

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 46 August 2016 No. 8



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

Spring 2016 Camp Meeting Report

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor

Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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Absolutely Beautiful!

It was an absolutely beautiful camp meeting that began on Sunday morning, June 19, 2016. Pastor Roger L. Decker greeted the saints and welcomed everyone to God's Acres. He asked the congregation to sing that old song that begins, "Once again we come. . . ." After telling of the prayer requests, he asked Brother Ray Edwards from Mississippi to word the opening prayer for the service. For eight days God's people were blessed, encouraged, and challenged as the Lord's presence moved in the services. The Lord truly opened the windows of Heaven and gave us a sweet taste of glory.

Often the statement is made that this was the best camp meeting yet. We believe that the Lord manifested His mighty arm during this spring camp meeting. His holy presence was exhibited in such an absolutely wonderful manner. Our hearts were encouraged and warmed over and over as He did magnificent things for us. It has surely made sweet and impressionable memories to be long remembered.

It is always difficult to put into words all the wonderful things our eyes have seen and our hearts have felt. We realize that the success of any meeting only comes about by much prayer, asking and seeking for God to be the Special Guest.

Brother Larry Dishman was the evangelist for the meeting. His message titles are: "The Kind of Fathers We Should Strive to Be," "The Commission to Be Ambassadors," "Don't Lose Hope," "How Do You Know If You Have Counterfeit Religion?" "What Will You Do in the End Thereof?" "Pick Up the Broken Pieces and Bring Them to the Lord," and "What Time Is It?"

Other brethren delivered outstanding messages each morning. Monday Brother Paul Prinkey preached "How We Are Known." Tuesday Brother Karl Wilson brought a message on "We Must Master the Skills It Takes to

Resist the Devil." Wednesday Brother Michael Wilks spoke about "The Unclean Spirits of False Religion." Thursday Brother Allen Polston preached on "The Angel and the Altar." Friday Brother Calvin Foster preached "In This Life You Live Only Once." Sunday morning Brother Richard Talbot preached "The Scepter of Righteousness."

Every afternoon Brother David Stegmeier taught on the subject of "Lessons on God's Creation." He used different characteristics of the animal kingdom to demonstrate the hearts of men. Each morning during the camp meeting, the children met in the old barn for worship at 10 o'clock. They sang praises to God and learned new songs. These young hearts were taught spiritual lessons based on the Bible. For the Saturday morning service, all the children sang and took part in the service. Sister Karen Wilks then told a story demonstrating "The Ocean of Life."

The adult choir sang in both services each Sunday and every evening service. What a great blessing and encouragement these wonderful songs of Zion brought to the saints! Our young people's choir also sang during the camp meeting. Their joyous singing was very uplifting and brought much gladness to the hearts of the people. There were many specials sung by the various singers and groups, which inspired and challenged our hearts.

Monday evening, a mixed quartet sang of "God's Mercy," and the altars filled with repentant souls seeking God's forgiveness. We witnessed backsliders crying out for pardon and deliverance. What a happy sight it was to see broken relationships healed and families reunited! Only the Spirit of God can create this type of glorious atmosphere. God was able to accomplish many tremendous things. In many of the services, we saw souls kneeling at

[continued on page 22]

1 *John 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: [There is not a man on this earth, saved or unsaved, who does not run into the possibility of committing sin. Do not believe the falsehood about the pope being infallible. The Word of God says all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God.]*

2 *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

3 *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his*

commandments.

4 *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

5 *But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.*

6 *He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

7 *Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.*

8 *Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.*

9 *He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.*

10 *He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.*

11 *But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.*

Knowing God



Brother Roger L. Decker

Are You Relying on Emotions or Intellect?

John returned from the Isle of Patmos, and he came back in the midst of a morning-time apostasy. People were defecting from the Truth. The love between brethren and the love toward God was getting very lean in the church.

In these verses John said a lot about knowing God and how you can know for certain that God is present in your life. Do you know for sure that you are saved and ready to meet Him? This is a question that you might not be too quick to answer. It might cause you to hesi-

tate, because you are unsure. You might have to think for a moment, or maybe even ponder the question. If you could not pray another prayer, would you be ready to meet God in your present condition? Many people in the places where terrorists have hit did not get a chance to pray. They were just taken out of this life unexpectedly. They had no opportunity to say anything to God.

John brought up the thought of knowing God, being in God, and abiding in God. Having fellowship with God has always been the desire of the human spirit. There is always that desire to really get to know God and to be with Him. There is some-

thing about us that reaches out to our Creator and keeps searching. You need to keep searching until you find Him.

Augustine said that God had made men for Himself and that they were restless until they found rest in Him, and that is true. God did make men for Himself, and men become restless until they find Him. In the centuries before Christ, the Greeks believed the way to God was through one's intellect, through an argument, or through a debate. However, to know God through the intellect would leave quite a few people destitute of His presence. Some of the great thinkers of the

early years were immoral as far as holiness was concerned, even though they had great intellect.

Some people are quite willing to let you know that they know the Scriptures, but having a knowledge alone of Jesus Christ does not remove the sin from someone's life. Often when asking people whether or not they are saved, they say: "I know the Bible. My mother taught me the Bible when I was a little child." However, that is not the question. The question is, Are you really saved?

Some have joined themselves to denominational churches and have been convinced that they know God through their knowledge. They argue the different points of doctrine and the Scriptures, but that does not make someone a holy person. Then there are those who rely on their emotions as a witness to their salvation. You need to be careful of relying on your emotions. Some people feel it is not as much knowing God as it is feeling God. No doubt, you have read about or heard testimonies of entertainers or other public figures who rely on their feelings. They feel that they have a real experience with God, and they hang on to that. Maybe they spoke in tongues or had a really great feeling come over them, so they take that as evidence that they must be God's child.

How God Revealed Himself in the Old Testament?

The Jews felt that since God revealed Himself to Moses, they were secure in that. Moses was a Hebrew, and Exodus 3:1-6 says: "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why

the bush is not burnt.

"And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."

In these verses of Scripture, we find that God revealed Himself to Moses. Also, we read that God revealed Himself to Abraham in Genesis 12:7, which states, "And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him."

There was an appearance to Gideon. I am just highlighting a few instances in the Bible when God revealed Himself to His people. Judges 6:11-12 tells us: "And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." Here we can see that God made Himself known to the Hebrew brethren in the Old Testament.

One of the greatest high priests in the Bible was Samuel. You can read in 1 Samuel 3:1-10: "And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. [Backing up a little, Hannah presented her child to the Lord. She asked the Lord for a man child, and she gave birth to Samuel, whom she gave back after he was weaned to do the temple work and to labor with the priest.] And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision.

"And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his

place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

"Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth." Here we read of instances of God making Himself known to different individuals from the Old Testament.

God Works Through the Conscience

How does God appear to you and me? More than likely, it is not in an audible voice. Sometimes He speaks through the conscience. God put a conscience within every one of us. What does the word *conscience* mean? The dictionary says, "An aspect of one's self-awareness; an audience room for the voice of God or the devil." It is a room where you are going to hear voices from either God or the devil. The conscience will witness for the good or against the bad.

Before you ever came to church or knew there was a God, your

conscience spoke to you. When you were little and being raised by your parents, God formed a conscience in you when you received instructions in the home. For example, sometimes when I said something that I should not have said, my mother would say, "Roger, you cannot say that; it is swearing." What was happening? I was not getting that at church. My conscience was being formed at home by my parents.

Sometimes my mother would say, "Roger, you need to show more kindness to your brother and sister." In this way my conscience was being developed to know right from wrong. If you were fortunate enough to be raised in the Truth, then your conscience developed more quickly. It is wonderful to raise children in a Church of God congregation. That is developing their conscience much quicker to know right from wrong.

I want you to read the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:7. He wrote, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." What was he saying? He was saying that he was covetous, although he did not think he was; but when the commandment, or the law, came, it stirred his conscience. His conscience had hold of him, and it stirred up the sin within him. He had no way of deliverance.

How do you know God? You may say, "Somebody invited me to church, and I went to the altar." That is fine, but how do you know God? Is it because you go to church every Sunday and every Wednesday? At the Judgment God is not going to say, "Enter in, because you never missed a service." How do you know God? He reveals Himself and calls you. God always calls individuals to life on a higher plain, to live a life of holiness.

God is a holy God; therefore, His people must be holy. We read in 1 Thessalonians 4:7, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." When God calls you,

there are things in your life that you know you cannot be a part of any longer, and you have to make a choice. God reveals Himself to you, but so does the enemy. Do you want to hang on to wrong or do what is right?

In my own life, before I got saved, I knew there were things I could not do any longer and yet be a Christian. That was one hang-up that I had with going to church. I did not think I could get rid of some things because I was always taught that you had to do it, more or less, in your own strength. I did not know anything about being delivered from sin. I knew I could not drink, gamble, smoke cigarettes, fight, and carry on and please God at the same time. Also, I had other hang-ups, such as inward strife and envy—deeper things in my heart. When I came to God, I knew this.

Obedience to God Is Necessary

To know God, you must be obedient to His Word. Knowing God can only be proved by your obedience to Him. You cannot say that you know God and disobey Him. It is written right in the Scriptures. You might have a knowledge of God, you might cry when you hear the story of the Crucifixion, and you might even cry when you hear a Gospel song being sung; however, the only way you can know for sure that you know God is by obeying Him. I have plenty of Bible to back what I am saying.

First John 2:3-6 reads: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

How did Jesus walk? He walked in holiness. One thing you can know for sure is that if you are not obey-

ing God, you do not know Him. If you say that you are obeying Him when you are disobeying His Word, you are lying. How do you know Him? You cannot know Him by intellect or by emotion, but only by obedience. Today people claim to know Him because they are Bible scholars or because they speak in tongues, but I am standing on the Word of God by saying that you do not know Him if you are not obeying Him.

Again, verses 3-4 of our Scripture text read: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him [and many do], and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Do you know Him or have you switched over to what the Bible calls a form of godliness? You know how a Christian should act, especially in the house of God. Are you caught up in a form of godliness or do you really know God? It can be dangerous being raised in the Truth if you do not obey it.

Some people may get a wrong impression of you when the only time they see you is in worship. On the other hand, some may know that you are not obeying Him when it comes to the outward standard, yet you seem to be lined up with everything inwardly. Just having a knowledge of God can still leave you in possession of bad passions and unholy habits. Merely going through an emotional high can still leave you bound by sin. Knowing God has to start with repentance; that is a command of God.

Salvation does not start with singing a special, singing in the choir, or teaching a Sunday school class. It starts on your knees, crying out to God to forgive you for your sins. When you repent, you will not remember every sin that you have ever committed; no one does. So the best thing to do is give it all to Him. You cannot hold on to any sin. To repent is a command. If you do not repent, you are not obeying God's Word.

Repentance Is a Command

Acts 17:30 states, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." When I pray with someone who wants to get saved, I often tell that person: "I cannot pray you into the Kingdom of God. I cannot pray your sins away. It is your prayer that God wants to hear, and it starts with repentance." In Mark 1:15 Jesus said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

We read in Mark 6:7-12: "And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats. And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city. And they went out, and preached that men should repent."

Jesus sent His disciples out to tell people to repent. You cannot be a child of God any other way except through repentance. To truly repent is to be sorry for your sins and sorrowful that you hurt God. You need to always keep this in mind: all sin is against God. Yes, there may be other people involved, but it is all against God.

Second Corinthians 7:10 states, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." There is a big difference between godly sorrow and the sorrow of the world. Some people always say they are sorry when

they are asking for money to do this or that. They say they are going to quit certain vices, but most of the time they are only saying that to get a handout.

I will give you an example of worldly sorrow. Once I was called to the jail to visit an individual who was caught writing bad checks. This was not the first time that person had done that. This individual was caught up in that habit. When I arrived there, that individual cried and carried on but did not cry because of sinning against God; this person cried merely because of getting caught. If that individual had not gotten caught, that person would have continued to write bad checks. That is an example of worldly sorrow.

Godly sorrow works altogether differently. With godly sorrow you are sorry for what you did because you hurt God, and you are sorry enough that you want to quit sinning. This is a sorrow that God pours out on you. However, that is not all there is to it. There is another step. After you confess and repent of your sins, you have to forsake them at the same time. This is where the trouble is with some people. You see, God knows whether or not you will really forsake sin.

Walk as Jesus Walked

Proverbs 28:13 says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Sins are never covered unless God covers them. They must be confessed to God because the sin was against God, and God is the only one who can forgive your sins. You cannot go to a priest, a pope, or a preacher and receive forgiveness for your sins, but you must go to Jesus Christ. First Timothy 2:5 reads, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." What is a mediator? He is a go-between. Remember, there is hostility between you and God when you are living in sin;

therefore, you need a go-between. To be saved and to know God, you must obey Him.

Verse 6 in our Scripture text reads, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." The child of God becomes an imitator of Christ. Is He not a good one to imitate?

I want you to notice that John said that the proof was in the walk, not just in the talk. He said if you are not walking as Christ walked, then you do not know God. Hebrews 12:13-14 says: "And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Friend, do you know God? Again, the steps to know God are, first of all, you have to confess and repent to God through godly sorrow. When you have repented and told God how sorry you are, you must forsake those sins. Next, you must walk even as Christ walked.

How do we know that people are Christians? We can see it in their walk, not only at the house of God but also in business, in shopping, or wherever they go. They should be dressed as modestly at the shopping center as they are at the house of God. Some sisters need to get the length of their skirts down. They are too short and too tight.

Can someone look at your life and see that you are an imitator of Jesus? If not, you need to have a little talk with the Lord. Matthew 10:32-33 says: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." If you deny Christ, you will be denied before the Father in Heaven. Do you know Him? You need to make sure that you do.

(Compact Disc TR-1659)

Deuteronomy 30:15 See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil:

19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death,

blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.

The Power of Choice



Brother Tim Wilson

Weigh Every Decision

We all have to make decisions, and our decisions affect others. The Bible lets us know in the New Testament that Joshua enjoyed the privilege of choice when he spoke to those people in his day, and he told the people to choose whom they would serve. When Elijah stood on

Mount Carmel, he encouraged the people to make a choice. He said in 1 Kings 18:21, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." He offered the people a choice. Ever since man has existed, he has been offered choices.

Today each of us will make decisions of some kind. Why are

your decisions so important? One decision you make may determine your eternal destination. You need to stop and realize that every decision you make should have your best consideration. You should think about your choices, and above all else, consider how your decisions will affect you and others spiritually. I count it a privilege to serve God,

who in His creative work, relinquished the power of choice to us.

When God created the Garden of Eden, He put Adam and Eve there and told them that they could freely eat of all the trees except one. He gave them a choice. Since that time, man has been faced with choices. God gave every one of us the free will to choose whom we are going to serve, where we are going to go, what we are going to do, and how we are going to live. However, some of those choices will determine where we will spend eternity. I want you to see that your decisions can be costly. This is the reason I say, no matter how big or how small a decision may appear to be, it deserves your best consideration. Therefore, you need to make sure that you weigh every decision in the right way.

Most of us have seen people who have made bad decisions. Sometimes your thoughts may be, "I don't want to be like that." Your decisions will either make you better for Christ or lead you away from Him.

Every decision has an outcome. You must consider how others are going to be affected by the decisions you make. You may say, "The decisions that I make are my business." They may be your business, but someone is watching you, and that is one reason that you must be careful.

Paul, writing to the Church of God at Rome, stated in Romans 14:7, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." He told us in verse 13, "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Paul lets you see that you have to be careful that you do not become a stumblingblock, or a hindrance, by the decisions you make. You must not cause someone to trip and fall if he were to make the same decision.

Paul said in verses 20-21: "For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it

is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

You have to consider what you do very carefully because a weaker person may stumble at the choices you make. I wonder how many people have stumbled because they were following others whom they thought were Christians. You must be careful that you do not offend someone and cause that person to become weak. Many have been destroyed simply because of thoughtless decisions on the part of others.

When you weigh your decisions, you should find out what God's feelings are on some things before you make choices. You need to consider how your decisions are going to affect onlookers? How will your decisions affect your brothers and sisters in Christ?

Seek God for Guidance

As a Christian, you live in a glass house, so to speak. You are an influence on a lost world. You may be the only Bible that some people ever get to see. You must realize that your decisions will either draw you closer to God or lead you away from Him. Paul said he had to be careful, lest after he had preached to others, he himself should become a cast-away. I realize that, if I become careless, I could die lost and end up in hell. I want to be what God wants me to be and to make Heaven my home. I am responsible for helping others to get there. Every one of us must realize that the Holy Spirit of God desires to help us. Not a one of us who is really determined to live for God wants to make a wrong decision.

You should not want to make a wrong choice. You should want to do the things that will help the church to go forward. You should want to see your brothers and sisters strengthened in Christ and to see the

world saved. Jesus said when the Holy Ghost came, He would guide you. That lets you know that you need leadership and guidance. That is the reason I am so thankful that I have the Holy Spirit who lives in my heart. He guides me in my decisions. He will guide you when you need leadership, but you have to be willing to listen to what He says. Also, He will give you the spirit of understanding. He said if you lack wisdom, ask of Him. If you ask, He will give it to you.

You need to make the right choices. God can see the consequences of your decision from the beginning to the end. You can only see the consequence of your decision right now, not what the end will be. This is the reason you need the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Decisions need to be made not only for the future in this life but also in the light of eternity. Everything you do ought to be considered in the light of eternity.

More people should stop and ask themselves these questions: How is this going to affect me? How is this going to affect my children? How is this going to affect my family? Then they would not have so much family trouble. Many people who once served God and had a love for God would not be out in a lost world right now if they had stopped long enough to ask themselves those questions.

In the Bible we can read of many different characters who made decisions. Some of them made the right decisions, while others made the wrong ones. Your choices will affect someone either positively or negatively. God has given you the power of choice. How can you know? The Scripture lesson says in verse 15, "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." It is your prerogative to choose, but you cannot determine the end results. You do not have the ability to know what it is going to do to you out in the future, and that is the reason you need to get God involved. There are some things that

God in His Word does not show us plainly. God puts confidence in us that we will do what is right. He made us free-will agents.

Faulty Decisions Are Costly

In the Book of Job, you can read that God said to the devil, "Have you considered my servant Job? I have confidence that he will make the right choice." When you come to God and receive an experience of salvation, that changes your life and makes you a new creature, God puts confidence in you that you will do what is right. Decisions can be fatal, no matter how trifling or how insignificant you might think they are. They may appear to be very small at the moment, but you do not see the end; you can only see the present.

You will find in the Old Testament Book of Exodus that God delivered the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. They crossed the wilderness and were on the border of Canaan at a place called Kadesh-barnea. They were just a stone's throw away from a land flowing with milk and honey. They were on the verge of receiving the blessings that God had promised them, but they made a faulty decision.

The Bible lets us know that because of some people's wrong choice, many innocent people had to live in the wilderness for forty years when they could have been enjoying the good things of God. A wrong choice made them suffer, and the murmurers and complainers had to die in the wilderness.

I am sure that if you could have talked to them at the time, they did not realize they had accepted an evil report and it was going to cost them. It cost them dearly. Decisions made without counseling with God will bring hurt and sorrow, and they are the most costly.

When the Israelites went to Jericho, Joshua gave them an order. He said: "I do not want you to take any spoils back with you. I want everything destroyed." Achan chose not to listen; he disobeyed and

brought back some things and hid them in the bottom of his tent and thought no one would know about it. What happened? It cost Israel far more than the cost of those few items that Achan took. Many lives were lost because of his bad decision.

Some decisions are more important than you might realize. If you do not seek God when it comes to making a decision about the way that God wants you to go, others besides you might have to suffer. No one ever made a faulty decision without someone having to suffer the consequences of it.

Father, mother, grandparent, if you could only understand the depth of what I am trying to tell you, it would cause you to be more careful in making decisions, and especially decisions that take in Jesus. It would cause you to slow down and consider matters more carefully. Your children could be lost, shut out, and separated from God for eternity simply because you decided to go the wrong way as a parent.

God's Law of Sowing and Reaping

The Bible says you reap what you sow. I can tell you this much: if you make the wrong choice, the reaping is not nearly as pleasant as the sowing, and when you start reaping, many times it hurts. If some parents had just stopped to think about the effect their decision would have on their home, their children, and their relationship with God, they would have made a different decision.

We are living in a world that often only thinks in terms of "every man for himself," but that is contrary to the Bible. The Bible does not teach that. No, the Bible teaches that you are your brother's keeper. Other people are being influenced by what you do or by what you do not do. That is the reason a faulty decision on your part can cost others as well as you.

Samson made a wrong decision

when he took on that which was forbidden by God. He knew what God had told him not to do, but he went ahead and overstepped those rules set forth by God. When he took that foreign woman called Delilah, he was out of the will of God. God let us know through His Word the results of his making the wrong choices. The results of Samson going his own way ended with having his eyes poked out, being bound, and grinding in the Philistine's prison house. Not only were Samson's eyes poked out but also his disobedience brought a reproach upon God's people. That is one example of someone not knowing how much his decision would cost him in the end. Samson must have had some idea of the cost, because God had shown him not to do what he did. You may say, "Some things are secret." Samson revealed a secret that God told him not to tell, and it cost him dearly.

If old Israel could have backed up and realized what it was going to cost them to make the wrong choice at Kadesh-barnea, they probably would not have done it; however, once they made the choice, it was too late. We each have the right to choose, and we may not know what the end results are going to be.

In Luke, Chapter 12, you can read about a rich man who had land that brought forth plentifully. This rich man went out and looked over his field and saw the yield and decided to tear down his barns and build bigger barns. Then he said to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (verse 19). Little did the farmer realize that his decision was going to cost him much more than the new barns that he planned to build. It cost him his life and his soul. You see, some people make decisions without realizing the cost involved.

Your decisions will determine your eternal destiny. Even though the rich farmer did not get to carry out his decision, it still cost him his soul. We are living in a day and time

when some people do not get to carry out the decisions they make, but it is costing them their relationship with God.

The Folly of Going Your Own Way

Do you remember the story about King David in 2 Samuel, Chapter 11? He was on the rooftop when most kings had gone to battle. The Scripture says he just took one look at a beautiful woman bathing herself and decided to inquire after her, but oh, the cost that was in that decision! Because of that decision, he sowed to the wind and reaped a whirlwind. Because of that decision, he made many other decisions that got him into deeper trouble. Thank God for a faithful prophet who went to David and confronted him regarding what he had done wrong.

David's decision cost him not only his son that was born from that relationship but also his peace. The Prophet Nathan said the sword would never leave his house. That decision was very expensive. We must realize that decisions can be very costly. As a parent, you have a great responsibility. The Bible says you are going to reap what you sow.

You are not going to sow one thing and reap something else. You are going to reap what you sow. That is why many times decisions are made in the sowing season without considering that a time of reaping will follow. Well, just give it a little time, and the reaping will follow. You may enjoy the sowing right now, but just give it a little time and the reaping will come. Someday you are going to answer for the decisions that you made without stopping to consider how those choices would affect you.

How many parents have sacrificed their children to a lost eternity because they decided to go their own way? They decided they were going to live as the world does for a certain length of time, and then come back to the Lord. What they did not realize was, they may come

back to God, but it might have cost them their children's souls. We are living in a selfish hour when people are willing to sacrifice their own flesh and blood in order to satisfy their fleshly appetites. Oh, how sad that is! Many times the enemy comes and says, "Oh, that is just a little thing," but while you have the opportunity to choose, you cannot determine the results of many things.

Have you ever bought an automobile, which at the time looked good and ran well, but it was not long until things started to happen? The day you purchased it, you could not foresee what was going to happen.

You must realize that often you cannot determine the results of everything down the road. David had to reap some terrible things. Because of one drink, one pill, or one cigarette, many people have reaped suffering in a terrible way. Therefore, you must realize the importance of your decisions.

Be Careful of Little Things

The Bible says the little foxes spoil the vine. The devil is clever. He is subtle enough to know that he cannot get the Christian in some big thing that he knows to be wrong, but the devil will work on little things without the Christian realizing that it is just the beginning. He does not show you the end, and the end is where you can get into trouble.

I read of a study in our country that shows that one out of every ten people walking the streets of our cities is a potential alcoholic. When some people take that first drink of alcohol, they are hooked. Why? The potential was there, and all they had to do was make that initial decision. Some young people have their purity lost by making one bad choice. How many young people have become drug addicts because they tried it one time? Sin works in little ways, but it does not stay that way. There is wrong with one little sin. Sin has a continual growing process to it.

Young person, a time will come

in your life when someone is going to offer you something wrong. Someone will say, "Hey, if you want to be a part of the in crowd, you must look at this or try that." They will tell you how good it is and how many people have enjoyed it. God has given you the power of choice. What you need to say to them is, "I made a bigger choice than this already, and I'm not going that way." Sinful things will be presented to you, but you must be determined in your choice to do what is right. Young lady, the time will come when you will be confronted with things that are not right. You need to remember that you do have the power of choice. You do not have to give in, no matter how much others pressure you.

My mind went back to when my sister started dating. One time she was going out the door, and my dad came across the living room and handed her a Bible. She asked, "What's this for?"

He said, "I want you to take it with you and lay it on the seat between you."

She asked, "Why?"

He replied, "If he climbs over Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, you slap him."

Young person, you must be careful. The devil will work through many things. You have to be careful of what kind of music you listen to. A lot of the music today has suggestive lyrics. What is the enemy doing? He is trying to plant seeds in your mind to get you to think the wrong way, but remember, you have the power of choice. You do not have to listen to it. What about country music? Country music has also gotten bad.

When you make the right choices, those decisions will bring happiness and future success in your life. Sometimes faulty decisions can bring hurt and ruin and make life a living hell. You must understand that you have been given the power of choice and the ability to say no. You must use it.

When you come to a crossroad

and you have to make a decision, how can you know which way to go? You need to ask yourself a few questions: Will God be glorified in what I am about to do? Will the church be strengthened? Will it encourage my friends and loved ones to hear that I have done this? What would my pastor think about it?

You may ask, "Why should my pastor care?" He is the one who is watching for your soul. He is the one who has given his life to try to keep you out of trouble, and that should mean something to you. You should ask yourself how your decision will affect you in the future.

Some other questions you should ask are: How will it affect me in eternity? Will good be accomplished or will this hurt God? Will this bring a reproach upon the church? Will it weaken my testimony? These are things you need to consider in making those decisions. Again, I say, you have the power of choice. What kind of decisions are you making? Remember, God is a gentleman, He will not override your choice.

Making the Right Decision

We find in the Old Testament there were times when God did not override the will of choice, but He sent obstacles and made people willing to do what He wanted them to do. In your choosing you need to realize there is an ultimate end that you are going to face, so you need to decide for Jesus, for righteousness. You need to endeavor to walk in His

footsteps and let Him help you in making decisions. You need to confer with Him regularly about what you should do.

Some people take life too nonchalantly. They do not stop to think about where a decision is going to lead them. Paul said in Hebrews 2:3, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Wrong decisions will cause you to neglect things that you should be taking care of and holding in high esteem.

In Matthew 24:13 Jesus said, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." You must endure through the right choices, through right decisions that will cause you to be able to make it. That is the reason these choices in life need to be pondered and prayed about. Then if you are still not satisfied, you need to talk to a spiritual leader, such as your pastor or someone who can help you to understand. Other saints have been through things, and they may carry some scars, so they can help you to avoid having the same scars in your life.

If you cannot come to a clear decision, do not just cast it off and say, "I guess it doesn't really matter." If you have any desire to make it to Heaven, you must start by making the right choices.

If you do not know Christ, I will offer you the decision I made. I decided to serve Jesus Christ, and I have never been sorry. Choosing Jesus has been the greatest decision that I have ever made. I only wish that I had gotten saved sooner. If you do not know Him, you need

to make the right decision. He is offering you a chance to meet Him now. He will become the dearest Friend you have ever had.

If you are a child of God facing decisions, or if you have made some wrong decisions, this is not the end. You can come to the One who can restore what has been lost and head you in the right way again. He can make you what He wants you to be in this day and time. Christ wants to guide you and strengthen you as you go. Are there decisions in your life that you need help making? I can honestly tell you that I do not have all the answers, but I have found a Friend who does.

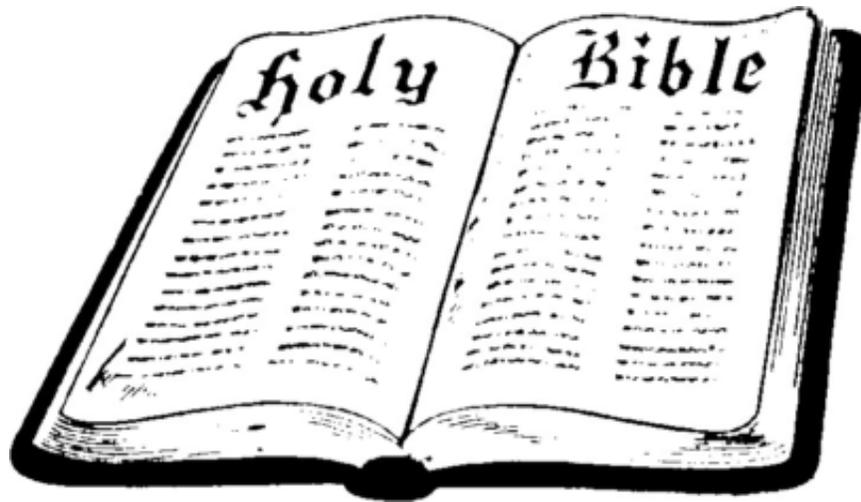
I am glad we have a Father who cares when we get in the hard places of life. When you come to decisions that are too hard for you to make, you have a Heavenly Father that you can talk to. He knows your feelings, He knows your hurts, and He is ever ready with outstretched arms, saying: "Come unto Me. I want to help you." That is not just for lost people. No, that is for each of us. Any time you need Him, you can go to Him, because He wants to help you. The enemy may cause you to feel, "If I could back up and make other decisions, I could straighten myself out." Well, you cannot back up the clock. Every one of us would like to do that, but we cannot do it. However, you can start changing the future. God is able to help you if you will come to Him.

(Compact Disc TR-1469)

If I have Jesus only, I'm safe for eternity.

If I have everything else, without Him I am lost.

Are You Rending the Veil?



Brother Mike Wilks

The Most Important Concern

Many souls are on the verge of being lost, and I pray that God will touch their hearts and draw them to Him. We all have family members and friends who suffer under the weight of sin. May God give us a greater burden for every lost soul. Every one of us is leading someone either to Christ or away from Him. Are you endeavoring to lead someone to Christ?

The rich man in hell never complained about not having a knowledge of God, but in hell he was concerned about his brothers. It was far too late for the rich man in hell to do anything about his condition, but his concern was that his brothers would not come to the same awful place.

Concern for your loved ones

needs to be now, while they are still on this side of eternity. The only space of time that we have to help the lost is right now. We are not guaranteed tomorrow. Do you have a concern for the lost? People are concerned about so many things.

Often we hear the term "greenhouse gases," but what about the pollution of sin? Church of God, we have to convince the world to live right by our everyday living, and we cannot let down. Many people are collecting filth in their souls at an alarming rate. It does not just wash away. Once it gets in the soul, it stays. Seven devils were cast out of Mary Magdalene by the Lord. If you are living in sin, you have a lot of filth in your soul.

Job 32:8-9 reads: "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them under-

standing. Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment." Age does not cure sin; only the Spirit of God working through a person's life will cure sin in his life. Older saints with the Spirit of God within have wisdom. They have been down the road of life, and I like to hear them talk about the experiences they have been through, because I may face similar places in my life. That is the reason young people need to seek counsel.

I am not too old to receive counsel, and neither are you. When I go to my pastor, he is not out to hurt me, but he is there to help me. Before I got married, I went to my pastor for counselling about my wife-to-be. I felt that she was the one whom the Lord wanted me to be with, but I went to him and asked

him. Had he told me no, I was willing to accept that, because I knew if our marriage was ordained by God, it was going to happen. Young person, whatever your pastor tells you, you should accept it and just wait on the Lord.

A Spiritual Curtain

I want to talk to you about a spiritual curtain. Job had been talking with his friends, and then Job 38:1 tells us the Lord answered him. (When the Lord answers you, you will know it.) Job 38:1-2 says: "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" Many darken counsel by talking about things they do not understand. They have no understanding of what God requires.

A curtain is a hanging piece of fabric used for privacy or to shut out the light from a window or at a doorway to a room for privacy. A curtain is also a drapery used for concealing all or part of a stage or a set from view of an audience. Likely, something is taking place on the other side of the curtain. People can make all kinds of statements on this side of the curtain. Being born on this earth is all they know. They do not know what is on the spiritual side of the curtain unless it is revealed to them through the Word of God. The reason you go to church is to learn of the hope that is on the heavenly side of the curtain.

Many times people get sick. Job went through a severe affliction that the devil put on him. If you are going through the valley of affliction, sometimes the devil will pile on more adversity. Some horrible "comforters" may come along and say things that are discouraging or give you bad advice. Suffering people need encouragement. When I had kidney stones, it was such an encouragement to know that people were praying for me. When you are in the depth of a trial and someone is praying for you, that is a real comfort.

Job's comforters made all kinds of discouraging comments to Job. It is amazing that people from twenty to eighty years of age make all kinds of statements and judgment calls. Some people only live for a few years and think they know it all. However, the Word of God is settled in Heaven; it is forever, and we had better take heed to it.

Isaiah 55:9 says, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." God is on a different level than we are. He does not think as we do. Once I faced a situation and thought I knew the best way to handle it, but God worked it differently, and it amazed me. The way He handled it brought such comfort to me. He is God, and I really do not know much, so I just ask Him to help me, and He does.

It is sobering for me to know this Truth will go on with or without me. Right now, I can see it clearly and do not waiver. I know the Bible is true with all my heart, but if I were to lose it, this Gospel train would go on without me. It scares me to know that I could become deceived if I am not careful to obey the Gospel. No matter how clearly I can see the Truth now, a few years down the road, I could lose it. God forbid that such a thing would happen. It could happen to you as well, so it behooves us all to draw closer to God.

There are some things that we have to experience on our own. Often I can tell what kind of food someone likes by his countenance. You have to experience things. Your mom and dad cannot do everything for you. Whether it is experiencing certain new foods, going through adolescence, finding the right companion, or marriage, they are a guide for you, but you have to experience things on your own. This is equally true with salvation, you must experience it for yourself. This spiritual curtain is a divine curtain, and you do not want to rend or mar it in any way. If your parents are spiritual,

that is a great blessing, but you are going to have to gain a spiritual experience with Christ yourself.

God's Separations

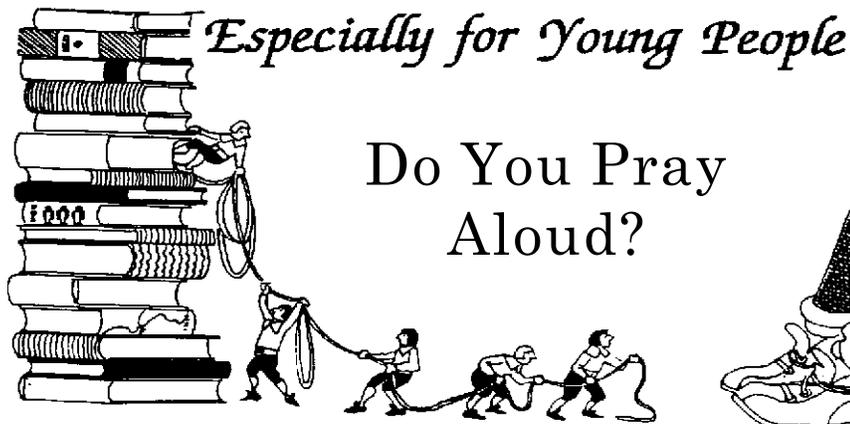
The Prophet Samuel was raised in the temple. Hannah, his mother, dedicated him to God, and he grew up in the temple. One night God started to call Samuel at a very young age, so he went to the priest, Eli, when he heard his name called. Eli said that he did not call for him. Three times this happened, and Eli perceived that God was talking to Samuel. God wanted to reveal Himself to Samuel. Young person, God has to be revealed to you. If you are lost, that will be revealed to you as well.

Going to the New Testament, we find in the Book of Acts, Saul (later called Paul) was well versed in the Jewish religion when Jesus revealed Himself to him on the road to Damascus. Saul had a great mind, but he was blind spiritually until God revealed Himself to him. Then he was given a whole new perspective of spiritual light versus darkness, or understanding versus a lack of knowledge. Darkness is the absence or the deficiency of light. Light is the natural agent that stimulates sight and makes things visible. There is also visible enlightenment.

Matthew 22:29 reads, "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err [He was talking to the Sadducees, not ignorant people], not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." Their hearts were not right with God. If your heart is not right with God, you are not going to see Truth. Child of God, that is the reason you should not argue with somebody over the Truth. You are wasting your time. You are not going to get through to someone by arguing. You need to just live the Gospel before them. That is the only way you are going to convince some people.

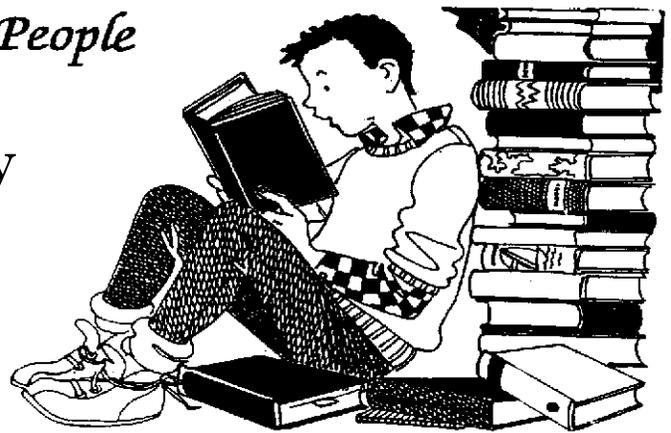
God's separations are all around us, dividing the day from the night.

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Especially for Young People

Do You Pray Aloud?



Psalm 3:4 reads, "I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill." Also, Psalm 5:3 tells us, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD." Sometimes Bible reading and praying can become routine in a Christian's life. Some have even used the word "boring." This is a dangerous time, because one could easily become spiritually weak if he or she is not careful. How can this be overcome? Is there a way to strengthen your Bible reading and prayer life? I had a praying mother. That is a blessing many people know nothing about. My mother had regular times of prayer, and all her children knew what she was doing. It would not be unusual to hear her praying aloud in her bedroom. When she babysat her grandchildren, they knelt or lay down beside her while she was praying. What a beautiful heritage she was creating for them!

My own prayer life was not so noticeable. Perhaps my children did not know when I was praying, because I prayed quietly. In time, the majority of my daily, personal prayers became silent prayers in my mind. I did not seem to notice it at the time, but my prayer time was losing fervor. On three separate occasions, before beginning my personal prayer, I seemed to hear a voice that said, "Pray out loud." I did not think it was God, because surely He hears all prayers, whether they are prayed aloud or silently. However, that thought would not leave me, and it prompted me to

see what the Bible says about praying aloud. I began a Bible study with questions such as these: Is there a place and a time for praying aloud? Can praying aloud be more effective than praying silently?

This lesson in no way diminishes the need for silent prayer. There are times when you cannot put into words what you feel. You may be too upset or too heavily burdened to pray aloud. That is when "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us" (Romans 8:26). There are times when silent prayer is perhaps more appropriate, such as praying over your lunch at school or asking God for help during a test. Silent prayer should be a part of daily meditation, and it can happen anywhere (on the school bus, while walking down the halls, while at work, and so on). There is a definite place for silent prayer.

Likewise, there is a definite place for praying aloud. It could cause confusion if a church service were to be begun with silent prayer. How could you agree in prayer if everyone were to pray silently? Would a silent prayer with one who is in need be as encouraging as a prayer prayed aloud? When having family devotions, children need to hear their parents pray aloud. This is a wonderful way to teach the children how to pray.

Let us do a comparison between silent prayer and praying aloud to help you make a decision. Because the Christian needs to have times of silent prayer and other times of

prayer that are prayed aloud, how do you know which way to pray during your daily, personal conversations with God? When praying silently, how long is it before you find yourself thinking about what you need to do later or something that someone said about you? Have you ever prayed a silent prayer and your mind did *not* wander? Have you ever fallen asleep while praying silently? For too many, prayer time becomes nap time. Praying aloud keeps you focused on what you are saying and helps to keep you awake.

How intense, or fervent, are your prayers when you pray silently? James 5:16b says, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The word *fervent* means "to put forth power, to be at work, to be active." Does this definition fit silent prayer? It is true that God knows our thoughts and can hear silent prayer, but we are not "wired" to communicate this way. My husband and I have been married for a long time, and sometimes one of us can guess what the other is thinking, but this is not an effective method of communication. To truly express one's feelings and to be understood, a couple has to talk to each other.

Praying aloud forces you to concentrate, to speak in complete sentences, and to be more specific. Have you ever needed to tell God that you are sorry for something you have done? Some of the hardest words for people to say are "I'm

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*Psalm 73:26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.
Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

Spiritual Depletion



Brother Irwin Seshier

How to Be Strong in the Lord

Today many things in this world can so easily break down your physical strength, but how many things in this world will break down your spiritual strength? If you do not eat right, do not get enough sleep, and fail to exercise, you will lose physical strength. Your body has indicators that warn you when things are not going well, such as fever, loss of appetite, muscle fatigue, nausea, weight loss, or blurred vision. These symptoms let you know that you are not doing well physically. It is the same with your spiritual strength. We all need to increase our spiritual strength. A true child of God is not

satisfied with his present spiritual strength.

The enemy of souls is constantly devising plans to test your spirituality. Every day that you live, you are going to face spiritual tests. A body builder is not satisfied with training goals that merely make him average. An excellent student in high school or college does not want to do average, or just enough to get by. I believe this is true when it comes to living for the Lord.

The Christian does not just want to get by. May the Lord help you if you have the desire to do as little as you can to get by. That is not what you ought to strive for. You should want to do the very best you can.

When it comes to living for God, if your attitude is to do just enough to get by, more than likely, you are not going to make it to Heaven. Things will arise in your walk with God that test your spirituality.

The child of God needs to be actively involved in the work of God. Why is that? You need to prevent the enemy from knocking the props out from under you. The saints of God work together and desire to do the right thing. Furthermore, when you are actively involved in the work of God, you will not find fault with others.

You need to stay strong in the Lord because the enemy of souls is after you. He wants to see you

defeated. The enemy of souls does not want to see the Church of God go forward and grow spiritually. He is going to come to you with something to try to knock you out of this race.

What must you do to stay strong in the Lord? You must read the Bible and obey the standard of God's Word. If a child in school is having difficulty with reading, the teacher does not close the book and say, "Go stand in the corner." He or she is going to have the child continue to read so his reading skills will become stronger. A child of God needs to read the Word of God.

There will be times when you need to fast and pray. The flesh does not like to fast, but sometimes you have to bring the flesh under. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:27, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." That is in the Word of God for us to read and to obey. You have to keep the flesh under. The flesh enjoys partaking of things that could prevent you from having victory in your Christian life.

Prayer and Fasting Are Necessary

Prayer is a basic necessity for spiritual life. What is often the need when people go to an altar of prayer? Usually they feel that they are not praying and reading the Bible enough. The devil works that way. He wants you to have a false sense of security by telling you that you do not have to read the Bible and pray. Also, he will say it is not necessary for you to fast. Dear one, these are all necessary for you to gain strength with God.

The desire of my heart in bringing this message is to encourage you to carry a greater burden for the lost and for those who are so heavily afflicted. One of the most sincere indicators of a true child of God is to be able to carry another's burdens in a way that lines up with the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2 says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." It is a

precious thing when we join ourselves in spirit with loved ones who are heavily afflicted. They need us to pray for them and to help them bear that burden.

What if you had a heavy burden or were under an affliction? Would you want others to pray for you? Would you want others to lift you up and help you to carry your load? I know that if I were greatly afflicted, I would want the saints to pray for me. You never know what might come your way in the future; only God knows.

The problem with many people, especially when it comes to sharing burdens with others, is time. Many people do not take the time to pray. They use their time elsewhere instead of channeling it where it needs to be channeled. They do not take the time to pray as they ought to. The reason is that it takes energy, and many people are just too lazy to put forth the effort. Also, it takes commitment, thought, and action. Some things are just not going to happen automatically. You have to take action with prayer and fasting.

We all have much to pray about. We have dear brothers and sisters who need to be touched by the hand of God. They desire and need our prayers. Let us not get weary in well doing. Our nation is in terrible shape. The leaders of this nation need prayer. We are living in perilous, evil times. We do not know what is going to happen in the future.

Twenty or thirty years ago, we never would have even thought that some of the things happening today could happen. Back in the sixties, seventies, or eighties, we never heard of anyone going into a school and shooting innocent people. What has happened? We are living in evil and perilous times. Where has the let down been? It started behind the sacred desks across our land. In other words, when the Truth is not being preached, how can you expect the people to live it? What is the congregation going to measure up to if they do not hear the Word of God

preached?

Some people say God has been taken out of our schools. The truth of the matter is, God was taken out of the homes first. You may blame the schools, but most let downs can be traced back to the home. When people take God out of the home, they are going to open themselves up to every awful spirit of this world. If you do not have the Spirit of Christ, I can guarantee that you are going to have a spirit of something else. You need to keep that in mind.

The Need for Spiritual Guidance

I have a feeling that if Jesus tarries, we have not seen anything yet. Who knows what we might witness? One young man whom I read about said he wanted to kill as many children as he could. His goal was to have the greatest massacre ever; that evil is caused by nothing but sin. I do not know what the boy's home life was like, but there was probably no godly influence in his home.

We need God more than ever. Our nation, our leaders, and our pastors need prayer for spiritual guidance. We need to act right and do right. The best gift a congregation can give a godly pastor is to live the Gospel message and to do exactly what he instructs the people to do through the Holy Spirit. When you are in the house of God, you need to sit up and listen to the preached Word of God and obey it.

We are heading for eternity. We cannot let things happen and then push a rewind button and redo it. We get only one chance; we have only one life to live for Christ. Many are not taking this as seriously as they should. I am concerned that the attitude of many people is just to sit back and let someone else do the work. We gain strength through the Lord, but many people are not doing the things that give them strength. You want God to bless you and help you through all your difficult circumstances, but are you doing your

part? You need to examine yourself to see if you are doing all that the Lord expects you to do.

You need to learn to respond to the call of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If the Lord awakens you in the middle of the night or keeps you up late or wakes you up early, there is a reason. He does it because there are fewer distractions that surround you in the early morning hours or late at night. God knows how to get your attention. Someone may say, "I cannot talk to God during the day because there are too many distractions." He might not let you sleep so He can talk to you. You need to be instructed and led by the Holy Spirit concerning how to carry burdens. You cannot carry them on your own. You need the Holy Spirit to help you.

The military must have a strategic plan in place. If one country is going to invade another country, the commander in chief does not allow the commander of each ship, squadron, and plane to fight whenever he wants to fight. The commander in chief concentrates his forces according to a master plan. Jesus Christ is our Commander in Chief, and He has a master plan.

As a child of God, you are engaged in a serious, spiritual warfare. It is important for you to discover the Commander's plan and to engage in your proper role in it. You cannot do what you want to do. You need to be led by the Holy Spirit in everything. It is important, saint of God, to consider a burden with heartfelt concern, or your prayers can quickly vanish into mere idle conversation, never getting to the point of why you are carrying a burden in the first place. You can become easily distracted. The longer you walk this Christian pathway, the more fierce the opposition.

Lean on the Lord for Strength

There is much you can do to help others. We all need one another. We are the family of God. We are to uplift and encourage one

another, bear one another's burdens, and help one another. Why? That gives us strength in the Lord. In the day in which we live, our minds are constantly being bombarded with information that we must learn and retain. By the end of the day, sometimes our minds feel overloaded. We can become fatigued and shocked by the number of people in our world who are suffering. However, this should not alter our burden for those for whom we are praying. Sometimes we can look at the big picture but not really focus on what we need to concentrate on.

Many get themselves in dire situations, and then wonder why they have no victory or strength with the Lord. Have you been there? At times, you may feel that you are not doing enough for the Lord. You may feel defeated. You may even wonder: "What is the use of going on? What is the use of doing what I am doing? No one cares about what I do." Those thoughts are from the devil. Do not listen to the devil. He will come at you with negativity. He will put you down and cast you down. He will tell you many things, but the one thing the devil does not tell you is how to get out of a bad situation.

The Lord will be true to you. He will let you know exactly what the problem is. You do not have to play a guessing game with the Lord. He will tell you exactly what is getting you down, and He will instruct you about what you need to do to get back up on the mountaintop, so to speak.

You need to be careful to listen to the Lord. Do not just go on your own understanding. Friend, when you go on your own understanding, you are going to lose strength with God. Someone may ask, "What are some things I need to look out for when it comes to having my spiritual strength depleted?" First of all, when you stop asking the Lord for help and strength in your everyday life, you are going to be depleted of your spiritual strength.

We need the Lord each and

every day. You should never leave your house without thanking the Lord and asking for the Lord to protect you as you go to work or school. Sometimes you can get in such a rush that you push God out. You may forget to have prayer. Also, if you have children, it is important to have prayer with them before they go to school.

Schools today are different from when I was growing up. Some of the shirts the children are wearing are too graphic, but some parents allow their children to wear such things. When the children get to the school, then the principal has to deal with that problem. When he calls the parents, often they say: "What's wrong with my child's shirt? You are stereotyping my child." Well, if the parent would be the proper kind of parent, the principal would not have to make the phone call in the first place.

This is what happens in our world today. Too many times, the parental responsibility is shifted. Some people do not want to be held responsible for what they do any more. They want to blame others for their child's problems. When I was growing up, if my dad and mom had a problem with me, I had to take care of the problem quickly. I did not want to call children's services. I just did what I was told.

If you stop asking the Lord for help, you will start losing strength spiritually. You need to ask Him to help you with the little things. The other day I misplaced some keys. I could not find them anywhere, so I prayed: "Where are the keys? Lord, help me to find those keys." I found them, thank the Lord. When you ask Him to help you with the little things and He answers your prayer, you will have more confidence when you ask Him for the bigger things.

You are going to face major obstacles in your life. It seems that the longer I live, the more of them I face. Some people go through what is called a mid-life crisis. It seems that things happen all the time.

Things That Will Drain Your Spirituality

Matthew 6:33 says, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Now, the Scripture does not say all these things would be "given unto you," but it says they would be "added unto you." We need to seek God's face in all that we do. When you do not seek His face, you will become depleted spiritually. Then you will become empty, discouraged, and disappointed. It is a painful experience when you do not seek His face, yet you know that He is there to help you.

Someone may say, "I just feel that my prayers are not getting through." Perhaps Job felt this way. When Job was going through adversity, he might have felt that no one had suffered more than he had. Job knew that with God in his life he would come forth stronger than when he started. He knew who his Master was. Job knew where he could gain the spiritual strength he needed. Job 23:8-10 says: "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

What a testimony! No matter what Job went through, he knew exactly how his end was going to be. He knew that if he put his faith and confidence in God, no matter what man would do, he was going to come out a winner. That is divine assurance! That is something to be happy about, to know that you will come forth as pure gold.

Another thing that will weaken you spiritually is turning back to worldly habits. If you drop the Lord from your life, your soul will try to reach out to other things for satisfaction. If you lose God from your life, your soul is going to reach out for sinful habits.

Young person, you need to stay away from the habits of this world. They are traps. Some people say, "Everyone else is doing it." No, not everyone is doing it. A true child of God does not want to ruin his body. He does not want to take up the sinful habits of this world. When you take up sinful habits, it could be a road of no return, and your life would be ruined. You may become broken physically and financially, and your home may become broken when you try to satisfy a bad habit.

Galatians 6:7 tells us, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Look at the reaping that is going on with people who wished they had never picked up the first cigarette, the first pill, or that first little glass of whiskey. It all starts with a first: the first drag on a cigarette or the first drink. Each year in the United States, approximately forty-four thousand people die of diseases caused by cigarette smoke, resulting in 5.6 million years of potential life lost. Think of that! This was in 2005. More than twenty-two thousand American lives were lost due to drug overdoses, and the number is rising rapidly. Around ten years ago approximately eighty-five thousand people died of alcohol consumption. Can you imagine what the statistics are today?

Young people are getting more involved with drinking wine coolers. Some of these adult beverages have a low dose of alcohol, but people get hooked on that stuff. After a while, these beverages no longer satisfy; therefore, many are drawn to something stronger. What about snuff and chewing tobacco? These are dangerous, maybe more so than cigarette smoking. Why? The nicotine goes directly into the bloodstream. Some people think they look cool by partaking of it. Well, they will not look cool once cancer starts. Young person, please do not partake of these habits. I warn you, it will lead you down a road that you may never leave unless the Lord helps you.

What is another thing that will

deplete your spirituality? Using human wisdom to solve your problems will cause you to lose spiritual strength. Seeking God's face is the best advice that I can give you. You must not rely on your own thinking to work out your problems. I am thankful that God never fails. Matthew 19:26 says, "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

Losing Power With God

What else will cause you to lose power with God? Ceasing to live a lifestyle of being fully surrendered to God. Many go through life thinking they know everything. Some teenagers think they know everything. I had a student at school one time who told me, "I already know everything, so I don't need to take that test to prove that I am proficient in order to go out and get a job."

I said: "Okay, your job is done in school. You are a ninth grader. Go ahead and get a job if you know everything."

We all need God. You may go through life thinking that you know everything and go your own way instead of God's way, but you have to surrender to God to be used of God. Some people do not like the word surrender. They think it means giving up their own needs. What is more gracious than to surrender to God's will in your life? This is what Jesus was instructing His disciples to do. He said in Matthew 16:25, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Someone once said, "Surrender, or complete obedience to God, is what is required to clean out those nooks and crannies of uncertainty." Some things in your life need to be cleaned out. You cannot completely surrender to God if you continue to hold on to things that God says you need to lay aside. If you have a wrong attitude in your heart, you have not completely surrendered to Him. If you have a spirit of wanting

to get revenge on someone, you have not truly surrendered to God. You must completely obey God and His Word.

Another thing that will weaken your spirituality is trying to live independently by refusing to fellowship or receive help from others. Saint of God, we need one another. We need other people to turn to for help and for prayer. We draw strength from other people. We all are fighting the same enemy. We all are striving to make Heaven our home one of these days. We must find out what we need to do to make us better saints of God.

You should never want to offend anyone. You should want to know if you are doing anything in your life that you should not be doing. When a message is preached, you should not take the attitude, "That is just his opinion." You need the Lord to direct you, and one way God directs His people is through the preached Word. Some people want to have an independent attitude, but I do not know what I would do if I could not come to the house of God to hear the Word of God and to have fellowship with the saints during the week.

I enjoy going to the house of God and being around the saints of God. As saints of God, we need to strengthen one another, help one another, and lean upon one another. Many times worldly people want to turn everything into something dirty. That is not how a saint of God should live. You should want to live pleasing to God. Where else would you be able to do that if not around the people of God? Going to the house of God will strengthen you. It should not be a bother for you to go to the house of God. You should have a desire to do so.

If you are a child of God, you should want to do those things that please God. By going to the house of God, you can get away from the world's affairs for a little while. The world has its own agenda. I know we have to be in the world, but the world does not have to be in us. God

wants His people together, not divided. We cannot have unity and strength if we are divided. If you separate yourself from the people of God, you will get weak spiritually. The enemy is working hard to separate you from the people of God.

Everyone needs a congregation to attend and everyone needs a pastor. The pastor can see things that the laity cannot see. The pastor is directed by God to stand as a watchman on the wall to let the congregation know what could be coming ahead. We need to uphold God's ministers and pray for them. We are God's sheep, and He takes care of us.

Do You Really Want Victory in Your Soul?

The last point I want to make on becoming depleted spiritually is refusing to take godly counsel. That will cause you to become weak. If you have a godly pastor, please take his counsel seriously. Many people have already made up their minds concerning what they are going to do before they even ask the pastor. Why bother to take up the pastor's time if you already know what you are going to do? I fear for some people who make moves when the pastor has instructed them not to make those moves. They would rather go ahead and do what they want to do. If you disregard your pastor's counsel and do what you want to do, you will lose spiritual strength with God. You are going your own way instead of God's way.

Let me ask you a question. I want you to answer this very truthfully to yourself. Are you as strong or stronger with the Lord today as you were six months ago or a year ago? If not, what has happened? You cannot say that God has let you down. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is the same God. Something has happened to you.

A true indicator that someone has lost strength with God is in his

countenance. That person has lost his joy. It has become a drudgery for him to go to church. He will begin to question: Do I have to go? Do I have to listen to that message? Do I have to do this or that? As a child of God, you should want to do what is right. You should want to do those things that will give you spiritual strength.

Have you allowed the cares of this life to keep you from doing what is right? One of these days, the cares of this life will fade away and you will wish that you had never allowed them to overtake your life.

The world wants to keep Jesus in a manger. Many people do not want to hear the message of the Resurrection and why He died for our sins. I am thankful that Jesus was born, and I am thankful that He died and rose again. He had victory over the grave, and because of that, I have victory over sin. I do not have to sin any more. There is power in the name of Jesus, and there is power in the Resurrection. I thank God that a resurrection has taken place within my breast. I am so thankful that He came and lived His life as our example.

You may say, "I cannot live free from sin." Christ did it. He did it through the power of God, and you can do it too. Through Him, you can face opposition and persecution. You can do it, but the question is, Do you really want to do it? Do you want to live for Christ? You need the Lord. If the world would heed the message of why Jesus Christ was brought into this world, we would not have all these things out here that we face today. I am thankful that there is power in the name of Jesus. There has to be power, because when Jesus called Lazarus out of the tomb, He had to say, "Lazarus, come forth." Had He merely said, "Come forth," every grave would have brought forth a body. Are you happy to be a child of God? Are you drawing strength in the time of need?

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[Are You Rendng . . . ?—contin. from p. 13]

The calendar (that is how time is set for us) divides days into weeks, weeks into months, and months into years. He separated the land and the sea, and He separated the nations from one another. As I was studying, I thought of the separation between Israel of old and the heathen nations. There was a curtain there, separating light from darkness.

A person is either a saint or a sinner. There is no sinning Christian or an honest thief. It is ignorant to sin and say you are a Christian. You should not take the grace of God for granted, because you are going to be disappointed in the end. The grace of God will empower you to live above sin and to serve God with all your heart. If you are living in sin, you are in bondage. Someone asked me (we were talking about living above sin) "Are you in bondage?"

I said, "I am in bondage to nothing," and I meant it.

When God saves a person, he is free from bondage. He does not have an old habit that, as soon as a church service is over, causes him to rush out behind the church building and smoke a cigarette. I do not have to go in a bar and have a beer. God cleaned me up and made me different. I cannot take credit for anything that I am today. All I can do is point to Jesus.

The Yoke of the Gospel

In John 4:22 Jesus, talking to the Samaritan woman, said, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." Friend, if you are a spiritual Jew, you know what I am talking about. You know what it is to worship God, and you know what is required of you by the Word of God. You cannot just go out and live carelessly. You are under the yoke of the Gospel. There is still a yoke, friend. Jesus said His yoke is easy and His burden is light. It is, but never forget that He has a yoke and you must wear it.

Merely knowing the oracles of

God is no guarantee that you are saved. The Jews had the oracles of God, but they were as lost as they could be, so God gave them four hundred years of silence without a prophet. When the Word of God is not preached, there is spiritual silence. You may follow after the Christian rock bands all you want. Some people think they are leading others to Christ that way, but they are deceiving them. They think that is the way to Heaven, and they tell everybody else that is the way.

If you are delving around in false religion, you had better be careful because that will get hold of you and take you to hell just as the liquor bottle will. The devil loves false religion. God wants His people to stay away from it. The pure Word of God says in 2 Corinthians 3:6, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." An able minister is someone who labors to see lives changed. He is not just somebody who gets up and rattles, but he preaches the true Gospel that will change your life. We all need to thank God that Jesus was dispatched from Heaven and gave the New Testament and brought the Holy Ghost.

The Old Testament can be difficult to understand, but Jesus appeared on the scene to show mankind who the Father is. Oh, that men would exhalt Him in a greater way, because He is worthy. They looked all over the earth, and they looked under the earth, yet no man was found worthy to open the Revelation seals, but Jesus Christ was.

Matthew 4:16 says, "The people which sat in darkness [people who did not even care—His own people, the Jews, sat in darkness] saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." The Jews had nothing to do with that light. Jesus had been living on the earth for thirty years, and very little was mentioned of His personal life. He is Jesus, the Son of

God, and when He returned to Heaven, He sent the Holy Ghost to comfort and guide us. If you do not have the Holy Ghost, there is no good being recorded about your life. You are wasting your life. When the Holy Ghost comes on the scene and great light springs up, Christ, through the avenue of the Holy Ghost, reveals things to His disciples.

Luke 10:24 reads, "For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." People have been looking and wondering about this plan of salvation that we enjoy, yet they easily pass it by. It breaks my heart that I resisted it as long as I did. It breaks my heart to see my friends and family resist this great plan of salvation. It is a plan that will change your life and make you what you ought to be.

Religion is not there to make you feel better about the sinful things that you are doing. True religion will help you to line up with the Word of God. When you walk into the house of God, you should say, "Lord, what am I going to learn today?" You need to make sure that your life is backing what is preached. A saint of God must be fed the Word of God.

Presenting the Truth in the Right Spirit

The Gospel brings a greater responsibility of holy living on us as never before. Do you think that it was John himself that turned Jerusalem upside down? It was not John, but it was the Holy Ghost working through him that changed things. It was because he had power with God, and men recognized it. Jesus showed up the same way. It was not because His name was Jesus; it was because He was anointed of God, and He had the Holy Spirit of God. The Apostles preached under the power of the Holy Spirit, and the light was great.

Truth can be presented in two

ways. It can be presented in the right spirit or the wrong spirit. Some preachers present the Gospel in the wrong spirit. A man must hear the Gospel first, and then he is responsible. One should not tell people they are going to hell when they have no idea what you are talking about. You have to explain the Gospel, live the life before them, and then if they ask, you should make sure that you have an answer ready for them.

God wants you to talk about this great plan of salvation and the things of God, but you must present the Truth in the right spirit, a spirit that causes the salt to begin to work. I like to eat hot wings, but they are very salty. They taste delicious, but every time I am done eating them, I always want to drink lots of water. Are you salty, Christian friend? Are you causing people around you to have a craving for the Gospel? Are you causing people to think differently? That is what God wants. He wants you to show people something different.

When the church is holding a revival, you should let people know and invite them to the services. More than likely, they are going to ask you what a revival is. That is an opportunity for you to witness, but you should not just tell them they are going to hell. You could say: "We get together during a revival to worship the Lord. We have great services! You should come with me sometime." Then you can leave it at that and let the Lord work on them. Are you rending this old veil of flesh so that the world can see Jesus in you? Are you living a life that is pleasing to God?

God wants you to be a useful vessel for Him. He wants you to be an ambassador for the Lord to tell others of the greatest message ever told. The world is hungry to hear it from one who is living the way a Christian ought to live. People do not like hypocrites. Sometimes the devil will make you feel that you are a fanatic if you talk about religion. If you are a hypocrite and you talk about religion all the time, you are

useless to God. On the other hand, if you are living the life when you talk about Jesus, He can use you. You should never let the devil come around and say that you are a fanatic when you are living right and spreading the message of the Gospel.

Religion of any kind is useless without the Holy Spirit. No matter what name people have above the door of their church building, if they do not possess the Holy Ghost, their religion is useless. You become a product of what you are taking in. The Holy Ghost is the Third Person of the Godhead, and when you have Him in your life, it shows who you have within you. As a Christian, you must live according to the standard of God's Word.

The Secret to a Successful Life With Christ

In Acts 1:1-4 we read: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach. Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me."

If they had departed from Jerusalem, they would not have been given the gift of the Holy Ghost. Obeying God is a serious matter. Jesus commanded them to tarry at Jerusalem. When He commands someone to do something, it is very serious. You must not override His commands or there will be a price to pay. You could lose your experience; it is a warning to each of us. The Holy Ghost cannot find a place in the majority of religions today. Many people have their own ideas

about religion.

Just as businessman Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, was kicked out of his own company, the Holy Ghost is being kicked out of His own organization because people do not want Him around. When the company brought Steve Jobs back, he revolutionized that company. He made it into something that they never dreamed it could be. It is the same with the Holy Ghost. He has the power to bring a revival such as we have never seen. He is the greatest New Testament figure, second only to Jesus Christ.

Saul, when he was traveling on the road to Damascus, said in Acts 9:6, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" If you do not have that same attitude, you are not going to get anywhere with God, no matter how intelligent you are or how much of the Bible you know. That is the secret to a successful life with Christ.

You cannot take credit for your spiritual understanding. This enlightenment comes from the Holy Ghost. You may turn on every lamp in your house, but it is not going to do you any good spiritually. However, when the Holy Ghost sheds light on the Word of God, you will understand things that you have never thought of. That is the work of the blessed Holy Ghost of God. I am thankful for Him in my life. Jesus did not have to come to earth and die for mankind. Suppose you were to receive a phone call, and someone said: "I want you to come down here and live in the slums for a while. We really need you here. People are lost and dying." In essence, Jesus did that when He came to earth. Why? He loves you and wants to make you a new creature.

In 2 Corinthians 3:14-15 we read this great warning: "But their [the Jews'] minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. [You do not have to be blind about the Word of God. The Holy Ghost was given so that we all can know what God requires.]

But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." May that never happen to you.

If a veil is upon your heart, you will believe all kinds of things and can easily accept false religious teachings. You might find yourself in a cult. You may even start believing the theory of evolution instead of the truth about Creation. There is something about the Scriptures that comforts one in a time of illness. Who would care about Darwinism if one had a dreadful disease? I am not going to show up at the hospital and read Darwin's theory to you. I am going to read the Scriptures to you.

I am thankful to be in the Church of God where Truth is preached.

May God help each of us to be a brighter light for Him. Unsaved people are dying all around us. I often think of my own family. I do not want to see them die lost. My brother and I are really close, and we talk quite often. When I go places, naturally I want my brother to be there. I want to share things with him. When we were younger, we used to go mountain biking a lot. I was totally delighted when I was with my brother. When we were out riding through the woods and sharing things, we had so many good

times together. I do not want to miss going to Heaven, and I do not want my family to miss it either. The cost is too great. May God help us to be greater soul winners.

If you are lost, you need to get right with God. You need to give up on your old sinful life and get saved. The saints of God want to see you saved. If you get your heart right with God, you will live the greatest life possible here and then go on to Glory when you die.

(Compact Disc TR-1314E)

[Camp Meeting Report—contin. from p. 2] the altar. It was truly a delight to see the miraculous works that God performed during this camp meeting.

Friday evening of the camp meeting, a special love offering of approximately \$14,000 was received to help pay for the replacement of the tabernacle roof. This building, completed in 1968, is almost fifty years old. Brother E. A. Wilson and the congregation dedicated this edifice to the propagation of God's Truth. Over the years, many repairs

have been made to the roof. About twenty years ago, a rubber roof was installed over the original roof and has been re-coated periodically to preserve it. However, the problems have now become so intense that the roof must be replaced. The complete replacement of this one-acre roof has been put off as long as possible because of the enormous cost involved.

Estimates from contractors all quoted the cost of replacement to be around \$500,000. Pastor Decker would greatly appreciate any finan-

cial support that you can give regarding this matter.

Once again, we remind you that the camp meeting CD's, MP3's, and DVD's of the messages are available. CD's of the choir and special singing may also be obtained. A complete list of recordings from this camp meeting is on page 24 of this issue. To receive your copies, please write to: CD Ministry, Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055 or you may call 740-345-1312.

[Especially for Young People—contin. from p. 14] sorry" and "I was wrong." Hearing yourself say these words to God aloud gives emphasis to what you are saying. You must verbalize the fact that you have failed God and that you need His help. This can be much more powerful, more humbling, and more meaningful than a silent prayer.

Let us consider the power of the spoken word. During Creation, did God think things into existence or did He speak? "And God said" (Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 24). Why did God not just think and have it happen? Was it necessary for Him to speak? Proverbs 18:21 lets us know there is power in the spoken word: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Is it possible that praying aloud could be a more powerful prayer than one prayed silently?

Does hearing spoken words, such as words of faith and hope and words of thanksgiving to God, increase your faith? Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Hearing yourself speak the promises of God's Word while praying aloud can strengthen your faith. For example, your prayer might be: "God, I'm thankful to know that all things work together for good" or "God, thank You for promising to supply all my needs" or "God, I'm trusting in Your promise that says 'they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength.'"

If your daily, personal prayers are all silent prayers, this is not to criticize or condemn you. Just as this was a personal challenge to me, I am presenting a challenge to you. For the next

week, try praying aloud during your daily, personal prayer time. Then ask yourself these questions: Were my prayers more fervent? Did it feel different to pray this way? Did I stay on track with my prayer? Did my mind wander? Did I fall asleep while praying? Did praying aloud make a difference in my prayer life? One additional question I ask you to consider: Could praying aloud during times of personal, private prayer help make it easier to pray aloud in public prayer services? We need more prayer warriors in our homes and in our church services. Do you have a weak prayer life? Does your prayer life need to be strengthened? If so, consider taking this challenge and see if it strengthens your prayer life.

Sister Sheri Strelecky

The Faith of a Child

When Paul was three years of age, he and his sister were taken to a Christian mission orphanage. Paul's father did not know the true God. He worshiped Mohammed as the prophet of God. He was Moslem. However, in the mission orphanage, little Paul came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. He no longer wanted to worship Mohammed or be called by his old Moslem name. He announced that his new name was "Paul," and everyone called him by that name from that time on.

When Paul's father heard that his son had become a Christian, he was very angry. At first, he did not take his little son away from the orphanage, but when the Moslem feast day came, he went to the orphanage to take Paul to the Moslem mosque.

When Paul knew that his father was coming for him, he said to the missionary, "If my father questions me, I shall have to witness that I am a Christian, won't I?"

His father came, and together they walked through the streets of the city. Everyone seemed to be happy. Children were playing on special swings that had been put up for the holiday. When they reached the mosque, Paul saw many men who were saying the Moslem creed, which states, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God."

"Now," said Paul's father, "do you hear what they are saying? I wish my son to repeat the creed also."

"Father," said Paul, "I am a Christian."

"Do as I tell you this moment," Paul's father insisted.

Paul turned pale. Then he said, "There is no God but God, and Jesus Christ is the Son of God." His childish voice rang out over the crowd.

For a moment, the men were silent. Then they took the lad and beat him cruelly. They threatened him with worse things if he did not withdraw what he had said. Then they gave Paul one more chance. Paul took it. This time he said, "There is no God but God, and Jesus Christ

is my Savior."

Paul's father did not know what to do with the boy. He did not want him in his home, but he did not want him to return to the Christian orphanage either. At last, he decided to send him to a Moslem school. He told the men there to fill his son's mind with teaching about the Moslem Koran, and the Moslem faith, so that he would forget all about Christianity. So strong was little Paul's testimony for Jesus that before long the teachers brought Paul back to his father.

"It is no good," they said, "we cannot knock this nonsense out of him, and if he stays here much longer we shall all become Christians."

Again, Paul's father had to decide what to do with him. At last, hearing that an errand boy was needed by a man who kept a little store in the town, he got Paul a job. The father did not know that the man was an earnest Christian. How wonderfully God had planned for His little Paul! Paul and the storekeeper had such good times together, talking about the Bible and praying. They both loved Jesus so much.

Often the storekeeper would send Paul on errands to the mission school so that he could see his teachers. "You need not hurry back, Paul," he would say.

For a time Paul disappeared. Perhaps his father found out what was happening. Then word came that Paul had been placed in a reformatory to see if they could make him renounce his faith in Christ. No matter what they said or did to Paul, he stood firm in his faith.

For a long time Paul's witness was silenced, and he was kept in a Moslem orphanage until he was eighteen. Finally he was released. He hurried back to the missionaries in his home city. Today Paul is witnessing for the Lord, who died for him and rose again.

Selected

THREE NOBLE TRAITS

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

James 1:19

1. Be Swift to Hear—Have a receptive mind, be teachable, & listen attentively.
2. Be Slow to Speak—Guard your tongue, be slow to speak when angry & when you've nothing to say.
3. Be Slow to Wrath—Temper is a valuable possession, so don't lose it.

Spring 2016 Camp Meeting Recordings

Recrd. No.	Date	Message Title	Minister
TR-1717	6-19-2016	The Kind of Fathers We Should Strive to Be	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1718		Do You Have a Problem With Your Spiritual Battery?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1719	6-20-2016	How We Are Known	Bro. Paul Prinkey
TR-1720		Lessons on God's Creation: Consider the Ants	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1721	6-21-2016	We Must Master the Skills It Takes to Resist the Devil	Bro. Karl Wilson
TR-1722		Lessons on God's Creation: Take the Foxes	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1723		The Commission to Be Ambassadors	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1724	6-22-2016	The Unclean Spirits of False Religion	Bro. Mike Wilks
TR-1725		Lessons on God's Creation: Like Sheep	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1726		Don't Lose Hope	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1727	6-23-2016	The Angel and the Altar	Bro. Allen Polston
TR-1728		Lessons on God's Creation: Characteristics of Serpents	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1729		How Do You Know If You Have Counterfeit Religion?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1730	6-24-2016	In This Life You Only Live Once	Bro. Calvin Foster
TR-1731		Lessons on God's Creation: Harmless as a Dove	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1732		What Will You Do in the End Thereof?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1733	6-25-2016	Lessons on God's Creation: Like an Eagle	Bro. David Stegmeier
TR-1734		Pick Up the Broken Pieces and Bring Them to the Lord	Bro. Larry Dishman
TR-1735	6-26-2016	The Golden Scepter of Righteousness	Bro. Richard Talbot
TR-1736		What Time Is It?	Bro. Larry Dishman
TM-371	2016	Spring Camp Meeting Songs #1	
TM-372		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #2	
TM-373		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #3	
TM-374		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #4	
TM-375		Spring Camp Meeting Songs #5	
	2016	Spring Camp Meeting Choir Songs # 1	
		Spring Camp Meeting Choir Songs # 2	
	2016	All Morning & Evening Messages in MP3 Format (1 CD)	
		All Songs & Afternoon Teaching Services in MP3 Format (1 CD)	

All messages and music recordings are available only on regular CD's or MP3 format. (Cassette tapes are no longer available.) The suggested donation for regular CD's is \$3.00 each and for DVD's is \$5.00 each. DVD's are not available for the teaching services. The suggested donation for MP3's is \$10.00 each. The postage is \$3.00 for one CD or MP3 and \$0 .35 for each additional. Recordings may be ordered by writing *The Gospel Trumpeter*, CD Ministry, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, Ohio 43055, or by calling (740) 345-1312, the Print Shop. Please make check or money order in U.S. funds payable to *The Gospel Trumpeter*.

All-Day Meeting

October 15, 2016

10:00 a.m.

We welcome you to join us for an All-Day Meeting on Saturday, October 15, 2016, to give praise and honor to God for a century of Truth! There will be a worship service in the old barn with special speakers, a presentation on the history of the congregation, memorabilia from the past 100 years, food, and fellowship!

Lodging will be available.

For reservation call

Bro. or Sis. Bush at 740-345-1213

For more information contact:

Pastor Roger L. Decker

740-344-2543



Announcements

- Newark, OH**
July 31-August 7
Camp Meeting: Church of God, God's Acres, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055
Three services daily: 10:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
For lodging reservations contact: Brother or Sister David L. Bush at 740-345-1213.
For more information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker. Telephone: 740-344-2543
- Blue Ash, OH**
August 12-13
Revival: Church of God, Civic League 9306 Towne Square Avenue, Blue Ash, OH 45242
(at Ronald Reagan Highway and Kenwood Road)
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
For more information contact: Brother Boch. Telephone: 513-260-1960 or 513-791-0691
- Mt. Pleasant, PA**
August 22-28
Revival: Mt. Pleasant Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
Service times: Monday-Saturday: 7:00 p.m. & Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor Paul Prinkey. Telephone: 724-547-2151
- Summersville, WV**
August 26-28
Revival: Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd., Summersville, WV 26651
Evangelist: Brother James Presley, Newark, Ohio
Service times: Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Visit our website @ www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com
For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders. Telephone: 304-872-4047
- Niles, MI**
September 2-4
Revival: Coulter's Chapel Church of God, 3176 Detroit Road, Niles, MI 49120
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
For more information contact: Brother Dave Frazer. Telephone: 269-635-1530 or 269-684-3499
- Medina, OH**
September 3-4
All-Day Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH
Saturday service times: 10:00 a.m. & 2:30 p.m. Meal will be served by the local congregation.
Sunday service times: Sunday School 9:30 a.m.; Worship Services: 10:30 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.
- September 7-9
Revival: Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH
Service times: 7:00 p.m. nightly
For more information contact the church at 330-725-5993 or call 330-421-0187
- Harvey, IL**
September 11
Special Services: Church of God, 14701 Myrtle Avenue, Harvey, IL 60426
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
For more information contact: Brother Charles Johnson. Telephone: 708-606-7136
- Chicago, IL**
September 12-18
Revival: Harding Street Church of God, 3924 W 14th Street, Chicago, IL 60623
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
For more information contact: Brother Aurelius Reedy Raines. Telephone: 708-751-1534
- Kalamazoo, MI**
September 19-25
Revival: Comstock Avenue Church of God, 555 Alger Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49041
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
For more information contact: Pastor Jerry Miller. Telephone: 269-998-3194
- Morehead, KY**
September 26-
October 2
Revival: Blue Bank Church of God, 3200 Blue Bank Road, Morehead, KY 40351
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
For more information contact: Brother Jeff Fannin
Telephone: 606-784-2858 or 606-776-2639 or 606-784-9241
- Newton, KS**
October 3-9
Revival: Church of God, 400 N. Meridian, KS 67114
Evangelist: Bro. Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
For more information contact: Pastor Sandy Killfoil. Telephone: 316-842-5127



A Cordial Invitation...

to attend the
Fall Camp Meeting
July 31 - August 7

Three Services Daily
10:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.

The first service begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday.

Holy Ghost Preaching * Inspirational Singing
Children's Services * Divine Healing

Come and worship the Lord with us!

MEALS reasonably priced (full-time evangelists and pastors and their spouses are half-price). LODGING is free-will offering basis.

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____ Number for women's dorm
____ Number for girls' dorm

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Newark, OH 43055

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