

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 46 November 2016 No. 11



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

Guest Editorial

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS

PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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*"Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy
name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who
forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."*

Psalm 103:1-3

Forget Not His Benefits

The Psalmist is once again reminding us not to forget what God has so freely given us as a people. He instructs us to bless the Lord and not forget all the benefits that He has graciously bestowed upon this nation. He has willingly forgiven all those who have called upon His Name for deliverance from sin. He has mercifully healed many who were fastened under the hand of sickness and affliction. He has worked out many serious, overwhelming problems.

Friend, we need to wholeheartedly offer up praise and thanksgiving to our wonderful Lord and Savior. As we come into this Thanksgiving season, let us pause from our busy schedules for a while and consider His goodness. Let us take time to express gratitude and appreciation for God's blessings shown toward us. We must not allow a spirit of ingratitude to abide within our hearts. In addition to our spiritual blessings, we also enjoy many material blessings from His hand.

Without a doubt we are the most highly prosperous people on the face of the earth. We have been blessed beyond measure with a multitude of material benefits. America is endowed with great quantities of natural resources, education, and technology, which far exceed that of other nations. The greatest blessing and privilege we have is

being free to worship God without the fear of being punished or arrested. God is so very good to us! We must never forget the blessings which He has so graciously bestowed upon us, nor fail to give Him the thanks that is due Him.

Have you ever stopped to consider how blessed you really are? Acts 17:28 tells us, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." It is because of our loving and merciful Heavenly Father that we are alive and able to breathe fresh air every day. He gives us the strength to rise from our beds each morning and to go about our duties. He provides food for us to partake of that brings nourishment to the body. We have eyes to see the beautiful creation He has placed here for us to enjoy, and ears to hear the delightful sounds of nature. All these physical blessings come from the hand of God. It is so sad that His goodness is too often taken for granted. Multitudes are ready to receive but never think of saying thank you. Praise to the Giver is readily forgotten.

During Jesus' earthly ministry, on His way to Jerusalem, He healed ten lepers who desired to be delivered from their dreaded disease. In His kindness He miraculously healed all ten of them from their leprosy. All went happily on their way, but only one "turned back, and with a loud voice

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Our Opponent—The Devil



Brother Roger L. Decker

A Subtle Enemy

When a man or a woman first gets saved, the feeling is wonderful! That person feels as if he or she has been lifted almost into Heaven itself. The conscience no longer condemns that individual, and he or she has tremendous power over sin and temptation. Life in general is so changed that one could only describe it as wonderful! It is a way that the unsaved man or woman has never walked. The newborn babe in Christ has a strong testimony and wants everybody else to enjoy what he or she has just received.

The woman at the well said in

John 4:29, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Verse 30 tells us, "Then they went out of the city, and came unto him." Many times when people get saved, they become thrilled about their salvation, about having a clear conscience, and about having the power to overcome sin. It is wonderful to be able to pillow your head at night, knowing that if God decides to call you home, you are ready.

God lifts you to such a wonderful state when He saves you. He protects you from many things for quite a while. Eventually the Lord lets your feet come back down to

earth, so to speak.

You need to understand that we have an enemy that is just as real as God is. That is what I want to talk to you about—our opponent, the devil. Dear one, the devil is not your friend, and he does not like you; in fact, he hates you. He has been rightly named, because the business he is in is devilish and whatever he is involved in is devilish.

First Peter 4:12 states, "Beloved, think it not strange [or peculiar] concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." In other words, do not think it is odd or unusual when the devil attacks you.

I want you to read the warnings put before us by the Apostle Peter. He said in 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary [or your opponent] the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." The Apostle Peter said to be sober and vigilant, which means to watch, because you are in dangerous territory at all times.

Peter said the enemy is as a roaring lion. I want you to notice that he did not say as a crouching lion, but he said "as a roaring lion." The devil is not pictured as one creeping unsuspectingly toward his foe, but rather he is portrayed as one that roars to intimidate you and to make you fearful. When you become fearful, you will tend to back away from your faith, and then you will become open prey to the enemy. Some say the lion roars when it is hungry, and it is then that it is the fiercest.

Satan appears in at least three forms in the Word of God. In Genesis, Chapter 3, he appears as a serpent. In verse 1 we read, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. [I want you to look at those last four words: 'LORD God had made.' We know exactly where the devil came from. Here the devil is in the form of a serpent.] And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

What does it mean to be *subtle*? It means "crafty." The devil perverts your judgment by putting forth alluring imaginations. Also, he contradicts the Word of God and tries to make the Word of God sound too strict, or too confining. He interjects just a thought to get a conversation started.

The Deceitfulness of Satan

Genesis 3:2-4 reads: "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the

garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die."

Satan can appear as an angel of light. He tries to deceive us by giving false views of spiritual things. Also, he tries to get us to presume upon the grace of God. The Apostle Paul tells us what it is like. He said in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves [God did not transform them; they transformed themselves] into the apostles of Christ.

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

Here we read that Satan can appear as an angel of light. These angels of light can creep in among us. Jude said in Jude 1:4, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dear one, you have an enemy, an opponent, that does not like you at all. He is not your buddy. You may think things are going well while you are serving him, but let me tell you something: he would like to keep you as long as he can. He will try to make things go well for you so you will keep serving him, but the day will come when things are going to change. He will oppose your motives, your efforts, and your desire to do well. You should never yield to him, but rather hold your ground and refuse to give an inch. Do not open the door even a crack to the devil. If you do, the next thing you know, he will take over your whole house.

The Apostle Peter wrote in 1 Peter 5:7, "Casting all your care upon him [the Lord]; for he careth for you." A similar Scripture is

found in the Old Testament. We read in Psalm 55:22, "Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Dear one, do not try to stand against Satan in your own feeble strength, because you will not get it done. You want to be bold, not in your own strength, but in putting your confidence in the Lord.

Characteristics of Satan

Let us look at some characteristics of the devil. Jesus taught us at least three things about him, and He said these things were present, or active, from the beginning. Jesus, talking to the Pharisees, said in John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts [or desires] of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning [that is one], and abode not in the truth [that is two], because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar [that is three], and the father of it."

Jesus said the devil was a murderer from the beginning, and he never abode in the truth; also, Jesus said the devil is a liar. He was never an angel of light, and he was never in God's Heaven. Some people teach that the devil got tempted and exalted, so God had to kick him out. If he got tempted in Heaven, then what would stop you and me from getting tempted there? Once someone goes to Heaven, temptation is gone. Remember, Jesus said he was a liar from the beginning. He did not just become a liar, but rather he started that way. He did not gradually become a murderer, he started out as a murderer.

In the Garden of Eden, to whom was Eve speaking? She was talking to a liar. If you carry on a conversation with Satan, you are talking to a liar. He was a murderer too, and he was never in the Truth. The first thing he did with Eve was to get her into a conversation. You have to lend your mind to the devil before he can become active. When he was

talking to Eve, what did he do? He threw out a question to Eve that stirred her to the degree that she engaged in a conversation with him, and he finally refuted the Word of God. After he drew Eve along for a little while, he said, "You will not die."

The command regarding the tree was already grievous to Eve. How do we know that? She overstated the command. The command is found in Genesis 2:17, which reads, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The command was, "Thou shalt not eat of it."

Now let us read the conversation again. Genesis 3:1-3 reads: "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

How could you keep a garden and cultivate it without touching the tree or the fruit? God did not say they could not touch it; He said they could not eat of it, lest they die.

Enter Not the Way of Evil

Genesis 3:4 states, "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." There is the lie, a direct contradiction to the Word of God, a command. Satan continually lies about God's Word. If you carry on a conversation with him, he will always try to convince you of a few things. One thing that he will try to convince you of is that the way is too straight, too narrow, and too difficult and that God does not want you to do all that the Word of God commands you to do. You must always remember who is doing the talking and that he is a liar. Dear one, the standard of the Church of

God is a wonderful standard. It is a beautiful way on the highway of holiness.

When the enemy comes in, he will whisper that you need to back off on things, but you must not listen to him. He speaks contrary to the Word of God. The way of holiness is not a hard way. Proverbs 13:15 reads, "Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard."

Proverbs 4:19 says, "The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble." What should you do when the path of the wicked comes before you? Every once in a while, the wrong path will come before you. It will present itself, but the end of that path is wickedness. The Bible gives good instruction. Proverbs 4:14-15 says: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away [or turn away from it]."

The enemy will tell you that the path of the just is unreasonable, but God, speaking to the wise man, said not to enter the way of evil. The devil is not going to encourage you. He will use whomever and whatever he can to deter you or to discourage you. You cannot listen to those who are disgruntled. There will always be hypocrites and those who are lukewarm who feel they got a bum rap, or were treated unfairly. You should not listen to them. Jesus was treated unjustly, but He did not go around complaining and grumbling. People mistreated Him and lied about Him. You will not get any encouragement or inspiration from listening to those who can never see good in anything, because they are not looking for good. They are in the habit of finding fault, and they will not give up that habit unless they receive Christ in their souls.

We are in the midst of an evening time apostasy, but God still has a church. Whether you are part of it depends on your obedience to the Word of God. It is not built on what you think or what I think, but

rather it is built on divine revelation by Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus said, "I will build my church." We are in a shaking time. A purging process is going on right now. Do not let the devil shake you off.

Jesus said in John 15:2, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it [in other words, He cuts it back as you would prune a fruit tree; you prune it back, but not enough to destroy the tree], that it may bring forth more fruit." He said in verse 3, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." God wants you to bear much fruit, and fruit can only come from the type of tree that bears it.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:15-20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit [some trees are beyond repair, so the only thing one can do is cut them down]."

"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Jesus said to beware of false prophets. They may appear to be innocent, but they still bear fruit. One has well said that a man's works are the tongue of his heart, and they tell honestly whether he is inwardly corrupt or pure.

Jesus went on to say that every good tree brings forth good fruit. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. In other words, you cannot bring forth good works with corruption in your life. Now, we know that a godly person is not going to have sinful deeds in his life. A sinner cannot live a godly life. You expect to harvest grapes from grapevines, not cherries or blackberries. From fig trees, you expect to harvest figs.

From the vine of Christ, you expect Christianity. If you are not in the vine of Christ, in no way can you bring forth the fruit of a Christian. What is the final analogy? Jesus said in verse 19, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

A Shaking Time

Dear one, I want to repeat that we are in a shaking time. I believe that Satan is really working overtime. I feel within myself (and I know a lot of preachers feel the same way) that time must be closing out.

We read in Hebrews 12:25-29: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

"And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."

What was the Hebrew writer talking about? He was actually quoting from Exodus 19:18, which reads, "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." Evidently, the Hebrew writer was referring to the words of Haggai in Haggai 2:6, which states, "For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land." This was a revelation of that which would take place in the

Gospel Day. God is going to shake things up really well. God is shaking not only false religion but also the church. Only those branches that are truly in Him, or that are truly in the vine, are the ones that are going to be there when the shaking time comes to an end.

Revelation 21:1 tells us, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

The Jews, the Pharisees, and the elders in that day were shook to the place that they called our Savior Beelzebub. They called Him all kinds of names, and afterwards He turned right around and did miracles in their sight. However, they were so bound with tradition that they would not receive His words. There are people like that today. They are so bound with their religion. They might have a church and a tradition, but that does not mean that they have salvation. A person cannot be saved until he gets Jesus Christ in his heart and the sin is gone. We are living in a day when we need to listen to the Son of God. Do not listen to a lot of people who have no vision of Truth at all, people who are disgruntled, or people who are complainers.

The Schoolmaster to Bring You to Christ

We read in Matthew 17:1-5: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

"Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud,

which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

Away with the doctrine of dragging people back to the old law. It was a schoolmaster to bring people to Christ. Once you come to Christ, you no longer need the schoolmaster. For example, from primary school you move on to middle school, from middle school you move on to high school, and from high school you move on to college, if you so desire. College will make you ready for a professional career in life. Once you get into middle school, you no longer need primary school. Once you get into high school, you no longer need middle school. Once you enter college, you no longer need high school. Likewise, that is the way it is with the old law, because the law was the schoolmaster to bring you to Christ. Once you accept Christ, you no longer need the schoolmaster, because you have Him on the inside. Peter was so excited that he said, "Let us have three tabernacles," or three places to worship, but it all comes down to just one: Jesus Christ—He is the One.

Dear one, do not let the purging and the shaking upset you, because it is going to happen. Do not grow weary in well doing, in living right, in planting good seed, or in sowing to the Spirit. Remember the characteristics of the devil: he is a liar and a murderer, and he has no Truth in him. He did not grow into these characteristics. Jesus said he was that way from the beginning.

It is not an uncommon thing to be told by Satan that you are not saved. Has he ever told you that? Many times Satan attacks through the mind. If he cannot get you with vices, if he cannot get you to do things in open sin, he will attack you in your mind and try to confuse you. Always keep in mind that if God is talking to you, you will not be confused.

If you have a problem, God wants you to take care of that problem and go on and live for Him. If

you feel that something might not be right, you need to get alone with God and ask Him to show you if something is wrong. God will be honest with you. He will not leave you in confusion.

Stand Against the Devil

Satan will work during the invitation at the close of a service. How will he talk to you? If you are not saved, he may say to you: "You shouldn't get saved now. You know there are some things you want to do first. You have plenty of time to get saved." Friend, you do not know that. The devil will tell you anything. He will leave a little hope that later you can get saved. He will say anything he can to keep you in the situation that you are in. Dear one, the time to be saved is when God speaks to you. You may ask, "How does God talk to me?" He speaks to you through His Word and through His Holy Spirit. He will inspire you and draw you with His Holy Spirit.

When it comes to dealing with the devil, you must not be lazy. You should not give place to him and let him do whatever he wants to do. You must have some backbone to stand against him and rebuke him. He is more experienced than you are, so you must use the weapons

that God has provided. You cannot fight him as one beating the air. No, you must use the equipment that God equips you with. One is prayer. You can pray anytime. Is that not wonderful? You do not have to get down on your knees necessarily. You can sit and pray at school or on the job. You can carry on a conversation with God anywhere. No one even needs to know that you are praying. You can pour out your heart to Him anytime. If you want to cry, you can, God will still hear you. If you pray a silent prayer, God will still hear you. What a weapon prayer is!

Other weapons are the reading of His Word, meditating upon it, and witnessing to others. When you witness to somebody about salvation, it may help you to forget some of your own problems. It is wonderful to engage somebody in conversation about his soul. All these things will strengthen you in your fight against the enemy.

Again, I want you to read 1 Peter 4:12, which states, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." Christ has already been tempted by what you are going through.

Romans 8:35-39 reads: "Who

shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Church of God, we have an opponent, and it is the devil, but God will help us. He sends help to every one of us, knowing that we each are in a battle, I do not know what your battles are, and you do not know what mine are, but we have a common salvation and a common enemy. Also, we have a God to help us if we put our trust in Him. When you go to Him, you need to make sure that you are honest with Him. You need to make sure that you tell Him the whole truth, not just part of it.

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A Good Reply

A skeptic in London recently said, in speaking of the Bible, that it is quite impossible in these days to believe in any book whose authority is unknown. A Christian asked him if the compiler of the multiplication table was known.

"No," he answered, "Then, of course, you do not believe in it?"

"Oh, yes, I believe in it because it works well."

"So does the Bible," was the rejoinder, and the skeptic had no answer to make.

Matthew 8:23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

Mark 4:35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

Luke 8:22 Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

Does the Hand That Holds the Storm Hold You?



Brother Richard Talbot

Trusting God's Unseen Hand

Let us never cease to marvel at our Lord and Savior. You can get so dried up in your experience that you cease to marvel in your heart about the things of God. Those disciples

stood in awe and were amazed at the power Christ had. They marveled at such great power! Sometimes I wonder if some people have ceased to realize what great power it takes to save souls. They seem to have forgotten what great power it took one

day to lift them out of sin, to change their lives around, and to make them new creations in Jesus Christ.

I never want to forget to marvel about how God saved me. It amazes me when I think of how God changed me. It still thrills my heart!

It is not a stale testimony, but it is a living reality. Often I marvel and think, "O God, how could You save me when I was in such a mess?" Yet He did. Child of God, you should never let salvation become a commonplace experience to you.

In our Scripture lesson, Jesus spoke and the wind ceased to blow. Have you ever stood on your porch on a strong windy day and said, "Wind cease!" About that time a big gust of wind would probably about blow you off the porch. You and I do not have power like that, but I know One who does. Is it not wonderful to have a Savior, Jesus Christ, who has power to command the things that bother you and affect your life? Jesus Christ has the power to say, "Peace, be still." When Jesus commanded the wind to cease, it stopped immediately. That may be hard for you to comprehend, but it happened.

I once heard a story about a Christian army officer at sea with his family in a storm. There was great terror among the passengers, but the Christian army officer was calm. The ship looked as if it was going to sink. His wife chided him because he was so calm. He was acting as though there was no problem at all. Her life and her children's lives were in danger, and her husband seemed to act as if he did not care. He walked into their stateroom on that ship, pulled out his sword, and pointed it at her chest. She smiled at him, and he said, "Why are you smiling at me when I have a sword pointed at your chest?"

She said: "Because I know the hand that holds that sword loves me and will never do me any harm."

He said: "That is just the point, wife. The hand that holds the storm loves me. I trust Him, and I lean upon Him. That is the reason I am not worried."

The Path to Victory

In our Scripture lesson, the disciples were in a fierce, raging storm. Jesus went down into this

little ship to rest. It tells us in Matthew 8:18, "Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side." Jesus was tired and weary, and great multitudes were crowding in. He commanded His disciples to get in the ship and depart to the other side. However, somebody else got to Jesus before He could get away, and that person had another discussion with Him. Jesus said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (verse 20). Jesus was looking to get into that ship so He could lie down and rest to get away from the pressures of the day.

Verses 21-22 read: "And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." Jesus was weary and tired. He probably longed for rest on that ship on the calm sea, away from all the pressures of the people.

Let us remember that the terrible storm came after they had launched forth. The storm came after they had obeyed His commands. Oh, how many times that happens in life today. It may be easy in many things to obey the Lord as He commands you in your daily walk with Him. However, as you obey God, an adversary is after you. A force of evil is opposing you in your obedience, a force stronger than you might realize. Sometimes people have gotten saved and come out of Babylon and come to the Truth and testified, "I never had such a battle in my life until I got saved." The devil fights against salvation. Every time God shows you something to obey, you can be sure that conflict is ahead. You are going to be pressed, pushed upon, and tempted by the enemy of your soul. You are going to be pushed by the devil in the opposite direction of your obedience.

The sea of Galilee lies approximately six hundred feet below sea level and is subject to violent winds

of hurricane proportion, which at times sweep down the hills with great velocity and without warning. This must have been a storm of unusual severity, because many of the disciples were experienced fishermen. They were accustomed to storms, but in this storm they lost their nerve. They were beginning to fall to pieces, so to speak. When they launched the ship, the sea was calm. Is that not how trickery works? There is always something that you are not expecting.

When I first began to pastor, an older brother told me, "Every time you have a victory, you should rejoice in it and praise God for it, because they will be few and far between." I have found that every time I have a battle, I can have a victory, but I can never have a victory without having a fight first. Victories are not just handed to people.

Military men do not receive medals and honors for merely sitting behind a desk but for fighting on a battlefield. They may even sacrifice their lives in a fight against an enemy. By the same token, you are not going to have any spiritual victories without some conflicts. Some fights are difficult and stressful. Some battles may press you to the end of your ability.

The Earnest, Effectual Cry of the Heart

The disciples were facing a difficult situation. I can image these disciples held out as long as they thought possible. No doubt, they did not want to disturb Jesus. Not one of them wanted to wake up the Master. At first, they probably thought, "We can handle this," as the waves were coming. However, as the storm advanced, that little ship bounced and rolled and flopped around like a cork on the sea. One disciple let us know that the boat was full of water; that was a dangerous situation. They resisted waking the Master as long as they could.

As men, we do not like to feel as

though we cannot handle things. We want to wipe out our problems without too much thought. We like the idea of being able to defeat adversaries that come against us. We can handle some things, but many people hold on a long time alone, and they think, "I can handle this."

Had the disciples not awakened the Master, they would have lost it all. Dear one, there are times in life when you need to let Christ know that you desperately need His help. You should never be ashamed to call for prayer, to seek counsel, or to ask for help. You should never be afraid or embarrassed to kneel publicly at an altar of prayer. If you have something that you are battling in your life, you should not be hesitant to get prayed for and get some help for that situation. You cannot handle some things on your own. Some things are more powerful than you are. The storm that the disciples faced was greater than they could handle. They had handled many storms in their lives, but this one got the best of them.

With the noise of the storm, the howling of the wind, and the violent waves crashing over the side and rocking the boat, the storm did not awaken the Master, but the frail cries of those human souls awakened Him. The cries of their souls drew the attention of Christ. The storm, the wind, the waves, and the shouting of the disciples back and forth as they were trying to save the boat did not awaken Him, but when they cried from the depths of their souls: "Master! Master! Don't you care that we are going to perish?" Jesus did not shrug His shoulders and roll over and go back to sleep. Their cries touched His heart, and He arose and said, "Peace, be still." Next, He turned toward them and encouraged their faith. In essence, He said: "You can trust Me and believe in Me. I will not fail you."

You may need a miracle in your life. Are you in the midst of a storm? As long as you remain silent, Christ awaits your cry. Do you remember reading about a blind man

called Bartimaeus in Mark, Chapter 10? As Jesus was walking by that day, he was crying out, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Jesus kept on walking. The crowd tried to hush Bartimaeus, but when they tried to hush him, he cried out the louder, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

Jesus stopped immediately because that cry touched His heart. The other cry did not affect Him; it was not intense. It was not down to where it was a cry of the heart. When the crowd tried to hush him, it inspired him to cry out louder. Why was he crying out? He was the one who had the need. He was the one who needed help. No one else was crying like that, but he was the blind man, and he knew that if Jesus passed by and he missed Him, he would miss the help he needed.

Sometimes people do not get the help they need because they are not in earnest. They do not get down to business of really crying out to God because they have so many other avenues to seek that their fervent prayer is not heard. The Bible says in James 5:16b, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The storm never awoke the Master; however, the weak, frail cries of human souls in distress brought Him to the rescue.

All three Gospel accounts record the fear of the disciples. Matthew's account says, "Lord, save us: we perish." Mark's account reads, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Luke's account states, "Master, master, we perish." When the storm arose, at the cry of the disciples' hearts, Christ arose and calmed the storm.

God Wants Your Whole Heart

Psalms 68:1-3 reads: "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; let them

rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice."

When God arises, your enemies will scatter. When God moves on your situation, you can expect things to turn around. First, however, you must get God's attention for your need. You must stir the heart of God with the earnest, sincere desire of your heart. Shallow, indifferent, praying once in a while will never move God to meet your need. Only earnest prayer will be met by the power of God. God can drive away your problems as wax melts before a fire. Those who oppose you will melt away. The wicked perish at the presence of God. One song lets us know that God may not always change a situation, but He can surely change you. When God changes you, it will be as though He has opened a door, or made a tunnel right through your problems. I have seen that happen many times. God is still a great way maker.

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians, Chapter 10, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. What are some carnal weapons of our warfare? They are the mind, the tongue, the feet, the hands, and the eyes. All of these bring about fleshly motivated actions that people can take in times of trouble. What is the mind of one who has been born again? A born-again experience is most necessary to have the life of Christ within. You cannot have eternal life, or abundant life, unless you are truly born again of the Spirit of God.

Some people who profess to be born again have no victory in their lives and no spiritual strength of their own. Now, there is no way that a person can be born again and not have the power of Christ in his life. Christ comes in when a soul is made new, or when old things pass away and all things become new; then you become a new creation in Jesus Christ. You receive eternal life from Christ. It is a victorious life, and you receive power from the heavenly throne. Instead of having a carnal mind, Paul said we have the mind of Christ. The Psalmist said in Psalm

19:14, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."

Our feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. The Bible tells us to lift up holy hands in the sanctuary, to bless the Lord, and to let our eyes observe His way.

I read a story about an army chaplain in World War II who visited a hospital ward. The nurses directed him to the bed of a young soldier about ready to go into eternity. The chaplain walked over to his bedside and quoted a verse in Proverbs 23:26, which reads, "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways."

The young man looked up at him and said, "Does the Scripture really say that?"

The chaplain said, "Yes."

The young man asked again, "Does it *really* say what you just read?"

The chaplain replied: "Yes, son. Why are you asking?"

He said, "Because that is my name." His name was John Myson. He thought as the chaplain quoted the Scripture, "My son, give me thine heart" that God was speaking directly to him, and he was. He got saved there on his deathbed through that Scripture because it so struck him that God used his name.

You know, that is what God wants of you—your heart. When God has your heart, He will have all of you. If God has your heart, He will have your affections, your love, and your desires. If God has your heart, He will have you from head to foot as far as your works are concerned, as far as your mind can think, and as far as where your feet take you. If God has your heart, nothing will be left for you.

If God has your heart, He will even have your pocketbook and your tithe. If you have been born again, you will have a spirit inside you that wants to tithe your income to the cause of God. Tithing is not an option; it is a command. You

must tithe your money, and 10 percent is all that God asks, and that is before taxes. Many people are stingy and selfish. They will not give God what is His, and then they want God to take care of all their needs. First, a saint must give God what belongs to Him.

You may say: "I cannot afford to tithe, because I have so many bills. There is no way I can tithe 10 percent." The saints love to cheerfully give to the Lord. You may say that you cannot afford to tithe, but in reality, you cannot afford not to tithe.

Child of God, if you have not been tithing, if you will begin to tithe, though mathematically you cannot afford to do so, God will start blessing you. You will be surprised by how God can stretch your dollars. Oh, you might have to skip eating out once in a while, but God's Word says He will honor you.

Leaving Things in God's Hands

Now let us look at the significance of the verses in the Scripture lesson. Many things can come your way to discourage you and to rob you of your joy and your praise. However, God gave much in His Word to encourage and strengthen His people. Yes, according to the Bible we all face problems, troubles, hardships, persecutions, and distressing times. Yet, in the midst of all those things, we can have joy unspeakable, and living for God is full of glory. We may not understand or comprehend lots of things that happen to us. We have no way of figuring out some things. I have had situations that I had to leave with God and say, "Lord, I don't understand these things, but I have to put them behind me and go on for You."

Dear one, you cannot allow things that you do not understand to become a stumbling block in front of you that will keep you pressed down. You must put those things behind you. Life is going to have many situations that we do not un-

derstand. We do not have an answer for some things. We just cannot comprehend them. What are you going to do—quit church, backslide, or move somewhere else? Some people think the grass is greener on the other side of the fence, so to speak, but that is not so.

You cannot convince cows that the grass is not greener on the other side of the fence. I have seen cows stick their heads through barbed wire fences and scrape up their necks while munching on grass on the other side of the fence. When they were finished, they pulled their heads back in and tore the fence apart when the grass they were standing on was just as green as the grass they were eating outside the fence. Any place you go is going to have its own set of problems that you are not going to understand.

Wherever there are people, there are going to be problems. Some people cause problems, and some people become problems. God is sufficient and able to help us, but there are a lot of things that you have to put behind you and go on for the Lord. Do not let overwhelming pressure cause you to become bitter and discouraged, and then give up.

A man stopped to watch a ball game between two young teams. As he walked toward the bleachers, he asked one of the young players, "Hey, Buddy! What's the score?"

The young fellow said, "We are behind eighteen to nothing."

He said: "What? Eighteen to nothing! You don't look a bit discouraged."

The young fellow said: "Discouraged? Why should we be discouraged? We have not even gotten to bat yet!" He was not worried about the score being eighteen to nothing. They just had not had their turn at the bat.

Sometimes we can become overwhelmed, but let Christ arise! When my big brother, Christ, comes on the scene, the devil trembles. You may not see Him, but that old evil power of the enemy trembles at

the real power of Christ that is brought on the scene by earnest prayer.

How to Stay Alert and Focused on Christ

You can read in the Bible in 1 Samuel, Chapter 17, that the army of Israel faced a giant called Goliath, and the men trembled. However, a young man named David thought, "I have not had my turn yet," and he won. In the New Testament, in Matthew, Chapter 14, the twelve disciples saw five thousand hungry men, plus women and children. They told Jesus to send the crowd away so they could buy food before the shops closed, but Jesus had not had His turn yet. After Jesus hung on the Cross and died, He was placed in a tomb. The angry mob had Pilate seal the tomb where Jesus was buried, but God knew His turn was yet to come. Do you remember the words of Jesus? He said, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

Sometimes you may find that you are in your own way. You may find yourself stumbling all over yourself, but if you can get yourself out of the way and let God arise, things can change. I guarantee you that if you will back off, get out of the way, surrender your situation to the Spirit of God, and let Christ arise, things will change in your life. The simple truth is, when a soul truly cries out for help and stirs the heart of God, things are bound to happen. No sin, no trouble, no situation in life, no enemy, and no evil can survive His presence.

Sometimes you can get worn out in your mind. You can become spiritually drained with the battles of life. You know what your battles are. Many times our battles today are not physical persecution, but they are the wear and tear of the daily routine and boredom of life. When I talk about boredom, what I mean is that sometimes you can go through a whole week and not really be se-

verely challenged by the enemy of your soul. Then you may get careless and grow cold. You can get lukewarm going through day after day; that is what wears people down, unless they stay alert and focus their attention upon the things of God.

We are told to fix our eyes on Christ. We have not had to suffer with blood yet, but a weariness of the mind can take its toll. I mentioned that some become bored. I have never been bored since I have been living for the Lord. I am not talking about being bored in living for the Lord. I am talking about a steady, monotonous routine. For example, you get up in the morning, eat breakfast, and go to work. You labor all day, rush back home expecting rest and food of some kind. Day after day, it is the same thing. Unless you are determined to stay focused on Christ, you are going to drift and lose the power of Christ in your soul that you need daily. That is the reason you must pray earnestly and often.

The Bible says to pray without ceasing. You can whisper a prayer driving down the highway. You can pray on the job. God reads the heart, and He knows your communication to Him. In order to stay spiritual, you have to get alone with God in your secret closet of prayer and really pour out your heart to the Lord. You must make prayer the most important part of your spiritual experience. Without continual prayer you are going to be weak before the enemy.

Becoming More Than a Conqueror

The disciples were stirred to action because their situation was so desperate. If you are lost in sin and without hope, Christ can arise in your life, and all the forces of evil that have you bound can be broken. The chains of sin can be broken. The sinful habits of life can be defeated. The battle of evil thoughts and desires can be conquered.

Sinner friend, if you will cry out to God and call for God to arise in your life, if you will cry in sincerity and in repentance, God will arise, calm your soul, and deliver you. Those chains of sin will fall away, and the Spirit of God will come alive in you.

God can make you something that you never thought you could be—a saved, born again, clean, holy, pure-minded person. You can have a pure heart and a pure vocabulary, and you never have to curse again. You never have to drink wine or any other alcoholic beverage again. You never have to smoke or use tobacco again. You never have to use drugs again. You never have to be hateful or have uncontrollable madness get hold of you again. That old temper that you used to let fly at anything can be controlled and drawn into subjection to One who is more powerful than you are. When you are born again, a change takes place, and you can have victory in your soul.

If you are having trouble in the home, let God arise. You are no greater or no better at church than you are within the walls of your home. If you are a terror in the home, God sees you as a terror in the church and in the congregation. You are no better in secret where nobody sees you than in the congregation of the saints. God knows the things you do and the thoughts you meditate on.

A true saint of God should never go to public beaches in the summer when it is hot weather and all those people are out there with hardly anything on. That is no place for a Christian. I like the beach, and I love the ocean. I like to sit on the beach near the ocean and listen to it and watch the waves come tumbling in. I enjoy that, but I go when the weather is cooler and when people are not running around with hardly any clothes on.

In the darkness of the night, if you are not living as you should be, then going to the house of God does not make you any better. If you are

brokenhearted or disappointed, if you have been misunderstood, let God arise. Let God come to the surface of your life and get victory. If you are sick, diseased, or afflicted, let God arise. If you feel hopeless, in despair, or broken in spirit, let God arise. God can change things for you. Yes, He can! When God arises, things change quickly. Satan is defeated, sin is conquered, habits are broken, chains are cut off, and a new person is created. Give God the man, and God will give man the power.

As smoke is driven by the wind, so will the bondage of self and sin be driven from your life! Situations can change for you overnight. Things can be bright and beautiful today, but tomorrow they can become a different story. Things can

change so quickly. Therefore, you ought to commit yourself to spiritual life in Christ. He deserves 100 percent of the affections of your heart. Dear one, you must set your affections on things above, not on the things in this world. As wax melts before the fire, so can your problems if Christ is allowed to have His way. Your problems can become as nothing. As the sun arises in the morning and chases the darkness from the earth, so it is when Christ is allowed to arise in a man's life. The darkness that dwelt there will be chased away, and then you will have something to rejoice in. Let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God exceedingly.

How is it in your soul? How is it in your battles and in your struggles of life? Do you need to get out of

your own way and let God arise? That was one of the biggest problems I had before I got truly saved. I had to get out of my own way. There have been times since I have been saved that God has had to jerk me by the ear, so to speak, and say, "Son, get out of the way." My father had to tell me that so many times.

Sometimes you can get in God's way trying to work out problems and situations in your life, and God has to say, "Move over and let Me take care of it." God can put things together so quickly, and your soul can be inspired, revived, and uplifted immediately if you will just let God's will be done in your life.

(Compact Disc TR-1618)

THE SECRET OF GIVING

If a person first gives himself to the Lord, all other giving is easy.

[Guest Editorial—continued from p. 2]
glorified God" (Luke 17:15). Only one stopped and considered what the Savior had done for him. In Luke 17:16 we find this leper "fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks." Only one of the ten lepers thanked Jesus for the loving-kindness and mercy bestowed upon him. The other nine received healing of the Lord but never thought to offer any praise or thanksgiving in return. We need to be careful never to allow a spirit of ingratitude to get in our hearts.

Forgetting to thank and honor God who has so generously bestowed blessings upon us can become dangerous. We can so easily become as the nine lepers who received help and then neglected or simply refused to give praise, honor, and thanksgiving to the Lord. When people conduct themselves like this, it grieves the heart of Almighty God.

In this world of materialism and

humanism, so many have the idea that they do not need God. Satan has deceived many men and women into thinking they are all sufficient in themselves with no need of help from above. Nothing could be further from the truth. Jeremiah 10:23 plainly tells us, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Without God's tender hand being extended, we weak mortals would be unable to do anything.

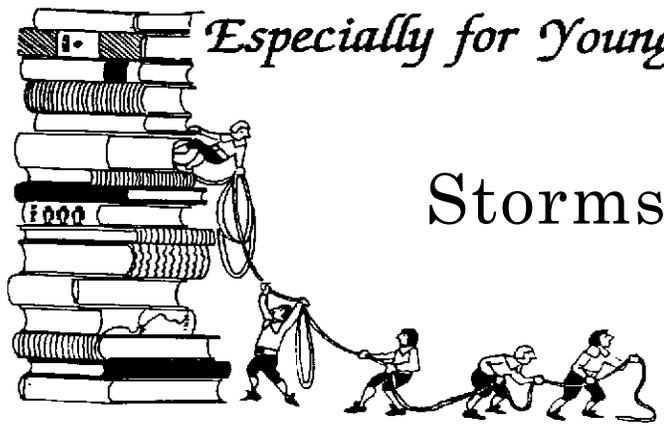
Considering the spiritual aspect of God's blessings, we well know that America has been given greater light and understanding of God's Word than any other nation. In many other countries they have either no light of Truth at all or the light is shining very dimly. We are greatly blessed to have this knowledge and understanding; therefore, we are extremely responsible to others. Jesus spoke in Luke 12:48b and said, "For unto whomsoever

much is given, of him shall be much required." God expects us to be thankful for these spiritual blessings and to verbally express our gratefulness to Him. The greatest expression of thankfulness to the Lord is shown by obedience to Him through honoring His Word and walking in the light. Thankfulness is more than mere words from our lips; it calls for righteous action in our daily living.

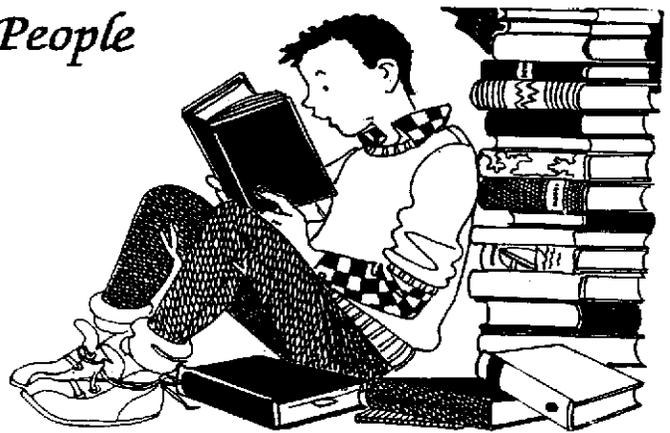
In Exodus 20:5 we are told, "I the LORD thy God am a jealous God." He demands all His creatures to worship Him above all else. We must not forget the blessings God has bestowed upon us physically, financially, and most of all, spiritually. We can demonstrate our thankfulness by living pleasing lives to Him and by praising Him continually with our lips from truly grateful hearts.

Selected

Especially for Young People



Storms



In Mark, Chapter 4, you can read that Jesus and His disciples got into a ship. Soon the sky blackened, the wind screamed, and the storm became intense. The disciples were becoming more afraid as the storm grew in intensity. Jesus was asleep, and they awoke Him and said, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" They were so amazed when Christ said, "Peace, be still." They were even more amazed when the storm suddenly calmed. Jesus rebuked them saying, "Where is your faith?"

All of us know what it is like to see a storm coming. The sky is usually dark. Some may get a little nervous. However, I am not going to write about the physical storms but rather the spiritual storms. No doubt, you have experienced a storm of one kind or another, and you know the fear of an unknown future. I know what it is like to go through the storm, not knowing the outcome, but trusting God.

At times, a storm can become fierce and scary, but you have to hold on and keep pressing. Paul said in Philippians 3:14, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." You have to press to make it through the storms of life. You need to always remember that God is in control of the storm. You do not have to worry, because He knows what He is doing.

The most painful things in our lives are stepping stones to something better. Yes, often those things

may hurt, but Proverbs 3:5 tells us, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." You have to trust that God knows what is best for your life.

In the storm you may think that no one understands what you are going through. Hebrews 4:15 states, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Jesus went through much, and He definitely understands. Your friends may not understand, but Jesus does.

In the storm you may feel so alone, and you may feel that no one cares that you are hurting. The devil will cause you to get discouraged. First Peter 5:7 reads, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." God cares about you; that is a promise. I love this chorus: "*Oh, yes, He cares. I know He cares. His heart is touched with your grief. When the days are weary, the long nights dreary, I know my Saviour cares.*"

Sometimes during the storm you will cry. You may think that no one is listening and that no one cares that you are hurting. Sometimes Jesus was surrounded by weeping people, folks whom He knew and loved. One time He was staring at the tomb of a man who had been like a brother to Him. What did He do? Did He tell them everything would be okay? Did He shout at them and ask where their faith was? Did He berate them

for grieving when He had promised them it would all work out in the end? No, Jesus did none of those things. Jesus cares when you cry. He is hurt when you are hurt because He cares. We can see how much He cares by all that He does for us.

One day I was feeling really down, and God spoke to me through a rainbow. He said, "Look, I've kept this promise that I made thousands of years ago. Why wouldn't I keep all the others?" That blessed me so much! God will keep every promise in the Bible.

Sometimes after the storm, you may feel that your world has fallen to pieces and cannot be put back together. I once read a quote that said, "When everything seems as though it's falling apart, that's when God is putting things together just the way He wants them." God has a huge plan, and every storm is part of that plan.

Without storms you would not be a strong Christian. Some of the strongest Christians are those who have gone through the hardest trials. Two verses really stand out to me. One is in Isaiah 43:2, which reads, "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." The second one is in Genesis 28:15, which reads, "And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places."

You may be fearful when you

are in the storm, but you do not have to be afraid. God is in control of your storm, and He will not give you so much that you cannot bear it. During the storm, you need to draw nigh to God, as James said in James 4:8a. He wrote, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." The closer you get to God, the closer He will be to you. I am so thankful that God is in control of the storm!

This song is so true: *"There's peace in knowing, Lord, You're in control. You've got Your hand on my life, You've got a hold on my soul. There's joy abundant, I just have to tell. I'm drinking sweet water from Your living well."* What would you do if God was not in control? You

can have such peace in knowing that you do not have to be fearful. God is in control.

Many verses in the Bible exhort us to be strong in the Lord. Second Timothy 2:1 states, "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." Ephesians 6:10 reads, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." You can be strong through Jesus.

First John 5:4 tells us, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." If you are saved, you can overcome!

This song means so much to me:

"Has the storm left shattered dreams and broken hearts? Troubles and burdens have almost torn your world apart. But storms still cease at His commands. Just reach out and take His hand, and there you'll stand after the storm. Still standing after the storm. I know I'm battered, I'm weary, and I'm worn. But God is my salvation. How firm the foundation, and I'm still standing after the storm."

Friend, if you are in a storm, you need to keep praying and pressing forward. God will bring you through, and then you, too, can be "standing after the storm."

Kaitlyn Bush

Honesty

If you wish to be great, be honest. The first step toward greatness is to be honest, for without honesty you can never hope to be great. No man has ever been too honest. "He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely; but he that perverteth his ways shall be known" (Proverbs 10:9). Honesty is the best policy. No man can be upright amid the various temptations of life unless he is honest for the right's sake. You should not be honest from the low motive of policy, but because you feel the better for being honest. Then lay the foundations of a character broad and deep. Build them on a rock and not on sand. The rains may then descend, the floods rise, and the wind blow, but your house will stand. Establish a character on loose dealings, and lo! some great tempest will sweep it away.

Some, in their greed to accumulate, practice secret frauds and imagine there is no harm in it so they be not detected. In vain will they cover up their transgressions. God, who knows the secret thoughts of the heart, sees it to the bottom. "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23). It pays to be honest.

God grant that each reader of this article will be strictly honest with all men and honest

before God. It is my earnest desire to eradicate the impression so fatal to many a young person, that one cannot live by being perfectly honest. This is a sad mistake. Everyone, rich or poor, great or small, young or old, should be strictly honest, truthful, and upright in his dealings. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

There are men who choose honesty as a soul companion. They live in it and with it and by it. They embody it in their actions and lives. Their words speak it, their faces beam it, their actions proclaim it, their hands are true to it, and their feet tread its path. They are full of honesty. They love it as God loves it, and they believe it is of God. It makes them beautiful; yea, more noble, great, brave, and righteous. Honesty, peerless queen of principles! How her smile surrounds those who love her! How ready they are to suffer for her, to die for her! They are martyrs. See them—what a multitude!—some at the stake, some at the stocks, some in prison, and some on a cross. They are all sustained. They smile on their foes. They have peace within.

Selected

Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Prevailing in Prayer



Brother Cleve Green

The Great Need of Fervent Prayer

When we see the wickedness, the immorality, the ungodliness, and people who once had victory but are now under the hand of deception, it is high time that the church prevails before God.

Jesus said that "men ought

always to pray, and not to faint." The word *faint* means, "to lose heart, to give up, or to quit." My friend, do you realize that one trick of the devil is to make it as hard for you to pray as he can? He knows that if he makes it difficult for you to pray a few times, he can discourage you from praying at all. It is sad that so many people who claim to be

Christians do not really pray. They may utter a few words, but uttering a few words is not prayer. We must get hold of God in *prevailing* prayer.

When the early-morning church prayed, the place was shaken and the power of God fell. Unsaved people will get saved when the power of God is demonstrated in the midst. We need the moving of the Holy

Spirit. Quietness, deadness, and only a little praise going up to God will not have any effect on sinners. We need more praise going up to God and a church that prevails in prayer to God.

Jesus gave an example of two men who went up to the temple to pray. Luke 18:9-11 reads: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous [this is a danger we have to keep watching out for], and despised others [your righteousness will not exceed that of the Pharisees and the Sadducees if you despise anyone; you must have a righteousness that will cause you to love everyone]: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are [he told the truth; he was an old hypocrite, and he was in a class all by himself], extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." Do you know what this Pharisee was trying to do? He was trying to build up himself and cast down someone else. A person will never get anywhere with God praying that way. One will never climb up the ladder toward God trying to push someone else down.

Verses 12-13 read: "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." He only spoke seven words, but oh, how complete they were! From this Scripture lesson, you can see that praying is not bragging on oneself and telling God how good you are. God already knows everything about you. Also, praying is not putting down the other fellow.

"Pray Without Ceasing"

Verse 1 of our Scripture text says, "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought

always to pray, and not to faint." I want you to study carefully the thought of praying always. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17 the Apostle Paul spoke almost the same words when he said, "Pray without ceasing." You cannot be on your knees around the clock or be in an atmosphere of prayer twenty-four hours a day. When you are sleeping, you are not in an atmosphere of prayer, so there must be a greater meaning here. The Apostle Paul made this clear in his writings. Again, 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says, "Pray without ceasing." The Greek version says, "Unceasingly pray you." If we cease to pray, we will soon die spiritually. He simply meant that we must keep praying. He did not mean that we are to pray every minute of the day.

Paul stated in 2 Thessalonians 1:11, "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power."

In 1 Thessalonians 5:16 Paul wrote, "Rejoice evermore." This is a similar expression; however, it does not mean you have to rejoice every minute of the day. We rejoiced when we got saved, and we have to keep rejoicing if we keep the victory. The Bible says that "the joy of the LORD is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10).

Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." Does that mean he thanked God every moment of every hour of the day? No, he simply meant that we should never cease to give thanks. Every time we pray we should thank God. This is giving thanks without ceasing. In Colossians 1:9 Paul used a similar expression: "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you. . . ." This does not mean that every hour of the day since he heard it he

prayed for them. It means that every time he went to prayer, he mentioned that request.

Acts 20:28-31 states: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Paul was not crying and weeping and praying around the clock. However, when he saw this work of destruction creeping in, he ceased not to warn the brethren. He warned them every time he got up before them. As you can see, Paul used the expressions "praying without ceasing" and "giving thanks without ceasing" freely, but he did not mean that he or others were required to do these every minute of every hour of the day. He simply meant that when he did pray, he mentioned these burdens every time.

What Is Effectual, Fervent Prayer?

Surely we need to ever keep at the job of praying. We need to prevail in prayer and get hold of God. Abraham of old prayed six times for Sodom and Gomorrah. He had a nephew there by the name of Lot, and Lot had a wife and children. Abraham loved his nephew and his family, so he pleaded with God six times to spare Sodom and Gomorrah. At first, he asked God if He would spare the city for fifty righteous, and then for forty, and so on until he finally asked God if He would spare the city for ten righteous people there. God said, "I will spare the city for ten righteous." Too many times people quit praying a little short of real victory. God loved

Abraham. Some have come very close to gaining real victory, but they quit praying and believing too soon.

We need to be effectual and fervent in prayer. James said in James 5:16, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." What is effectual, fervent prayer? It is prayer that affects God, the person you are praying for, and the person praying. Prayers that do not affect you will not get very far. David of old said, "But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom" (Psalm 35:13). This meant that he was getting a blessing out of praying. Have you ceased to receive a blessing from your secret prayer life? There is something wrong if prayer does not bless you. You ought to be able to get hold of the prayer bell and make it ring.

The great need of the hour is prevailing in prayer. Effectual, fervent prayer is red-hot praying, if you please. I love to hear someone pray who is red hot. I love to hear someone preach who is red-hot, and I love to hear someone testify who is red hot. We need to be able to pray effectually and fervently to God. We should not dictate to God, tell God how good we are, or put down our fellowman. Prevailing prayer is one of the greatest needs of the church. We need to really know how to prevail in prayer.

Many times people ask God for something a few times without really believing wholeheartedly that He will send it; then they are asking in vain. James said to "ask in faith, nothing wavering." Then he said, ". . . let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord" (James 1:6-7). If you waver, you will not receive anything from God. You will be like a wave at sea that is on this shore today and that shore tomorrow. You will not get anywhere with God in that condition.

The Power of Prayer

I am glad to tell you that the Church of God down through the centuries has prevailed in prayer with God, and God has changed things. Prevailing prayer will change things! I knew of a congregation that had some property, and then a beer joint moved in next door. The owners kept it open until the early hours of the morning, played loud music on the jukebox, and drunks came staggering out. The church went to prayer and prayed that God would close down that place, and it was not long until it closed.

Another congregation was building a church building during World War II. The government had frozen the sale and distribution of all steel and would not let any steel out to civilians at all. All steel had to go into army production. This congregation had their building under construction and needed the steel. The pastor inspired the people to pray. She said, "God is able to bring a carload of steel in, even though the government has frozen the sale of it." They started praying and believing God, and they prevailed in prayer. One day a carload of steel was sidetracked right into Sullivan, Illinois, with "Church of God" stamped on the side of it. This ought to give you an idea of what can happen when you really prevail in prayer.

When you prevail in prayer, God is able to help you. My friend, I know of no greater power that we need than the prevailing power of prayer. You can buy most any kind of power that the world has with the right amount of money, whether it is political power or industrial power. However, the power of prayer only comes through one source. God's people must humble themselves, pray, and believe God. God blessed humble fishermen, Peter and John. They were ignorant and unlearned men, yet the Bible says the people took note of these men. They knew they had been with Jesus because of the power they had in prayer.

When the morning church got on her knees to pray, things happened. I wonder, what happens when you get on your knees to pray? Things happened when the morning church prayed: jail doors were opened, hypocrites fell dead, Peter was released from prison, and Paul and Silas had a Holy Ghost revival down in the Philippian jail. All these things happened because of the prevailing prayer of the church.

Before the Day of Pentecost, the followers of Christ met to fast and pray for ten days and waited on the Holy Ghost. God moved in a marvelous way because they prevailed in prayer. I believe they got every little hindrance out of the way, and God came on the scene in mighty power. Sometime later, we read about them in Acts 17:6. One part of that verse says, "These that have turned the world upside down. . . ." The sinners thought they had turned the world upside down, but in reality, they had turned it right side up. That is what sinners would think today if we turned this world right side up for Jesus. Friend, the early-morning church moved people through prayer. They said on one occasion in Acts 5:28, "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." I wish we could be accused of that.

Someone once said, "Prayer is the key of the morning and the boat for the night." Thank God, every morning we can unlock a new day with prayer and ask God to direct and lead us. When you pillow your head at night to sleep, you can pray for God's protection and believe that He will protect you. I am glad for the great power in prayer!

Once I was in Chicago, Illinois, holding a revival meeting for Sister Griffin in an industrial area. I knew it was a rough area, because one trucking company behind the church had two police dogs staked there all the time. One night the trains awakened me, and I kept having the feeling that someone was out there prowling. Well, I just prayed, committed it to the Lord, and went back to sleep. Sure enough, someone tried

to steal a car. They broke out the glass and messed up the ignition trying to steal it, right there under the bright lights of a parking lot. Surely prayer can be the boat of the night. I thank God for that.

A Prevailing Church

In Matthew 16:18 Jesus talked about a church that the gates of hell could not prevail against. He said, ". . . upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Why? We are a prevailing church, and all the powers of hell cannot prevail against the church that Jesus built. Gates are entrances. All the man-made religions are gates. He said the gates of hell, even the man-made entrances of religion, cannot triumph over the church. She is a prevailing church from beginning to end.

God wants us to prevail in prayer. When you really pray and prevail, you will get a soul burden. Do not let the devil throw you a curve. Once when I held a revival meeting in a certain place, I encouraged the people to get under a burden for souls. A young minister came to me and said: "Brother Green, I have a terrible, heavy feeling upon my soul. I have searched my life and do not know of anything wrong in my life."

I said, "Brother, have you been praying for God to give you a soul burden?"

He said, "I surely have."

I said, "That is what it is."

The devil will cause you to think something is wrong with you when you get a real soul burden that weighs you down, causes humility, and makes you feel heavy in your soul. He will try to make you think that something is wrong in your experience or you would not feel so heavy. A soul burden will make you feel heavy, but thank God, when you get to church, you can still rejoice in Truth.

Some folks try to excuse themselves for having long, sad countenances all the way through

revival meetings. They say, "I have had such a burden for souls." The Bible says there is a time to rejoice. It is a time to rejoice when the Word is going forth. When the invitation song is being sung, then you should take on a serious countenance and begin to pray earnestly and get under a heavy burden for souls. When the Word is going forth, you need to rejoice in the Truth. How are others going to know that you enjoy salvation if you never nod your head when the Word is being preached? Sinners who come in will say: "Well, those folks do not believe the message. They are sitting there, but I do not even see a nod out of them." By the way some folks live, others know they do not believe it. They live something different from what the preacher preaches.

Surely we need a prevailing church. Jesus prayed all night before choosing His disciples. He was human and divine. As He was getting ready to choose His disciples, He had to lean upon His Heavenly Father for wisdom. Luke 6:12-13 says: "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles." The next few verses name the Apostles whom He chose. Jesus felt a great burden to prevail in prayer when He was faced with a serious decision.

Prevailing Prayer Can Bring to Pass the Impossible

We need to prevail more in prayer. We read in Acts 19:18-20: "And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." In order for the Word to prevail, you have to prevail in prayer. Prevailing

in prayer will give the Word depth and power as you go forth. You need this great prevailing prayer.

The three Hebrew boys learned the secret of prevailing in prayer. They submitted themselves and were willing to die for God. In essence, they said to the old king, "Be it known unto thee, O king: our God is able to deliver us. But if He does not see fit to deliver us, we have our minds made up to trust Him anyhow." Praise God! They prevailed in prayer until God sent His Son down. Because the king could not see a Spirit, Jesus went in the midst of the fire in a fleshly form and walked around with the three Hebrew boys. In essence, the king said to his men, "I thought we threw three men in the fiery furnace."

They said, "We did, O king."

He said, "I see four men walking in there, and the fourth is like unto the Son of God." Even that heathen king recognized the Son of God.

Thank God, the Hebrew boys prevailed in prayer, and God came to their rescue. They came out of the fire without even the smell of smoke on them. (It is almost impossible to go into some places without getting the smell of cigarette smoke on you.) Those boys went through the fiery furnace, and God took out the heat and took away the smell of smoke from them. Thank God, they came through victoriously because they knew how to prevail in prayer.

Through prevailing prayer, our services can be greatly anointed; the singing, the testimonies, and the messages can be greatly anointed. It does us good to rejoice in the Lord. It makes us feel better, and it makes others feel better. Someone may say: "It does not make me feel better. I feel funny when folks do that." If it makes you feel "funny" when people praise God, you must have the wrong spirit. You need to get a different spirit about you. You see, I feel offended when someone curses, blasphemes, or takes God's name in vain. Why? Because I have a different spirit than they have. Therefore, if you come into the services and

cannot enjoy the shouting and true praise given to God, something must be wrong. Let us examine ourselves.

Examples of Prevailing Prayer

I believe it was D. L. Moody, during his great evangelistic efforts, who had two sisters who traveled everywhere he went. They were the unseen prayer warriors. They were not given any publicity in particular, but they felt it was their duty to go along and pray for old-fashioned revival. These two sisters were very valuable to D. L. Moody. That is what we need today. We need saints praying behind the scenes. Many folks like to be in the limelight, in a place of recognition. Not too many want to go behind closed doors and get down before God and prevail in prayer until God sends an old-fashioned, Holy Ghost revival. Surely, we need to get a greater burden of prayer.

Hannah prevailed in prayer. She was barren and could have no children. This was a great reproach to her, so she prevailed in prayer, fasted, and called upon God until God gave her a precious child. This boy, Samuel, grew up to be a great man of God.

I thank God for people who will prevail in prayer. Daniel of old prevailed in prayer. What did God do? He locked the lions' jaws. Those lions did not take a bite of him; they lost their appetite. Those were not a bunch of old, toothless lions. You can read a little later about the fellows who caused Daniel to be thrown in. Those same lions leaped up, grabbed them, and broke their bones even before they hit the ground. Oh, I thank God that we can prevail in prayer. God will do the impossible if we will prevail in prayer. Every obstacle can be hurdled, every problem can be solved, and every difficult circumstance can be worked out, thank God, if we will prevail in prayer.

Jesus prevailed in prayer in Matthew 26:36-38: "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called

Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful [when we really get in the spirit of travail and prevail in prayer, we are going to be sorrowful and heavy], even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." We have to keep the flesh under so that the Spirit can be predominant.

Verses 42-46 continue: "He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." Jesus prevailed in Gethsemane. Luke said His sweat was as great drops of blood; that was because of His great traveling in prayer.

These Scriptures show us that Jesus was human and divine. The human cried out: "Isn't there any other way? Isn't there an easier road?" My friend, Jesus was just as human as we are, and He was no more divine than we have access to be. He could not have been our true example had He been more divine than we have access to be. We have access to the same God, the Father,

that Jesus had. In fact, God the Father will do even more for us in a measure than He did for His own Son. At one time God turned His back on His Son, but He will not do that to us if we are obedient to Him.

The Need of Having a Greater Burden

So many people get the idea, "Oh, that was Jesus who lived with no sin and with no guile in His mouth." Well, when you get Jesus in you, you will live the same way. There will be no willful transgressions and no guile in your mouth, thank God. Again, Jesus could not have been the true example had He been more divine than we have access to be or had He been less human than we are. To be the true example, He had to be made up just as we are. He was tried with every temptation we would ever face so that He could be our great mediator and intercessor. Thank God, He is ever listening, pleading, and interceding to the Father for us.

I am confident in my heart that God would have cut off some of us long ago had it not been for Jesus. Jesus says: "Wait, Father. I walked in yonder world. I know what these folks are going through. I have lived there and walked where they are walking. Father, wait just a little longer." Jesus is our intercessor; He is the One who pleads for us and wants us to come before Him and be prevailing prayer warriors.

John Wesley came over to this country as a missionary and worked among the Indians before he was saved. His belief in salvation at that particular time was that one grows into this experience. One weekend while on a ship with the Moravians, he noticed they exemplified such a calm and restful feeling when the storm was upon the ocean, shaking the ship about in the water. Those Moravians lived so close to God that the storms did not upset them as it did other people. John Wesley was determined to get an experience like they had. Upon returning to his

home, he got down to business with God and got a real experience of salvation. He prevailed in prayer until three o'clock in the morning and was filled with the Holy Ghost. He got a genuine experience, thank God!

We need to be just as determined to prevail in prayer for some of the needs we see around us. Worldly people sing and dance all night long. Many dance the old year out and the new year in, but we saints cannot even pray all night long. Many times we get down to pray, and we are done praying in five to ten minutes because our burden is not heavy enough.

We need a greater soul burden and greater compassion to cause us to prevail and to tarry before God in prayer. If we had real compassion and a real burden, and if we could see lost and dying souls going into hell, we would travail in prayer longer. Isaiah likens it to a woman in travail, about to bring forth a child. That woman has one concern, and that is to bring forth her child. Surely, that ought to be our greatest concern now, that we would reproduce and bring forth new babes in Christ Jesus. Remember, the Bible says that men ought always to pray and not to faint. It also tells us to pray without ceasing and to prevail in prayer.

When Peter was in prison, the church began to prevail. Of course, they were just a little surprised that God answered prayer so quickly. They thought He was going to have to work through some other medium. The thing I like about this is Peter's consecration. When the angel went to him, he was asleep. He was not up walking the floor, wringing his hands, or biting his fingernails because of worry; he was asleep. He was committed to God whether he lived or died.

The church got under a burden and prevailed in prayer, so God sent an angel to open the jail door and lead him outside the city gate. The city gate opened of its own accord. Peter went and knocked on the gate

where the church was gathered for prayer. A little damsel said, "Peter is here!" The church said, "Oh, it cannot be Peter. We are expecting God to work it out some way, but it could not happen this quickly." My friend, we need to realize that when we prevail before God in prayer, He can answer quickly or in any other way that He sees fit to answer.

When You Pray, Believe

God answers every prayer that is prayed in the right spirit. His answers are either yes, no, or wait awhile. Waiting is the hard part. If we could just get a yes or no answer and go on, it would be easier. When we have to wait for an answer, it is more difficult. We are tempted to become impatient. We must be willing to wait upon the Lord. We must prevail before God in prayer until we get the assurance that God has heard and granted our request. Then we must start thanking God for hearing and answering prayer. Surely, He will come to the rescue.

My friend, I wish I could make plainer the need of prevailing in prayer. I want to impress it on your heart even more. God has done the impossible. He parted the Red Sea and let the Israelites walk across on dry ground. Nothing is too hard for God. Do not give up on your unsaved children, your unsaved companion, or your unsaved neighbors and friends. Go before God in prevailing prayer. Prevailing prayer will avail in time. Jesus said, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). If you believe, you shall receive. He has the doors thrown wide open. He trusts us to ask for things for His glory, for the edifying of His cause. Whatever it is, He says, "If you can just believe, I will send it; it is already on the way."

When you pray, do you travail in prayer? Have your prayers become just a rumbling of words? Is prayer just a routine thing that you go through because the Bible says the

Christian ought to pray? Statistics tell us that the average Christian in America prays only three minutes a day; that is not long enough to run off the devils.

I was in a revival meeting down in Tennessee once, and I had the feeling that if I could get the crowd in, we would have revival, but I found that was not so. One particular night it was drizzling rain, but there was a good turnout for a country church. Seventy-five to eighty-five people were there. During the course of preaching, I asked, "How many of you make this your place of worship?" and most of the hands went up. Next, I asked: "How many of you are saved? Raise your hand if you are a child of God." I suppose about sixty-five to seventy hands went up. Then I inquired: "How many of you would be willing to prevail before God for the souls of people in this community for one hour a day during this meeting? That is only about twenty minutes in the morning, twenty minutes at noon, and twenty minutes in the evening." When I looked around, the preacher had his hand up, my wife had her hand up, and I had my hand up. Only three people were willing to prevail for an hour a day.

Next, I asked them: "How many of you would dare to pray thirty minutes a day? Would you prevail thirty minutes a day in this revival meeting for the souls of people in this neighborhood that ought to be coming to God? That is only ten minutes in the morning, ten minutes at noon, and ten minutes in the evening. If you go to the evening prayer meeting, you will pray almost that much time." I looked around and only six hands went up out of about sixty-five to seventy people who claimed to be saved. Needless to say, we did not have revival. Why? Because the people were not willing to prevail.

Do you see the spirits that we are up against? People would rather talk than pray. They would rather go into an auditorium for fifteen or twenty minutes ahead of time and

visit with one another than to get in the prayer room and pray. This is the tendency I have seen all over the country. Usually no more than 10 to 20 percent of the people in a congregation of people who profess to be saved are faithful in attending the prayer services. This is sad. We ought to get in the prayer services and get on our faces before God.

Isaiah asked the question in Isaiah 66:8, "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her

children." Can sons and daughters be born unless Zion travails? The answer is no. Why can we not travail before God and become the prevailing church in prayer? That ought to be the most important hour of the day. The best spent hour of the day is the hour we spend with God. It is no wonder the songwriter wrote, "Sweet Hour of Prayer." The sweet hour of prayer is the hour we can draw back from the world, close every door, just open one door to God, and have sweet communion with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; then He will richly bless us. We ought to

thank God for the privilege of being able to travail and prevail in prayer.

I trust that you have been stirred to do more praying, and then do more believing. You see, without believing what you pray for, your praying is in vain. You must believe what you pray for. Do you know how to convince God that you believe what you are praying for? You just ask Him and have the assurance that He has heard you; then start thanking Him for answering prayer.

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If a man is too busy to worship God twice on Sunday and once on Wednesday night, he has more business than God intended him to have.

J. C. Penney

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Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have

dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

James 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.



Are You Contemplating Going Back Into Sin?

Brother Irwin Seshier

Sin Separates You From God

God has done so much for every one of us. He is such a good, righteous, and fair God. He understands you when you do not understand yourself. What a blessing to be

saved from a life of sin! He did not have to, but He cares so much for each one of us. What an assurance to be in the center of God's will! I could go on and on about the miraculous wonders of Jesus Christ.

Why do some people return to

the life of sin when God has been so good to them? Why do some people want to bear the terrible burden of sin again? Why do they struggle with the things of God and then fall back into the hands of the enemy? It is called being disobedient. If you do

not obey the Word of God, keep His commandments, and stay close to Him, you will slip back into the very things that God has delivered you from.

There are dangers in returning to the pathways of sin. It would be better to throw a match in a room full of dynamite or to play with high voltage wires than to entertain the thought of going back into the old sinful pathways. You may feel that you can dabble in sin and still be a child of God, but sin separates you from God, and it will cheat you out of a life of service to God.

Proverbs 14:34 states, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Sin is a deceiver, and it will make you feel comfortable. Some people say, "Sin will not grab hold of me." You need to be careful of making a statement such as that. If you are not up to par with God, you can succumb to the things of this old world. Sin will take you further than you want to go, it will keep you longer than you want to stay, and it will cost you more than you want to pay in this body of clay. Sin is a terrible thing. Sin not only separates you from God but also from family. I cannot paint a picture black enough to let you know what sin will do to an individual. There is no cleanliness in sin.

I want to ask you a very serious question, Christian friend. Have you ever entertained the thought of going back into sin? It would be the most drastic and terrible decision that you could ever make on this side of eternity. As a saint of God, that thought should exit your mind just as fast as it comes in. You should never entertain the thought of going back into this old world. Things out in the world are more evil today than they were years ago. Many other spirits have been loosed today that are more prevalent than they were in the past.

Hold on to the Things of God

You should thank and praise God that He saved you when He did.

We do not thank Him enough for what He has kept us from. When you sell out to God, you will be in the worship services. If you deliberately miss the services, you are not going to get enough strength for your soul. Certainly there are times when you may go away to visit family, when you go on vacation, or when you are ill. However, there are spirits out in the world that want to draw you away from the goodness of God. Sin does not paint you a picture of serving God; it paints you a picture of satisfying the flesh. Some people have been overtaken with the seducing spirits of this old world. If you do not have the Spirit of God, you have a spirit that does not want to lift up Jesus Christ.

The world does not understand the things of God. Since I have been saved, I no longer understand the things of the world. If Jesus were to come back to this earth today, He would still be criticized and attacked by the same spirits that put Him on the Cross. The religious world talks big and says they love Jesus, but He would still tell them the way it is. When a man of God stands before you each week and tells you how it is, he is going to be attacked. If you have a godly pastor, you ought to pray and uplift him. I thank God that we have a godly pastor. There are too many wishy-washy preachers today.

John 15:18 reads, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." The world does not understand why the Christian goes to church three times a week. I love it! The world has its agenda, and the saints of God have theirs—to serve God faithfully. If you do not lift up Christ, who is going to lift Him up? There are spirits loose today that want to shut down the Truth. You can see how the signs of the times are. I do not have to paint you a picture. Every day more of our rights are being taken away. Why? The enemy wants to prevent people from serving God the way they should. When we are taken out of this world, what a

reward we will receive! In order to get to Heaven, we have to die and pass from this old world. What a way to wake up—in eternity with Jesus Christ! The saints of God love to sing the songs of Zion and shout praises to God for all the great things He has done. We love to give true worship to God.

Sometimes people go back into sinful things. They fail to hold on to the things that the Lord has shown them. It is possible to slip back into the things of this old world. The enemy will try his best to get you to think only of yourself. He is good at that. He will get you to think of all the things that you are missing because you are living this Christian life, but the enemy is a liar. He has been a liar since the very beginning. There is no truth in the devil's message.

Make a Clean Break With Sin

The devil will try to tell you to do this or that. He wants you to just give up. The true child of God is going to stay true and be right where God wants him to be. The devil will cheat, deceive, and lie to you so that you do not live this Christian life. Friend, you do not have to give in to the spirit of the enemy. There is power in the life of Jesus Christ. It is nothing in yourself, but you can have the Spirit of God dwelling within you. Do you have a desire for the things of God? If you do, you must put forth the effort to get yourself to the house of God and listen to the Word of God. You have to bring the flesh under.

Psalms 41:11 reads, "By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me." Saint of God, there is nothing to go back to in sin. When you get saved, you must make a clean break with sin because you are tired of the life that you have been living. You must be sick of doing the complete opposite of what you want to do. When you go to an altar of prayer and seek God's face, you must give up sin and truly repent.

God will hear your plea. Thank God, He still hears and answers prayer.

What is the hang-up with many people? They are not truly sick of sin, so they do not want to give up all sin. Friend, if you want help from God, you have to give up all sin. You cannot withhold anything from Jesus Christ, because He knows everything about you. You need to empty out all those things in the chambers of your heart that you are holding back—critical spirits, envy, strife, bad attitudes, and your lack of love for others.

Salvation automatically puts a love in your heart for others, and even for people that you did not know before. You should love the people whom you think have wronged you. When you get saved, you will not try to find ways to get revenge. I believe that is a big hang-up with lots of people. You may say, "You just don't know what they did to me." God does, so you should leave them with God, pray for them, and treat them right. Some do not seem to know how to treat people right, but you must treat everyone right if you want to make Heaven your home one of these days.

There is nothing to go back to when it comes to sin. I made a clean break from sin when I got saved. In order for you to get the help you need for your soul, that is what you must do as well. Then you have to get anchored in the things of God. If not, you will be blown away with other winds of doctrine. The devil has many things in his arsenal that he can use to take you away if you do not get things settled. When you are truly sick of sin, you will have had enough of sin.

You may say: "God, if You will get me out of this predicament, I will serve You with my whole heart. I'm truly sorry that I sinned against You. I want to go Your way. Please help me, Lord. I'm in a desperate situation. I need Your help and guidance." Only Jesus Christ can give you the guidance that you need. You need to tell the Lord, "I will never

go back to the old life of sin," and mean it. You should be bold in your statement. Do not treat the Lord as you would a light switch, on one day and off the next. You must make a true commitment to serve God, regardless of what the enemy throws at you. I repeat, there is danger in going back to the pathways of sin.

Rejection Turns Into Destruction

Genesis 19:15-26 tells us: "And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

"And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord: Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die: Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

"And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain,

and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt."

Do you see what happens when people look back to the things of this old world? They die spiritually, and they might die physically as well. Again, verse 25 of this Scripture reading states, "And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground." There was nothing left. When God does a work, He does a complete work. When Jesus Christ saves you from sin and you truly repent, He saves you from the entire element of sin. He does not leave some sin there, but he removes all sin. We see a total destruction of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Those people had their chance; however, their rejection turned into their destruction.

Meeting God's Conditions

Jesus Christ gives each of us a chance to meet God's conditions. There is nothing to go back into sin for. What happened to Lot's wife? She looked back. You should never look back. You must burn those bridges behind you. Are you looking back? What is in sin that is comparable to Jesus Christ? Nothing. Sin is much worse today than it was a year or two ago. Sin does not get better; it gets worse, and nothing warrants your return. Sad to say, too many are returning to sin.

You do not wake up one morning and decide that you want to return to sin. It is a gradual, cooling-off process. For example, you may say that you do not see the message the way you used to. You may start asking questions of others in the congregation, but you do not ask those who are pillars in the church. The enemy is patient. He will let you go at your own pace. He will let you take your time and let you develop a cooling-off period. Friend, you have to guard against cooling-off. You

need to be on fire for Jesus Christ.

The enemy will try to accuse you, but you need to stay hot for God. If you cool off, the enemy of souls will cause you to question what goes on. You may say, "How can this be?" You must be careful. That is not the time to run and call someone to see if that person feels the same way. Instead of going to the phone, you need to go to the throne of God and ask Him to guide you into all Truth and understanding.

Back in the Old Testament, the spirit that Moses and Aaron had to deal with was the same spirit that the true Church of God pastors face today. Numbers 16:1-4 reads: "Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face."

Saint of God, you need to be careful of what you say about the pastor. You should never think that you know more than the pastor does. God has put him in that position. There is danger in that type of spirit. Again, Numbers 16:4 tells us, "And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face." How do you think a man of God would feel if he heard something like that? He would seek God's face, just as Moses did. Why? Those people have souls, and he is responsible for their souls.

When individuals start to question this and that, the devil will be right there to work. You had better watch what you say about a man of God and watch what you say

to others.

If anyone starts to say something to you about the pastor, you ought to stand up and say: "That's enough! I will not listen to you talk about my pastor." You should not listen to anyone run down your pastor. You need to stand up for a man of God. God has put him on the wall to watch over souls. If you speak ill about a man of God, you could end up lost.

The devil is on the loose, and you need to be wise concerning his devices. We are living in the last of the last days. The devil is out to totally destroy the true Church of God. There is a spirit of self-righteousness that wants to creep in, and that makes it almost impossible for some people to receive help.

Saint of God, it is vitally important that you stay focused on God's plan. Many other things can take away your focal point. Jesus endured the pain of the Cross and urged us to follow His example. He did not have to do it, but He did it for us.

Hebrews 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." He did it all for you and me.

Corrie ten Boom was a woman who suffered horrible things in a Nazi death camp. She explained the power of focus. She said: "If you look at the world, you will be distressed. If you look within, you will be depressed. If you look at God, you'll be at rest." I thank God there is rest in Jesus Christ! Remember,

what you go through in this life is only temporary because you will have an eternal reward.

Sinner friend, the enemy of souls wants you to put off your salvation. He wants you to be a procrastinator. If you listen to the enemy, you will never find a convenient time to get saved. He always wants you to put it off. He will say, "Wait until you get a good job or a companion" or "You should wait until you are more financially secure." Friend, today is the day of salvation.

Saint of God, you must be careful of what this old world has to offer. The spirit of this old world is flashing its lights and honking its horns. That spirit will get you to think that you do not need to attend the church services. The Bible says not to neglect the assembling of yourselves together. It just makes good sense to go God's way. Some want to go a different way, but there is really only one true way. Are you contemplating going back into the ways of sin? You need to put it out of your mind.

If you start singing hymns or quoting Scriptures, the devil will not stay around long. The devil hates it when someone quotes Scriptures. People get themselves in trouble when they entertain the devil. If you start entertaining him, he is going to start talking. You are human, and you must be careful. If you are contemplating going back into sin, won't you seek the Lord's help before it is too late?

(Compact Disc TR-1382)

**FAITH is believing what
God says simply because it
is God who says it.**

Announcements

- New Castle, IN**
October 31-
November 6
Revival: 9th Street Church of God, 125 South 9th Street, New Castle, Indiana 47362
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
Service times: Monday-Friday 7:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor Allen Polston. Telephone: 765-524-1776
- Brighton, AL**
November 14-20
Revival: The Church of God, 1111 India Street, Brighton, AL
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
For more information contact: Pastor Karl Wilson. Telephone: 205-422-5917
- Canby, OR**
November 22-27
Revival: The Church of God, 522 N. W. 2nd Avenue, Canby, OR 97013
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
For more information contact: Pastor David Stegmeier. Telephone: 503-313-0227
- Summersville, WV**
December 2-4
Revival: The Church of God, 74 Armstrong Road, Summersville, WV 26651
Evangelist: Brother Richard Talbot, Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania
Service times: Friday 7:00 p.m., Saturday 6:00 p.m., Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders. Telephone: 304-872-4047
Visit our website: www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com
- Newark, OH**
December 28-
January 1
Camp Meeting: The Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055
Three services daily: 10:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. The first service begins
Sunday morning. The afternoon service will be a teaching service.
For lodging reservation, please call Bro. & Sis. Dave Bush at 740-345-1213
For more information contact: Pastor Roger Decker, 87 Decrow Ave.,
Newark, OH 43055. Telephone: 740-344-2543

2017 Camp Meeting Dates

June 18 - 25
July 30 - August 6
December 27 - 31

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*We hope you will plan your vacation time so that you  
can join us for these old-fashioned camp meetings.*

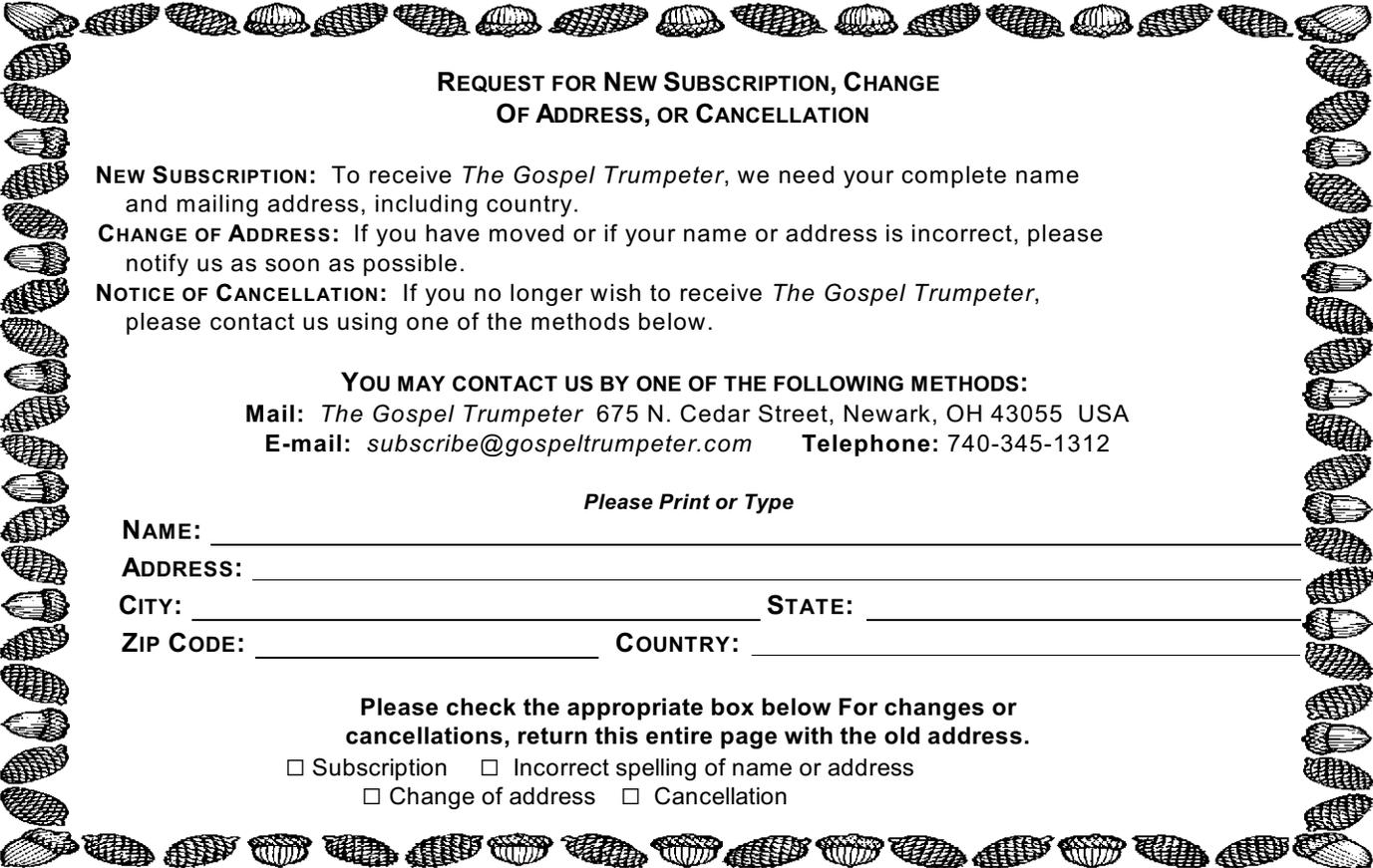
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