

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

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

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 48 March 2018 No. 3



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

Winter 2017 Camp Meeting Report

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER USPS #871620

Periodicals postage paid at the post office in
Newark, Ohio 43055.

POSTMAN, send form 3579 to the printer:

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER
675 N. Cedar Street
Newark, Ohio 43055

This periodical carries no subscription price;
however, it is partially maintained through the gifts
and offerings of its readers, with the balance of the
expenses being paid by the local congregation.

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

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

Email: pastor@church-of-god-online.com
Phone: 740-344-2543
Fax: 740-344-4737
Print Shop Phone: 740-345-1312

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

Jesus organized it (Matt. 16:18)
On a good foundation (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11)
Christ governs it (Eph. 1:22-23; Isa. 9:6)
God admits members (1 Cor. 12:13-18)
Sin puts you out of it (Rom. 11:22; Ex. 32:33)
The saved only are members (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)

We reserve the right to edit and/or decline any
material for any reason. Not responsible for unsolicited
articles or items.

CONTENTS

How to Kill the Two Witnesses.....	3
Reigning, Sweetly Reigning.....	9
Especially for Young People.....	13
My God Shall Deliver Thee.....	15
Are You a Committed Christian?..	19
Three Days Most People Struggle With.....	23
Meeting Announcements.....	27

Vol. 48 March 2018 No. 3

ONLY FIVE NIGHTS AND FOUR DAYS

Wednesday night, December 27,
2017, at 7:00 p.m., the Winter Camp
Meeting began. Brother Irwin Seshier
opened the service and welcomed
everyone to God's Acres. The camp
meeting was short, only five nights
and four days, but it was a sweet time
of fellowship with the saints. It
seemed like it just began and then it
was over before we realized what had
happened. We affirm that the meeting
was power packed as the Lord moved
in the midst and accomplished His will
and purpose. Each service was well
attended again by God's people from
both near and far.

Brother Calvin Foster started the
meeting by bringing a sound message
on evangelism entitled "Fishers of
Men." His sermon reminded us of how
important and how necessary it is to
win souls to the Lord. The topic of the
message that he delivered Thursday
evening was, "They Gladly Received
the Word." Again, Brother Foster chal-
lenged hearts with vital thoughts.
Friday evening Brother Foster con-
cluded with the sermon, "You Have
No Excuse." Then Saturday evening
Brother David Stegmeier preached on
the subject of "The Blessings of Obe-
dience." Sunday evening the Holy
Spirit crowned the meeting with souls
going to the altar to seek salvation or a
closer walk with Christ.

Starting Thursday morning Brother
Michael Wilks spoke on the subject of
"Being Turned." Friday morning
Brother Michael Miller delivered a
sermon entitled "The Devil Wants to
Destroy Our Vision." Brother Josh
Thilmony presented a message Satur-
day morning entitled "Brothers and
Sisters of the Messiah." Then Sunday
morning Brother Richard Talbot en-
couraged us with the thought, "Occupy
Till I Come." Each afternoon Brother
David Stegmeier taught a series of
lessons entitled "Essentials for Chris-

tian Living."

It is always good to see the
ministers sitting on the pulpit platform
backing the man of the hour as he
delivers the message. The anointed
messages that God laid on their hearts
were powerful and pointed, bringing
enlightenment to the hearers. It is a
wonderful sight to see men and women
in need of salvation make their move
to accept the Lord Jesus Christ into
their hearts. Many received the help
they needed. It grieves the Spirit of
God and the saints to witness convic-
tion working on the unsaved and then
see souls turn away from God's plead-
ings. Many needs were met, but sad to
say, some refused God's offered grace
and pardon.

Although the winter meeting was
short, it was a joy and a blessing to be
present with the Lord and the saints.
Each wonderful message that went
forth was vitally needful. The brethren
who preached were inspired by the
Holy Spirit as they spoke. Positive,
pointed, anointed preaching is what
men and women need to hear in these
days of uncertainty and turmoil.

Many wonderful things were
accomplished during this winter meet-
ing. Time after time, our hearts were
made to rejoice as the singing and the
preaching went forth. The visitation of
the Lord always brings joy, praise, and
happiness to the saints. His presence
was uplifting and encouraging to each
soul, challenging us to press on in the
good fight of faith. We highly recom-
mend that you order a copy of the
messages preached. The beautiful
songs sung by the choir as well as the
songs sung by the special singers are
also available.

It will not be long until it will be
time for another camp meeting here at
God's Acres. We hope that you will
begin to make preparations to attend.

Revelation 11:7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11 And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood

upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their

seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven [that is talking about the church], and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.



How to Kill the Two Witnesses

Brother Roger L. Decker

Symbolic Language

In the Book of Revelation, objects, systems, and sometimes people are depicted symbolically instead of using the actual name.

Revelation 1:1, which is used many times to prove the point, reads, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come

to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." What is this verse really saying? It is saying the Revelation originated from God, passed down to Jesus Christ, and then

passed down to His servants.

You must be a servant of Jesus Christ to understand this Book. Just as the meanings are hidden in the parables, meanings are hidden in this Book from those who are wise in their own eyes and are not followers of Jesus Christ. The unregenerated, or those who are not born again, are presuming the interpretation of this Book to be literal. Dear one, do not try to literalize it. Chapter after chapter deals with dragons, with beasts, and with four and twenty elders. If you take these things literally, you are going to get completely off track.

You cannot literalize everything in the Bible. Revelation 12:1 reads, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Let us take a look at that literally. How big would this woman be? The Sun is about ninety-three million miles away from the moon, so that is how tall she would have to be if this verse were to be taken literally. Approximately nine hundred sixty thousand Earths could fit inside the Sun. You could fit seventy-six million moons inside the Sun. Consider the size of this woman's head compared to her feet.

The Sun is the source of all life in the solar system. It generates 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit just on its surface. Jesus is the source of all light for those who dwell on the Earth. It would be utterly ridiculous to literalize such symbolic language. What do these symbols portray? The woman represents the church. Her being clothed with the Sun represents the New Testament light, with the lesser light on the moon, or the Old Testament, under her feet. Why would the moon be under her feet? The Old Testament is the foundation of

the Gospel. When Jesus Christ came, there was a foundation. What was it? It was the old covenant. Therefore, what does this woman do? She connects the two covenants together, the Old and the New Testaments.

The Book of Revelation has many symbols, and symbols are definitely common in the Word of God. John the Baptist used symbols when he said in Luke 3:7, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" He was not preaching to literal snakes, and he was not getting ready to baptize vipers. Jesus said in Matthew 10:16, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

Jesus said in Matthew 23:33, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" What was Jesus talking about? He was talking about the powers of the enemy, even among the Sadducees and the Pharisees, who at that time were opposing the things of God. In other words, He was telling the disciples, "Nothing is going to harm you." When Jesus sends you on your journey, your journey will be successful, although you will be opposed. Symbols were common in order to illustrate, or represent, personalities, character traits, objects, and systems.

The Bottomless Pit

Revelation 11:7-8 tells us: "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

Jesus was not really crucified in Sodom or Egypt. That is symbolic of the condition in which He was crucified. How do you kill the Word and the Spirit? You could not shoot them or destroy them physically. You would do that by killing their influence, or by taking away their preeminence. In the above Scripture, we see the rise of the beast and the spirit of the beast. The beast is not peaceful; it is a warring beast that is out to kill the life of the church, or the Christians. Where did this beast come from? It came from the bottomless pit. When something does not have a bottom to build on, it has no foundation. This bottomless pit simply means it has no Bible foundation.

Matthew 7:26-27 says: "And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." You can only build according to the Word of God.

The Roman Catholic Church came into existence because of an apostasy, a falling away, or a defecting from the Truth. Roman Catholicism is total darkness. It is a worldly religion, and according to the Bible, the world is an enemy of God. Why is it called a beast? It is called a beast because of its nature. The word *beast* comes from the Greek word **therion**, which means "venomous beast."

Let us get the same word from another verse. Acts 28:4 reads, "And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live." The word *beast* here is the same as

the one used in Revelation 11:7, which is translated "venomous beast." Instead of Christianity coming from the Catholic Church, there is venom, or poison. It is responsible for the death of millions of Christians.

I quote this fact: "In the year 1527, Roman Catholics in France, by prearranged plan, under Jesuit influence, murdered seventy thousand Protestants within the space of two months. The Pope rejoiced when he heard the news of this successful outcome." I quote again: "During the reign of the papal Church of Rome, tens of millions of Christians were persecuted and killed." Why? They refused to bow to the authority of the papal church. This beast looked religious enough; it looked like the real thing except when it spoke.

Sodom and Egypt

We read in Revelation 13:6, "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." Where does Revelation, Chapter 11, fit in on the Revelation chart? It fits in from the beginning, A.D. 33, and comes up through the apostasy, through the Dark Ages, and through the sixth and seventh seals. It is a complete summary of the church from the Crucifixion on through. It is almost a whole series within one chapter.

Revelation 11:8 reads, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." What "dead bodies" lay there? The Word and the Spirit. What is that great city? Revelation 16:19 tells us, "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of

the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

Spiritually, this is called "Sodom and Egypt." Who dwelt in Sodom? Genesis 13:13 says, "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly." The Scripture says Sodom and Egypt. What about Egypt? Exodus 2:23 states, "And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage."

Exodus 3:7 reads, "And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows." Wickedness and bondage are also trademarks of Babylon, Sodom, and Egypt; it is a combination. It all makes up Babylon, the great city. We read in Revelation 11:9, "And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves."

The Protestant Era

Now we move into the Protestant era of time, from the years 1530 to 1880. This is the Protestant age. Around 1730 and up through, there were multitudes of divisions and splits, and Protestant churches that arose at that particular time. You can read about several reformers back in the years of 1700 to 1800. Protestantism killed the effect of the Word and the Spirit, but it wanted the people to think they were still active in their religion.

Some singing groups that travel, sell tickets, and sing advertise how the Spirit moves in their midst. Many people attend those concerts, get worked up, and carry on, but it is just

entertainment. Souls do not go to an altar and really repent. It is entertainment, and even sinners take part. Some of the ones who sing are sinners. They have good voices and good harmony, and that works people up.

False religion often talks about the Holy Spirit, and they even talk about being Spirit filled. They do not bury the two witnesses entirely, but they do not let them have control of their services or their people. The two witnesses do not have their right of way in their services. How long will this go on? The Revelation tells us three and a half days, which is another symbol, and it denotes three hundred fifty years, the timeline of Protestantism.

From 1530 to 1880, when D. S. Warner and others preached the unity of God's people, there was a great call to come out of Babylon. The Protestant era had two parts of teaching: justification and holiness. Martin Luther and others taught justification. Then approximately 1730, John Wesley and others taught holiness. If you have ever read any of John Wesley's messages, no wonder it was a shock when that message took hold, because that brother could really get into holiness.

The Word and the Spirit could not have their rightful position in the church. Many people became followers of Martin Luther, some became followers of John Wesley, and others became followers of other reformers. Therefore, they had the Roman Catholics, the Lutherans, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Nazarenes, and the list goes on. Various reformers rose up, and people went to churches named after the names of the reformers.

Suppose you and your wife were to have a child. You would not give the child someone else's last name. We are children of

God, so we take God's name. We are not ashamed of our Father's name. Why should we change God's name to Martin Luther's name or John Wesley's name? Why not call the people of God the body of Christ or the Church of God? The Word and the Spirit in that era of time could not have their rightful position in the church.

Earthly Religion

Revelation 11:10 states, "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." He was not talking about moving upon people on the earth. He was talking about earthly religion. Earthly religion rejoices over the fact that the Word and the Spirit do not have their right of way in worship.

Revelation 12:3 tells us, "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." Revelation 13:1 states, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy."

What was John talking about when he said, "And they that dwelt on the earth . . ." Revelation 13:11 says, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." What was John the Revelator talking about? He was speaking of the rise of the Protestant religion, known as Protestantism. The writer said the beast had two horns. What do the horns denote? They signify power. If you were to go inside a fenced area and see a

bull with horns, what would that tell you? He has power.

There were two horns on this lamb, signifying two kingdoms that supported Protestantism: Germany and England. It looked "churchy" and had the looks of just what you would expect in religion. Many times religion looks good outside, but it is deceptive and corrupt inside. The Scripture says they sent gifts to one another. What kind of gifts would one send to another? They were gifts such as awarding someone a doctorate degree, ordination, calling one "Reverend," putting one in an office, making someone a professor or a Doctor of Divinity. In reality, there is only one true gift giver when it comes to spiritual gifts, and that is the Holy Spirit.

When I became a pastor, I did not really know how to be a pastor. I only knew what I had seen from my pastor. I had not studied in a seminary school. Brother Emerson Wilson never studied in a school either. I never studied how to be a pastor or how to oversee a congregation. The only thing I knew is what I had seen. I had been involved in some consultations, but I did not know what went on behind the scenes. I did not know what went on in decisions, counseling, and just working with people in general, but God gives the gifts according to the needs. One has to step out in faith to answer God's call. After Brother E. A. Wilson passed away, I was praying for a new pastor, just as everyone else in the congregation was, and I was shocked when God called me.

God not only calls but also equips. If God has called you to a position, perhaps to be a Sunday school teacher, and you do not know how you can stand in front of that class, you can be assured that God will give you what you need for that position. I repeat, God is the giver of gifts.

Ephesians 4:8 informs us, "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

Revelation 11:10 reads, "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." John was speaking of those who dwell in and rely on earthly religion, those who had man-made ideas and who are involved in entertainment, false doctrine, false theology, and are out of the will of God. They are going to be tormented.

"Come Out of Her, My People"

Revelation 14:3 tells us, "And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." John was writing about those who are sold out to God and consecrated to His service.

Revelation 14:4-5 states: "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile [or hypocrisy]: for they are without fault before the throne of God." What woman was he talking about? He was speaking of false religion. It has false doctrine, false theology, and it is out of the will of God.

The ones who were called out were called out of earthly religion by God. They were the first fruits. In 1880 a call went out. D. S. Warner, F. G. Smith, and some other brethren and early reformers put out a call. What was the

call? Revelation 18:4 reads, "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." God has that same call today. He does not want you to receive of Babylon's plagues. Earthly religion is plagued. Do not feel sorry for false religion; do not pat it on the back. Earthly religion is corrupt. I am not talking about your good friends in false religion. I am talking about the systems of false religion that people are in.

Revelation 17:3-5 says: "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

God does not want His people to mix, to become entangled with, or to feel sorry for false religion. False religion is the gateway to hell. Allow me to illustrate what I am trying to convey. Suppose two people are sitting on barstools at a local bar. One has no religious profession and the other person does. One person says he is lost and the other says he is saved. Where did they get that? It was not out of the Bible but from a false prophet who wrests the Scriptures. In reality, both of them are lost. False religion cuddles sinful conditions.

"Come Up Hither"

Revelation 11:11-12 reads: "And after three days and an half

the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." After three hundred fifty years, the Protestant age on up to 1880, the Spirit of God entered into them, and the two witnesses stood upon their feet.

Mark 4:28 says, "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Truth came in three parts: through Luther came the truth on justification, through Wesley came the truth on holiness, and then through Warner and others came the truth on the unity of the one church. Now we have the full ear. Those two witnesses stood upon their feet.

We read in Revelation 14:1, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." How do the two witnesses stand up? They stand up through you and me. Whose feet, whose body, whose mind, whose gifts and abilities do they have? They have yours and mine. What do we have a picture of? The Word and the Spirit back in their rightful place in the church, reigning in the church where the Word is preached and individuals are added to the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit.

Again, Revelation 11:12 reads, "And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." What was going on? Zechariah 14:7 tells us, "But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor

night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." The truth concerning the unity of God's people comes to the surface once again.

If you have raw milk, you can shake the milk, but the cream will always come back to the top. That is the way Truth works. When Jesus was crucified, He came up in a greater display of Truth than ever before.

In approximately 1880, D. S. Warner and other preachers at that particular time, the reformers, were calling people out of church joining as the Word and the Spirit had their right of way once again in the church. They were called to come up to a higher level of worship and to get away from Babylonian ideas and theology. They called people to come up to true holiness, to the unity of God's people, unashamed of the church and the name of the church, which is Church of God, and to where the presence of God is on display. Now we are getting back where Truth prevails once again.

The Holy City

The rest of Revelation, Chapter 11, is filled with victory. Verse 12 says "their enemies beheld them." Who are their enemies? The same ones who rejoiced over the fact that the Word and Spirit were not in control of sects where they might have someone come in and entertain them for a while instead of preaching.

The Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3:5, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." The church has a form of worship. We cannot deny that, but we have seen numerous times where the Spirit changed that form. Why? Because the Word and Spirit were in control. The people of God need to stay

away from false religion. We are not against people, because it is people whom God uses to make saints. We are against false systems of worship that deceive and corrupt the Truth. The Church of God originated with God Himself.

Revelation 21:2 reads, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." The church came down from God out of Heaven, not from the earth or the sea, but from God. This verse is not talking about a literal city. If it were a literal city, you would not have to be saved to see it. It is talking about the church, the New Jerusalem, or

the new Jews. If you are saved, did you know that you are a new Jew? If you are saved, you are a New Testament Jew. It is not the outside that we go by. Although the outside is important, the inside gets cleaned up first, and then we move along to the outside.

If you see the truth about Babylon, or false systems of worship, you need to take a stand and come out of it. In the past when people received light regarding where they were worshipping, they publicly took a stand for Truth. God is still calling people out yet today. The message has not changed. The seventh-seal message says that the mystery of God is finished.

All that secret stuff is brought to light, and what do you find? The door is open in heaven. This is not talking about Heaven, the place of eternal abode for God's people. He is talking about the church. The church door is opened to "whosoever will." You do not have to join the church; you are born into her. If you have a need, God is ready to supply your need. If you are not doing well spiritually, you need to do something about it. Do not be content to stay where you are. The Spirit of God wants to help you.

(Compact Disc TR-1848)

God Needs You

Here is a true story about a man whom the Lord needed. A minister of the Gospel in England by the name of Samuel Chadwick told of a person who had been a drunkard but was later soundly converted. This man was uneducated and unable to read. Dr. Chadwick tried his best to teach him to read, but to no avail. Yet the man was so eager to work for his new found Lord and Savior. He was unable to succeed at anything that Dr. Chadwick suggested, who finally told him that he must go to the Head of the church and say, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

One Sunday morning the Lord told him to go fetch a notoriously godless family to the chapel. Dr. Chadwick said, "When I heard the name, I forbade him to go, but his mind was made up. It was a dreadful house, all drunkards, and several of them violent and brutal. I was afraid they would half kill him." The little old man knocked at the door. An old man answered in his stocking feet. He opened the door a little way, and the little old man, knowing their ways, slipped through the door without a word. Then he delivered his message to the astonished old sinner. It was only a broken sentence or two about God's love and coming to the chapel. The old man looked in silence at him. One by one, the other members of the family came downstairs

in various stages of undress to see what was going on. "What is he after?" inquired the wife.

"He says his Master sent him."

"And who is his Master, I pray?"

The old man turned and said, "Who did you say it was?"

Again, the simple, broken message was spoken: "God loves you. Will you come to the chapel?"

Then the old man said in broken words: "Young man, you are the first person who has spoken to me about my soul for the last twenty years. Young fellow, I am a big sinner, but if you will have us, we will come."

For the first time in their lives, those children saw their father in tears. He and his wife kneeled together that night in the chapel, sobbing their way back to the Father's house. When they had prayed through, he asked Dr. Chadwick to hold a prayer meeting in his house every day until all his family were converted, and this was done. The little fellow, the uneducated, the converted drunkard who could not read, found his work, and he developed a marvelous faculty for bringing big sinners to the house of God. The Lord has need of each one of us.

Matthew 28:1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week [we worship on Sunday to commemorate the resurrection of Christ], came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before

you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

14 And if this come to the

governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

REIGNING, SWEETLY REIGNING



Brother E. David Stegmeier

The Mighty Conqueror

I would like to focus on verse 18 of the Scripture text, which

reads, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Jesus is the ulti-

mate ruler, and He has control of all things. One song says, "He is the mighty conqueror." He became that by winning the battle

against the forces of evil. The word *conqueror* means "to gain by fighting, to win the war, to overcome by force, to get the better of, to defeat, to be victorious."

We often sing a song entitled "Be an Overcomer." We must overcome and be on the winning side. I thank God that we can be on the winning side. Throughout the life of Christ, He reigned over every situation, and through Him we can reign too. Even in Pilate's judgment hall, Jesus was reigning. Sometimes it takes more of the power and the grace of God to keep still than to speak. Pilate said to Jesus, in essence, "Are You going to say anything?" Sometimes it takes grace not to speak.

First of all, Jesus reigned over the power of the devil in His temptations in the wilderness. He reigned over every temptation that the devil brought to Him. He reigned through the Word. He said, "It is written." Through the Word, through the Holy Spirit, and through prayer, we, too, can reign. Church of God people are reigning, sweetly reigning. Jesus reigned over every temptation in the wilderness, so He knows how to help you. The Bible says that in every point a man is tempted, Jesus was tempted. He was tempted in the same way that we are, but He did not succumb; that is the key.

Hebrews 4:14-16 reads: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 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. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Jesus delivered the demonic

man who lived in the tombs, as recorded in Mark, Chapter 5. He freed that poor man who was bound by the spirit of the devil. I have seen people who have been bound by the devil. I saw a woman who was bound by the devil for thirty-five years delivered right before my eyes. It was quite a scary situation, but God completely delivered her.

I was playing the organ during a camp meeting when the woman bowed at an altar of prayer. The pastor dismissed the congregation and led us to a back room with a couple of ministers, saying, "This woman needs deliverance from the power of Satan." We went back to the room and prayed earnestly. The devil told her that he would kill her if she allowed the ministry to deliver her from him. The pastor said, "Let us keep right on praying and holding a rebuke on the devil." God delivered her in a miraculous way and gave her a new life. She said, "I went to many ministers down through my life, and I never could be delivered." Jesus still has power over all the powers of the devil. Through Him, you, too, can have power over the devil.

Healing the Sick

Second, Jesus reigned over every disease. The Word of God is replete with incident after incident where Jesus healed those who were sick. The Church of God has always had a ministry of healing.

At the pool of Bethesda, a crippled man who had been crippled for thirty-eight years was healed by Jesus. There was a woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years who was healed. The Bible lets us know that she had been hemorrhaging for twelve long years. As she walked through the crowd quietly, she thought that if she could

touch the hem of the garment of that Holy Man, she would be healed. She touched Him, and He said, "Who touched Me?"

The disciples said, in essence, "Look at this crowd. People are thronging You, and You ask, 'Who touched me?'" Jesus knew that someone touched Him with the touch of faith. Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Third, Jesus reigned over death, the last enemy. In His ministry, as recorded in Luke, Chapter 8, the Bible says Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, from death. He brought her back to life. The people told Jesus that she was dead, but Jesus said she was not dead, but that she was sleeping. The Bible says they laughed Him to scorn, but Jesus said, "Maid, arise." We are serving the same God. He raised a dead man back to life in the city of Nain, according to Luke 7:11-15. They had a funeral entourage and were walking down the main street of Nain carrying a coffin. The dead man was in there, and Jesus reached up, touched that coffin, and the man came back to life.

I have not personally seen that happen, but it did happen in Newark, Ohio. News of it spread all the way across the country. A reporter came from Vancouver, Washington, a large city, put an article in their local newspaper and a picture of Brother Emerson Wilson praying for the man who was electrocuted when a company moved the old barn on God's Acres. The headline read, "Reverend Wilson Raises a Man Back to Life." Several brethren who were there at the time can testify that it happened. We are serving a powerful God! Church of God, we ought to be the happiest people in the world. We are reigning, sweetly reigning. What a blessed thought!

Through the grace and power

of God, you, too, can reign. You can be more than a conqueror. Romans 5:17 says, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace [that is so profound] and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." I love the old song that says, "*Grace, grace, God's grace.*" You can reign if you will avail yourself of the strength, the power, and the grace of God.

Singing a New Song

Back in the 1960's, during the civil rights movement, the Mormons were considering allowing the black people into the religion. David McKay was the president of the Mormon church at that time. I asked some Mormon elders what the status was of allowing black people into the Mormon religion, because for years black people could not be members. They were not even allowed to enter the Mormon church to be a part of their services. They said David McKay was looking to God for a divine revelation to see what they could do about them. Ten years or so later, I asked them again, and they said, "Well, they can be members, but they cannot be priests."

Acts 10:34-35 states: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." As I was growing up, I always enjoyed the black ministers who came to preach because often they were a little more dynamic.

Salvation gives a man love where there was once hatred. There is a change in a man's life, praise God! Revelation 5:9-10 reads: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the

seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

How can you be a king? You can reign over the devil, the flesh, and sin. In order to have victory in my life and to preach with power, I have to keep my mind clean. When sin first appears, it appears in the mind. If you have a thought that is not conducive to living for God, you need to get rid of it. You can have power over sin, self, and the devil.

What does the Scripture mean by saying we are priests? We do not have to go through someone else to talk to God. We can pray directly to Him. We are kings and priests. We are reigning, sweetly reigning. We can reign right in this life, and then at the end of our days, we can reign over death.

First Corinthians 15:55-58 reads: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." We are a blessed people. I enjoy living, do you? God has been so good!

Being Conquerors Through Him

First Thessalonians 4:13-18 tells us: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [the reference in my Bible says, 'who have died'], that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope [we sing a song that says, 'We have a hope']. For

if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep [or go before them].

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." We are going to see the saints of God again some day.

When God called home some of the older saints, they saw beyond this veil of flesh. They saw some of their loved ones. God can do wonderful things for His people. We have a hope! We can reign over the devil, sin, sickness, and death. Romans 8:37 says, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

We are going to have tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, but we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. We can be conquerors in all these things. Romans 8:35 states, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" We are to endure anything that comes upon us.

Do you remember the story about the four friends who carried a man up to the rooftop and let him down through the roof? You may ask, "Why does God not heal everybody?" I do not know, but I do know that God heals. If God does not answer your prayer right away, and if

He allows you to stay in the fire for a while, you can still be more than a conqueror. God wants you to reign. Paul said, "In all of these things we are more than conquerors."

Some hardships can work for your good. A man by the name of C. W. Naylor wrote a lot of songs. His back was broken, and he was paralyzed. Some people went to him and said, "There must be something in your life, because you are not healed." After that, he went into deep depression. Fannie Crosby, Job, and others had serious afflictions. We do not have all the answers, but I do know that God heals. Fannie Crosby might not have written more than eight thousand hymns had she been able to see. Someone asked her, "Fannie, are you bitter with God?" She replied: "No, how could I be bitter with God? The first face I will ever see will be the face of Jesus Christ."

We can be more than conquerors in every situation. Trials and situations work for our good. Hard places should draw us closer to God. We should sidle up to Him in a greater way. Sometimes it is a time when we search our hearts, which is good. We are more than conquerors, because through those times, we draw closer to God.

Reigning Triumphantly

Trials and afflictions work as a blessing to others. They say, "Wow, look at the grace of God, and look how beautifully they accept their affliction," so it works as a blessing to others. Through these situations, we bring glory to God. We can make slaves of our enemies and stepping stones of our roadblocks. This can only occur through the strength and the power of Jesus Christ. Only the power of Christ can bring sweetness out of bitter-

ness, strength out of weakness, triumph out of tragedy, and blessings out of heartbreak.

Dear one, through Christ you can reign in every situation of life. You can triumph over the works of Satan and over every disease. Christ was never unable to do anything unless He was blocked by unbelief. Ultimately, He reigned over death.

I want you to read a song written by B. E. Warren, who was probably the most prolific Church of God songwriter, entitled "The Blood of Jesus." It reads:

*Must I in sinful bondage be,
Deprived of peace and liberty,
When in the promise I can see
The blood of Jesus cleanseth?*

*Must I be doubting, full of fear,
And gloom obscure my pathway
here,
Be up and down in life's career?
The blood of Jesus cleanseth.*

*Must I be under guilt and sin,
And have its blighting force within,
Beset by wrong, no victory win?
The blood of Jesus cleanseth.*

*Must I suppose I'm right today,
Tomorrow think I've gone astray,
Let demons hold me in dismay?
The blood of Jesus cleanseth.*

*Must I by Satan be accused,
And with his galling yoke abused,
Until at length from Heaven
refused?
The blood of Jesus cleanseth.*

*The blood, the blood,
The precious blood of Jesus,
The blood will work a perfect cure,
Will cleanse the heart and keep
it pure,
The blood, the blood,
The precious blood of Jesus.*

I believe many are not reigning as they should. Are you living a victorious life? If there is a problem that you are struggling with, God can help you.

Homes should be places of peace, joy, and tranquility, but too many homes are battle-grounds; that should not be. Are you reigning? Are you living a victorious life? If not, avail yourself of the grace of God.

The song entitled "Reigning in This Life" says:

*Do you triumph O my brother,
Over all this world of sin?
In each storm of tribulation,
Does your Jesus reign within?*

*One we hail as King immortal,
He did earth and hell subdue;
And bequeathing us His glory,
We are kings anointed too.*

*Shall we, then, by sin be humbled?
Must we yield to any foe?
No, by heaven's gift we're
reigning
Over all this world below.*

*Oh, what grace and high
promotion,
That in Jesus I should be;
Raised from sin to royal honor,
Even reigning, Lord, with Thee.*

*All this life is blissful sunshine,
Earth is subject at our feet;
Heaven pours its richest
blessings,
Round our throne of love complete.*

*Then we'll sing and shout the
story,
Of the wondrous blood divine;
Full salvation, glory, glory!
I am reigning all the time.*

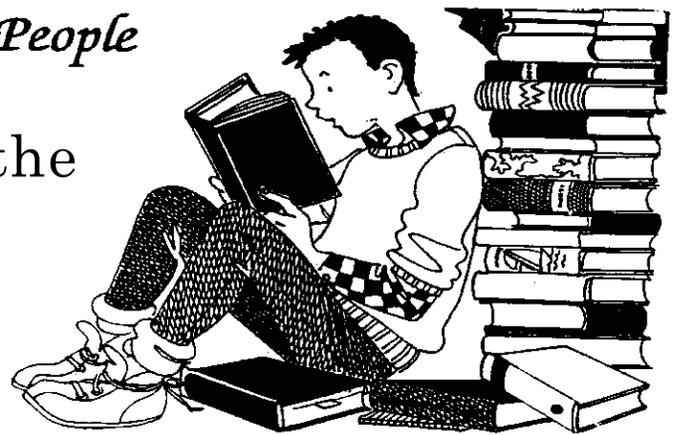
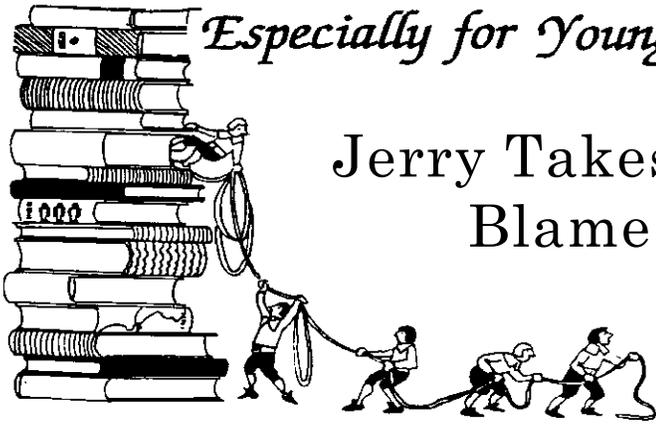
*I am reigning, sweetly reigning,
Far above this world of strife;
In my blessed, loving Savior,
I am reigning in this life.*

If you need victory over sin, Jesus has it. Our Scripture text says in verse 18, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

(Compact Disc TR-1338E)

Especially for Young People

Jerry Takes the Blame



At the sound of breaking glass in the lonely spot, the four boys ran. That was instinctive. Behind the shelter of some tall bushes, they stopped and looked at one another, and each one was asking himself what he should do.

For two years the old hosiery mill at the edge of town had been shut down and vacant. One day the sheriff discovered that many of the windows on the side of the factory next to the woods had been broken. The town papers carried headlines: "Wanton Vandals Destroy Property." There was a hint that the sheriff had a clue and that the guilty ones would be brought to justice.

In Jerry Conn's home, they had talked it over. His parents did not ask Jerry if he had broken the windows. They did not expect any such behavior. But Mother had said, "Jerry, I don't think you should go near that place until the matter is cleared up."

"Oh, Mother!" Jerry protested. "It's miles farther to go around that road. Do you mean I'm not even to go past the place?"

His parents considered the matter a little longer and said they would not forbid him to go past the place. After all, Jerry was nearly thirteen years of age and old enough to decide some things for himself. They said they trusted him and hoped that

he would be careful and not get into any suspicious situations.

And now, a week later, this!

Jerry and three boys from his room at school had been walking toward town by the shortest way. They began throwing stones ahead on the path to see who could throw them the most accurately. Then suddenly there was a crash of glass.

"We don't even know whose stone broke it," said Jim, keeping his voice low.

"We could all share the blame," said Jerry. "I'll pay my share to get it fixed."

"You know what will happen if we go and say we did it!" demanded Kurt. "We'll get blamed for all the broken windows. You know we will."

"They have a watchman there now," said Tom. "He'll be out any minute, or maybe he called the sheriff first, and he will be here soon. We'd better get out of this area quickly."

They got over the fence and, keeping behind the bushes, hurried on until they came to the main road, where they slowed down as they went toward town. If it had been a simple matter of a broken window, where they could have walked up and offered to pay, they would not have hesitated, but this was different with its threat of trouble and disgrace.

At Cedar Street, Jim, Kurt, and Tom turned off and mut-

tered "So long" to Jerry. Jerry walked on alone, wrestling with his problem. It would have been easier if they all had decided to do something together, but now he had to face it alone. After Jerry thought about what to do, he stopped to pray and asked God to help him to take responsibility for the accident. Next, he went into town to go talk to Mr. Carter, who owned the hosiery mill. Mr. Carter was out of the office at the time, so he told the lady working in the office what had happened and said that he would pay for the broken window. Then he left his name and telephone number so that Mr. Carter could get in contact with him.

When Jerry got home, he went in the back door, but as he came through into the hall, he could hear people talking in the living room. He stood for a moment in the shadow of the stairway. He did not want to be seen. He was not ready to talk to anyone just now, and this is what he heard in his minute of hesitation.

"You are mistaken, Mr. Carter," Mother was saying. "My son might have broken the window. He is an average boy, and he does get into mischief sometimes, but if he did break it, he would never sneak away and try to escape responsibility. I know him better than anyone else in the world does, and he is not that kind of boy."

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Conn," said a voice. "But sometimes boys get into things that mothers do not know about. I would not have made a point of this, but we are having a rather heavy loss, and we must do something about it. Four boys were seen throwing stones, and the person on watch was quite sure that your son was one of them."

At this point, Jerry straightened up his shoulders and went bravely into the room. "Hello, Mother," he said.

"Jerry, I'm glad you have come home. This is Mr. Carter, who owns the old hosiery mill."

"Yes, I know," said Jerry. "Mr. Carter, I was one of the boys throwing stones near the mill. We were not throwing them at the windows, and we did not break the other windows. After the accident, I went to town to your office. You were not there, but I told the lady in the office what had happened, gave her my name, and said I would pay for the window. If you blame me for all the windows, I haven't enough money to pay for them, but I can pay for the one I broke."

For a moment there was silence in the room. Then Jerry plucked up enough courage to

look around. Mother was wiping away a tear. Of all things! She did not need to cry. Wasn't he going to take care of the matter? Of course, if he should be arrested—. He looked at Mr. Carter, and that gentleman had a very odd expression.

"I apologize, Mrs. Conn," he said, "You are quite right. This isn't that kind of boy."

"Jerry, I accept your offer to pay for the window, and I do not blame you for any of the other damage. I'd take your word about anything."

Selected

BUILDING, BUT NOT IN VAIN

There are times when it pays to get an architect. There are times when it pays to get a well-trained contractor. There are times when it pays to say: "I don't know enough about building to do it myself. I need someone to show me how."

Men today are paying heavily because they have tried to build their lives without the Great Architect, God. By being too "wise in their own conceits," men have found out too late that their house of life was built of flimsy materials, on a poor foundation, and with poor planning.

God must build your life, or else all you do will be in vain. Your life is bound to be built one way or another. The question is, Are you building for this passing, contemporary age or are you building for eternity?

Every man seeks happiness. God has placed this desire for happiness within man and wants him to be happy. However, there are different ways of building the house of inner happiness. If you build according to God's plans, you will be happy throughout eternity. You can build God's way and have a house that will withstand all the storms of life. You can be happy in the midst of poverty, sorrow, and disappointment if God builds your house of happiness. If you try to build your house without God, you will find that you are building in vain. As soon as something comes up that adds extra strain, your happiness will depart. You can have all kinds of ideals and Christian kindness, gentleness, love, faith, and goodness; but unless God builds that house, you might as well give up building.

There is a great deal of frustration in working hard on a structure, putting sweat and labor into the building, and then seeing all that which sweat and labor have erected crumble because of poor planning. This need not be in the realm of spiritual things. God must have labored long over His drawing board as he worked out a plan for man's life. When He had finished the plan, it was completed. It needed only to be followed to make a sound structure.

As you follow the plan of the Great Architect, you will find that you are building, and not in vain.

Selected

Psalm 18:2 The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

My God Shall Deliver Thee



Brother Irwin Seshier

Trust in the Lord

I am a firm believer that there is strength in the Lord. It takes great strength to live for God. You cannot do it on your own, by taking a food supplement, or by working out with weights. The power and the strength that I am talking about comes from on high. You can have an assurance that the Lord will be by your side whenever you need Him to help you.

You need Him so desperately. If you are cast down, depressed, or discouraged, the Lord can comfort and soothe your soul, and you can trust Him even more. You need to seek God's face when it comes to trust, because it is so easy to start trusting in your own strength.

Psalm 54:7 says, "For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies." Today you need to

trust God more and more. Thank God for some agencies available for certain needs, but I believe some of them hinder people from really trusting in God. If people have a need, they pick up the telephone or look online for answers.

I believe God wants people to trust Him more. When a need arises, you can trust God. In these perilous times, you need the Lord on your side. I do not want the Lord to be my enemy. I want Him to help me in my battles. I want Him when I go through discouragement and when I face opposition.

The truth is, you should want Him too. You are very vulnerable to attack when your spiritual thermometer is low. If you are not where you need to be spiritually, the enemy is going to attack you from all angles. The Lord does not want you to go through that. He wants you to be

uplifted. You need to attend to the little things in your life to make you strong in the battle.

Sometimes it takes time and patience to establish what needs to be prioritized in your life. You might not sit down and make a physical list, but in your mind you know what is most important. In considering the things that are most important in your life, you need to ask yourself what is really important in the eyes of God. Is it something that you could live without? Many times when it comes to serving God the way you need to, you may think certain things are important when God does not think they are. You must start dwelling on what is truly important. God may be telling you to let something go that is a hang-up in preventing you from giving God full service.

We all get in a hurry. We live in

a fast-paced age. It is not good to be in a hurry when it comes to your decision making. I have made wrong decisions. I tell the students at school, "I have erasers on my pencils because I make mistakes." You should not let your mistakes hinder your love for God. You need to pick yourself up by the bootstraps, so to speak, and continue to live for God. Why? He is your deliverer.

Spiritual Maturity

You need to learn to be totally dependent on God in all that you do. The Lord is more concerned about what it will take to make you spiritually mature. You might feel that you have to go at a certain pace, but you may not be geared that way, because you are human. Often people want things instantly, but God has His own time clock. He will move in His own time.

You may say, "Lord, why don't You move on this situation?" or "Lord, why don't You take care of that healing?" God has a purpose. You need to be in complete obedience to God and say, "Lord, I submit to whatever Your will is. Not my will, but Your will be done."

The Lord is interested in strengthening your grip on spiritual matters. How is your stability when it comes to the things of God? Too many times people want to cut corners and want answers immediately. We do not want to go through pain, do we? Yet we all will suffer pain and difficult situations in our lives. Your pain could be completely different from my pain. Your situation could be completely different from my situation. I may not understand what you are going through, and you may not understand the things that I go through. We all will go through some opposition. It is written in the Bible that we will go through hard times. Christ went through them, and He is our example.

True spiritual maturity is never the result of a single experience, no matter how drastic it is. Growth in the things of God is gradual. Physi-

cally, your children grow gradually. If your children did not grow gradually, you would be concerned. The Lord is interested in seeing that you grow spiritually. He is going to look at your life. If you are faithful to God, He is going to speak to you. I thank God for His Holy Spirit!

The Holy Spirit will direct you and let you know the things that are preventing you from growing spiritually. You should never say to the Holy Spirit, "I don't want You to show me anything." You need Him to show you these things. In 2 Corinthians 3:18 we read, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Have you ever had to call upon the Lord to deliver you from a temptation? Did the Lord help you through that temptation? Thank the Lord for His deliverance! That temptation was not sin. When you had that temptation, I am sure that you did not want to displease God. You did not want to fail Him, so you said, "Lord, help me through this temptation." Just as quickly as a temptation comes to you, you should get it out of your mind. You should think of a Scripture, a song, or something to get the adversary out of your mind. The devil cannot stand Church of God songs, quoting the Bible, or prayer. If you become weak spiritually, that is when he really works hard to defeat you.

Deliverance From Fear

You will go through sorrowful and fearful times, but thank God, He is a deliverer. Psalm 34:4 reads, "I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Sometimes you may enter places that can be fearful, because you do not know what is going to come upon you. None of us knows what life has in store. Life is fragile, and it has no guarantees. You have no idea what a day might hold. You might be here today and gone to-

morrow, but you can be confident that the Lord will bring you through. Many times I think about how I have been delivered.

How easy it would have been for David to turn and run away from Goliath. He might have swallowed hard a few times as he looked upon that giant. Even though he had God and knew God was with him, he was human. He did not know what was truly going to happen, but he did know that God was in control of his life. That was the most important thing. Goliath was an obstacle.

Do you have a Goliath in your life at work with a co-worker, in a situation, or due to a deadline? Did you ever see such a time when people are faced with so many deadlines at work? For example, someone may say, "Take your time on this deadline, but I want it today." That is a Goliath, is it not? Another example is, the Lord may tell you to witness to a certain person. You know that person is not a true believer in God, but the Lord told you to visit that one. You want to say the right thing. You do not want to turn the individual off and cause that one not to listen at all. That would be a Goliath, would it not?

Goliath was huge, and the attire of Goliath was intimidating. It was not just because Goliath was such a large man, but his armor was even worse. First Samuel 17:5 tells us some things that Goliath wore: "And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass." That was approximately one hundred twenty-five pounds, which was probably close to how much David weighed.

Verses 6-7 continue: "And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: [The spear's head itself was approximately fifteen pounds. You could kill something big with that.] and one bearing a shield

went before him." I do not think he needed a man with the shield to go before him. The way Goliath was dressed was very intimidating.

Goliath thought his armor was going to protect him. He thought he was invincible. Do you know that is exactly what sin looks like to a lot of people? Sin can look enticing, but it is not what it seems to be. It can be intimidating. What Goliath was wearing was intimidating, not only to David but also to the others. He caused a sense of fear to fall upon the army of Israel. However, David trusted in God.

Goliath was a terrible adversary. He was defiant, full of malice, hatred, anger, and discouragement. There he was, standing in front of David, who lived for God. That is how the enemy of your soul is. He will tell you that you cannot get through your situation because it is huge in your sight. Furthermore, he will tell you there is nothing that you can turn to in order to save yourself. However, David had something that Goliath did not have. David had the love of God in his heart, and he knew that God was a deliverer. These two forces were on a collision course: good versus evil.

Goliath's covering was of a carnal nature. David had the Spirit of God in his corner. Think of that! Goliath's world revolved around himself, but David's thoughts were centered on God. Goliath had all that armor to protect him. David's lack of armor showed how humble he was in the eyes of God.

In order to get the Lord's attention, you have to go to Him with a humble heart. You should not go to Him and say, "Look what I have done!" You must go to the Lord just as humbly as you know how with no pretending.

When you are living in sin, you may get bold with your words and your actions and think you do not need help. In reality, this is the time when you need help most in your life. Often an old independent attitude comes when you are living in sin.

Boldness to Stand Against the Enemy

First Samuel 17:8 says, "And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me." That is how bold Goliath was.

Undoubtedly Goliath thought he was going to win without really having to fight. He probably thought: "I am Goliath! Who is this dog? Who is this that Israel's army has put before me?" In the eyes of the armies of Israel, I am sure it looked like a hopeless situation, but even though Goliath looked intimidating, David knew God was his deliverer.

David was bold in his actions, and salvation will give you boldness. When you know what God has done for you and how He has brought you through opposition, you can become bold for Him. David knew Who was on his side, and he stood firmly.

Saint of God, that is what you have to do. When you are living for God, you should not waver. You have to stand firm. There is so much opposition that wants to tear you down as a Christian, to take away your Christian rights, and to leave you stranded. If there was ever a time that you needed to be a child of God, it is today. You should be thankful that you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. You ought to stand for Jesus. If you are ashamed of Him, He will be ashamed of you.

David stood firmly. How do we know? He spoke right back to Goliath. First Samuel 17:45 tells us, "Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." God was David's deliverer, and He is still our deliverer today. Do not become weak in living for God. You need to stand for Jesus

and be bold.

When the enemy is attacking you with every tactic available, you must keep in mind that your God is a deliverer. Psalm 34:4 states, "I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Psalm 50:15 says, "And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Psalm 118:5 reads, "I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place." Think of that!

Power to Live Above Sin

You can learn so much from God's deliverance, and as you learn, you can pass it on to others. By doing this, you can grow spiritually. When other people see what God has done in your life, that might prick their hearts a little. They may say: "I know that God is no respecter of persons. If He can do that for someone else, He can do that for me." The Lord will help you to reach people. People are looking for those who are living clean lives and who practice what they preach as they go about their everyday living.

Christian friend, you have a job to do, and that is to carry the message to a lost and dying world that Jesus Christ is the deliverer from sin. I thank God that He delivered me one day. He gave me peace down in my soul that I cannot express. He gave me joy and contentment, something that the world cannot give. You cannot get this in a bottle, in a syringe, or by taking a drug.

Jesus is a true deliverer! He can deliver you from anything that is hindering you in your spiritual growth. He can deliver the backslider from his backsliding. If you have walked away from God, He wants you to come back to Him. You know exactly what you are missing when you choose to sin once you have experienced the goodness of God. If you need healing for the body, He is a deliverer.

Others need to be exposed to the

Gospel. You need to use what you know to help and assist others. James 4:17 says, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." The Lord is a deliverer of ones who have nasty attitudes and critical spirits. He wants to deliver people from these things.

Are you having problems with your tongue? He is a deliverer. He will give you a new talk. The Lord can deliver you from anything you can think of. Are you living the life that the Lord wants you to live? Is there anything that He is showing you that you need to take care of? He is a deliverer. Do not continue to profess something that you do not possess. Too many religious people do not possess anything. You hear their talk, but they do not have a true possession of salvation. However, real salvation is more than a religious tag.

Some people wander around with no true direction in their lives. They do their best to live a good life, but they do not really have what it takes when opposition comes. I thank God for the power to say no to the devil and yes to God. You cannot do it on your own. You need power from God in order to live free from sin.

I want you to consider some examples in the Bible that show how the Lord has delivered others. In the Old Testament, look at the predicament Moses was in and how far God brought him. Moses was a deliverer,

not only to the people in bringing them out of Egypt but also in other situations. Moses could not do that in his own strength. He had to have God. The Lord delivered Daniel from the den of lions, and He delivered Elijah from the wrath of Jezebel.

A Higher Plane of Living

In the New Testament, what about Paul and Silas? They were in jail and could not get out by their own strength. They had to have a true deliverer. On and on the examples go. God is still the same today as He was back then. Sinner friend, He wants to deliver you from the power of darkness and elevate you to a higher plane of living. You just have to believe that He will be faithful. Thank God, my Lord is faithful!

Can the Lord count on you to be faithful to Him? Second Timothy 4:18 says, "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Do you want the Lord to be your deliverer? In order for that to happen, it takes total commitment to Him on your part. Do not be afraid to commit yourself to God. You may not know what to expect, but remember, God is in control.

If you do not commit yourself to God, you will wander aimlessly through life with no true direction. If you are not committed, you will become anxious in other areas of

your life. One song says, "*I have left all the world to follow Jesus.*" If you are not committed wholly to God, you will feel guilty and become frustrated. Most likely, you will turn to worldly values. Do not let this happen to you. You need to center your life around Jesus Christ.

The enemy will try to convince you that you do not need Jesus in your life. How many times has the enemy spoken to you and said: "You really do not need Jesus. You might be going through a hard time, but things will work out." Friend, things do not just work out without Jesus. The problem is that the devil wants you to use human reasoning, but it will get you in trouble every time. The devil may say: "Don't worry about this and that. You are just down on your luck. Things will get better." You need to realize that day will never come. It might get a little better, but it may get a lot worse.

Someone wrote this: "When you work a jigsaw puzzle, you know all the pieces are there." Have you ever tried to work a puzzle with missing pieces? Isn't that frustrating? Life is sometimes like a puzzle. The pieces are there. It is your job to put them all together, and that is when you need the Lord to help you. He will help you to put those pieces in the right place. Do you want God to be your deliverer? I do, and no doubt you do too. You need God to be your deliverer.

(Compact Disc TR-1777)

*When we see the lilies spinning in distress,
Taking thought to manufacture their own loveliness,
When we see the birds all building barns for store,
'Twill then be time to worry—not before!*

Daniel 6:20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for

ever.

22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

Are You a Committed Christian?



Brother Larry Dishman

Wholeheartedly Following Christ

I would like you to read the entire chapter of Daniel, Chapter 6. In this chapter we find that Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes because an excellent spirit was found in him. The king thought to set him over the whole realm of the kingdom. Then the presidents and the princes sought to find an occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom, but they could not find any occasion or fault in Daniel, forasmuch as he was faithful and no error was found in him. King Darius had signed a decree, which

his counselors had tricked him into signing.

My message deals with the subject of being a committed Christian, and it comes in the form of a question, Are you a committed Christian? I want you to notice that I am not asking, "Are you a Christian?" but rather, "Are you a *committed* Christian?" All across America, young and old people are not really committed Christians. They might have the appearance of commitment; in other words, they talk the talk, but they do not walk the walk. Their actions speak louder than words. That is what my mother used to tell me, "Your actions speak louder than

words."

I read a story about a hen and a pig who became very good friends. They were seldom seen apart. One day as they strolled about the barnyard lot, the hen suggested that since they had never eaten breakfast together, that they do so the next morning. Never being one to turn down a meal, the pig readily agreed, but he asked, "What will we eat?"

Then the hen stood in deep thought for a while and replied, "It appears to me that we each should contribute something to the meal, and it will be more meaningful to each of us."

"Fine," said the pig. "What do

you suggest?"

Again, the hen stood as if in deep thought for a while and said, "Well, I have an idea. Let us have ham and eggs. I will provide the eggs and you provide the ham."

The pig said, "Hold on a moment. What you are offering to contribute is the fruit of your labor, but what you are asking of me requires a total commitment." That is what God requires of all of us—a total commitment. Friend, I do not want to be a part of a group of people who has little or no wholehearted commitment to God. It is God's requirement and God's plan that we, as His people, wholeheartedly serve Him.

I like to see young people, older people, and all people really sold out to God, committed to God, and committed to the work of God. True commitment is following Jesus, and it demands making a choice. You can read about Ruth's words of commitment to Naomi in the Book of Ruth. Her words did not speak as loudly as her actions. She left her family and homeland to return with Naomi to Bethlehem.

Putting God First

The first and greatest commandment in the Word of God is in Matthew 22:37-40, which states: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Friend, you cannot hold anything back from God and still be committed to Him at the same time.

Luke 14:33 says, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." That is what Jesus said. What we have to offer God is ourselves. When I talk about being totally committed to God, I think about the Scripture in Romans 12:1-

2, where the Apostle Paul was not talking to sinners but to Christians. He said: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

A total commitment to God puts God first in your heart and life. Many feel pressured to do many different things at once. You have to choose the things that are most important. Too often God is put off. Too often, even among those who call themselves Church of God, God is not really first in some people's hearts and lives. Friend, you do not have to face God directly right now. You do not see immediate consequences for your actions, so you may tell yourself that you will make it up to God later. The Bible says in Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." God's church must come first, and God's work must come first.

Commitment definitely limits choices because it is exclusive. For example, in commitment to marriage, God's perfect plan is one man and one woman until they part in death. That is the perfect plan of God. Commitment builds up faith and develops character. It is spiritual discipline requiring time, work, and determination. An example of someone who was consecrated and totally committed to God was Daniel. Again, I encourage you to read the entire chapter of Daniel, Chapter 6. While he was a young man, he totally committed his life to God.

Examples of Commitment

Another person that you can read about is Peter. He requested that they not crucify him as they did the Lord; he wanted to be crucified upside down. Peter was a man who

was committed. How about the Apostle Paul? During his ministry, he was so committed to Christ that he was jailed, beaten, hungry and thirsty, stoned, ridiculed, run out of town, and eventually killed. Despite all of that, in essence, he said, "None of these things move me." That is what commitment will do for you.

In my opinion, even though Daniel did not know the joy of salvation as we do, which is bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ, he had a commitment like none other. Daniel's commitment began as a young man and lasted throughout his entire life. We can read about a teenaged Daniel standing for his convictions in Daniel 1:8. We can read that Daniel chose not to defile his body with anything impure, such as the king's meat or the king's wine.

One song says, "*Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Thou art the Potter, I am the clay. Mold me and make me after Thy will, While I am waiting, yielded and still.*" That is what being committed will do. However, by many people's actions, the way they sing that song is, "I will have my own way, Lord! I will have my own way! I will be the potter, and You will be the clay. I will mold You and make You after my will, While You are waiting, yielded and still." This is exactly the attitude that cuts off the blessings of God. Friend, that is not what God desires. God wants every one of His people to open up their hearts and say: "Lord, have Thine own way, You are the Potter, and I am the clay. Lord, I want You to mold me and make me into what You would have me to be."

When you are determined, you may not say something with your lips, but you see to it that you get your own way. Many believe they are strong in the Lord, but total commitment also means dedication to God. Even when nothing opposes you, when the cares and the things of this life distract you, or when friends, relatives, or other people are conspiring against you, you must

stay committed to God.

As an evangelist, I can preach with so much more liberty than I did when I was a pastor because I do not know what is going on in people's lives. People cannot say I am throwing something at them because I do not know them.

Are you committed to the church? Are you committed to the work of God? I do not understand people who do not love the church, because since I got saved at eighteen years of age, I have loved the church. When I lived in Indiana, I drove an hour to church one way and I did not think that was bad at all. I do not understand people who do not have a love affair with the church. I cannot wait to assemble with the people of God. Ever since I got saved, I could not wait to get to church.

Low Commitment

The reality of having a low commitment to the church is evident everywhere I go. People feel no attachment or obligation of regular attendance and church involvement. It is no longer a priority in their lives. They just sort of bounce and flow, hop and skip, and jump around, but you could not pay them to make a commitment to the work of God. The church may meet, but they feel "It doesn't apply to me." The church may gather to study and pray, but somehow they think when the Bible says not to forsake the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is, somehow they are excluded from that verse.

The closer we get to the return of Jesus Christ, we are supposed to come to church more, not less. The writer of the Book of Hebrews said not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but so much the more as we see the day approaching. We need it more today than ever before! So why is it that many denominations are closing down the services on Sunday nights? I will tell you exactly why: there is low commitment.

Many congregations are doing well to get people to church on Sunday morning. I cannot understand how people feel as though they have done some great duty on Sunday morning and do not need to go back Sunday night. I am not talking about when people are sick or when they have to work. I am talking about being neglectful to the house of God! I am talking about being slothful! I want you to read a poem entitled "Not on Sunday Night."

*I love the church that Jesus
bought,
And know that it is right;
I go there on Sunday morning,
But not on Sunday night.*

*I love to sing the songs of God,
Such worship must be right,
This I do on Sunday morn,
But not on Sunday night.*

*God bless the preacher too,
And give him power and might,
But put the sinner in his place,
I won't be there Sunday night.*

*I love to hear the Gospel too,
It gives me pure delight;
I hear it on Sunday morning,
But not on Sunday night.*

*I know I need more strength
To keep me in the fight;
For help I come on Sunday morn,
But not on Sunday night.*

*Yes, we all must die,
I hope I will be right,
So may I die on Sunday morn,
But not on Sunday night.*

Author Unknown

Are you faithful on Sunday morning and on Sunday night? Are you faithful on Wednesday night? Are you faithful to revival services? Are you faithful to attend camp meetings? Are you faithful to work days? If not, you probably are not as committed as you ought to be. I know this is not popular, but I do not preach to be popular.

Being Free From Blame

Daniel was committed, and because he was committed, he had an extraordinary spirit. His spirit was different. People who are sold out and committed are like Daniel. They have an excellent spirit; that is a sign of being committed. Did you ever hear people say, "That brother has such a sweet spirit" or "She has such a good spirit"? That is a sign of commitment.

Daniel lived in such a way that no grounds for accusation or evidence of corruption could be found in his life. Men tried their best to find something with which they could accuse him, but they were unsuccessful. Daniel was the type of person that the Bible calls blameless. There was nothing in his life that could bring guilt upon him. He was living above reproach. Is there anything in your life right now that people can point to as immoral or contradictory to the Scriptures? Are you guilty of wrongdoing? The word *blameless* means "free from blame."

In the dictionary, the next word after blameless is *blameworthy*, which means "deserving blame." Daniel was a faithful man. Are you faithful? The word *faithful* means "trusted or believed to be sure." Daniel was trustworthy and committed. Is there any area of your life where God does not have complete control? Have you ever attempted to do something that, unless God supernaturally intervened, it would not happen? I want you to think about it, friend. Daniel lived the Word of God. He was consecrated, and he was committed to God. Daniel only had the first five books of the Old Testament, the Law of Moses. No doubt, Daniel had studied the Law of Moses and lived it out in his life.

A committed Christian prays continually. Daniel knew what the king's orders were, and he knew the consequences if he was caught praying, but that did not stop him. Three times a day, he opened his window toward Jerusalem and prayed. He

did not pray in secret. He did not say, "Well, since some men are trying to ensnare me, I will just talk to God silently." No, he prayed openly to God his Father. Daniel knew the penalty for breaking King Darius' law, but he prayed anyway. I think children ought to pray in school whether the school says they can or not.

Because of the life Daniel lived, he was under God's hand of protection. Again, verse 22 of our Scripture text reads, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." Does that mean you will never get hurt or that you will never be disappointed? No. Does that mean God is going to give you freedom to do whatever you wish to do or to place yourself in dangerous situations? No, but it means whatever happens to you, it will work together for good. As the Bible says in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Where Do Your Priorities Lie?

I will tell you something else about a person who is committed to God. Daniel's life had an effect on others. Daniel's life and his commitment to God had an effect on the king. Daniel's commitment showed the power of God. Daniel's commitment even turned the kingdom toward God. What can one person do? Daniel accomplished a lot. When was the last time someone came to you and said, "I have been watching you. There is something different about you." They may ask: "How can you always be so happy? How can you always be so compassionate toward others, even those who are not compassionate toward you?"

A house church in the former Soviet Union received a copy of the Gospel of Luke. Since it was illegal to possess Scriptures of the Bible,

they tore it up into little pieces and distributed those few Scriptures among the saints. Their plan was to memorize the portion that each one had been given, and then on the next Lord's Day, they would meet and redistribute the sections of Scripture. On Sunday these believers arrived in small groups throughout the day so they would not arouse suspicion of the KGB informers.

By dusk, they were all safely inside with the windows closed and the doors locked. They began to sing a hymn quietly but with deep emotion. Suddenly, the doors pushed open, and in walked two soldiers with loaded automatic weapons. One shouted: "All right everyone, line up against the wall. If you wish to denounce your commitment to Jesus Christ, leave now." Two or three left quickly, and in another few minutes, two more left. One of the men said: "This is your last chance! Either turn against your faith in Jesus Christ," he ordered, "or stay and suffer the consequences!" Another person left, and finally two more departed. In bare silence with their faces covered, they slipped out into the night. No one else moved.

Parents, with small children trembling beside them, looked down and reassured them. They fully expected to be gunned down, or at best, to be thrown into prison. After a few moments of complete silence, the two soldiers closed the door and looked back at those who stood against the wall and said, "Keep your hands up, but this time in praise to our Lord Jesus Christ. Brothers and Sisters, we, too, are Christians! We were sent to another house church several weeks ago to a group of believers." The other soldier interrupted and said: "But instead, we were converted. We have learned by experience, however, that unless people are willing to die for their faith, they cannot be trusted." They said, "It is time to have church now. We got rid of all the ones who are not totally committed. Let us have church!" And they had church.

God requires total commitment from each of us, even to the point of dying for Him, if need be. Many are not willing to be totally committed to the Lord because it demands too much of them. The reason you are not committed is that it demands too much. Total commitment is worth every effort. Nothing of lasting value ever comes easy. Are you committed? If you allow anything to come between you and your relationship with God, you are challenging your relationship with God. What is challenging your relationship with God? Where does your commitment to God stand? You can make a difference.

You may say, "I am just one person." If Daniel, a young man, could surrender to God and make that type of commitment to God, if his life made a difference, your life can make a difference. God is counting on you to make a difference. How committed are you to God?

I have not preached this message to hurt or to wound anyone, but to encourage you and to challenge you as a child of God. Will you make a total commitment to God? Are you ready to make God your first commitment? Have you made a total commitment to the Lord and His requirements or are you just trying to get by? That is what a lot of people are doing. God does not want your second best. God has never accepted anyone's second best. God wants your first, your best.

If you have never been saved, now would be a good time to make a commitment to God. You might be a lost sinner, but you can become a committed Christian. Would you do that? If you realize: "My commitment to God has not been what it ought to be. I am coming up short. I want to put God first in my life," God will send you the help you need. Won't you seek Him now?

(Compact Disc TR-1797)

**The greatest ABILITY is
DEPENDABILITY**

Three Days Most People Struggle With



Brother Leamon Whitehead

Put Up the Shield of Faith

The three days that most people struggle with are what we call yesterday, today, and tomorrow. In Matthew, Chapter 6, about ten verses there teach us not to worry because God has everything under control. Living for God is the best way to live. It is a happy way, and God intended for us to enjoy life, to enjoy salvation, and not to be pressed down, troubled, and overloaded all the time. However, we have an adversary that tries to overload us. He wants us to fret and worry and have regrets throughout life. When you have those things and do not have continuous victory, your

days will be consumed with regrets and weariness, but God wants you to be happy and to serve Him.

My desire is to help those who are struggling and do not have consistent victory. You must be able to maintain victory or you are going to continually be pressed down and troubled. Your bright countenance will be gone, and you will live a defeated life. If you had a failure or a shortcoming yesterday, you need to get it taken care of and get it out of the way so that you can continue living for God.

Satan will overload you and press you down about yesterday, maybe a failure or a shortcoming. He wants to keep your mind

on other things besides today so that you cannot be what God would have you be. It does not take much to overload us. In Matthew 6:34b Jesus said, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." In other words, we have enough to deal with just today.

Someone once said, "Yesterday is a canceled check; tomorrow is a promissory note; today is the only cash you have—so spend it wisely." The enemy will pull things over from yesterday to cause you to worry about tomorrow. Do you know what he is trying to do? He is trying to get you so involved that you are unable to do anything for God today. God will not allow him to keep you pressed down all the

time.

You have to learn how to box with the devil, so to speak. Suppose two fellows are boxing. If one of them has had good training and the other steps up and says he has boxed a little, the second fellow is going to take quite a beating. The Lord will help you to put up the shield of faith and land a few good punches with the devil.

If the devil always has you on the run, beat down, fretting, worrying, and concerned about what might happen, you can take care of that by turning it all over to God and by allowing Him to have His way in your heart and life. While the enemy has people fretting about yesterday and worrying about tomorrow, he is pulling the clouds of tomorrow over today's sunshine. This "today" that we are in now started at midnight, and it will run until midnight tonight. Before you can have time to worry much about tomorrow, it will already be "today" again. The thing about tomorrow is, it never comes. Maybe you have heard the saying, "Today is the tomorrow that you worried about yesterday." Today is that tomorrow. If you were threatened or worried about today, this is it. It is a new day. It is the day the Lord has made, and you should rejoice in it and be glad!

Being More Than a Conqueror

As a Christian, you have to keep an up-to-date experience with God. Do not live in such a manner that you are always fretting and having regrets about yesterday. If you have a problem that happened yesterday, do not let that linger. You need to get it straightened up so that you can be happy and have victory today. When you really get a handle on this, you will realize that it is always today. You do not need to fret about tomorrow.

You need to keep constant victory in your soul. Today is all you have. This is the reason Satan works so hard to disturb your peace.

First Peter 5:8 tells us, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Satan is a disturber of peace, joy, and contentment. Did you know that Satan is a fireman? I am sure that you know what firemen do. They do not build fires; they put them out. If you have a spark in your soul, the devil wants to put it out. God wants to fan revival fires. You need to pray for revival and fan revival fire, but the devil wants to put out that fire. Real revival has to start within your own soul, on an individual level. The devil wants to keep you troubled and worried all the time so that you cannot live and enjoy today. Twenty-four hours from midnight last night, today will be history, and the devil wants to make sure you do not get anything accomplished for God.

Sometimes people will shout, "Glory, hallelujah!" The next time you see them, they are trying to climb up out of a manhole, so to speak. God wants you to have constant victory and to rejoice in it. The Lord has already said that He will not put more on you than you can bear. God is not going to press you down and send you out defeated. No, that is the enemy who does that. Not many will get by today without some kind of problem, trial, or test, but the Scripture text says, "This is the day which the LORD hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." God will not put more on you than you can handle.

What did Paul say? He said in Romans 8:37, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Whatever battle you are go-

ing through or whatever burdens are on your heart, you can stand upright and rejoice in the Lord. Satan wants to trouble you with what *might* happen tomorrow or what has happened yesterday. He wants to cause you to be downcast and forlorn. Sometimes you do not get but one opportunity to do something. When some opportunities come your way, if you fail those, you may not get another opportunity. That is the reason you want to maintain victory. There is no need to worry about something that is never going to happen. God will give you victory in your soul. That is the reason Satan fights you so hard.

Do you always feel like going to church? As you get older, you might have physical ailments that slow you down and cause you to struggle. Other times you will be so overjoyed that you cannot wait until you get to church. However, there will be times when you might have to push on. I hope you do not stay at home just because you get up feeling that you do not want to go. You need to defeat the devil. He is trying to defeat you. You need to let him know, "I have my mind made up." I do not have to get up on Sunday morning and pray about whether or not I am going to church. I knew that all through the week. You can get the jump on the devil. On the other hand, if he sees something there, he knows that all he has to do is trouble you a little and you will not go to church.

Anchor Your Faith in God

The devil knows whether or not you are committed to the things of God. He knows whether you really mean it when you say yes, and he knows whether you really mean it when you say no. Did you ever ask your father and mother if you could do something and they said, "Well,

we will see"? You never lost hope because they never really said no, so you pressed them a little more. If your father was like mine, when he said no, there was no need to bother him anymore about it. Satan knows whether you really mean what you say. Sometimes you can cause yourself a lot of trouble. You open a door for the enemy to trouble your mind. One little song says, "I am happy in the Lord anyway." Regardless of what might come your way, you can be happy in the Lord, but you have to work at it.

In reality, no one can live in yesterday, and no one can live in tomorrow; you can only live in today. If something is coming up Monday, God is faithful and will give you strength. He will take care of it. He will not overload you with anything. The devil wants you to fret about that today and miss what God has planned for you in this day. He is a tricky fellow. Much of what Satan troubles the saints with never happens. He will say things such as, "What if this happens?" or "What if that happens?" I repeat, much of what people worry about never comes to pass.

If the devil had his way, the preacher would get up behind the pulpit with a long face, and the singers would get up with long faces. That would not be inspiring, but God gives the saints victory in their souls. That does not mean you will not have burdens or that you will not face any trials. It just means that through Christ you are an overcomer, and the Lord will take care of things. You must keep your faith anchored in Him.

Too many people live in yesterday, and a lot of people live in and worry about tomorrow; therefore, they are missing the blessings of today. God has a job for each of us to do. We are laborers in the kingdom, and

there will be enough to do today if we keep the victory and be what God would have us to be.

Contentment is a must to be successful in Christian living. In Isaiah 32:18 God said, "And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." God's people will dwell in a peaceable habitation and in quiet resting places. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:6, "But godliness with contentment is great gain."

Living for God is so peaceful, knowing that everything is right between you and God. You have peace in your soul, victory over sin, and victory over the habits of life. You have victory over the things that once had you bound. My heart goes out to those who are bound with sinful habits. They are in captivity, but if you are saved, you can rejoice in your soul because you have victory. You do not have to live in captivity, bound by the habits of life. Praise God! My friend, you can walk with God and know how peaceful it is. I am glad to be saved. I am thankful to know that I can depend on God.

You need to live so that you will not have any regrets after you get saved and make sure that you are right with God. No doubt, there are things in the past that you wish you could change. Maybe you wish you could tear that chapter out of the book, but you cannot. If you are struggling with a regret or something else in the past, maybe you had a failure, do not let that destroy you. You need to turn it over to God and get victory over it; then you can live in today and enjoy the blessings that God has for you. Have you heard the song that says, "There's too much to gain to lose"? One verse of that song says, "If this world were laid at my doorstep, Its pleasures were all mine to use, I'd have no regret for the way that I have taken,

There's just too much to gain to lose." You will have no regret for the way you have taken if you have made the choice to go with God.

Keep Moving Forward

Let us look a little at old Israel. In Numbers 11:4-6 you can read that Israel lost heart. They were discontented and looking back to Egypt. Egypt is a symbol of bondage. Oh, how they wanted out of Egypt! In our terms today, they would have said, "Lord, I would give anything to get out of Egypt." God heard their cry, and He sent Moses to deliver them. They had no sooner gotten out of Egypt, getting ready to cross the Red Sea, when the Egyptian army came behind them. The people began to murmur and complain against Moses. In essence, the people said: "We had houses to live in and places to be buried. You have brought us out here, and now we are going to be destroyed." They began to look back. God told Moses to tell them, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord" (Exodus 14:13).

Do you have constant victory, dear one? Do you struggle with yesterday? Do you struggle with worries about tomorrow to the place that you cannot really enjoy today? This day will soon be history. You will never be able to come back and redo it, and the devil knows that. He knows that unless he can oppress and trouble you about something that may never happen, you can be used of God to see a great work done. The devil knows that, but he likes to keep you preoccupied. Perhaps you are not able to get above the fray and rejoice and have constant victory in your soul.

Israel began to lose heart and lose hope. When God was working deliverance for them, they

began to complain and moan. You never know what God is doing. If you have lost children or lost loved ones, keep on praying! You may say, "Well, I have been praying for them for a long time, and I have not seen any change." You must keep on praying, because when you pray in earnest, God is going to visit them. I have confidence in God that He will pay them a visit. Do you know why? Because His child cried out to Him, "Lord, would you please visit my son?" or "Would you please visit my daughter?" He will knock on their hearts just because you asked Him to. What they do about it will be between them and God, but I have confidence in God. You need to keep praying until the answer comes. Your faith has to be in that or you will not keep praying because you are not seeing any results.

In Exodus 14:12 Israel said to Moses, "Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness." Do you see how quickly they changed their minds? You cannot flop around like a fish, so to speak, or be wishy-washy. You have to be settled. You should not want to go forward a little and then go backward a little, but you should continually be in forward motion, going forward in the things of God. I only mention that to show you that your mind needs to be on what God would have you to do, not on troubles about the past and worries about the

future. When that happens, those clouds overshadow the sunshine of today and hide your view.

Cast Your Cares Upon the Lord

Someone may say, "I wish I could be happy like some people that I have seen." If you are not really happy, there is a reason for that. God does not want you to mimic others, but He does want everyone to be happy. He wants you to have victory in your soul and to be ready to do what God would have you to do. The preacher cannot do it all. As the body of Christ, we each have a part in soul witnessing and soul winning.

You cannot go out and witness to others unless you have that burning down in your own heart. You must have that, because people can tell whether or not you are really enthused about what you are talking about. You see, it takes that burning in your soul, that desire to do something for God, in order to reach people. That is a job for every one of us. If growth comes, it is going to come through the church. The church must be under a burden and be concerned.

The Bible says in Amos 6:1, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." When you carry a burden, you will cry out to God. It stirs God because He has people who are concerned about souls. They are concerned about more than just their own well-being. There is much more to it than just keeping yourself saved. I found that you cannot be a blessing to others without getting blessed.

You cannot really help others from the heart without getting blessed. The more you give, the more you do for God, the greater the blessing that comes back into your heart and life.

Dear one, you can only live in today. When you pillow your head each night, may you be able to say: "Lord, I have done all I could. I have done everything that I felt You would have me to do." Then you will be ready to do the bidding of God the next day. I trust that this message will inspire you to put greater emphasis on the day you have, or the time you have. My prayer is, "Lord, help me to do my best, to do all that I can for the upbuilding of the kingdom." That is the burden on my heart, and I have shared it with you.

If you are having a struggle or a problem with something in the past, or in what we call yesterday, do not let it go any further. You need to bring it to Jesus today and get it taken care of. If something is troubling you about tomorrow, God can take care of it. He will be God tomorrow and the next day, and He is big enough to handle all your problems and all your troubles. It does not have to be something that the devil hinders you over. He can hinder people over nothing, but you have to get the victory so that the enemy cannot defeat you. He cannot defeat you if you hold on to God. If you will pick up your end of the bargain, God will always pick up His end, and you will be more than a conqueror.

(Compact Disc TR-1759)

*Everywhere the Apostle Paul went, he made
some people GLAD, some people SAD,
and some people MAD.*

Announcements

MEDINA, OH

April 4-8

Please note time
change for Sat./Sun.
Morning Services

Revival: Church of God, 6745 Wooster Pike, Medina, OH
Evangelist: Brother Calvin Foster, Kensett, Arkansas
Service times: Wed. - Fri. 7 p.m.; Sat. 10:30 a.m.; Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 3 p.m.
A meal will be served by the local congregation after the morning service.
For further information contact: Pastor Mike Miller. Telephone: 269-447-4227 or 330-725-5993

MT. PLEASANT, PA

April 21

Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA
Service time: 10:30 a.m. A meal served by the local congregation. MOTELS: *Holiday Inn Express*, 724-547-2095 (This is on the same road as the church. Please mention that you are there for the church meeting.); *Super 8 Motel in New Stanton*, 724-925-8915 on I-70W, 10 miles north of the church); *Melody Motor Lodge*, 724-628-9600 on 119N in Connellsville).

April 30-May 6

Revival: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA.
Evangelist: Larry Dishman, Hurly, Mississippi
Service times: Mon. - Sat. 7 p.m.; Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor Paul W. Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666.
Telephone: 724-547-2151

SUMMERSVILLE, WV

April 30-May 6

Revival & Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd., Summersville, WV 26651
Evangelist: Brother Leamon R. Whitehead, Minerva, Ohio
Service times: Mon. - Thurs. 7 p.m.; Fri. 10:30 a.m. & 7 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Meals will be provided by the local congregation Friday thru Sunday following each service.
Lodging may be obtained at the Econolodge for \$50.00 per night by calling 304-872-6900.
Tell them you are there for the Church of God meeting.
Visit our website @ www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com
For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders. Telephone: 304-872-4047

Winter 2017 Camp Meeting Recordings

CD NO.	DATE	MESSAGE TITLE	MINISTER
TR-2015	12-27-2017	You Will Be Fishers of Men	Brother Calvin Foster
TR-2016	12-28-2017	Being Turned	Brother Mike Wilks
TR-2017		Essentials for Christian Living: The Fear of God	Brother E. David Stegmeier
TR-2018		They Gladly Received the Word of God	Brother Calvin Foster
TR-2019	12-29-2017	The Devil Wants to Destroy Our Vision	Brother Mike Miller
TR-2020		Essentials for Christian Living: Faith in God	Brother E. David Stegmeier
TR-2021		You Have No Excuse	Brother Calvin Foster
TR-2022	12-30-2017	Brothers and Sisters of the Messiah	Brother Josh Thilmony
TR-2023		Essentials for Christian Living: The Love of God	Brother E. David Stegmeier
TR-2024		The Blessings of Obedience	Brother E. David Stegmeier
TR-2025	12-31-2017	Occupy Until I Come	Brother Richard Talbot

2017 Winter Camp Meeting Songs #1, #2, & #3; 2017 Winter Camp Meeting Choir Songs; 2017 All Songs for the Winter Camp Meeting in MP3 format; All Messages (includes afternoon teaching services) in MP3 format

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

Postman send form 3579 to:

The Gospel Trumpeter

675 N. Cedar Street
Newark, Ohio 43055 U.S.A.

PERIODICAL POSTAGE
PAID AT THE POST OFFICE
IN NEWARK, OH 43055
USPS # 871620

REQUEST FOR NEW SUBSCRIPTION, CHANGE OF ADDRESS, OR CANCELLATION

NEW SUBSCRIPTION: To receive *The Gospel Trumpeter*, we need your complete name and mailing address, including country.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: If you have moved or if your name or address is incorrect, please notify us as soon as possible.

NOTICE OF CANCELLATION: If you no longer wish to receive *The Gospel Trumpeter*, please contact us using one of the methods below.

YOU MAY CONTACT US BY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:

Mail: *The Gospel Trumpeter* 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055 USA

E-mail: subscribe@gospeltrumpeter.com **Telephone:** (740) 345-1312

(Please Print or Type)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____

ZIP CODE: _____ **COUNTRY:** _____

Please check the appropriate box below, and for changes or cancellations return this entire page with the old address.

- Subscription Incorrect spelling of name or address
 Change of address Cancellation