade me to go to the altar. He said, "We are not acquainted with those ministers. We do not understand their teaching, and if you go to the altar during their services, you will have to leave home."

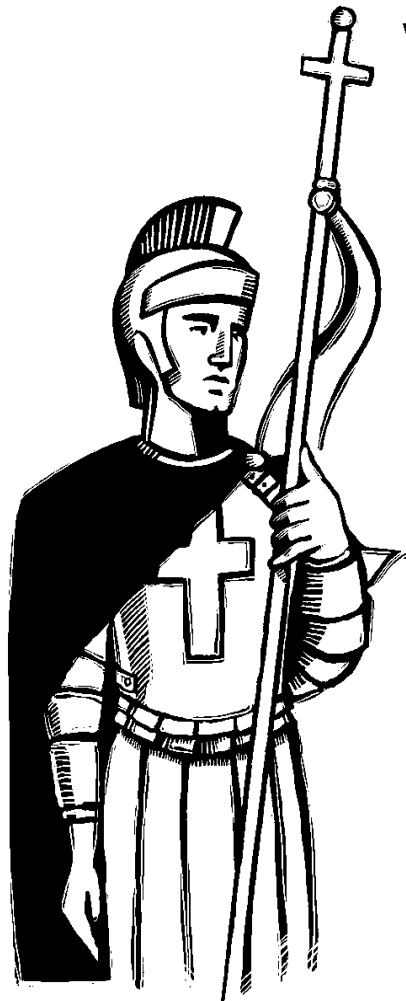
I believe my father was honest in his convictions, but one can be honest and be wrong. I was much perplexed. My soul was lost. The thought came to me, "What shall I do?" Presently I decided, "I shall have to give up father or give up Heaven. I cannot sacrifice all Heaven to please my earthly father. I shall have no place to go in this world, but I shall have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. A mansion in the house of God will mean more to me than a home on this earth." My soul was awakened to its awful condition. I longed for a real experience of full salvation; so I said "Good-bye" to my father and to the world of sin, and with a broken heart I made my way to the

altar of prayer.

I called on God, agonizingly and believingly. I had a struggle over one thing that came to my mind. A Christian friend with whom I had been acquainted all my life came and knelt by the altar and told me what to do to be saved. He offered an earnest prayer for me. I said, "Yes, Lord, I will give up all for you." Then suddenly the love of God came into my soul. Praise God, my heart was bathed with Heaven's sunshine. Smilingly, I looked up through tears and told my friends, "Jesus has saved me." Praise God, the change was real. I went on my way home rejoicing in my Savior's love.

Days and weeks sped by pleasantly, but at last the test came. One dark, lonely night my father scolded me severely for attending church. He informed me in unmistakable terms that I would have to give up my religion or leave his door. He said, "Pack your clothes! You will have to go." As I looked at his large, flashing eyes, I knew he meant what he said. I had not forgotten my consecration to the Lord the night He saved me from my sins; therefore, I said gently to my father, "I shall pack my clothes and leave home." I had no place to go, but I thought of what David said, "When my father and my

*[continued on page 20]*



Wherefore  
take unto  
you the  
whole  
armour of  
God, that  
ye may be  
able... to  
stand.

Ephesians 6:13

*Matthew 24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*

*13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

*14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

## He That Shall Endure

*Brother E. David Stegmeier*

### Truth Is Light

It is my desire to see people saved, to see them established in the Truth, and to see them continue to the very end of their lives. Too many start, but they do not continue. Many whom I have known down through my life are either no longer serving the Lord or in false religion. It is a quandary to me why they give up serving such a wonderful Heavenly Father and quit living this awesome Christian life.

The Apostle Paul said in 1 Timothy 2:4, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." God wants us all to know the Truth, and He wants us to continue in the

Truth.

Light is God's Truth revealed to you, or that which God reveals to you. In Ephesians 5:13 we read, "But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." This verse in the Amplified Bible says, "But when anything is exposed *and* reprov'd by the light, it is made visible *and* clear; and where everything is visible *and* clear there is light."

Years ago, probably three or four years after I began to pastor, God began to speak to me. We were going through a valley of decision and looking at some new understanding (not new Truth, for Truth has always been Truth). One morn-

ing God spoke to me from John 8:31, which reads, "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." As long as we are living, God is going to give us greater understanding of His Eternal Word, and we must not draw back from that which He reveals to us.

Two synonyms for the word *continue* are "endure" and "remain." I knew that I needed to study very seriously. I made this statement to my wife: "We need to watch our attitude." When something is presented to us, sometimes the devil comes along and tells us not to look into it. We must be careful to have the right attitude. Jesus said in John 12:35-36: "Yet a little while is the

light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light."

I believe with every ounce of strength that we have the light. I am not speaking boastfully or arrogantly, but I believe that we have the truth. I am thankful for it. One songwriter wrote:

*Lord, I have started to walk in the  
light  
Shining all around me from Heaven so  
bright.*

*I've bade the world and its follies  
adieu,  
I've started with Jesus, and I'm going  
through.*

*I'd rather walk with Jesus alone,  
And have for my pillow, like Jacob,  
a stone,  
Living each moment with His face  
in view  
Than shrink from the pathway and  
fail to go through.*

*Many there are that start the race,  
But with the light refuse to keep pace,  
Others accept it because it is new,  
But not very many expect to go  
through.*

*I'm going through. Yes, I'm going  
through.*

*I'll pay the price, whatever others do;  
I'll take the way with the Lord's  
despised few,*

*I've started with Jesus, and I'm going  
through.*

### **Holding Firm Under Adversity**

Sometimes the price is very costly. Unfortunately the price is too great for too many people. Jesus spoke of the price in Luke 14:26, which states, "If any man come to me, and hate not [or love less] his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." God must come

first. You must not let husband, wife, son, daughter, or anyone else hinder you in your race for God. You must endure to the end.

Solomon said in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." The cost is great; it is too high for many people. I like what Jesus said in Matthew 4:19, which reads, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." I used to fish when I was a boy. When I caught a fish, my heart beat so fast. I was excited! Sometimes I would lose it, and you fishermen know how disappointing that is. As Christians, we are to fish for men.

Our Scripture text says in verse 13, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." The word *endure* means "to remain firm under adversity; to bear up as under tribulation without yielding." Paraphrasing the words of Jesus, we could say, "He that will hold firm under adversity, the same shall be saved." Countless people once served God but turned back. It troubles me to see people go back into sin or to go back into false religion. It is a quandary to me how they can leave the awesome teachings and the legacy of the Church of God. They have been turned over to having a reprobate mind.

We sing a song entitled "Joy Comes in the Morning" by Bill Gaither. It reads:

*If you've knelt beside the rubble of  
an aching, broken heart*

*When the things you gave your life  
to fall apart.*

*You're not the first to be acquainted  
with sorrow, grief, or pain*

*But the Master promised sunshine  
after rain.*

*Hold on my child, joy comes in  
the morning.*

*Your weeping only lasts for the night*

*Hold on my child, joy comes in  
the morning*

*The darkest hour means dawn is just  
in sight.*

During my forty-four years of pastoring, I have gone through some extremely difficult times. However, God has helped me to hold on, and now I have a very precious, lovely congregation. I thank God for it. The message is this: "But he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Revelation 3:11 says, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." If you have a clean, clear hold upon God, do not relinquish that hold. You must keep holding on to God's eternal hand.

### **The Downfall of King Saul**

I have chosen to study the life of King Saul, because his life could be applicable to any one of us. He was an individual who started well, but something happened, and he did not endure. Many people do not hold firmly to biblical principles, and when they experience adversities, they give up. When tribulation comes, they yield and deviate from the path of rectitude. God wants us to stay on the path of Truth and righteousness and godliness.

Titus 2:11-12 reads: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." When tribulation comes, many people yield and go back into the world. They veer away from godliness, honesty, truthfulness, and the strait and narrow pathway. At one time they were going God's way, but now they are going their own way.

If you will consider the details of the life of King Saul, I believe that you will receive valuable instruction. In the life of Saul we can see how he slowly lost his position with God. We see the details in his descent in station. First Corinthians 10:11 states, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition." The Old Testament contains



powerful lessons that still apply to us today.

First Samuel 15:1-3 reads: "Samuel also said unto Saul, The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

Verses 7-11a read: "And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt. And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly. Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed [or carried out] my commandments."

### **Israel's Desire to Be Like Other Nations**

Israel rejected the Word of God. Rather than continue as a theocracy under the control of God, they wanted to become a monarchy and be ruled by a king. Why did they want a king? First Samuel 8:4-5 tells us: "Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, [They should have considered his age and realized that he was wiser. There is something about the wisdom of older people that we need to listen to. Sometimes young people rise against older people; that is not

right.] and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."

No doubt, the people wanted some of that pomp and splendor that came from having a king. When I was a boy, I can remember the older preachers used this Scripture to speak to our congregation. There was a real drifting among the people, and rather than just have schools to educate or help preachers, they wanted to become a university. They said, "Let us have colleges like all the other churches." My pastor said the Church of God is different from all the religious movements.

A college out west sent literature to me because they wanted me to attend their college, but my pastor said not to go, because it could take away my fervency, so I never went. A danger that we need to be wary of is becoming like the world or becoming like false religion. We are under the divine rule of God.

Each congregation is autonomous, having the right of self-government. We might help one another and counsel one another, but the ultimate say is up to each local congregation and its pastor. It is not wrong for older ministers to give some advice, and sometimes that is important. Also, it is important to listen to older men and women in the congregation and older men of God. It is part of God's plan. As the church, we must be careful not to fashion our undertakings according to the religious organizations of our day, which refuse the direct rule and intervention and administration of God. We are under God's direct control. Our headquarters is in Heaven. God is in Heaven, and He is still alive.

The request of the elders of Israel for a king hurt Samuel, but God said in 1 Samuel 8:7, "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." Samuel spelled out all the things a king would require of them, such as inhuman sacrifices

and temporal goods.

Verses 19-20 read: "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations." God gave them their desire. We need to be careful of what we ask for. Psalm 106:15 tells us that God gave them their desire, but He sent leanness to their souls.

### **The Downward Spiral of Saul's Character**

Samuel anointed Saul to be Israel's first king. Let us consider briefly the downward spiral of Saul's character in hopes that it will be a help and a benefit to you. It ought to serve as a warning if you want to endure to the end. I want to endure to the end. I want to draw closer to God and become more useful in His kingdom.

First, Saul was a young man of great promise and much potential. First Samuel 9:2 states, "And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice young man and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people." Saul was from a good family. He was from the tribe of Benjamin. In the New Testament, Saul, who later became Paul, was from the same tribe. Physically speaking, Saul was the best choice. He was an outstanding young man. Saul was an individual who satisfied the people. He definitely fit in with royalty. He was tall, handsome, and noble.

When God chose a successor to King Saul (David), He said He wanted a man after His own heart. God was not so concerned about his physical attributes. When God sent Samuel to anoint David, He said to Samuel in 1 Samuel 16:7, speaking of Eliab, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the

heart." More than your physical attributes, God is concerned about your heart. What is going on down in your heart? Your greatest aspiration in life should be to be used of God, to use your abilities and talents for Him.

When Saul first became king, he was a humble, modest young man. He manifested a spirit and an attitude of humility. First Samuel 9:21 says, "And Saul answered and said, Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou so to me?" He was very humble.

Another time some men were looking for Saul, and 1 Samuel 10:21 says that when they sought him he could not be found. Verse 22b reads, "And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff." Saul might have thought that he was unworthy of that high position. He might have thought that it was against the will of God for the people to ask for a king, or he might have thought Israel was in a bad situation with their enemies (the Amalekites and the Philistines). This was not a favorable time to become a leader.

### Too Much Pride Is Destructive

First Samuel 9:20b says, "And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house?" Saul was the choice of the nation of Israel. Could it have been that his popularity bolstered some pride in him?

As parents, we need to be careful of what we instill into our children. You may say to one of your daughters, "You are the most beautiful girl in the world." That might not be good for that little girl. You need to be careful when dressing little people. Pride is a destructive force in the lives of too many people.

Saul was the choice of the nation of Israel. This could have been a warning of an upcoming problem.

Could it have been that his popularity bolstered some pride in him? Solomon said in Proverbs 16:18, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Undue pride is an enemy that you need to be careful of. It is good to have enough pride to take a bath before you go to church. You need to have some pride, but too much pride is an enemy.

We can read of many examples in the Word of God where people were brought down because they were lifted up with pride: Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, and Herod, to name a few. Proverbs 29:23 reads, "A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit." Disobedience begins with pride. A humble person will take instructions and obey. God may bring an individual down who attempts to lift himself up. This happened with King Saul. God lifts up the humble and puts down the proud.

God is looking for people with a spirit of humility, a people who truly realize that without God they can do absolutely nothing. We have a song that we sing often, which says, "*He will not walk with the proud or the scornful; humble thyself to walk with God.*" God wants people who trust Him, whose faith is anchored in Him and His Eternal Word, who are totally dependent upon Him. God is looking for people who are willing to walk by explicit faith in Him, who refuse to doubt or to question Him or His Eternal Word. God is yearning for people who will serve Him wholeheartedly, who will yield completely to His will for their lives.

A song we often sing speaks about being yielded to the will of God. A portion of it reads: "*O sweet will of God, thou hast girded me round, Like the deep, moving currents that girdle the sea. And now I have flung myself recklessly out, Like a ship on the sea of the infinite will. I pass the rough rocks with a smile and a shout And I just let my God His dear purpose fulfill. Forever I choose the good will of my*

*God. Roll on, checkered seasons, bring smiles or bring tears, My soul sweetly sails on an infinite tide.*"

### Coming Short of Complete Obedience

In this case study, Saul had great potential, but he failed. When a commandment came along, he failed to fulfill and obey God's expressed command. His obedience was not complete. For us to endure to the end, our obedience must be complete.

Saul did not fulfill his God-given responsibility. First Samuel 15:3 reads, "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not." God's commandment to Saul was explicit. There was no misunderstanding. One time I had a boy in English class who would not sit down. Also, he was very arrogant. I finally got very stern with him and said: "What do you not understand when I tell you to sit down? Is that hard to understand?"

Saul's command from God was explicit. However, Saul must have had his own ideas. God's Word is given to us, and we must obey it exactly as it is given. We do not have the prerogative to change God's Eternal Word.

In Joshua 1:7 we find these words to Joshua recorded, "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest."

The Bible says in 1 Samuel 15:9, "But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them." The Amalekites had mercilessly ambushed the Israelites as they were leaving Egypt to go to the Canaan land, so they were to be utterly destroyed. Partial obedience is really disobedience.

No matter what Saul was given to do, he came short of complete obedience. Some people are like the little boy who was with his father when he was driving down the street to go some place. The father said: "Sit down, Johnny. Sit down. I said sit down, Johnny!"

Well, Johnny sat down, but he said, "Ha, ha! I'm sitting down, but the Johnny inside me is still standing up." Saul attempted to show mercy to the Amalekites who did not deserve any mercy. Saul was constantly redefining the Lord's commands. Some people today do that with the hair standard, the dress standard, and other things. They redefine them, doing what seems best to them rather than what God said is best.

### **Failing to Stand Against Pressure**

We read in 1 Samuel 15:22, "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Saul wanted to substitute offering a sacrifice to the Lord for obedience. Here we have the second time Saul had been disobedient and presumptuous. Earlier he was instructed to go down to Gilgal and wait for Samuel to come to offer the sacrifice. He was to wait for seven days. However, Saul did not wait; he became impatient and impetuous, and that got him into trouble.

When Samuel queried him, Saul said in 1 Samuel 13:12, "I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering." He failed to heed his conscience. It is always a bad choice to go against your conscience. Patience is a positive attribute of noble character that Saul lacked. No doubt as time went on, Saul became somewhat haughty and high-minded. Pride, rebellion, and stubbornness worked on him, and perhaps he struggled with a lot of self-will.

King Saul was insincere in his behavior. He actually lied to Sam-

uel. First Samuel 15:14 says, "And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Besides Saul's other weaknesses, he failed to stand against the pressure of the people, and that is bad. We have to stand against lots of pressures. Saul shifted the blame to the people. Even though the people might have been partially to blame, Saul was primarily responsible. He was in charge.

Parents need to stand against the pressures of the schools, their peers, and society. Even family members may put pressure on you. The Bible says Saul feared the people and obeyed their voice. The fear of the people will bring a snare. If you fear God, you do not have to fear anyone else. Saul was never short of excuses. You can be a modern-day Daniel. Daniel stood up under pressure all the while he was in the courts of Babylon. They told Daniel not to pray, but to Daniel prayer was a matter of life or death, so he continued to pray. Will you dare to be a Daniel? One chorus says, "*Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone! Dare to have a purpose firm! Dare to make it known.*"

When Saul was confronted with disobedience, his repentance was partial and halfhearted. I fear that too many people stop right there. Their repentance is partial and halfhearted. Saul had a problem confessing his wrong. In verse 30 he finally said, "I have sinned: yet honor me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel." He was more concerned about his reputation with the people than his standing with God. He wanted to maintain a good reputation with the people.

What does God think of you? You should not be so concerned about what people think about you, but rather what does God think about you? Do you want God to bless your life? Then you must do a complete work of repentance. Saul made a show of repentance, but not from the heart. It was just not there.

His repentance was superficial; it was phony and insincere.

Saul's failures proved to be his undoing and eventually caused him to become unfit for the throne of Israel. His weaknesses were allowed to work until he was rejected of God. (We all have weaknesses, and we need to be careful.) He started out well. If only he would have kept that same humble attitude. First Samuel 15:17 reads, "And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?" Humility is the secret of success. Saul was on a downward slide, and it accelerated the further down he went. His end was a tragedy.

Saul's actions grieved Samuel. Do your actions grieve your pastor? You need to endure, saint of God. That is my earnest prayer. You should never entertain the thought of giving up. Matthew 10:22 states, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Over time and because of situations, some people change, and many give up the fight. Why? Perhaps only God knows all the excuses. Paul asked a question in Galatians 5:7, which says, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" The Christian life is likened to a race, and you need to consider your beginnings. When you began this race, did you have more zeal than you do now? If you did, you need to ask God to help you to regain it.

### **Being Determined to Endure Until the End**

How is your zeal today compared with the zeal that you had when you first got saved? I think it needs to increase. You must run well and complete the race to gain the prize. You must not allow anything or anyone to hinder you in your race. You must remain true to God and be determined to endure. Rather than lose momentum as I near the

end of my journey, I want to gain momentum. A song entitled "I Am Determined to Hold Out" reads:

*When I first found Jesus, something  
o'er me stole,  
Like lightning it went through me,  
and glory filled my soul;  
Salvation made me happy, and took  
my fears away,  
And when I meet old Satan, to him  
I always say:*

*I am determined to hold out to the end,  
Jesus is with me, on Him I can depend;  
And I know I have salvation, for I feel  
it in my soul;  
I am determined to hold out to the end.*

*Satan, he was angry, said he'd soon  
be back:  
"Just let the path get narrow, and  
he will lose the track";  
But I am full of glory, my Lord I always  
find,  
And I just say to Satan, "Old man,  
get thee behind."*

*I am determined to hold out to the end,  
Jesus is with me, on Him I can depend;  
And I know I have salvation, for I feel it  
in my soul;  
I am determined to hold out to the end.*

*This old-time religion makes me  
sometimes shout,  
I don't have time to gossip, nor any  
time to pout;  
They say that I'm too noisy, but  
when these blessings flow,  
I shout, hallelujah, I want the world  
to know.  
When I hear the trumpet sounding  
in the sky,  
And see the mountains trembling,  
to Heaven I will fly;  
For Jesus will be calling, there'll be no  
time to mend,  
With joy I'll go up singing,  
"I've held out to the end."*

*I am determined to hold out to the end,  
Jesus is with me, on Him I can depend;  
And I know I have salvation, for I feel it  
in my soul;  
I am determined to hold out to the end.*

In John 10:10 Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." You must hold out to the very end. Paul said he had finished his course, and there was laid up a crown of righteousness for him. So hold on, dear one. You must endure and be an overcomer. You need to be a pillar in the church until the trumpet calls you home.

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[Esp. for Young People—contin. from p. 14]  
mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." I said, "Father, when you think of me being away from home, I want you to remember that I left home because you would not let me serve the Lord." Presently his countenance changed. Tears came into his eyes, and he said to me so sweetly, "You are the only one in our family living for Jesus, so I want you to stay at home and serve the Lord, and I don't want to hinder you."

From that night, my father had implicit confidence in me, and he highly respected my religion. I was the first one in our home to read a chapter from the old, leather-backed Bible and pray. My father was a large man, but he would kneel with me in prayer. It pays to be true to God. He quit his sins, and a number of years before he passed away, I heard him say, "I have settled it all with the Lord."

I am glad that I gave my heart to Jesus in the days of my youth. At the age of eighteen, I accepted the whole truth. I know there is but one way that leads to Heaven, and I mean to go onward and upward until I reach the goal.

W. P. Long

## Just Mother

*She could not paint, nor write, nor  
rhyme,  
Nor leave her footprints on the sands  
of time  
As some famous women do;  
Just simple things of life she knew,  
Like putting little ones to bed  
And listening while their prayers  
were said.*

*She wasn't learned in chemistry,  
Law science, or philosophy;  
She could not speak her thoughts aloud  
In eloquence before a crowd;  
But hers a tranquil atmosphere  
That brought a bit of Heaven here.*

*She was no singer; neither blessed  
With any special loveliness  
To bring applause or passing fame;  
No headlines ever blazed her name,  
But oh, she was a shining light  
To us, who loved her day and night!*

*Her home, her kingdom – she, its  
queen;  
Her rule was honest, loving, clean;  
Impartial, just, and loyal to each  
And everyone she sought to teach,  
Her name? Of course, there is no  
other  
In all the world so sweet – just  
mother!*

Selected

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## Mother

*Yours were the hands that lead my  
way  
Through the carefree paths of youth,  
Yours were the faithful prayers each  
day  
That showed me the way of truth.*

*Yours were the precious golden hours,  
The cherished dreams, the rest,  
All sacrificed in mother love  
That I might have the best.*

*No gift I give can ever repay  
Such love or care so true  
But in my heart I'll always have  
The deepest love for you.*

Selected

*Genesis 1:2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the*

*waters.*

*Matthew 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were*

*opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.*



## *The Operation of the Holy Spirit*

*Brother Mike Wilks*

### **The Preeminent One**

In the beginning of the Old Testament and in the beginning of the New Testament, one person stands out, and that is the Spirit of God. He is the preeminent One in all the creative works that are around us. He is your best friend, He is your advocate, and He is your guide. If you will just listen to the Spirit, everything will be fine. He knows all things.

The Holy Spirit has the answer for every situation in life. He can encourage you if you are down, and He can give you understanding on any matter. When you are reading the Bible, you need understanding.

Some people get stuck on one little point of Scripture, and that is all they hang on to. My friend, the Church of God does not preach on only one chapter or one verse; we preach the whole Bible.

First John 5:8 says, "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." You are going to find in the true Church of God that they all agree. There may be certain issues on which we may not see eye to eye, but nothing is so great as to divide us. There is no excuse for division. Some people get too full of themselves and think that they actually know better than anyone else. I am

not talking about letting down the standard of holiness. I am talking about little pet peeves and accusations that people make. It should not be so.

When people start going the wrong way, there are warning signs. When the standard is the same but people accuse others, watch their lives. That is the litmus test. People can talk all they want to, but watch how they live. As saints of God, we should not have anything to hide. I have great confidence that if you could go live with a saint for a week, you would find that he or she is true.

I want you to take a very important look at the Holy Spirit.

Either you have Him or you do not. The Bible calls Him a gift. When God gives you His Spirit, there is nothing you can give back for that gift. What a gift Christ is! Nevertheless, people get reckless with the Spirit of God. He is the One who is going to take you to Glory, and you should reverence Him. I am talking about getting ready for eternity.

People exchange gifts, but this Gift is given only according to the Word of God. Acts 8:13-23 says: "Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

"And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."

How many individuals would take it today if a minister looked them right in the eyes and told them that? Not many people would take that. Back then they did not play around. Paul told people their true condition whether they liked it or not. When he preached to a congre-

gation, he did not hold back. He had the wisdom of God, and he was not afraid to call people out on certain lines. Boldness is what comes with the Holy Ghost.

### **The Soul of Christianity**

John, in speaking of the Spirit, said in John 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This is the perfect way to represent the Spirit of God. You cannot see the Holy Spirit when He comes into a service, but you can feel Him. How do you know He is there? Your heart will begin to be touched. You can feel His presence, and you become tender. If you are lost, He will begin to convict you. He is not trying to scare you, but He will convict you of your sins. He can convict you so much that you will tremble under His mighty power.

As I was reading, I thought about how the wind is the soul of sailing, and so it is with the Holy Spirit; He is the soul of Christianity. If no wind is blowing, it is going to be a long day on the sailboat, is it not? It is the same thing in a church service. When you come into a service, if you do not have the Spirit of God, the service may seem long to you. You need to let the Spirit operate, and He will guide you.

The Spirit was active in the Old Testament, but He was not yet given. In Judges 14:6, speaking of Samson, it says, "And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him [a lion] as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done."

First Samuel 10:10 says, "And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him [King Saul]; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them." These two verses of Scripture show how the Spirit sometimes operates. If you are a

sinner, He can change you into something that you never thought you could be. You are not to lean to your own understanding. You have to be careful of this. You may be comfortable with your own reasoning. I am comfortable with my reasoning, but if you want God's blessing, you have to trust in the Lord.

### **God's People Are of One Accord**

In this New Testament dispensation, the vehicle that powers the Christian's life is the Holy Spirit. The church exploded on the Day of Pentecost. The Gospel went across the then-known world almost instantly. They did not have modern-day communications, but they were out there preaching, and that is what it takes for the Gospel to spread. As the church, we cannot merely sit in our homes and just pray people in. Prayer is wonderful, but people need to be visited and called. They have to see something better, and we must show them something better through our lives.

Men carried a great burden for souls, and that is how the Gospel spread. Did men suddenly get under a great burden and the Gospel just spread like wildfire? No, it was because the Holy Spirit had been given to men. He was the great Commander then, and He is the great Commander now.

Acts 4:31-33 says: "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart [They were in agreement; they were of one heart and one soul. If people have carnal minds, they cannot be of one heart. However, with God it can happen. Read the Book of Acts. No one could stop them because they were of one accord. When people are of one accord, that is when God's power shows forth. That is when God really reveals Himself to His people.]

and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."

In the Old Testament there was one pillar. When the children of Israel were led out of Egypt, they were led by one pillar. We have one pillar today, and it is the Church of God. We preach the whole doctrine and that doctrine will set you free like no other. I do not understand why people want to go only so far with God. They are limiting themselves of God's great blessings. There are special moments that all saints have with God. When you draw close to God, He said He will draw close to you. There is nothing like having God draw close to you.

People in the world can pretend all they want. I pray that God will give you discernment to see through all the falseness out there. They may say things are good, but they are not going to tell you about the bad times. An individual that I know went to work a day after a party that he attended, and he was sick all day. He had been throwing up all night. Do you call that a good time? I have never left a church service after being blessed by God feeling sick. The only time I feel badly is when people do not yield to God and they miss out on the best life that God has for them.

All you have to do is come to God; He is fair. He is not asking you to do something that you cannot do. All He wants you to do is put Him first. If you will do that, He will bless you, uplift you, and exalt you. He will put you in a job where He wants you. I pray many times: "Lord, You are in control. You put me wherever You want me." If He wanted me to be the president of a company, I believe He would put me there. However, I do not think that is where He wants me.

I want to be right where God wants me to be, right in the center of

His will. He will do good things for you. If you need a job, just talk to Him and wait for Him to act. God is not going to rush, but He is going to work in His time. He loves you. Sometimes it may take Him a little while to put things together for you.

### **The Emblem of Holiness**

We read in 1 Timothy 3:15, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The Church of God is mentioned often in the Scriptures. Nobody can refute that, yet some people say the Bible is talking about a universal church and say that all these little sects make up the Church of God. No, they do not. There is only one Church of God.

Every large company has an emblem to represent quality. When you say Church of God, our emblem is holiness. Many people hate the word holiness. Many people treat God as if He cannot do anything. That bothers me because I am talking about Almighty God. If you want to live holy, He will help you.

Too many people are preaching an old gospel of defeat. I do not read of that in the Book. You need to read your Bible. My friend, you cannot be a part of the Church of God with sin in your life. There is a higher standard, the banner of holiness. Some people are hinging their whole lives and where they will spend eternity on whether they speak in tongues; that is foolishness. The important questions are these: Has God changed your heart? Did you get rid of bad habits, such as drinking alcohol? Did you get rid of your old filthy tongue? Have you quit putting ungodly stuff in front of your eyes? God can help you to get rid of all of that and more. He has done that for me as well as many others. Living for God is all about holiness.

The Holy Ghost does not have brothers and sisters; He is One. First Corinthians 5:9 tells us, "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to com-

pany with fornicators." Second Thessalonians 3:14 says, "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." People are doing many things that they ought to be ashamed of, but they are not. As Christians, we are held to a higher standard. The Church of God holds a higher standard.

### **The Pure River**

What do you suppose people think when they see a Christian? If they are honest, a picture comes to their minds of what a Christian should be. If you are a Christian, people are watching you, and you need to lift up Christ. I could tell you how my life was before I was saved and how it is now. My life used to be miserable. I was bound with sinful habits. I could not help myself, but God made a change in my heart. Saul met Jesus on the Damascus Road. We each have had our "Damascus Road," so to speak. It was a miracle what God did for me in my life. I am here to labor for Him. There is no greater work.

What if death were to call for you today? What if Jesus were to split the clouds and life on earth would be over? What have you done lately that has been worth your time? Would your bank account, your home, your car, or your job matter? Only the labor that you have done in His name would matter. He will make it all worthwhile one day.

The Holy Spirit is not a hypocrite. You must stay clean to live this way. Psalm 46:4 reads, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." This is speaking of the pure river of God.

Revelation 22:1 says, "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." When you get saved, God gives you some spiritual "gills," and

He puts you in a clean river. He wants you to swim upstream, so to speak. Some people are out here playing around going sideways, back and forth, and in some cases backward. Our commission is to go forward. We are to keep swimming. That is going to take effort, and it is going to take God.

We do not want to swim in the wrong stream. There are so many people who are deceived. We ought to fear losing the understanding of Truth. When you are saved, thinking that you might lose what you know is hard to fathom, but you can. We can see the warnings in many places. The flesh is very strong.

### **What Happens When the Spirit Departs?**

There is a great illustration in the story of Samson, whom God had given great strength. We read in Judges 16:17, "That he told her [Delilah] all his heart [In the first place, he was keeping company with the wrong woman. Young person, you need to avoid dating someone who is not serving the Lord. You can get in a situation with the wrong person, and your affections will become a bondage to you. Your affections are nothing to play around with. You need to make sure that you date one whom you know is right with God. You can avoid much hurt if you will follow this advice. You need to get the mind of God. He can keep you from evil things.] and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven [if he breaks his vow], then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

If you lose the Spirit of God, you will become weak spiritually. Although you make a big profession, go to church, and carry your Bible, you are just like any other man. You are a sinner without the Spirit of God. There are many people who attend church, but they are

sinners. They are caught up in lots of sinful things. Some have alcohol in their refrigerators, yet they go to church and feel they are saved. Let us call it what it is; it is sin.

Judges 16:18-21 reads: "And when Delilah [from the wrong crowd] saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house."

The awful part is not only losing the Spirit but also not recognizing when He is gone. He is a still, small voice. When people are listening to that still small voice, you will see it in their conduct. You will see victory in their spiritual lives. They hunger for God and for the Word of God.

### **Staying Sensitive to the Spirit of God**

Luke 2:49 says, "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" In other words, Jesus said to His mother,

"Don't you realize what I am doing?" We must stay sensitive to the Spirit of God. You may ask, "How do I stay sensitive?" You must go to church, read your Bible, and pray to stay sensitive to the Spirit of God. You must stay close to the Gospel, and you must stay close to God and His people to keep your heart tender.

All the power in the world is useless without vision. You can have nuclear weapons, but if you cannot aim them at the right place, it is useless. It is the same with God's people. If you are just going through a form, you are not accomplishing anything for God. You can only be effective for God through the leadership of the Spirit of God.

Genesis 11:2-3 reads: "And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar." Those people were operating without the Spirit; so it is with many people today.

You need to appreciate the Holy Spirit. He is your Friend, and He will always be honest. He will teach you exactly what is Truth, and that is something in which you can take comfort. A man can lead you astray, but that still, small voice will not. If you have a tender heart, and if you have a heart after God, He will guide you in the right way. You need to be thankful for the Holy Ghost. He has brought us all good things.

*(Compact Disc TR-1255)*

A Christian is one who does not have to consult his bank book to see how wealthy he really is!



*[My Testimony—continued from page 13]* conviction came over me. I told her not to cut my hair. She wanted to know why, but she knew the Bible standard of the church. First Corinthians 11:14-15 reads: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."

Down through the years, God has healed me many, many times. First, He healed me of cancer of the kidney, which I did have removed, but I told them I was not going to take any chemotherapy. When the doctor told me I had cancer, I asked God to let me live at least one more year because we had just moved into another house. That was approximately five years ago.

The second time God healed me, I had an infection in my jaw, time and time again. The doctor said to me, "You don't want surgery, do you?"

I told him no, and then he told me if I had surgery, that side of my face would be paralyzed. Then one time I had a new doctor, and he found a salivary duct stone in my jaw and got it out. I still had infection for a while, but thank God He

healed me again. I did not have any surgery.

The third time God healed me, I started having heart problems and lost sixty-three pounds. I had to go to the hospital to get fluid drained from my body many times, so they had to put in a pacemaker. Had it not been for God, I would not be here today, because many times I would fill up with water and could not catch my breath. I could not walk up and down stairs without huffing and puffing. My daughter had to do most of the work for me. I thank God that she was kind and considerate in doing my work without complaining. Thank God, I am able to do so much more work now.

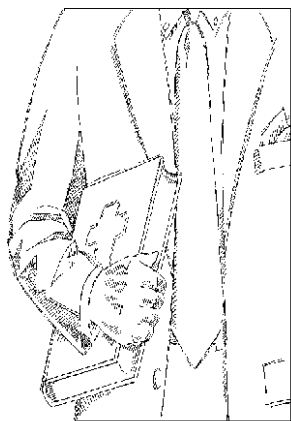
The fourth time God healed me, the doctor told me I had spots on my lungs, and they wanted to do a biopsy, but I told them no. The next time the doctor had an x-ray taken, he barely saw any spots at all. That was God again.

The fifth time God healed me, my liver was not functioning right, but God healed me of that—no doctors. The sixth time the Lord healed my body, my knee went out while I was working during camp meeting. My other knee

had done the same thing a couple of years before that. All I did that time was put a brace on it for a couple of months, and God healed me of that condition. I did the same thing this time, but the devil kept playing games with me. He would let the other knee go out of place, and then back to this one. I left it up to God to heal me, and again, He never let me down.

I just want to say that God can heal not only your body but also your soul. I have said many times that when God is finish with me, I am ready. I just want to do His will and serve Him with all my heart. I know the devil may still come and put afflictions on me, but I want to hold steady until God is finished with me. I do know that God will do just what He has promised. Young person, stay true to God and He will be there for you in every circumstance. You must pray and believe that nothing is too hard for Him. Just hold steady, and God will do all He has promised. I love God with all my heart.

Sister Freda Patton



*We are announcing that Brother Larry Dishman has resigned his pastorate and feels the call to evangelize full time. He is now open to meetings.*

**Brother Dishman can be contacted at  
1-251-776-2100**

# Announcements

**Mt. Pleasant, PA**  
May 5-10

**Revival:** Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania 15666  
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Mississippi  
Service times: Tue.-Sat. 7:00 p.m.; Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.  
A meal will be served by the local congregation after the Sunday morning service.  
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 Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666  
Telephone: 724-547-2151

**Kensett, AR**  
May 22-24

**Memorial Day Fellowship Meeting:** Kensett Church of God, 409 SE 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Kensett, AR 72082.  
Service times: Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. Dinner will be served at 4:00 p.m. & service will be at 7:00 p.m.  
Sun. Worship 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.  
Dinner will be served after the Sunday morning service.  
For further information contact: Pastor Calvin L. Foster  
Telephone: (Church) 501-742-3006 or (Cell) 501-593-5105

**Newark, OH**  
June 21-28

**Camp Meeting:** Church of God Camp Meeting, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055  
The first service begins Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m.  
Please make reservations in advance, if possible. Please bring your own towels.  
See page 27 for more information. Visit our website at [www.godsacres.org](http://www.godsacres.org)  
For lodging/camper reservations, please contact Bro. Dave or Sis. Ruby Bush at 740-345-1213.  
For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker, 83 Decrow Ave. Newark, OH 43055  
Telephone: 740-344-2543

**Canby, OR**  
July 6-12

**Camp Meeting:** Church of God Camp Meeting, 522 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Canby, OR 97013  
The first service begins Monday evening at 7:00 p.m. Two services daily: 10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.  
A complimentary breakfast is available each morning at the motel. A meal will be served after the morning service. Also, snack stand will be open after the evening services.  
Please make reservations in advance, if possible.  
For further information contact: Pastor David Stegmeier, 522 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Canby, OR 97013  
Telephone: 503-266-9297

**Muncie, IN**  
July 15-19

**Camp Meeting:** Ninth Street Church of God Camp Meeting will be held at the Central Friends Campground, 5601 E County Road 650 S, Muncie, Indiana 47302.  
The first service begins Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m.  
Service times: Thurs.-Sat. 9:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.; Sun. 9:00 a.m.  
Three meals served daily, including continental breakfast. Also, snack stand will be open after the services each evening. Air-conditioned dining hall. Age appropriate activities during non-service times. Limited space availability. Campers & tents are welcome.  
**PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO BRING YOUR OWN BEDDING AND TOWELS.**  
For lodging/camping reservations, please contact Sis. Michelle Gingerich @ 765-808-8705.  
For further information contact: Pastor Allen Polston, 2020 Ralph St., New Castle, IN 47362  
Telephone: 765-521-8284

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

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

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

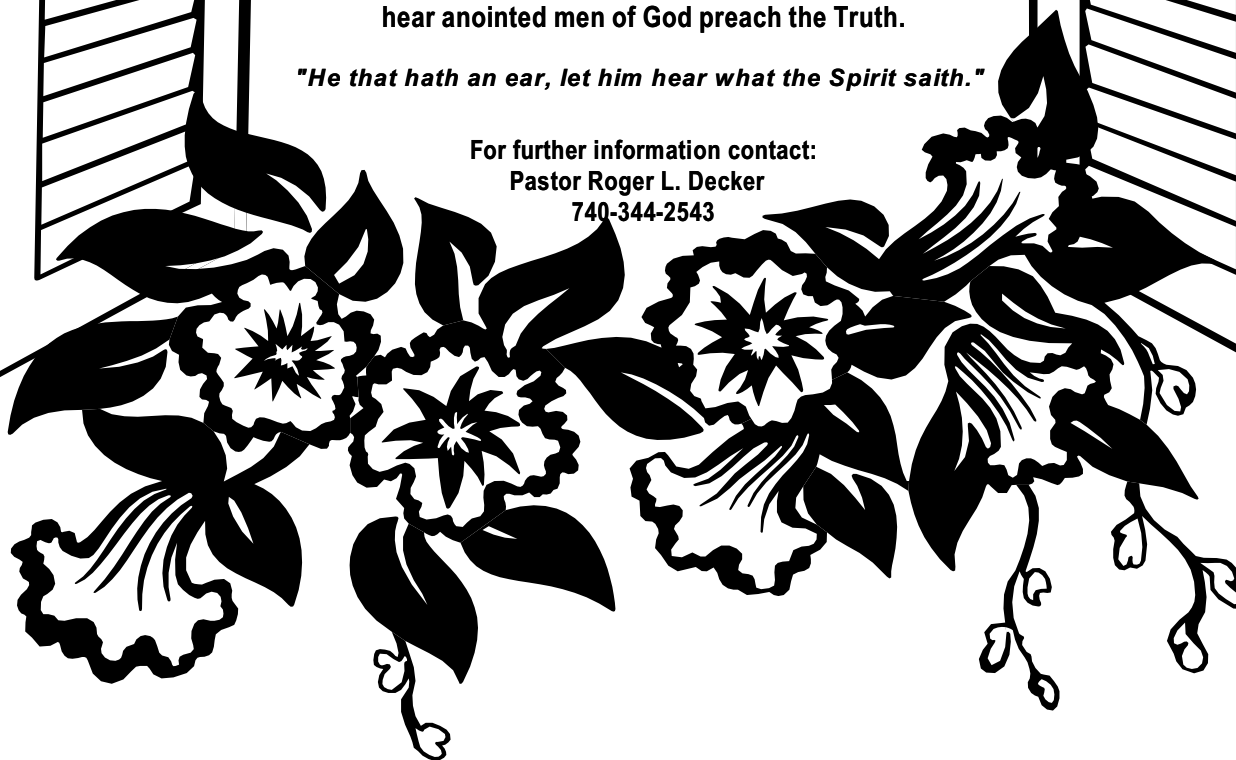
We have special services for the children,  
youth services, morning prayer services,  
inspirational singing, Holy Ghost preaching,  
divine healing, and fellowship with the saints.

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

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

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

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



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