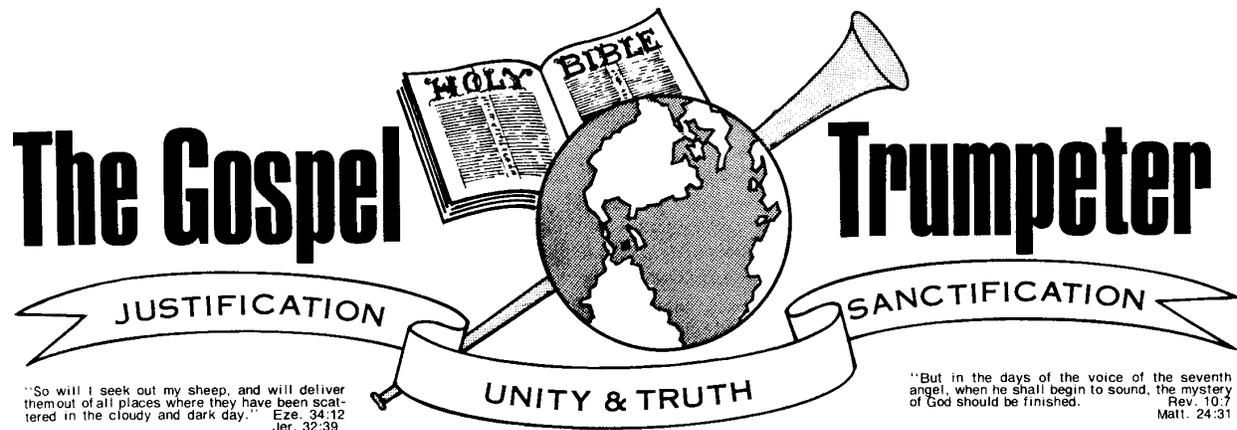


The Gospel Trumpeter



JUSTIFICATION

SANCTIFICATION

UNITY & TRUTH

"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. 49 April 2019 No. 4



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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

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Vol. 49 April 2019 No. 4

2019 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT
for The Gospel Trumpeter

It has come time again to publish *The Gospel Trumpeter's* Annual Financial Report. We are thankful that the good news of God's Word is still sounding forth. Through the printing of this Gospel publication, the Lord is accomplishing many great and wonderful things. Precious souls are being exposed to the glorious message of Christ's love and salvation. The unadulterated Word of God is still heralding forth the Truth to those who are fastened in false religious systems. It shines a beacon of light that reveals the old paths and the right way to men and women who are seeking it.

Many messages that Pastor Decker has preached are printed in *The Gospel Trumpeter*. Various ministers in the Newark congregation as well as others are used. Biblically sound evangelistic and doctrinal sermons are selected, preached by ministers who have brought forth messages during revivals and camp meetings. Our desire has always been to faithfully present the Truth in a clear manner that enlightens our readers. We want to help souls find the Lord and then to grow strong and mature spiritually. Wholesome instructions challenge God's people to press onward in the good fight of faith.

Each year around this time, *The Gospel Trumpeter* prints its Annual Financial Report of the past year's expenditures for you to view. The purpose for printing this report is to show our

readers the ever-rising costs involved in printing this religious periodical.

As we all know, inflation is and has been on the upsurge for many years. Unfortunately *The Gospel Trumpeter* is not immune to the increasing costs but has been affected by them also. You will find a breakdown of the expenses by the various categories on page 7. The figures show what was paid out as well as the amount received through your contributions.

Although this periodical is being mailed under a second class permit, the postage rates continue to rise each year. We realize *The Gospel Trumpeter* is a missionary effort and requires a large amount of income to operate it in a successful effort. Brother Decker and the saints feel a great responsibility to reach out to lost men and women with the Gospel. They want to offer salvation's message to those who are searching for freedom from sin's bondage. There are also many who are entangled in false religious systems that need to be released. Our hope and prayer is that this publication is a tool to lead souls to Christ and to help others to live victorious lives for the Savior. It is very rewarding to be a part of a missionary effort that helps lead souls to the Truth and to Heaven in the end.

As we have done so many times in the past, we want to again ask our readers to take a greater burden for the work of

[continued on page 7]

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above [setting your affection on things above lets you know that you can set your affection where your heart should be], not on things on

the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

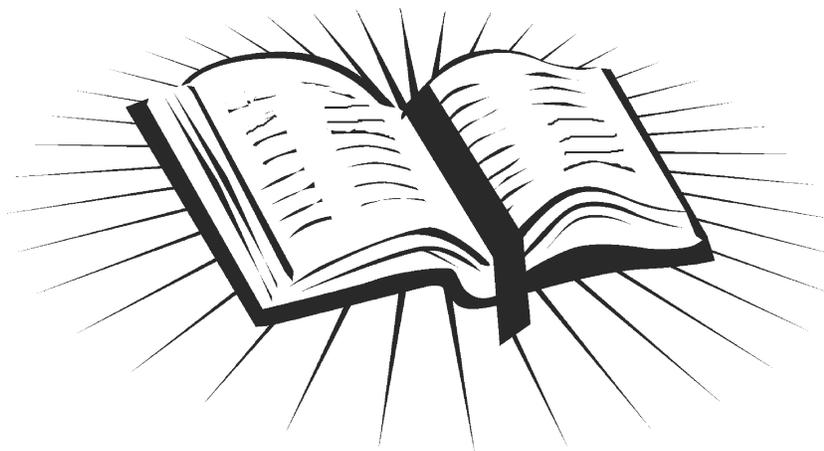
5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affec-

tion, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

Your Spiritual Resurrection



Brother Roger L. Decker

Being Risen With Christ

The Apostle Paul said in verse 1 of our Scripture text, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek [or covet earnestly] those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." When the Apostle Paul said, "If ye then be risen . . ." he certainly was not talking about the general resurrection, but rather he was talking about a spiritual resurrection, which takes place when you are raised from a life of sin and living after the flesh to living in newness of life in Jesus Christ.

Two deaths and two resurrections are mentioned in the Word of God.

In John 5:25-29 Jesus said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live [a physically dead person cannot hear, but one who is physically alive but who is dead in trespasses and sins, if he will hear the voice of the Son of God, he shall live]."

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And

hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice [the choice will be gone once you are in the grave], And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

The first resurrection is spiritual, when one is raised from a dead state in sin to newness of life. This is speaking of the work that God did, and we know that

He is rich in mercy. Paul said in Ephesians 2:6, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Just as Christ sits on the right hand of God, we also are raised up together to sit in heavenly places. Christ sitting shows that He is reigning, because His work is finished.

Acts 2:29-33 reads: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell [he was not speaking of the place of eternal separation, but rather of the grave], neither his flesh did see corruption [in hell, the place of eternal damnation, there is no corruption, because the soul lives forever]. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

"The Working of His Mighty Power"

Thank God, Jesus is still on the throne of mercy. He still makes intercession for you. Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:19-23: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in

this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

Christ was set on the right hand of God by God Himself. As the church, we also sit on thrones. Matthew 19:28-30 states: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."

What does it mean to sit on a throne? Well, we know that kings sit on thrones, and when someone sits on a throne, it means he is reigning. Now, when you are born again, you reign over sin, over the flesh, and over the devil. The Apostles were foundation stones in the church. Again, Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration [speaking of the new birth] when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Here we see the reigning power that one has when he is raised by the same Spirit that raised Jesus Christ out of the tomb. That is the same Spirit that raised you up to sit in heavenly places.

What do you reign over? Paul told us in Ephesians 2:1-6: "And you hath he quickened [the word *quickened* simply means to be made alive], who were dead [not physically, but spiritually] in trespasses and sins; Wherein in

time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation [or conduct] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

The Path of Destruction

Death is caused by trespasses and sins. The Greek word for *sin* is *hamartia*. What does it mean? It means, "failure to hit the target, or to miss the mark." That is what sin is. It is the failure to hit the target that Christ has ordained. It is the failure to be what God intended for you. Sin is against God, against life, and against innocence. Sin does something to a man. A person is never quite the same when he commits sin. Sin will leave unpleasant memories in your mind; it leaves scars, and it will leave remorse that you have to overcome.

Many times in my life, I have thought back on incidents that happened before I was saved, and those memories torment me. If you were raised under the sound of the Gospel, if you will stay true to God, you can avoid having all those scars. When a man goes into sin, it does something to his mind. I can remember some sins as though they happened yesterday, and I would to God that I could not remember them. Along with remembering them, I can thank God for victory over sin.

Sin will kill the will, or the de-

sire, of a man. When a man or a woman first engages in sin, it is often because they want to, but then they become bound and sin because they have to. Paul spoke of this when he wrote in Romans 7:18, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."

Sin will destroy the high standards that you once had, those things that you thought you were going to do in life and the things that you were going to engage in. Many times sin changes your whole path of life. You might have had a high standard, but sin will cause you to throw away that standard and take the path of destruction. Sin kills. Every sin that you commit makes the next sin easier. Paul used the word *trespasses*. It means to slip or to fall from the right way and choose the wrong path, or to slip away from Truth.

What kind of character were you before you were saved? You would not have wanted to know me. I did not have a good reputation. I lived by the world's standards and the world's values. The world's standard sets you in the center of that, but the Christian sets Christ in the center of his life.

God knows there are many spirits that tempt a person to do evil. Many spirits are out to propagate evil and to destroy the souls of mankind. First John 4:1 reads, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." There are a lot of false prophets, and many have been ordained to preach. Without God you have no armor against those spirits, and without God you could be persuaded by their deceit. You could be driven by their promises and lost because those spirits would lead you against God.

A Child of Disobedience

Paul mentioned the spirit of disobedience. Titus 1:16 states, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." When people are under a spirit of disobedience, they are under the wrath of God. Does that make you feel kind of fearful? Colossians 3:6 states, "For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." Ephesians 5:6 warns, "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." God has plenty of wrath when one gives himself to the spirit of disobedience.

In 1 Kings, Chapter 13, you can read what happened when a man of God came out of Judah and cried against the altar that had been defiled by idolatry and cried out against King Jeroboam. He was given the charge not to eat or drink in that place. Also, the Lord told him to return another way. However, he was seduced by an old prophet, and when he was seduced, he fell under the anger and the wrath of God.

First Kings 13:26 reads, "And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him."

A spirit of disobedience was working. It works among young people. Young person, you need to watch your attitude toward your parents. Do not think that it goes unnoticed. You need to watch what you say. I used to say some things that I should not have said to my mother, but I

never did it in the presence of my father. When I spoke in a wrong manner to my mother, she had a habit of snapping me with a dish cloth, especially if she was doing dishes. I guess I took that better than her saying, "I'm going to tell your father," because when she said that, I had instant fear.

Children need to be careful of how they treat their parents. If you become disobedient to your parents, you are disobeying God as well. That is the reason God was so strict in the Old Testament. They could not let a disobedient child continue in the congregation and grow up to adulthood full of disobedience, because he would affect others. If you give vent to disobedience, you will become a child of disobedience. As this world, and even the religious world, gives in more and more to sin, your spiritual resurrection will stand out as a light in a dark world.

Sins of the Flesh

Why are homosexuality and lesbianism so prevalent today? At one time, they were not out in the open. People were not flaunting it. Now they have their own parades, and they have infiltrated Hollywood and the news networks. They are everywhere, propagating their sins. People always hear what others say about it, but they never hear what the Word of God says about it. Many sins are more prevalent today. Many people just live together instead of going through the ceremony of marriage. There is no divorce, there is no separation of property, and it is just a convenience. On the other hand, marriage is wonderful, and it is ordained of God. The Bible says a man who finds a wife finds a good thing, not a bad thing.

If you have been raised up with God, the more this world goes on, the brighter your light will shine. What did Jesus say?

He said in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Who could not see a city that is set on a hill?

When I was in the military and in a plane that took off from Seoul, South Korea, as we were flying low over the city at night, what a beautiful site that was! You could not miss the lights across the city. That was what Jesus said the church is. The darker this world gets and the more sin prevails, the brighter the church shines.

Paul, in Ephesians 2:3, mentioned the desires of the flesh, or wrong desires. Having fleshly desires is a craving for forbidden things. Paul mentioned fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Desires and lusts take in far more than just the physical.

Paul named some things in Galatians 5:19-21, writing, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like [or anything like this]: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

What does that tell you? If you are involved in those things, you are going to be lost unless you repent. Paul listed sins of the flesh here in Galatians, and they take in more than just the physical aspects. For example, one man might be weak in his body, and another might have trouble with pride. Another might have trouble with earthly things or his temper. The flesh will work on people in different ways. Do not think that because you do not have trouble with the grosser sins that you are going to be trouble free.

Seek a Spiritual Walk

In Acts 9:1-2 we read that Paul (at this time his name was Saul) "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."

At that particular time, Paul did not know Jesus Christ, but he knew those who represented Him. He was not out there against Jesus, but he was out there blasting the body of Christ. What happened? He got a visit from Christ. There was no one in the church to step up to him. The main reason was that they were in fear. Someone may say, "I would have gone out and faced him." Oh, you would have? Well, you might have ended up in prison just as quickly as those people did. Therefore, Christ paid him a visit.

Acts 9:4-5 reads: "And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me [you need to keep your mouth off the church or you could get a visit from Jesus]? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

How was Saul persecuting Jesus? He was persecuting Jesus by persecuting His people. If you do not want to live the way the Bible dictates, that is your privilege; you have that right. God is not going to make you. You can walk away, just as the rich, young ruler did. Or you can grab your inheritance as the prodigal did and give all you have to the world. However, while you are doing your thing, it would be wise not to speak against the church. God dealt with Saul. God has a way of bringing a person

down to his knees.

In your sinful condition, before you were quickened, you deserved nothing but the wrath of God. Do not think that God owes you anything. Do not think that God is in debt to you. God sees the heart. God looks deeper than man can see, just as God did with Saul. He saw what He could do with Saul once the sin was removed.

Paul wrote in Colossians 3:1, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." You need to seek a heavenly, eternal walk; seek a spiritual walk where you can reign over sin. Church, seek the best that God has for you. You need to show God how much you appreciate Him and how much you appreciate what He has done for you. How? You can do that by living a Christlike life.

If you have shortcomings you can bring them to God. Do not let them take root in your heart. Bring them to Him, and He will help you to overcome them. The Lord has helped me many times. You can talk to God about anything. If you want to talk to Him about the weather, you can talk to Him about the weather. He can even change the weather. You can talk to Him about your loneliness, your heartaches, your problems, and your burdens, and He will listen.

The purpose of the message is to encourage you to live a Christlike life, as Jesus would have you to live. Church, you should always be thankful for what the Lord has done for you. I am so glad that one of these days I am going to leave here, but I am so glad that I can leave a different man than when Jesus found me. I am so glad I was able to live this Christian life in front of my five children. I appreciate that opportunity. How can you show thanksgiving to God? You can do so by living a Christlike life.

If you are troubled in spirit,

why go on that way? It is not going to get any better. You cannot dig your own way out of it. The only way you can get out is if Jesus lifts you out, and He is will-

ing to do that. Why do people get stubborn? Sometimes some people say, "Well, I'm going to work it out, but I'm not ready yet." If you have shortcomings, you can

bring them to Jesus. He is ready to help you.

(Compact Disc TR-1872)

[Annual Financial Report—contin. from p. 2] *The Gospel Trumpeter*. Your prayers do contribute a tremendous amount to the success of this

missionary endeavor. Your financial support is also appreciated and needed. You may not realize the impact that your sacrifice is

making; however, the Lord is recording every act of love and devotion to His great cause. We trust He will bless you. Thank you!

Statement of Condition for 12 months ending January 31, 2019

	Income	Expenses
Supplies		\$ 32,854.13
Miscellaneous Expenses		5,385.91
Wages		51,454.96
Payroll Taxes/Insurance/Workers' Comp		30,186.42
Donations/Offerings	\$15,065.08	
Equipment Purchased		3,435.12
Equipment Maintenance/Repairs		3,201.00
Postage		72,976.64
 Subtotals	 \$15,065.08	 199,494.18
 <i>Balance paid out of the general fund of the Church of God congregation at Newark, OH.</i>		 \$184,429.10

**The diamond cannot be
polished without friction, nor man
perfected without trials.**

Nehemiah 1:1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace,

2 That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.

3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

4 And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,

5 And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:

6 Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of

Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

8 Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:

9 But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.

10 Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.

11 O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.



Building the Walls in Troublesome Times

Brother Ricky Morris

A Dreadful Condition

The first chapter of Nehemiah is very moving. The Jews had

gotten themselves in a bad situation. According to the prophesy of Jeremiah, for seventy years, they were in captivity, but

God in His mercy said if they would turn, He would begin to change some things for them. God started a work of restor-

ation. The work got started, but after a while the work stopped. When it stopped, instead of people doing the things of God, they began to do their own thing. The king's cupbearer, Nehemiah, was doing his duties one day and a brother came and said he was distressed because he had been to Jerusalem and had seen those who had gone back to do the restoration work, and they were sitting down on God. He told Nehemiah about the dreadful condition.

Before I get into this, I would like to give you a little more commentary so that you can envision what he was saying. Just as they were living in troublesome times, we, too, are living in troublesome times, and many people are doing their own thing. If there was ever a time when the church should rise and shine as never before, that time is now. However, too many people are in their own corner with their own little group, doing their own thing. That is not a true representation of the Church of God. When we look at this story of Nehemiah, we can almost see a snapshot of our day in history.

Approximately one thousand years after the time of Moses and some four hundred years before the birth of Jesus, the nation of Israel and the Jewish people were in a desperate state. Their nation was destroyed, first the northern kingdom of Israel and then the southern Jewish kingdom of Judah.

The city of Jerusalem was completely conquered by the Babylonians, and the once glorious temple of Solomon was destroyed. Then the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem. They deported almost everyone from the city and in the region. For some seventy years, Jerusalem was a ghost town with the potential to end up as many ancient cities, completely forgotten except in history. When the Jews were

deported to Babylon, they began to make homes there for themselves. They settled down, and many still followed the God of their fathers, but they did it from Babylon with no desire to return to the land that God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Some of the faithful Jews were raised to positions in palaces or to places of prominence in the government. Consider Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Daniel. They became leaders in Babylon. Esther was made queen in the courts of a Persian king. After seventy years of captivity in Babylon, they were given the opportunity to return to their homeland, the promised land. This is what moved me. Out of two or three million Jews deported from the land, only fifty thousand decided to return to the promised land, which is only about 2 percent, but they did return.

Burdens Bring About Change

In the days of Ezra, they rebuilt the temple and laid a spiritual foundation for Israel once again. The Book of Nehemiah begins about twelve years after that return. The Book of Ezra ends, and the Book of Nehemiah begins. There was a period of about twelve or thirteen years of silence. During this period, there was a time when the work ceased, and those who were building for God went to build for themselves, and they cared more about their own houses than the things of God. This silence is described as a period of distress and trouble for the residents of Jerusalem. The walls of Jerusalem were broken down, and the gates were burnt with fire.

When the brother brought the distressing news to Nehemiah, what could Nehemiah do? He was just a simple cupbearer. That

could be compared to being a clerk in an office. When I looked at Nehemiah, a simple cupbearer, and the burden that he was about to take on, I was amazed. As we study this, you will see that Nehemiah went from being a cupbearer to being a builder, and after he became a builder, he became a governor. If you will be faithful in a few things, God will make you ruler over many, but you have to start somewhere.

First of all, anytime you want to do something for God, you do not just strike out. There is a way that we do things for God, but believe it or not, He is a God of order even when it comes to His church. We have to do things decently and in order, even in the line of worship and in the line of service, no matter what it may be. God sometimes works spontaneously. In most cases that is when we did something we should not have and we are begging God to intervene. However, if you look at the Bible, you will see that He is a God of order, and He likes things to be in order. When things are out of order, there is a problem.

In order to build for God, first you need to work on yourself. You cannot be satisfied, because the Bible teaches in Amos 6:1, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." The sixth seal laid great groundwork to build on. When the seventh seal was opened, there was silence. It was not just an absence of sound; the work had ceased. When people are working for God, noise is being made.

In this day and age, we need to stand. Do you know what I love about Nehemiah and reading that story? Even as a cupbearer, when it looked as though he was in a position that he could not do anything, his burden was so great that it moved him, and he said, "I have to do something." Even the ordinary saint or the lay minister, whatever your gift or

calling may be, if you get a burden for something, burdens can bring about change. As I said, you cannot just strike out and not know what to do.

Getting God's Attention

When you want to change things, do you know the first thing you need to do? You must pray. Nehemiah was a man of prayer. When Nehemiah received the news, he said in verses 4-6 of our Scripture text: "And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, [How many hearts are broken today about the division, the compromise, and the silence? When was the last time you stood between the porch and the altar? That should move you. If a lowly cupbearer had a burden, pastors had better have one.] and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven, And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: Let thine ear now be attentive, [Prayer will get God's attention. God knows what the condition is already, but do you have His attention? God will wait to see what you are going to do. God already knows what to do. So a cupbearer began to pray.] and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned."

Any time a restoration is to take place, we must unveil ourselves before Almighty God. We do not practice sin, but if we fail to do what is needed, it becomes sin, because "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to

him it is sin" (James 4:17). Nehemiah said the nation had sinned and His servants had sinned, but he did not leave himself out. He said, "I . . . have sinned." His plan began to develop. Anytime you see something that needs to get done and it is not really in your power to bring the results, you need to start praying. I know we say that prayer changes things. Well, I am going to add a little more to that. It is good to pray. When I deal with children, I ask them, "What is prayer?"

They reply, "It is talking to God."

I ask, "What is reading the Bible?"

"It is God talking back to you," they respond.

We must open a dialogue with God to get His attention. After we get His attention, we must begin to pour out our burden. We see the condition, so we have to be like the cupbearer and lift our cups up to Him and say, "Lord, give us a plan." Plans are born out of prayer. God is waiting to see what we are going to do.

Nehemiah was a man of prayer, and he was a man who had a burden. When you begin to pray, that is going to increase your burden. Most things that have been done, or restorations that have been brought forth, have been born out of a burden. First, you have to pray. Second, you must have a burden. Third, a plan must begin to develop. The entire plan must come together.

Making Preparations

What is the next step? You have to begin to prepare, so that God can use you. You have to place yourself in a position where you are prepared. In Revelation, Chapter 8, when the silence was broken, we see the scene of our High Priest standing at the altar. As He stood there, there were

seven angels, because it was a period of silence. With the seven angels was given seven trumpets. They had prepared themselves to sound.

Leaders must prepare themselves for difficult work, because it will not be easy. There is no winning without warfare, there is no opportunity without opposition, and there is no victory without vigilance. Whenever the people of God say, "Let us rise up and build," the devil will say, "Let me arise and oppose." We are going to face opposition.

Leaders must have a big vision. Even though Nehemiah was a cupbearer, he had a big vision. What I like about it was when he actually started the work, it only took him fifty-two days to complete it. I want you to notice this: it appears that Nehemiah prayed for four months before he did anything, which was about one hundred twenty days. In order for a plan to be effective, instead of running out and trying to do something, you must get your plan together and begin to pray. One hundred twenty days of prayer produced fifty-two days of work.

Again, Nehemiah was a man of prayer, a man with a burden, a man of preparation, and next he became a man of action. In verse 11 he said, "O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man [talking about the king]. For I was the king's cupbearer." He was not an evangelist, a pastor, or a preacher. He was a cupbearer who knew how to get God's attention.

We read in Nehemiah 2:1-2: "And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the

king. Now I had not been before-time sad in his presence. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid."

A person did not go before a king in just any way, because if he did not approach him right, the king could have easily said, "Off with your head!" Likewise, we should not come before God in just any kind of way. Today we have access to Him, and we have the opportunity. The Bible says in Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." We are living in the time when we need God.

A cupbearer was a high official in the royal household whose basic duty was to choose and taste the king's wine to demonstrate that it was not poisoned and to present it to the king. This gave him frequent access to the king's presence and made him potentially a man of influence. The king, therefore, had to have a tremendous amount of trust in his cupbearer, who had to be a man of faithful and impressive character. If the cupbearer could be turned against the king, assassination was imminent.

Pastors need to surround themselves with people of good character and integrity, people who have been tried and tested, because everyone does not mean them well. Evil communication corrupts good manners. In your dealings, whatever you are trying to do, you need to put the right people in your path.

Faithfulness and Humility

Nehemiah went from being a cupbearer in Chapter 1 to a builder in Chapter 2 by being faithful. First of all, you have to be faithful in prayer and be faith-

ful in carrying a burden. Also, you have to be faithful in your plans and in your preparation. It is then that God moves you to the next level. He will teach you more about prayer, because if everything was handed to you, you would not appreciate it. He is teaching you about a burden, He is teaching you about a plan, and He is teaching you how to be a builder because that is what we are doing in the Church of God. We are building the house of God.

Sometimes when God deals with you, it is unwise to discuss everything God told you to do. What is for you is for you. It does not mean it was for everyone else. Everyone does not have the same vision. Where there is no vision, the people perish. When God gives you a vision of doing something for Him, you need to go step by step with God, because He is the one who is able to work it out.

Nehemiah wrote in Nehemiah 2:11, "So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days." After the king saw how burdened Nehemiah was, the king gave him tools. For example, a carpenter has to have a hammer and a plumber has to have pipe. Likewise, when you are building for God, you need tools. First of all, God gave him a command of soldiers. I do not know how many the king sent, but it was enough so that he could safely get to Jerusalem. Also, the king gave him wood out of the king's forest. It takes building materials to build, and a builder has to have tools. That is the reason we have to be faithful and stay before God and wait and not run so fast.

When Nehemiah entered Jerusalem with a military escort and the lumber from the king, the people there noticed. He did not say anything about his mission until the timing was right. Good leaders learn a sense of

God's timing. Nehemiah came to Jerusalem full of heart, full of prayer, full of faith, full of wisdom, with a burden, with a big vision, and full of support from the king.

In the middle of the night, as Nehemiah rode upon his beast, he began to look at the walls of Jerusalem, the gates and the far places. The first place he visited was the Valley Gate. The first place for anyone who is beginning their Christian journey for God is going to be the Valley Gate. If you know anything about a valley, it is the place of humility. It will teach you humility. One great characteristic of a leader is, he has to be humble. When it gets too tough, you might have to do as Andrae Crouch and write a little song. He wrote a song entitled "Through It All." The chorus reads:

*I thank God for the mountains,
And I thank Him for the valleys,
I thank Him for the storms
He brought me through.
For if I'd never had a problem,
I wouldn't know God could
solve them,
I'd never know what faith in
God could do.*

"Lay Aside Every Weight"

The Valley Gate began to show Nehemiah humility, so he had another stop. That beast of burden was a type of his riding with his burden. After he had left the Valley Gate, he came to the dragon well. What was the purpose of the dragon well? What does a reptile or a dragon do? It sheds its skin. There will come a point in your experience, when you will discover that you have some things that God cannot use, and you need to lay them aside. You are going to need to shed some skin, so to speak. You are going to need to let some things go, because God cannot use those

things. You need to visit the dragon well.

On the third stop in his personal surveying of the land, he came to the Dung Gate. What was a dung port? That is the place where you take out the trash. If some "trash" in your life is hindering you, you need to get rid of it. God cannot use it. Hebrews 12:1 says to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us."

Last but not least, he went to the Gate of the Fountain, a place which is symbolic of the Spirit, where we are refreshed, because in your building, from time to time, you will have to be refreshed in the things of God. Why do you need to be refreshed? First of all, if you are a man of God, when you are refreshed, your flock will be refreshed.

Once I taught a lesson on the sheep, the shepherd, and the sheepfold. In my studying of the sheep, I learned a personal observation about sheep. The Bible says in Psalm 23:1, "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." Jesus said in John 10:9, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." He was not talking about going in and out the door. No, he would go in one pasture and graze, and then the shepherd would take the sheep to another pasture and they would graze. In coming up in the things of God, my pastor taught us about salvation, the new birth. When we finished grazing on the new birth, we went to sanctification and unification. A pastor has to graze the sheep. Why? If sheep stay in one spot for too long after they have already eaten down all the grass, parasites will begin to crawl up their legs. At the Gate of the Fountain, in order for the flock to be refreshed, the leader has to be refreshed.

The cupbearer became the

builder, and everyone was in place. Nehemiah had to become a good supervisor and governor. Why? A governor knows how to delegate authority. What was the purpose? The walls were torn down. They got the temple built, but what good was the temple if it did not have any walls? It was open to everything, so the walls had to be straightened and the gates had to be repaired. I think of Psalm 48:12 that says to "Walk about Zion." Pastor, when you are inspecting your work, that is what you have to do. You have to walk about and make sure that everything is in order.

The Twelve Gates

There were twelve gates, and the first two gates were the Valley Gate and the Gate of the Fountain. The third gate was called the Sheep Gate. Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus said in John 10:7, "I am the door of the sheep." A door is the entranceway. The elders sat in the gate and taught. The gates of Jerusalem were their pardon. The third gate was called the Sheep Gate. The people would come through the Sheep Gate to bring in their sheep to make an atonement for their sins. We must never let that gate be in disrepair. We are to let the people know there is a Lamb that was slain. In John 1:29 John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God." In the Church of God, if you come to Christ where He resides, where the altar is, you can find a message that is being preached where you can be forgiven of your sins.

The fourth gate was the Fish Gate. In Matthew 4:19 Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." When you get saved, the next step you need to

do is tell others. I remember one brother said, "The best way to keep victory over sin is to go out and rescue sinners, because if you are busy pulling them out of sin, you do not have time to fall into sin." We need to make sure the Fish Gate is repaired to encourage the saints to go out and seek sheep and bring in the sheaves.

The fifth gate was the Old Gate. Jeremiah said in Jeremiah 6:16a, "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." You do not have to compromise to get people in. You do not have to let down the standard. If you lift up Christ, He will draw them.

The seventh gate was the Water Gate. Do you know what was so unique about that gate? That gate did not need to be repaired. You can go to the Word of God and be cleansed by the washing of the water of the Word.

The eighth gate was the Horse Gate. Why did they have to repair that? The army of Israel, the soldiers, went out that gate. The horse was symbolic of militancy, a symbol of warfare. We must keep it before the saints that we are fighting wicked spirits in high places. We are in a battle. There is war in heavenly places. Saint, be encouraged, and remain on your white steed.

The ninth gate was called the East Gate. As lightning shining from the east to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. I do not know about you, but I am encouraged. I believe Jesus is coming again. Do you believe that? We need to keep that gate constantly before the saints. What a day that will be! The saints used to sing the song entitled "I'll Have a New Life" by Luther G. Presley. One verse reads:

*On the resurrection morning
When all the dead in Christ shall
rise
I'll have a new body
Praise the Lord, I'll have a new life.*

*Sowed in weakness, Raised in power
Ready to live in Paradise
I'll have a new body
Praise the Lord, I'll have a new life.*

The tenth gate was the Gate of Judgment, or the Registry Gate. When the Word of God goes forth, it is preliminary judgment. If you cannot stand the preliminary judgment now, how are you going to stand the final Judgment in the end? In the preliminary judgment, men's sins are opened beforehand, before going to the final Judgment. Some men's sins follow after. Whatever you need to deal with,

if there is sin in your life, you need to deal with it now, before you get to the final Judgment. Do not wait and let your sins be opened at the final Judgment when God will roll back your memory and let you know every sin you did not repent of and did not straighten out. Therefore, we have to keep that gate repaired.

The eleventh gate was the Gate of Ephraim, and it did not need any repair either. That was the most beautiful gate of all. That was a type of Heaven. Heaven's Gate does not need to be repaired. All you need to do is live right, and you will get there. We are going to walk through that gate one day.

The last gate was the Prison Gate, which is a type of hell. If you do not do what you need to do in this life and stand for

Christ, you will end up in that gate. That was another gate that did not need repair either, because the gates of hell are ready. As a matter of fact, God has enlarged those gates.

We are building walls for Jesus Christ in troublesome times. We all are workers together with God. Some plant and some water, but God is going to give the increase. Let us be wise master builders, and let us build for God. Do not look at your position or your status, because you may be a cupbearer. A little ways down the road, you may become a builder. If you will be faithful over a few things, God said He would make you ruler of many, and then you may become a governor. May God bless you.

(Compact Disc TR-2098)

Jesus Christ Gave All

He gave His head to the crown of thorns.

He gave His back to the cruel lash.

He gave His cheeks to those who plucked out the hairs. He gave His face to the rude human spittle.

He gave His shoulders to be draped with the robe of mock royalty.

He gave His clothes to His murderers.

He gave His mother to the Apostle John

He gave His hands and feet to be transfixed with nails to the accursed Cross.

He gave His blood to this earth for the remission of sins.

He gave His body for the life of the world.

He gave His spirit to God.

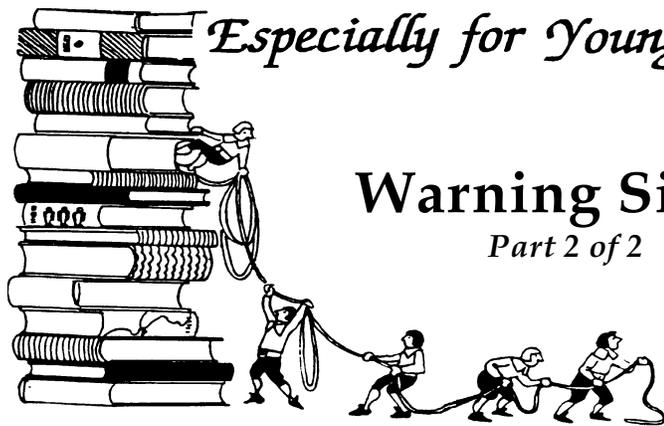
Abandoned and desolate, without God, friend, and acquaintance far from Him, He gave Himself unto death. The sun withdrew; behind the black pall of mourning a cold, cruel world shivered; nature itself refused to contribute anything—Jesus Christ gave everything.

Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was rich, yet for our sakes became poor—He gave everything.

He loves me and gave Himself—gave everything—for me.

Selected

Especially for Young People



Warning Signs

Part 2 of 2



Young person, I want to encourage you to memorize Scriptures. I memorized Proverbs 20:1 when I was in college. It states, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." How can you be deceived? You can be deceived by taking just one drink. Why would you want to start down that road? Young person, I am warning you, do not do it.

Someone may ask, "What about social drinking?" That is popular today. It is going on at businesses and work parties, and even among many priests. Some of them are heavy smokers and drinkers. What is wrong with social drinking? Drinking is wrong, period. Nevertheless, at social events there is always peer pressure. The Bible says not to follow others to do evil. Social drinking is wrong, and drinking any nature of strong drink that is fermented is wrong. Like smoking, alcohol is a drug that God's Word warns against. You should not even start down that road.

Let us look at another warning from God's Word regarding gambling. There was a game many years ago that used to be played quite often. Have you heard of the game called Russian Roulette? I heard of a young person in one school district who went to an early grave because of gambling. Some young people filled one chamber

of a gun with a bullet and passed the gun around, put it to their temple, and pulled the trigger. Now, that sounds sickening, disgusting, and despicable, but when young people are in groups where peer pressure enters in, there is no telling what they might do, especially when they involve alcohol.

I do not know much about fantasy sports, but from what I understand, a lot of that involves gambling. Playing the lottery, playing poker, and participating in raffles is gambling as well. A raffle involves buying a ticket to try to win a big prize. What is wrong with gambling? The American Psychiatric Association considers pathological gambling a mental disorder and has created diagnostic criteria to apply to a gambler's symptoms. Now, pay attention to some of these warning signs, and look at all the sins associated with gambling.

People involved in gambling often exaggerate their winnings and minimize their losses. Is exaggerating not lying? You are either telling the truth or you are not. You may say, "Well, it is just an exaggeration." Is it the truth or is it not the truth? What is wrong with a half-truth? Well, the half-truth is a whole lie. Either you are lying or telling the truth. Occasionally I have had to catch myself in conversation. You are not purposely trying to do wrong, but in conversing with

someone, you may hurriedly say, "Yeah, I've been there." Have you really been there? I want to make sure that I am telling the truth.

Gambling, exaggerating, and lying have a way of binding you. That is the reason it is never good to start down any of these roads, because their tentacles will wrap around you, and the more you are involved, the tighter that squeeze gets, to where you cannot get free from these habits void of salvation and God's miraculous work.

What does the Bible say about gambling? In Judges you can read that Samson went astray by desiring a worldly companion. The Bible lets us know that he threw dice before the Lord and made a bet concerning a Babylonian woman, and God was not pleased. Gambling was involved with the robe of our Savior when the soldiers cast lots for Christ's garments.

God wants you to earn money through hard work, not through superficial means. Gambling is what I call dirty money. It is not money that has come about through hard work; it is money that has been wasted. Many homes have been destroyed and families divided because of gambling. Why am I warning you, young person? Because much of this starts in people's youth, and then they become so bound that they cannot let these sinful habits go.

Proverbs 6:25-29 states: "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent."

Many young people play with temptation until they become too wrapped up to stop. What follows? Before they know it, a baby is on the way and they are not married. These are warnings. God's Word is full of warnings. Warnings do not come to hurt but to help you watch where you are heading. If your pastor warns you not to do something and you do it anyway, you are going to pay a price, because God's Word will not return void, or without effect. God's Word never fails.

As a Christian young person, dating a person who is unsaved is dangerous. I like to call it Christian courtship, because if you are a Christian, you should only date another Christian, and that is Bible. The Bible warns against associating with those who are unbelievers in 2 Corinthians 6:14. It is dangerous.

Personally, I always wanted someone with whom I could worship God, attend revivals and camp meetings with, and have fellowship with. I did not want a war in my home. I wanted my home to be a soul-saving station for my children and for all those we would invite into our home. It cannot be that way when there is bickering, fussing, fighting, screaming, and disagreement on where you are going to worship, yet people still disregard the warnings. I have always wondered, once you disregard the warnings and get what your

heart wants by getting married and getting a baby, then what? When you are thirty years of age and your husband hates you and abuses you, but you got what you wanted, was it really worth it?

Young person, you need to think about these things. God loves you. The devil tells young people many lies, such as, "You are never going to find anyone who suits you" or "You will never find a job close to church" or "You will never find a good enough school for you close to church." These are lies the devil tells young people. God wants you to stay near where you can get your soul fed and where you can marry a saved individual. Warning signs come, but too often they are disregarded.

If you do not have any intention of marrying someone, why are you dating that person? Purity is still something a Christian should seek in looking for a companion. Do not let the devil steal your purity through illicit relationships and sinful carrying on. That was what the wise man was speaking of when he mentioned hot coals in Proverbs 6:28. If you play with fire, it will burn you. Likewise, if you flirt with temptation, it will overtake you. When warnings come, you should heed the warnings.

The unsaved person whom you are dating may make statements such as, "You don't really love me." Is that not what Delilah told Samson? Judges 16:15a reads, "And she said unto him, [Delilah was not a woman that God had sent. This was not God's perfect will. Samson played around and went contrary to what God had told him to do.] How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me?"

Young person, a worldly person would want you to stay out late at night and go park in the dark. Does the devil work this way? Yes, he does. These are

warnings that will protect your young, beautiful life and give you a beautiful future. Someone said, "The forbidden thing indulged in will gradually entrench itself in your moral being, and if not mortified by the Spirit of God, it will become a part of you." The wise man said in Proverbs 4:23, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

Let me give you one more point to think about concerning warning signs. How about worldly associations? The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 15:33, "Be not deceived [when the Apostle Paul wrote those three words, he was letting people know that many fall prey and are deceived by this very thing]: evil communications [the Greek says 'companionships'] corrupt good manners." Good moral character is corrupted through wrong associations.

The book entitled "Twice Pardoned" tells of a man who was merely the driver of a vehicle. Two men had gone into a store to rob it and one man shot an individual who died soon afterwards. One man who was merely the driver of that vehicle was tried and convicted for two life sentences. Your associations will affect your thinking and your life. They affect your adornment and what you wear. People are affected by their associations. You may say, "Well, he wears that and claims to be a Christian, so I guess I can too." Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:12 not to measure yourselves by yourselves; it is not wise. You cannot reject God's warnings, compromise your stand, and keep your godly example and influence. It does not work that way.

The wise man said in Ecclesiastes 12:1, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them [or the

reaping years]." Young person, the devil works through these avenues to engulf you, to diffuse your light, and eventually to ruin you in the end. Millions are bound by smoking, alcohol, and gambling habits. Most of the world is bound by fleshly lusts and worldly associations. A warning sign means nothing unless it is heeded. As I gave the example in part 1 in the previous issue, of Cape Kiwanda in Oregon, bigger signs and lighted signs will not do any good unless people obey the warning.

Is there something in your life that you have been warned against, yet you feel that you will be the exception to the rule? God is warning you, "Do not do it." Many parents are influenced by an unsaved companion when they want to move them away from the church. They move when they should not have moved.

A Christian was asked one time, "What is the secret of remaining faithful?" The Christian replied, "Mind the checks." In other words, when that still, small voice speaks to you, you ought to listen. When you listen to all the dealings with your heart, God makes you a stronger Christian. On the other hand, if you disregard the warnings, as the songwriter said, "Slighted the warnings repeated," eventually the Holy Spirit will go away, and God will leave you to die in your

sins.

How is it with you? Are there warnings in your life that God has talked to you about that you failed to heed? Maybe you have gone beyond the warning signs. Now is your opportunity to come back on this side of the warning sign. You are not dead yet. God is still talking to you, so it is not too late. The admonition from God, from the Word of God, from the Voice inside you, is saying: "You are in the wrong. You are in sin. You have done something that you know you should not be doing. You are into something that you should not be in." Now is the time to come back on this side of the warning sign.

A pastor may warn individuals several times about an impending danger and about playing around with that fiery temptation. Why does a pastor warn them several times? They do not listen. I am sure every pastor would like to be able to say something only one time, but some people do not listen. He has to do as Ezekiel did in the course of five Scriptures: he warned the people seven times. Why? So they would pay attention and wake up to the error of their ways and realize that the condition they were in was not good.

Oh, how you need to listen and heed the warnings. The songwriter said, "*Careless soul, oh, heed the warning.*" Are you bound by some sin and cannot seem to

get yourself free? God has the power to free you from that sin. The devil promises liberty while he himself is bound. If you are bound, you have no liberty or freedom. You have no power to stay saved except with God. That is the reason that people, on their own, cannot quit smoking, cheating, gambling, drinking alcohol, and partaking of worldly lusts. They just give in to those vices. They cannot stop because there is no power with the enemy; it is with God.

Young person, how is it with you? Have you stepped beyond the warning signs? Do not put off making a move until tomorrow. We are not promised tomorrow. We are not promised another moment. If God is talking to you, if He has warned you, that is a blessing. If you were traveling along and a bridge was out, would you rather someone warn you about the bridge being out or just let you go on? It would not be kind just to let you go on. Love is telling you the truth, and I am telling you the truth. Dear one, do not start down the road of sin, because it will engulf itself around you and bind you. If you have a need, God has sent out the warnings. Now you need to obey the warnings while the day of opportunity is still here.

Brother Reggie Stegmeier

**If you stop to think
BEFORE you speak,
you won't have to worry AFTERWARD
about what you said BEFORE.**

There Is Yet Hope!

"Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? Saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."

Jeremiah 18:3-4,6



Failure is never a pleasant thing for anyone to experience in life. However, not too many people can say they have never slipped or come up short since they began their journey with the Lord. Failure often comes as the result of neglect to a known duty or command. Perhaps it was carelessness during a serious time of trial. On the other hand, it may be the result of taking the warnings of God too lightly. In any event, the individual can end up falling away. Instead of humbling himself before the Lord and acknowledging his error, he chooses to throw in the towel, so to speak. Then he no longer possesses the joy and the blessings of salvation. His life has once again become entangled with a yoke of bondage.

The above Scriptures reveal God's love and patience toward those who have been tarnished with failure. Notice what the potter can do with clay that is soft and pliable in his hands. Although the vessel has become marred, he is ready to put the vessel back on the wheel. He desires to rework it and to make it beautiful again. A person's failure can be turned into success and victory. As the Lord patiently worked with old Israel, He is yet willing to work with others today. Only He can take the broken pieces of a man or a woman's life and put them back together again. The miraculous work is performed when the vessel is fully yielded into the hands of the Great Potter.

There is good news for those who have been marred by sin and failure. There is hope! Yes, you can actually start afresh with the Lord and be lifted to success and enjoy victory in your soul. Just bring your life that has been marred and lay it at the feet of Jesus and trust His tender mercy. Do not allow the transgressions of the past to bring you to total ruin with no remedy. Nothing can be done with clay that has become hard and stiff. When it gets to that point, all that is left is to cast it off.

God is affording you the opportunity of allowing your past failures or departure from the faith to actually become a steppingstone. You need to allow this misguided move to teach you a lesson instead of it being a stumbling block. You are being given a chance to turn from sin and evil by returning to the strait and narrow way that the Lord has chosen for you. If you will seek the Savior with all your heart, He will surely be found. He will turn your past defeat into sweet victory and make your life a radiant glow to those around you. There is yet hope!

Some may feel that they will never be able to get back to the Lord and be beneficial in His kingdom. First of all, you must abandon these negative thoughts and feelings. When God saves a soul, He does a thorough transforming work on each heart. God wants all men everywhere to be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth. He has a

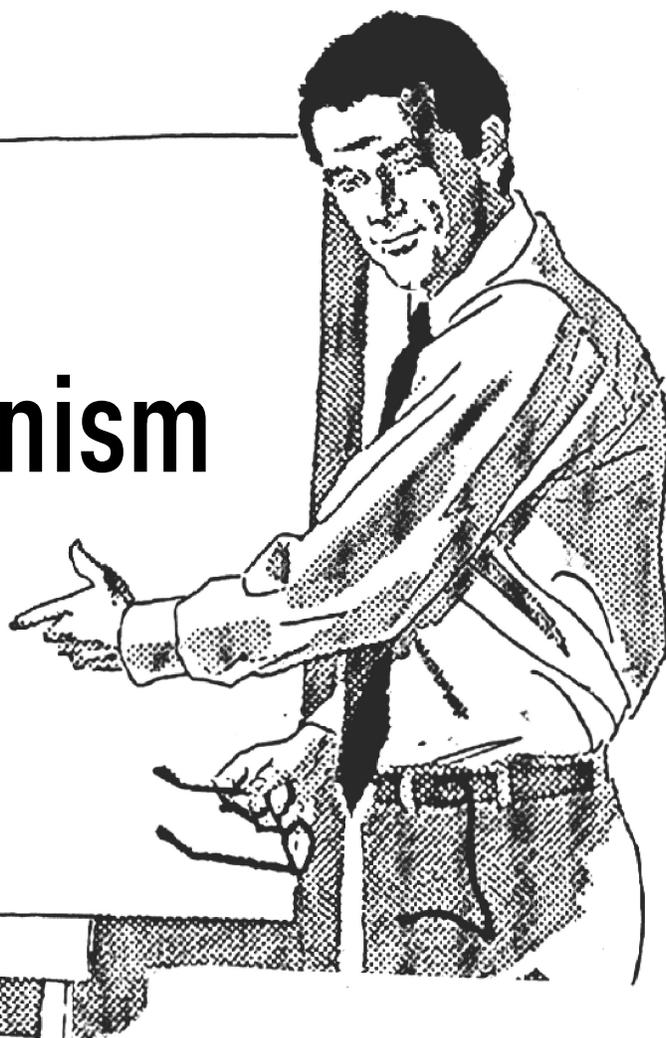
special place and purpose for each one to fill.

Allow me to remind you of the man David, who was once a very special vessel in the Lord's hand. He was especially gifted and mightily used of God, yet he failed miserably. Through neglect and carelessness, David gave vent to his fleshly desires that led him into deep degradation. His deed began with lust—just a look—then he went on to commit adultery, and he murdered an innocent man. In Psalm 51 we find that David pleaded for God's mercy and forgiveness. God was certainly stirred with David's hideous crime, but He freely forgave him, reinstated him, and led him to greater heights. This example of God's kindness ought to be an encouragement to anyone who has fallen away.

Dear reader, do you have a desire to find your way into the loving arms of a merciful God? There is yet hope for your redemption if you will only turn to Him. You must acknowledge your sin and error to the Lord, and then you will once again enjoy the fellowship that comes only when your life is completely clear with the Savior.

Selected

Transhumanism



Brother Donald Orr

God's Creation Is Good

What is the love of God? John 3:16 tells us, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The correct response to God is to believe on Christ as the only Savior and to respond to the Spirit of God by taking action in the form of salvation.

What is transhumanism? It is the belief or the theory that the human race can evolve beyond its current physical and mental limitations, especially by means of science and technology. Ac-

ording to "Transhumanist Values," by Nick Bostrom, we read: "Transhumanism is a loosely defined movement that has developed gradually over the last two decades. It promotes an interdisciplinary approach to understanding and evaluating the opportunities for enhancing the human condition and the human organism opened up by the advancement of technology."

Another reference to transhumanism states, "Transhumanism is based on the premise that the human species in its current form is not the end of our development but rather a comparatively early phase." In other

words, some people think they can transcend beyond their current mental and physical abilities to a super state and almost live forever. They believe that all conditions that impede this process will be eliminated by the use of science and technology. Also, they think that all the conditions that impede living forever will be eliminated.

Some would like to outdo what God said in Genesis 1:31, which states, "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." God created the heavens and the

earth, and all the things that he created that we can touch, feel, see, and hear. On the sixth day, he said it was good. Everything that God created was good, but we have a movement today that says what God did is not good enough and they can do a better job.

As a society today, we are constantly being bombarded with elements of this movement. I would like you to read some excerpts from a book entitled *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology* by Ray Kurzweil. He stated, "The Singularity is an era in which our intelligence will become increasingly nonbiological and trillions of times more powerful than it is today—the dawning of a new civilization that will enable us to transcend our biological limitations and amplify our creativity."

You might say this is all "bologna." What is bologna? Bologna is a mixture of all kinds of meat cuts, some good and some bad, all squeezed into a roll. Transhumanism is like bologna, because there is some good and some bad mixed in it. Some say, "Transhumanism will never happen." Article headlines reveal there are some very determined people who are trying to make it happen. Where is God in all this business? That is a good question. God's Word always has the final say. We can stand on the Word of God.

Revelation 20:12 says, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." God is going to have the final say, and everything will be brought into judgment.

From the book entitled *The Resurrection, Transhumanism, and the Singularity* by Paul McGuire,

we read this excerpt:

The science of Transhumanism has entered into the mainstream through Hollywood movies like *Transcendence*, *Divergent*, *Avatar*, *Captain America*, *Interstellar*, and countless other films. Ray Kurzweil of Google, whom many call the father of the modern Transhumanist movement has introduced the concept that death, disease, and aging can be overcome through new scientific breakthroughs. Transhumanism is the new religion of The Singularity [that is an era in which our intelligence is becoming increasingly nonbiological], which offers Man a technological resurrection from death and entrance into an artificial heaven called the World Brain or the Hive Mind. [No doubt, you have heard references to the Cloud? This is another extension of that.]

Transhumanism, which does offer on varying levels real potential benefits to Mankind, in the end becomes a technological alternative to Jesus Christ's offer to Mankind of a real resurrection from death and true eternal life. The question is, Can Transhumanism truly offer a viable resurrection from death and real eternal life, and not just a virtual one?

New generations of men and women do not want their bodies and minds to grow old like their parents and grandparents and are looking to the science of Transhumanism to grant them a Transhumanist immortality. Growing numbers of people around the world are demanding that their governments start massive funding for anti-aging research. Who would not want the governments of the world to stop spending money on bloated bureaucracies and wars and start funding anti-aging technologies [as a side note, I read in another article that one of the people pushing this said that their research is more important than feeding starving

children in Africa; that lets you know where the mind-set is]?

Anti-aging sciences and technologies which would include nutrition, exercise, vitamins, herbs, hormonal therapies, meditation, brain wave research, genetics, DNA, drugs, computers, computer-brain interfaces, uploading human consciousness from a dying body into a new cloned body, an interspecies breeding of animal/human and some believe Nephilim DNA [from the giants of old, back in Genesis, taking their DNA and morphing it to create a super person] in order to create super human beings is just the tip of the Transhumanist revolution.

A great deal of this research is good and there are no reasons that any of us should age, get sick, and die prematurely. But in addition to the moral and ethical problems of some areas of research, the idea that an artificial immortality can be achieved through Transhumanist science and technology enters into a theological domain that the proponents of Transhumanism do not fully understand.

Advancements in science have enabled people to live longer than they did in the 1950s or before. People are living a lot longer today. Through advancements, the age span is greater than it used to be. Today we have medications that fight infections. Years ago, a simple infection killed many people, but now they have medications that can help. Also, they have replacement body parts when things wear out.

Many people have had hips, knees, and shoulders replaced. That is an advancement in science that helps to extend quality of life. Obviously, these medical advances cannot make you live forever, and I find no fault with them. However, we always need to keep in mind that some people are not happy to stop there. They

want to take it to another level.

The excerpt continues:

Ideally, when we deal with science, we should be dealing with empirical evidence and scientific fact. The question has to be asked, "Why is it that men and women age, get sick, and die?" On one level it could be said that the problem exists in their DNA coding and things like nutrition. . . .

Again, although many of the goals of Transhumanism may be admirable, Transhumanism is looked upon as the way man can achieve immortality and a kind of resurrection from death through science and technology.

The Singularity Deception

Psalm 90:10 reads, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." Hebrews 9:27 tells us, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Did God make us to be physically capable of living forever? No, but He did place within us a soul that will live forever.

In one sense I see this Transhumanist movement as a totally self-centered movement. They are no different from the early explorers who were searching for the fabled Fountain of Youth. Ponce de Leon searched for it. What is the Fountain of Youth? It is a spring that supposedly restores the youth of anyone who drinks or bathes in its waters. Many searched for it, hoping that they could reach that pool of water, either to drink of it or to bathe in it, and never grow old and live forever.

We each want to live a long life; there is no doubt about that. As a Christian, the only entrance to Heaven is to die or to be living

when the Lord returns. The Bible is clear about that. In Heaven no one will suffer sickness or death, so in one sense, they are trying to achieve Heaven on earth.

One major wireless telecommunication company aired a commercial promoting the singularity deception. Their commercial for a certain new phone embraces many concepts wrapped up in Singularity, which promotes that the moment scientists achieve this, humanity will be able to fully integrate with computers and achieve immortality through advanced technology. The idea of achieving eternal life outside of God is an aspiration that is totally flawed. In the commercial they have a man who sits in a chair with a device stuck to him and basically uploads his brain. You may say, "That is a commercial, and it is merely science fiction." Nevertheless, scientists are trying to make it happen.

How about this headline? "An iPhone Inside Your Brain? The H+ Digital Film Series." An article regarding this reads:

In a chilling foreshadow of the coming *Singularity*, the moment that technology can fully interface with the human body, the H+ digital films, a series of internet short movies produced by acclaimed film director Bryan Singer, depicts a world in which wireless smartphone technology is implanted directly into the brain via a microchip implant. *Beginning and End* has detailed how the media and Hollywood can use film to plant or prepare society for a certain idea. In this series, the genocidal consequences of RFID (Radio-Frequency Identification) microchip technology are portrayed as a third of the world population is killed through their microchip implants.

This film series is endeavoring to show the dangers of this technol-

ogy.

Some people are clamoring to be microchipped. I know that many people say that is the mark of the beast, but other people want to have these computer chips embedded in them. I saw a picture one time of a fellow who had a chip implanted in his arm, and it looked hideous.

"Designer Babies"

How about this headline? "Designer Babies—Playing God in the Womb." Did you know that two years ago, a company actually patented the process to design what type of baby you want? If you want a blond-haired, blue-eyed male that has strong arms and legs, they can make it happen; that is scary. A lot of the articles that I came across regarding this were from several years ago.

A team of scientists at the University of Washington has developed a message to predict the entire genetic code of a fetus by taking a small blood sample from the mother and the saliva of the father. They believe that the test will be able to screen for thirty-five hundred genetic disorders, allowing expectant parents to selectively choose the type of baby they want. Coupled with this is the thought of aborting any fetus that seems to be undesirable.

In other words, if the test determines that your child is going to have problems, they tell you that you might want to abort that baby because it will have problems later in life and that genetic testing proves it and shows that. This is where science is going. Doctors are pushing for certain screening when the expectant mother goes in to be checked.

Another article entitled "Frighteningly Real Artificial Intelligence Robot—Sign of Things to Come?" It states, "Artificial intelligence has progressed

beyond what we can only imagine." This is really disturbing. I have read a lot of articles where people who really know about artificial intelligence are truly frightened by this technology.

The last article is from a United Kingdom laboratory. It has secretly made one hundred fifty-five human-animal hybrids. In reports that seem straight out of science fiction movies, three labs in the United Kingdom at King's College London, Newcastle University, and Warwick University have reported that they have created an astounding one hundred fifty-five human-animal hybrids mixing the DNA of humans with the genetic material of animals. This came straight from the U.K. Daily. Their reporters reported that. The Transhumanist movement actually had a person running for president in the last presidential election.

I want you to read some excerpts from an article by Wesley J. Smith entitled "The Trouble With Transhumanism."

For those who may not know, transhumanism is a Utopian social movement and philosophy that looks toward a massive breakthrough in technological prowess, known as 'the singularity,' that will open the door for transhumanists to seize control of human evolution [obviously, they believe in evolution] and create a post human species of near immortals.

Transhumanists believe in their ageless post human future with a desperate passion that borders on—and often serves as a substitute for religious faith [it is like a religion for them]. Also, when it comes to transhumanism, much attention is paid to immortality and quirky personalities, with little attention paid to transhumanism's poisonous core beliefs and goals.

The Dangers of Advancing Technology

The news media is promoting this whole thought. Those who have a lot of money want to achieve some type of immortality and be able to live forever. Even though they know they are dying, they have paid lots of money either to have their whole body cryogenically frozen or to have their head frozen. Therefore, at some point in the future, they hope to have their head attached to a new body or cure cancer or whatever disease they have. At some point in the future, they want someone to thaw them out so they can come back to life.

You may ask, "Is it only the wealthy people who are going for this?" To a great degree it is, but the whole thought process is being entwined with everything that we have in society. In one sense it is affecting us all. The research is being pushed. They would rather spend money on research for this than to help people who are truly in need. We are in a transhumanistic world when some prefer prosthetics over natural limbs. The key social indicator of the arrival of transhumanism is when people find themselves seriously considering having their own fleshly hand cut off and replaced with a cybernetic one.

The technology now in prosthetics is amazing, and it is advancing by leaps and bounds. The technology is so advanced that one can have the thought to close his hand or open his hand, and it happens. For some people to have the ability to do that with an artificial limb is so inviting that they have actually had their good hand cut off and had an artificial one put on. Why is that? Movies promote this thought of super human beings and being able to do things that no one else can do.

A long time ago, I read a book

about a private investigator who was fairly wealthy, and he had all kinds of attachments on him. This was more than twenty years ago. He had all kinds of attachments for his prosthetic arm. He had a hook, an actual hand, a built-in gun, built-in knives, as well as other gadgets. In the story the government actually made him register his arm as a lethal weapon. Basically he could grab someone and break his arm.

Today we have progressed to nano-technology and micro-technology to do amazing things. Now, for those who have lost a limb, it is a great thing to be able to walk again or to be able to use their hands. The problem is, we have progressed beyond extending the quality of life to being able to do the things that they were unable to do when God created them. Those artificial technologies of prosthetic limbs and so on have a good side, but researchers have gone beyond that.

Another excerpt from "The Trouble With Transhumanism" reads:

Needless to say, transhumanists support brain implants and other measures taken to improve intelligence (never the ability to love, I noticed)—including the ludicrous notion of uploading individual human consciousness into computers. And, of course, in keeping with the transhumanism's desperate materialist yearning for a corporeal eternal life . . . a world when the average age exceeds 120.

That is where this movement is going. They want to push for everyone to live to be at least one hundred twenty years of age. They are developing computers now that they can hook you up to, and basically somewhat read your thoughts. A person is connected to a special scanning device that can read electrical

impulses. A human brain is the last thing they are trying to understand, but it is very complex.

Did you know that back in the 1950s, experiments were done that determined frequencies to enable the body to do anything they wanted it to do? When the correct frequency was applied to someone, that person would do exactly what they wanted the person to do, including causing one to have wild thoughts of all kinds and panic thoughts.

The article goes on to say:

Things go downhill steeply from here. . . . Dripping with eugenics values, Munkittrick expects future children to come into being via IVF (In Viro Fertilization) or cloning technologies that will permit "genetic modification, health screening, and eventually synthetic wombs" to allow "the child with the best possibility of a good life to be born." (Eugenics means "good in birth.") At the same time, freedom to have children would be legally constrained. [You would not be allowed to have children whenever you wanted to. You would be required to have a parent license to have children.] Thus, state control and official permitting over human manufacturing—including custom design, special order, quality and inventory control—are core goals of the transhumanist social revolution. [Anyone who is in manufacturing knows exactly what I am talking about. They want to apply that to humans.]

Transhumanism foresees doctors as mere order takers and anything goes public morality that would be sanctioned by the state. . . . Actions such as abortion, assisted suicide, voluntary amputation [as I told you, if a person wanted to cut off his arm, he could do that], gender reassignment [you have heard of that], surrogate pregnancy, body modification, legal unions among adults of

any number, and consenting sexual practices would be protected under law.

The door has already been opened to those things, so next it is going to be "anything goes." For example, if a person wanted to marry a cow, he could marry a cow. If you wanted to marry a chicken, he could marry a chicken. It seems ludicrous, but they have already opened the door.

Wesley Smith's article continues:

In such a world, the value of the human life would cease to be intrinsic, but would become relative. . . . If we are going to preserve a culture founded on the Judeo/Christian ideal of equal human dignity and the obligation for individual behavioral restraint, transhumanism must be resisted intellectually and rejected, both in our public policies and the ways in which we lead our personal lives.

This is scary stuff, but I know the One in control of everything, and His name is Jehovah, the Mighty God.

God Confounded Their Language

Genesis 11:1-9 reads: "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

"And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which

the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."

What do we see here? The people were trying to do something without consulting God. They had no acknowledgment of God. They said, "Let us build us a city and a tower . . . and let us make us a name." As you can see, they made no mention of God or of what God wanted. It was what they wanted, and they were all together as one people in their endeavor without regard for God. Building a tower to Heaven has been a question for a lot of people. For what purpose? Why would they want to build a tower to Heaven? Is it possible that they were building a tower to Heaven to sacrifice to some other god and the true God saw what they were getting ready to build? That is possible. Whatever the reason, God confounded their language, and that was the end of it. That endeavor recorded in the Book of Genesis is there to let us know that when man thinks he is trying to do something extra special without God's help, God has the last word. God stepped in and showed them that He was the great Creator and that He was in charge.

Can you imagine being there that day? We do not know how many people were there. Perhaps there were thousands of people.

All of a sudden, they could not understand the others beside them. When they turned to others to try to talk to them, they could not understand one another. Soon the people started dividing up. No doubt, it was quite an ordeal to find others who spoke the same language. Therefore, those people went their separate ways upon the earth.

Attempting to Achieve a Godlike Status

Genesis 3:1-13 reads: "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. [If you back up to Genesis 2:17, you will see that God spoke that commandment to Adam. God did not tell Adam not to touch it, but rather He said not to eat of it. So there is a mixture of truth and error here.]

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the

garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

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

The serpent told Eve, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Satan is still whispering the same thing to people today. He tells individuals: "You shall be as a god. You don't need the Creator. He didn't do a good enough job. You could do better." Too many people are falling for that. The enemy of souls has convinced a lot of people that they can achieve a godlike status, just as Eve thought. They have accepted a lie from the enemy of souls.

Who is God? He is the Creator, the Supreme Being who has created all things. God is not an old gray-haired man on top of a mountain somewhere, issuing commands. He is a Spirit. He was before, and He shall be after. That is a deep statement. After what? He was before everything, and He shall be after everything. His thoughts are far above our thoughts. We are just lumps of dirt. Many people think they are really something, but in reality, we are just specks of dirt. Some people think they are so special that they can improve upon God, but they are so wrong.

Mankind wants to get his

hands into God's realm. Some say: "There is no God. If there was a God, He would not let this and that happen." They want to go beyond what God created them for. They say, "We can use our knowledge and ability to change things, and it would be more pleasing to us." They want to change the body, change the mind, achieve longevity of life and maybe live forever.

They want to use science and technology to please themselves. They fail to acknowledge that in order for them to have anything to work with in the first place, those things had to be created by a higher power. Where does it all come from? They do not want to acknowledge God. They do not want to acknowledge the fact that they are responsible to God. They want to be responsible only to themselves. They are selfish, and it is a selfish desire movement. They fail to acknowledge that in order for them to have anything to work with in the first place, those things had to be created by a higher power, meaning our Creator: God. The people in this movement will continue to play God until our world is a much greater mess; it is a mess now, which is far from the perfect world that God created.

Will God Find Faith When Christ Returns?

Obviously, the enemy of souls is laughing with pleasure because the world is a mess, and all these people are falling into his trap. Yet, the awesomeness is, if they would turn from their evil ways, that same God would forgive them and give them a perfect world and the true freedom for which they are longing. That is the amazing part about it. If they would turn to the same God that they do not want to acknowledge, He would bless them in so many ways.

Going back to the question at

the beginning, How long will mankind respond to the love of God? My fear is that technology will replace feeling the need for God. We read in Luke 18:7-9: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others."

Shall God find faith when Christ returns? I have thought about that question many, many times with the condition of our world and all the things going on. Will He find faith? Those who do not want to acknowledge God are not going to have faith. I thought about the world today. If you have an ache, there is a pill for that. If you have depression, there is a pill for that. If you need to feel better, there is a drug for that too. If you need to change your mood or increase your energy, there is another pill for that. Are you suffering with grief? Scientists are working on an up-load of intelligence for the needy brain. If you need super powers, they are working to supply that. They want to have a cure or a fix for everything.

Technology is great when it is used properly. I fear that technology and the advancements in science and technology in this transhumanism movement is, of course, extreme in terms of where this is going. These things would be readily available and would take the place of asking God for help.

Fewer people believe in divine healing today. Why is that? There is a pill for this and a pill for that. If someone has a problem, he goes to a doctor who might be able to take care of about anything, so what do they

need God for? Someone can supply a cure or a fix for just about everything except for the sin that sends one to hell. There is no cure for that except the blood of Jesus Christ. There is no technological cure for the longing that God places down inside each human being, a longing to have communion restored with God by the power of the Holy Spirit. There is no scientific or utopian solution for that. No, only the blood of Jesus Christ can restore the communion back to the Creator, the One who created us.

God Will Have the Final Say

Faith in God is disappearing from society today. In general, the religious world accepts just about everything. More and more denominations are falling into the trap door that has been opened. More and more of them are saying, "I think this is okay now and that is okay." Man thinks he can create better than God. Man thinks he can exist without God. I believe that, just as at the tower of Babel, God will step in and have the final say, but this time it will be with fire.

We read in the Book of Genesis that God confounded the people's language, and then He destroyed mankind with water. Do you remember Noah? Genesis 6:4-6 tells us: "There were giants in the earth in those days; [those are some of the ones they are trying to gather DNA from] and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." What

happened? The world was destroyed with water, and only eight souls were saved. God stepped in and had the final word because their minds and hearts were on evil continually.

A lot of people have said that the civilization at Noah's time was far more advanced than what we might think, but what happened in the Flood? Everything was destroyed. This movement of transhumanism is entangled in our society in many more ways than one. It is our responsibility as the Church of God to build up faith in God by our actions, by our speech, and by our lives. I am not looking to live forever on this doomed planet called earth.

The planet really is doomed. Did you know that? God said He is going to destroy the earth with fire; therefore, the planet is doomed. We are just strangers and pilgrims passing through this earth. A home is awaiting in God's Heaven where I will live forever with the Creator of all things, and that is God Almighty. Do not let the enemy of souls sell you the same lie that he did Eve. Remember, Satan said to Eve, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," thereby achieving a godlike status. Many people have accepted that, and the enemy has convinced them that through the use of science and technology, they can live forever and all those things in transhumanism can be achieved. Thus, they can evolve beyond the current state into something hybrid or cloned or morphed.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 states, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter [this Scripture is so appropriate]: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Fear God, keep His commandments, have faith in Him, believe on the Son Jesus Christ, and you shall have eternal life. Friend, you need to trust God. He will never fail you.

(Compact Disc TR-1742)

God and the Impossible

In Matthew 8:23-27 we read about Jesus and His disciples in a great storm on the sea. We read in verses 23-24: "And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep." This storm that arose while the disciples and Jesus were out on the sea in the ship was not an ordinary storm. We are not too alarmed when a storm rises and it is just like any other storm. Even spiritually, some things come into our lives. We liken them to storms. We say that we are passing through deep waters.

No, this storm was not an ordinary one. It was a "great tempest." It was unusually and entirely different from the usual storms that arose on the sea. Sometimes for God to work out the impossibilities in our lives, the unusual or extremely difficult storms arise, and we are perplexed beyond reason. The ship in which Jesus and His disciples were was covered with the waves. The ship was next door to sinking with the weight of the water that was filling the ship.

Often in our lives, we are likened to ships on the sea of life, and our small bark is in the midst of severe persecution or trying circumstances. Are you working under severe trials? Maybe your employer is extremely unreasonable. Perhaps you are living in a neighborhood where ungodliness is rampant, and you cannot find another place to live. You are discouraged because your children are forced to associate with these ungodly ones. Maybe your body is bent with pain, and you are forced to endure affliction that human hands cannot relieve. Your ship is sailing in a "great tempest." Your circumstances may well nigh engulf you. It may seem that you are about to sink beneath the waves of circumstances and testings.

It is discouraging enough to be in such a situation. However, we read further in this portion of Scripture and find that Jesus "was asleep." Have you ever passed through trials and unusual situations where it seemed that God was far away? Has it ever seemed that when you prayed that the heavens were as brass? Have you been tempted to think that God does not care, and you are so

alone in the midst of a severe trial? Friend, God knows all about you. He knows what you are passing through. He understands your frailties. He knows when the way is hard. He has a lesson for you to learn. There are some lessons that you could never learn any other way than through the way He is now taking you. The hard things come into our lives to draw us closer to Him, to lean harder on Him, and to live more like Him. If the hard things did not come, we might live selfish, self-pitying, carnal lives. We should thank God for what has come into our lives, even though it seems as though the Lord "was asleep."

In the midst of the disciples' trial, they went to the Lord Jesus. I want you to notice that they did not run frantically to one another and wring their hands and cover their faces and exclaim: "What should we do? What should we do?" John did not take Jesus aside to a private corner and say: "We must have a private talk about this. Tell me what You would do now." Andrew did not grasp Peter by the arm and cry out: "You never went through anything like this. You cannot possibly under-

stand what I am passing through!" No, we read that the disciples went to the Lord Jesus. They did not just stand over His sleeping form and sigh: "Oh, if only Jesus would help us! If only He could tell us what to do!" No, they meant business with the Lord, and so they "awoke him." They were in earnest. They needed help right at that moment. They did not wait until things were better or until the storm abated. They awoke Jesus and pleaded for help. You can read in verse 25 that they said, "Lord, save us: we perish." Have you ever prayed such a prayer when all things seemed to be against you and you saw no help coming your way? Have you ever prayed: "Lord, I am helpless in this situation. I do not know what to do. I don't think I can stand this trial much longer. Lord, give me grace, give me mercy. Show me that You love me. Save me, or else I will per-

ish"? When you mean business with God, then He will mean business with you.

Next, the Lord Jesus came to His disciples' rescue. He delivered them! How did He go about to deliver them? I want you to notice that before deliverance came, rebuke came first. Some dear souls continue through life with the storms of life constantly engulfing them. Why? It may be because they rebel against the Lord's rebuke. They want deliverance from the hard things that come into their lives without the rebuke that the Lord must give them first. For many, many years, they live under a constrain. Before deliverance comes, there must be a willingness and entire surrender and commitment to the Lord for anything that comes from the Lord as a rebuke or correction. The Lord said to the disciples in verse 26, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" The Lord rebuked them for their fear-

fulness and their faithlessness. How many today are guilty of the very same thing! Many are living in perplexity and doubt because they are fearful of the things that have come into their lives. Their faith is weak and small when they see the huge waves of discouraging afflictions. They need that rebuke from the Lord to get them on their feet, so to speak.

Then, and only then, does the Lord get busy in behalf of their circumstances. Verse 26b tells us, "Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm." The great calms that come into our lives are so welcome. But remember, there is a great price for the great calm, a great and complete surrender to the Lord.

Selected

The Tither's Surprise

The Christian who begins to tithe will have at least six surprises. He will be surprised—

1. At the amount of money he has for the Lord's work.
2. At the ease in meeting his own obligations with the nine tenths.
3. At the deepening of his spiritual life in paying the tithe.
4. At the ease in going from one tenth to a larger giving.
5. At the prudent disposal afforded to a faithful and wise steward over the nine tenths that remain.
6. At himself in not adopting the plan sooner.

Meeting Announcements

MT. PLEASANT, PA

April 20

Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA
Service time: 10:30 a.m. A meal will be 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).
For further information contact: Pastor Paul W. Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666. Telephone: 724-547-2151

SUMMERSVILLE, WV

April 29-May 5

Revival & Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd., Summersville, WV 26651
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
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.
Discounted lodging may be obtained at the Econolodge by calling 304-872-6900
Tell them you are there for the Church of God meeting.
Visit the website @ www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com
For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders. Telephone: 304-872-4047

MT. PLEASANT, PA

May 6-12

Revival: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
Service times: Monday-Saturday 7 p.m. each evening; 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

NEWARK, OH

June 16-23

Camp Meeting: Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055
The first service begins Sunday 10 a.m. Three services daily: 10 a.m., 3 p.m. & 7 p.m.
Please make reservations in advance, if possible.
For lodging/camper reservations, please contact Bro. or Sis. Bush at 740-345-1213.
For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker. Telephone: 740-344-2543

MUNCIE, IN

July 10-14

Camp Meeting: Ninth Street Church of God, 125 S 9th Street, New Castle, IN 47362. The camp meeting will be held at the Central Friends' Campground, 5601 E County Road 650 S, Muncie, Indiana. Service times: The first service begins Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m.; Thursday - Saturday 9 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.; Sunday 9 a.m. For lodging/camping reservations, please contact Sis. Michelle Gingerich @ 765-808-8705
For more information contact: Pastor Allen Polston. Telephone: 765-521-8284

CANBY, OR

July 22-28

Camp Meeting: Church of God, 522 NW 2nd Ave., Canby, OR 97013
The first service begins Monday at 7 p.m. Two services daily: 10:30 a.m. & 7 p.m.
Please make reservations in advance, if possible.
For further information contact: Pastor E. David Stegmeier. Telephone: 503-266-9297

NEWARK, OH

August 4-11

Camp Meeting: Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055
The first service begins Sunday 10 a.m. Three services daily: 10 a.m., 3 p.m. & 7 p.m.
Please make reservations in advance, if possible.
For lodging/camper reservations, please contact Bro. or Sis. Bush at 740-345-1213.
For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker. Telephone: 740-344-2543

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