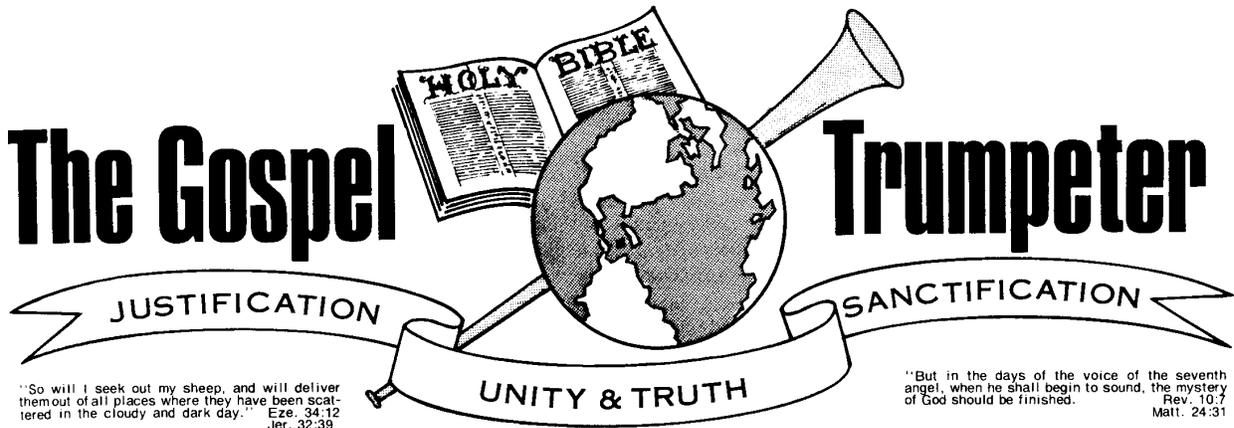


# The Gospel Trumpeter



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 December 2019 No. 12



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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Vol. 49 December 2019 No. 12

# Guest Editorial

## Time for Winter 2019 Camp Meeting

In just a few weeks, on December 26, 2019, saints will gather together again for the winter camp meeting at God's Acres. It is a time to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. This is always a special time when we can come into a godly atmosphere and have our souls renewed and refreshed. What a wonderful opportunity to feast on heavenly manna that comes from above and to enjoy the good things God has to share with us!

These are times for God's people to be encouraged and uplifted. The Lord wants to enrich each one with greater understanding and challenge His saints to keep pressing forward in the battle for Truth and right. The Psalmist David said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD." David knew the importance of going into the house of the Lord. It was there that he (as well as we) received spiritual instructions for the godly life that we are to live.

It is plain to see that the forces of evil have been turned loose against the people of God. These are forces led by Satan, who is determined to destroy the Christian's faith and love for God and for one another. His purpose is to divert as many away from the path of holiness and true righteousness as he can. Dear one, we need all the solid, Biblical instruction

and direction that we can receive. Learning about the good old paths and understanding the things that please God are more needful today than ever before. The Hebrew writer stirs our hearts not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together" (Hebrews 10:25).

It is hearing the Word of God, believing, and obeying that brings us victory. James tells us, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). This is not a time for saints to relax their efforts or to become slothful in their living. It is a time, as Paul said in 1 Timothy 6:12, to "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." The wise man also instructs us to "Buy the truth, and sell it not" (Proverbs 23:23). It is vitally important that we do not allow the Truth to slip away from us. We must always remember that it is the Truth that brings freedom and spiritual stability.

Camp meeting is held for your spiritual prosperity and blessing. It is our desire to provide a place for each of you to come and learn of God's ways. We would like to encourage you to do all you can to be here so that your soul may be fed, enlightened, and blessed. We write these things to stir up your pure minds and to "provoke [you] unto love" (Hebrews 10:24). Remember, dear one, living for God takes real effort.

*[continued on page 7]*

*Luke 1:13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.*

*14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.*

*15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.*

*16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their*

*God.*

*17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*

# Are You Prepared to Meet the Lord?



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

## **The Way of Holiness**

Preparation is necessary in many areas of life. Our Scripture text tells of the announcement of the birth of John the Baptist. He was to be great in the sight of the Lord. He was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, and he was to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. John was sent as a forerunner of Christ. I want to define his role and his calling.

First, let us begin our study in prophecy. John the Baptist is de-

defined in prophecy. Isaiah 40:3-8 reads: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

"The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is

grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." In these verses of Scripture we see John the Baptist defined in prophecy.

In the New Testament, we find that John the Baptist is defined in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 3. Verses 4-6 state: "As it is written in the book of the

words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

What is this prophetic message in the Gospel of Luke saying? It is saying that a highway is there where all can get on. This highway is straight, and everyone traveling on this highway is on one level. The mountains and the hills shall be made low, the valleys shall be exalted, the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places will be made smooth.

The Gospel writer was saying that the way is now open, a way of holiness, and all who pass this way will come only one way. They all are going to line up with the Word of God. The Prophet Isaiah talked about a highway, and all those who are traveling upon it are holy.

Isaiah 35:8 tells us, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness [the only way you can get on this highway is to be holy]; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." All of this was in preparation for the Lord. Repentance and bringing forth fruit was a requirement before the Spirit of God could ever make His abode in an individual's life.

### **Getting Ready to Meet God**

In everyday life there are preparations. Every season, every month, every week, and every day, some kind of readiness is needed. Before I bring a message, I must prepare for it. I do not wait until the last minute.

We are constantly preparing for something. Each year there are graduation parties, graduation services, wedding rehearsals, and wedding ceremonies. We prepare for vacations, retirement, building, buying, shopping, and the list goes on and on. The Scripture says that John the Baptist came to make preparation for the Lord and to make the path straight. The Scripture lets us know that John was sent to remove all obstructions and to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah. He was like a herald going before an army on the march to make preparation for Christ's coming.

We prepare for tornados and stay tuned to radio announcements. We do not want to be caught unprepared. These things have been provided for us to prepare for coming events. Think of how devastating it could be if we did not have a radio to be notified of these things.

John was sent to prepare the way for the Lord. God has also sent help your way to help you prepare for the greatest event in your life: going into eternity. We need the Lord to help each of us prepare. If you are unclear in your soul, you do not have to be lost. You are lost because you choose to be lost, but you do not have to be. God has sent you help if you will heed it. God will put you on the highway of holiness and take you safely into eternity.

God has sent messages on repentance so that He can cleanse your soul and you can be made whiter than snow. You must repent to reach Heaven. God will convict you in your conscience, trouble you with His Holy Spirit, and make you feel uneasy when you commit sin. I think most people who commit sin feel a little uneasy about it. God does this so that you can prepare for eternity and to prepare you for the final Judgment.

In Amos, Chapter 4, God was

speaking to Israel. Israel had refused to return to the Lord. In verse 11 He let them know they were like Sodom and Gomorrah. They knew all about what happened there. He said in verse 12, "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare [or get ready] to meet thy God, O Israel." Preparation takes effort, and it works whether it is temporal or spiritual.

### **Heed the Warnings of God's Word**

I want you to consider some more things the Lord has provided to help you to prepare for eternity. First, you must realize that God does not like to take anyone by surprise. It would be against His nature to do that. God wants you to have time to prepare so that you will be ready when that day comes, whether it is the day Jesus returns or the day that you return to God. He wants you to be ready.

I want you to read the pleadings of the Word of God through the Prophet Ezekiel. Ezekiel 18:30-31 reads: "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

Ezekiel 33:11 states, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

What does God give to help us prepare? He gives pastors and evangelists. Now, you can refuse to listen to them; that is your

privilege. You may slander their names, and that is also your privilege. You can go out and spread discord about them, but they are still given to you to help you prepare for eternity.

You do not have to listen to the Gospel message. You can get on your cell phone and play games, look at social media, or send text messages while the message is going forth. You do not have to believe what the man of God says, but if you will believe the message and line up with it, that message will help you to prepare yourself for eternity.

In Mark 16:15-16 Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Are you prepared? People have various ways of tuning out the Gospel message as it goes forth. Some think about what they are going to do immediately after church, while others think about what they are planning to do next week. People may think about a lot of things, but they are going to miss what God has sent to help them.

Are you prepared for eternity? Have you heeded the warnings in God's Word? God's Word is full of warnings. Most of the New Testament was written to warn people who were already saved. Being a church member is not enough, being baptized in water is not enough, and attending a congregation where the Truth is preached is not enough.

### **Faithful Witnesses**

Have you taken advantage of all the help that God has sent you on this journey? God uses many things to help us along the way. Why does God do this? God does not do it just to keep Himself busy. He does it because He loves you. You have never felt

love in your life like the love of God. He loves you, and He loves to give mercy. He wants you to enjoy being with Him and His people, not only here but also throughout eternity. God uses other people who are saved. If you do not hear the Gospel preached, or maybe you will not listen to the pastor or a Sunday school teacher, God may send someone around to witness to you.

In Acts, Chapter 6, people were being converted and filled with the Holy Ghost. Verses 6-15 read: "Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

"And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words [lying and slander] against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

The disciples felt that they

did not need to leave the preaching and the teaching of the Gospel to do secular work, so they chose seven men among them who were of honest report and full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. They were to attend to the monetary transactions of the church and to make proper distribution for the needs of the poor. One of those men was named Stephen, who entered into a debate of the Word of God with several of these factions such as the Libertines, the Cyrenians, the Alexandrians, and others. Accusations were brought against Stephen, and he was taken before the council.

Stephen was filled with the Holy Ghost, and the testimony they heard was something they had never heard in their lives. Stephen was the first Christian martyr. Look at his character. He was full of faith, and he had power to work miracles. He did wonders and miracles, but those influential men stood against a true man of God. Before this persecution took place, most of it had been confined to threats and imprisonment, but this persecution had advanced since the birth of the church. When Stephen spoke to the council, their anger burst forth with rage and madness, and it could only be satisfied with the spilling of Stephen's blood.

Again, verse 9 states, "Then there arose certain of the synagogue [all these different factions joined together against Stephen], which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen [or questioning him about the Messiah]." These groups ganged up together against a man of God. Verse 10 says they were unable to resist his wisdom. They saw a man who, to them, looked like an angel of God. You talk about power! Stephen was a strong

witness. No doubt, that council had never heard a witness like that in all their days.

Stephen had wisdom in the Scriptures because of the Holy Spirit anointing him. They had to urge their men to stir up the people. The people saw three things that particular day. They saw Stephen's wisdom, the Holy Ghost anointing, and Stephen's face as an angel. However, instead of his testimony leading them to God, they resisted and their hearts were hardened immediately to the degree that they could only be satisfied by taking out the threat by death.

No matter how full of sin, envy, jealousy, strife, hatred, and anger you are, God is going to send a witness to you to testify of the Truth. Yes, the council killed Stephen because they would not accept his testimony. They refused to prepare their hearts. Although they would not prepare their hearts, God always works good out of things.

Somewhere in all this debate, this threat, and this killing, God was working. You can read of it in Acts 7:58, which states, "And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." The name Saul means "destroyer." Saul (later called Paul) could not get away from what he saw and heard that day. No doubt, he never got away from Stephen's boldness, and he saw what the council saw: the face of an angel. He heard the wisdom and witnessed the anointing of the Word of God.

### **Things God Uses to Awaken Souls**

Saul could not shake what he saw. He saw Stephen bold and fearless as Stephen looked to Heaven to get his strength. God was preparing Saul's heart. Later when Saul was on the road

to Damascus, more preparation took place. Next to Jesus Christ, Paul is one of the most talked about men in the New Testament. Wherever he went, he not only preached the Word of God but also testified of the goodness and the power of God in his life.

If you are lost, how many have witnessed to you, yet you still have not prepared your heart for eternity? The witness of Stephen was something that Saul never got away from.

What else does God use to help people to prepare their hearts for eternity? Have you ever had a close call when you were driving? Have you ever pulled out in front of someone when you really should not have? Has someone ever pulled out in front of you or have you crossed the center line on the highway? Do you ever think back in your life to a close call that you have had?

Sometimes God uses sickness to cause people to think about eternity. God will allow illnesses to come into your life to prepare you. No one likes to be sick, but when a person is really sick, it is a reminder that we are not going to be here forever. Sometimes we can get caught up in everyday living, but when we get sick, it is a reminder that we all are eternity bound souls.

My wife used to say to me, "Roger, how do you think we are going to leave this world?" I would say: "I don't have a clue. It could be an automobile accident, a sickness, or something else." We all know that we are going to leave this world someday, but before we do, God is going to allow things to prepare our hearts. These events can help clear the way for you to receive Jesus Christ and prepare your heart for eternity.

What about the tragic end of someone that you knew for sure did not portray the life of a Christian? As a pastor, I do not think

there is anything sadder than preaching the funeral of a person who did not show the fruits of repentance. Now, that person could have repented at the last moment, but when you look on the faces of the people, you can tell that they wonder and question in their own minds also.

No one likes to go to funerals. We enjoy going to weddings and social events, but not funerals. Whenever I walk into a funeral home, it has an effect on me. I do not know what it does to you. Maybe you can pass through there and it does not affect you, but it always affects me because death is the end of the physical life of all men.

### **Have You Made Preparation?**

I want you to read what the wise man, Solomon, said in Ecclesiastes 7:2-4: "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth."

What was Solomon telling people? The house of mourning deals with the soul, but the house of feasting deals with the flesh. Through the wise man, God is saying that it is much better to go to where you can get help in your soul than to go where you spend much time feasting and entertaining the body.

How about natural disasters? Does it make you think a little whenever there is talk of war? I have thought about it. What if you lived in a place where there are lots of earthquakes? Some foreign countries have tsunamis. If you lived in one of those places and knew that a tsunami was coming your way, would you be

ready for eternity?

God uses these things to prepare hearts for eternity. God always helps the believer through these things, but you have to allow them to work to prepare your life for eternity. Job 11:11-20 tells us: "For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider it? For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt. If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him; If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt

not fear: Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away: And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

"And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety. Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee. But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost."

Wouldn't it be nice if God could have His way in every heart? If God had His way,

everyone would be prepared for eternity. God desires that so much that He gave Heaven's best, His only Son, to help you to prepare your heart. Everything in life can go along fine, but things can change in a moment of time. Something could happen to you within the hour. You can be bold and say, "I don't need to do that; things are going well." Friend, sometimes changes can happen very suddenly, and you could go from the house of feasting to the house of mourning. Are you prepared to meet the Lord?

*(Compact Disc TR-2116)*

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*[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]*

To make it to Heaven will require a deep determination and consecration on your part. Regardless of the cost to make it through, it will be worth it all. Just one glimpse of Christ's dear face will amply repay whatever the cost you have suffered and endured.

Friend, it would be in your best interest, and your family's, to be in the camp meeting. What you gain will be a great blessing to you and will help you to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The sound preaching of God's Word uncovers many tricks, snares, and pitfalls that Satan uses to deceive

and overthrow the Christian. In addition to hearing the Word preached by various ministers, there are other advantages to attending the camp meeting. It is a time to share burdens and problems with other saints of God. Hearing testimonies of praise and victories won through God's grace is uplifting.

Satan tries to convince an individual that his situation is unique. He endeavors to persuade him that he is the only one who ever had a circumstance like this. However, learning about others' trials and how they have overcome them will show that we have a common salvation.

You are not alone in life, and your situation is not unique. Fellowship with the saints is a time for renewing your strength and your hope and for increasing your faith.

Brother Decker extends an invitation for you to join us at this winter camp meeting. It will be worth any effort that you put forth to attend. We ask that you pray earnestly for the winter camp meeting. God's direction and presence is surely coveted in the services. Having God in our midst as the Honored Guest is of utmost importance. He is the only hope of redemption for those who are lost.

### **The Unwelcome Visitor**

A preacher stopped by a man's house, and the man opened the door and said, "What is your business?"

"Oh, it is just to speak a little about the soul and its eternal interests, but I see that you are very busy."

"Well, yes, I am, very."

The preacher put out his hand to say "Goodbye," and drawing close to the astonished man, he whispered solemnly in his ear, "Suppose I had been Death?"

Luke 16:19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his

bosom.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come

from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

# Does Hell Exist?



*Brother Larry Dishman*

## **The Reality of Hell**

One time an atheist asked a minister, "Do you honestly believe that Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of a great fish?"

The preacher replied, "I don't

know, sir, but when I get to Heaven, I'm going to ask him about it."

The atheist said, "What if he isn't in Heaven?"

The preacher answered, "Then you can ask him."

There is a small town in

Michigan between Detroit and Lansing called "Hell." That community has a population of less than three hundred people, but many people have taken advantage of the little town's name. Every April some people mail their tax returns from there so

they bear the postmark of Hell. Each year the town hosts an event called "Run Through Hell" marathon. On January 7, 2001, a headline in a Detroit newspaper read, "Almost Cold Enough to Freeze Hell." The article stated: "The deep freeze that hit the nation in recent weeks and buried several states in an unending wave of snow had one more odd effect—Hell almost froze over."

Now, the hell that you are going to read about in the rest of this message will never freeze over. You may ask, "Does hell really exist?" Yes, friend, hell does exist. The Bible declares in very dogmatic terms that a place called hell truly does exist. Denying hell does *not* destroy it, to shun hell does not annihilate it, and to ignore hell does not erase it. One cannot believe the Bible and not believe in hell. The place that I am talking to you about is too terrible for me to describe. One hundred sixty-two texts in the New Testament speak of the doom that awaits the unrepentant sinner, and more than seventy of them were uttered by the Lord Jesus Christ.

What is hell? Friend, it is not just a byword, or man's imagination. Hell is an actual place for real people. To deny the reality of hell is to deny the character of God as revealed in the Word of God. According to the Bible, God is love; that is the character of God. We read in 1 John 4:16, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

We can read about another characteristic of God in Romans 12:19, which says, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." To deny God's vengeance would be to deny His entire character and the reality of God.

Our Lord's first New Testament sermon was on hell. Did you know that Jesus was a hell-fire and brimstone preacher? I have heard some people say, "I don't want to talk about hell because it is very negative." Friend, you need to read the Bible and study this subject. Jesus preached about hell, and He often spoke of the doom of sinners. He preached about those who refuse to repent and procrastinate until it is everlastingly too late.

### **Man's Two Choices**

The Bible emphatically teaches that a man may enter two gates. Matthew, Chapter 7, clearly teaches of two ways that men can walk and two destinies that men can reach. When the end of time comes, everybody will be heading toward Heaven or hell. There is no place in between. You cannot read anything in the Bible about purgatory; that is a false idea. Jesus taught only two destinies when He said in Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Jesus said in Matthew 10:28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Hell is a place of final punishment for the wicked. It is an actual place, just as Heaven is. Many people like to accept that Heaven is a place, but they reject the fact that hell is a place. As God has a place of happiness for the redeemed, so He has a place of punishment for the rebellious, for those who serve the devil, for those who refuse to humble themselves at an altar of prayer. People need to come back

to the reality of hell, because sinners are heading there.

I am sure that the rich man that Jesus spoke of in Luke, Chapter 16, did not spend time thinking about eternity or hell. I want you to notice what Jesus said in verse 23. He stated, "And in hell he lift up his eyes. . . ." A large percentage of preachers either read this verse incorrectly or quote it inaccurately. Most people say that in hell he "lifted" his eyes. That has always caught my attention. If he "lifted" his eyes, that means he lifted them and it was over. I believe the Scripture bears out the fact that his eyes are still lifted up, and he will "lift up his eyes" throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

The subject of hell is rarely preached on these days. This is due to several reasons. One is that no one likes to think about hell any more, but it is a part of the Word of God. I believe in preaching on hell for two reasons: first, to warn sinners about the wrath to come; second, to help the people of God not to lose their vision of what the Bible says about hell, lest they cease to have the burden needed for loved ones outside the ark of safety. This subject is disturbing in its very nature. Many preachers in the religious world love their jobs, and because it is not popular to preach on hell, many of them stay away from this subject.

### **A Place of Everlasting Punishment**

In our Scripture text we find two people. The beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, and the other man died and was buried. The Bible does not say or even hint that this is a parable; this was an actual happening. I want you to look at this because you need to keep its reality fresh in your mind. Hell made a soul winner out of that rich man, but it was

too late. He was very concerned about his five brothers who were still alive. He begged and pleaded for Lazarus to be permitted to warn his brothers, lest they also go to that place of torment. The rich man did not have the attitude, "I can't wait till my five brothers get here, because I am lonely, and then I will have some company." No, he did not want his brothers to come there at all. Again, Luke 16:23 says, "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

Jesus mentioned hell in our Scripture passage as a statement of fact. As "In the beginning God . . ." is a Truth to be proclaimed, not argued, and so is the doctrine of hell. He did not ask anyone to believe in it; He just stated the fact of its true existence. Hell is not a fantasy of some religious mind; it is not merely a fear factor. Hell is not something to be joked about, but hell is an eternal fact to accept.

Matthew 25:41 reads, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Friend, if you are not saved, that is where you are heading, a place with everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Once death overtakes you, there will be no possible escape, no second chance, and no time limit. Hell is a terrible place of everlasting punishment. Also, hell is an eternal conscience punishment. There is no way around this. There is no reform school from which to graduate, and purgatory is just a wishful dream.

Hell is a place where people pray who have never prayed before. It is a place where people cry and beg for mercy who never asked for mercy in this life. It is a place where there is weeping and wailing, a place of sorrow, and a

place of outer darkness. The Bible speaks of it as a place of blackness and darkness forever.

### **A Place of Darkness and Torment**

Years ago our family went to a place called "The Lost Sea Adventure" in Sweet Water, Tennessee. It begins with a guided tour of the caverns. You walk back a long way, and then there is an underground sea. Next, you go for a boat ride, but somewhere in the tour, they turn out the lights and you are in total darkness. I have never witnessed darkness as I did in that cave. I could not see my hand when I placed it right in front of my face.

There is another place called "DeSoto Caverns" in Childersburg, Alabama. It consists of a series of caves. Once again, you go way back into the caves and they turn out the lights, and you experience total darkness. I believe that place is so large and so dark that if they were to keep those lights out, you would never be able to find your way out.

The Bible speaks of hell as a place of darkness. Jesus said it is a place where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched. The Bible speaks of hell in very specific words such as these: agony, banishment, curse, darkness, destruction, distress, guilt, hopelessness, loneliness, pain, suffering, pressure, prison, punishment, separation, shame, contempt, and so on. In that place there will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. I have studied this subject many times since I have been called into the ministry, and it is incomprehensible. Hell is a terrible, terrible place, and I do not want anybody to go there.

Someone once said, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." I do not believe any person would say, "I want to go to

hell." I am glad that I do not have to go there, and you do not have to go there either.

Jesus made a way so that every individual could escape the damnation of hell. The wonderful thing is that you do not have to go there. It would be one thing if you were predestinated and had no choice in the matter, if you were forced to go to hell, but you are not forced to go there. You can choose your own destiny. It is a serious thing to keep saying no to God, because if you leave this world unprepared to meet God, you will be lost eternally.

Some people do not really believe that Jesus was a hellfire and brimstone preacher. Jesus said in Mark 9:43-48: "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched. Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Someone may say, "I don't believe that I could ever cut off my hand or my foot, and I know I could never pluck out one of my eyes." Friend, that is not what Jesus was talking about. He was saying, "You need to cut loose from all the hindrances in this life."

What is your hindrance? What is keeping you from getting saved? Whatever the hindrance is, you need to cut yourself loose from that hindrance so that you can get saved. Jesus was saying

that it would be better to cut off your hand or your foot or to gouge out your eye rather than to go to hell. There is crying and total darkness in hell. It is a terrible place of separation from the presence of God, the Lamb of God, the holy angels, and the redeemed. It is a place of separation, a place of no light, no life, no peace, no joy, no righteousness, and no salvation. There is only darkness and torment forever.

### **Which Way Will You Choose?**

The people who end up in hell will come from every kind of background, from all walks of society, from all kinds of religion, and from every culture. Among their numbers will include those that the Bible describes as hypocrites, sinners, cowards, the unbelieving, the abominable, murderers, sorcerers, covetous, homosexuals, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, and extortioners. I want you to think about that.

I read of a warden at a large

prison who was concerned about a long-time inmate, because in all the years that he had been there, no one had ever come to see him. One day the warden called that inmate into his office and said to him, "Lefty, do you have any close relatives or personal friends?"

He replied, "Sure."

The warden said: "No one has ever visited you since the day you arrived. Can I contact somebody to come and visit you?"

He said, "They are all here." That is sad, is it not?

Hell is a place where everyone there is lost. Everyone there will have had an opportunity to have gotten saved, but they will have turned it down. There are no words to describe the awfulness and the torments that will be endured by those in hell. In reality, the torments of hell are beyond words. The flames are unquenchable, the darkness is unbelievable, the desires are unsatisfiable, rest is unattainable, the end is unforeseeable, mercy is unreachable, and memory is unreasonable. The Bible lets us

know that the highway to hell is wide, and the road to Heaven is narrow. My question to you is, Which road are you traveling?

If you follow Jesus and continue to follow Him, your place in Heaven is assured. However, if you are not following Jesus, you are heading toward hell. There is only one way to escape hell, not five ways or even two. The only way to escape hell is through Jesus Christ; He is the door. John 3:16 states, "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." Sinner, God does not owe you anything. It is only by His grace and mercy that you can be saved, because you do not deserve to be saved. I did not deserve to be saved, but as one song says, "God's grace and mercy brought me through." God's grace and mercy are the only things that can bring you through, friend.

*(Compact Disc TR-1794)*

## **A Man Born Blind Speaks**

**On Glasgow Green in Scotland, after an open air meeting, a man stood up after hearing the Gospel message and said, "Friends, I don't believe what this man has been talking about. I don't believe in hell, I don't believe in a judgment, and I don't believe in a God, for I never saw one of them."**

**Another member of the crowd then stood forth and said, "Friends, you say there is a river running not far from this place, the river Clyde. There is no such thing; it is untrue. You tell me there are trees and grass growing around where I stand. There are no such things. You say there are many people standing here, but that cannot be true. I never saw one of these, for I was born blind, and no one but a blind man could talk as I have." Then, turning to the unbeliever, he said, "The more you talk, the more you expose your ignorance, because you are spiritually blind and cannot see."**

2 Chronicles 7:13 If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among

my people;

14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face,

and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

# The Great Need of Revival



*Brother Garrett Haylock*

## **God Works Through His People**

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The Bible tells us the Prophet Elijah asked God to shut up the heavens. The Scripture tells us in the New Testament in Luke 4:25 that for three years and six months it did not rain, because God shut up the heavens. The same prophet went back sometime later and prayed, "Lord, open the heavens and send rain," and God did that as well. God has a people, and He has always chosen to work through human instrumentality. It is not that He cannot bypass

His people and do things without consulting us or reasoning with us. He did it all by Himself years ago, and He can do it again; however, God chose to work through a people called by His name.

Church, we need to realize that we are highly favored to be God's chosen people today, and God says we have a responsibility. The enemy knows the value of unity. He knows that if we stay united, we could crush any force that comes against us, but so many times we lose sight of this. Sometimes it is so easy to get out of step with God.

The Bible tells us in our Scripture text, "If my people, which

are called by my name, shall [first] humble themselves, and pray. . . ." It is easy to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. That is a wicked way. God blesses us so that we can bless others and glorify Him, not to get proud, to feel exalted, or to feel that we have surpassed others in blessings. The more blessed we are, the more humble we should be.

God is a great and mighty God. The devil knows these things, and sometimes he will get a brother to fall out with another brother, to disagree with a brother and make them feel that is all right, because it is just the two of

them and everything can go on as usual, but that is not so. That is a wicked way. The Bible lets us know that one shall chase one thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight (Deuteronomy 32:30). Unity is so important.

Jesus said in Matthew 18:19, "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." He will do it for you. If two can agree and touch Heaven and get things done, what would happen if two disagree?

We cannot feel that we are insignificant just because we may never be called to go in the pulpit. He said, "If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." I thank God for the privilege of serving Him and for the privilege of knowing that I have the right to be in His will and to help others.

### **The Need to Humble Ourselves**

The Scripture says if those who are called by His name will humble themselves and pray, He will heal our land. It is easy to say offensive things, but it is harder to go back and say, "I'm sorry." Sometimes people brush over these things and say, "Well, it was his or her fault," and continue on, but then revival time comes, and God is expecting everyone to be at his best. God may remind you that you owe someone an apology.

If people would really listen to God, many times harmony could be restored, but too many do not listen to the Holy Spirit. They turn a deaf ear to His little nudging when something is not just right. Those are ways that

the Christian may take lightly and think nothing of it, but sometimes God said these are things that you need to humble yourself over and repent.

I want you to notice that the Scripture text says if God's people will humble themselves and pray, then He will hear from Heaven. Praying is one thing that every child of God needs to do often. Of all the things that Christians should do, Jesus let us know that "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). There is never a moment of the day that is a bad time to pray. Sometimes things are not convenient, but prayer can be whispered. In a crisis, prayer can be whispered to God even in the busy hustle and bustle. If you just take the time, you can find something to thank and praise God for, and you can worship God as you humble your heart toward Him.

Today God is saying that if He can get full cooperation, He will do a work among us that would even amaze us as His people. God is able to do great things, but He needs all of us to feel that we are a part of this. There is a great need for revival. Our land needs revival. The whole world needs revival.

God has blessed us, and we have much to be thankful for! As we have heard on the news, the economy is doing better and things are moving forward. We have a president now who is acknowledging God in just about every speech and in everything that he does. I believe it is good for the country. However, what the president does will never bring revival, but it helps you to have a better livelihood. It helps you to have more things to be thankful for, but your cooperation with Almighty God is one of the only things that will bring revival.

God is a good and an awesome God, and we need to coop-

erate. We should realize how highly favored we are to be called by God. If you heard that the president was coming to this town and you were asked to do something to make that stay a little more enjoyable, you would feel highly favored. God is calling us. He said, "If my people . . ." You can put your hand on your chest and say: "I am one of those people. He is calling me by name." He is calling you and saying: "If I can get your cooperation, I will heal your land. I will bring about revival. I will bring about something wonderful."

### **The Need to Pray**

Prayer has done wonderful things throughout the world in the ages past. Prayer will still do great things today. It will still accomplish wonderful things, but there is that little word "if." Do you pray as much as you could pray? I am not talking about praying as much as you *should* pray, but I am talking about praying as much as you *could* pray. There is so much hustling and bustling, and so many things to do. Sometimes, if you are not careful, you will yield to the things that you see need to be done, but nothing is greater than spending time in prayer with Almighty God.

You need to get direction from God. Proverbs 3:6 says to acknowledge the Lord in all your ways, and He shall direct your paths. When you pray, if you talk to the Lord and ask Him, He will give you directions. One thing for sure is, as David said in Psalm 66:18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." I am glad that I do not regard iniquity, and He has heard my prayers. I can freely address Him with my needs. Friend, He knows your needs already, but He likes you to ask. God is a great and mighty God, and He can accomplish great things through

prayer. Prayer is something that the enemy of souls does not want you to do.

Again, our Scripture text says, "If my people. . . ." I can understand why the word "if" is there. It is because of the many pressing things around us. Sometimes you may overlook prayer and deal with the things that you can see. Someone wise once said that love, care, and prayer will do more to bring revival than all man's plans. You may try to set some things in order. As a pastor, sometimes I have to sit down and try to plan a time for this or that. We have to acknowledge God. If God is directing something, you had better say yes to God's will.

God desires to have your full support. Verse 14 of our Scripture text goes on to say, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face. . . ." What would you want Him to do if you could get an audience with Him? What would you ask for? So many times people go to God and do not even know what to ask for. Sometimes they ask, but their asking is not right. Thank God for the Holy Spirit. He intercedes, because sometimes you do not know how to pray as you ought. At times, you may carelessly say something or ask for something that God in His wisdom says you cannot have. God wants to hear from you and give you good things, if you will only ask Him.

### **Seeking the Lord's Face**

God wants to get your full support. Maybe you are a backslider who is still professing to be a child of God. God knows those who are His, and He is going to reward you according to your works. Sometimes people have conditions that God cannot condone, so He has to stir and dig around the heart to show a person his need.

If you will pray, seek His face, and turn from your wicked ways, God said He would hear from Heaven, forgive, and heal the land. Because of some people's doings, He has had to turn His back in the past, and He is no respecter of persons. If we are going to get revival, we must meet His requirements. We must seek God in a greater way. It is one thing to want God to do something, but it is another thing to really seek Him. The Bible tells us in Ezra, Chapter 8, how Ezra and the people began to seek Him. God is so good.

The Bible tells us in Ezra 8:21-23: "Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was intreated of us."

We have to seek the Lord. Sometimes people conduct themselves as though they do not have a great God, as though God is not as great as we say. The Book of Ezra tells us that they gathered to seek of Him a right way for them and their little ones, because they were ashamed to ask the king. One song says, "*Our God is so big, so strong and so mighty, There's nothing our God cannot do.*" Ezra tells us they got before God and sought a right way for them and for their little ones.

When we meet God's blessing and God starts to work among us, not only does it do us good, but also it will be good for our children. I pray that God

will get you to cooperate with Him so that you may be able to see great and wonderful things accomplished.

We have to realize that God is able to do all those things that He has promised. He said if His people would seek His face and turn from their wicked ways, then He would hear from Heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land. The cry should be: "Lord, save our people. Speak to people and bring them in. Soften the hearts of the people. Our land needs healing."

### **Turn From Your Wicked Ways**

If you are not saved, God is able to save to the uttermost. To be saved and to know that your sins are forgiven is the richest blessing that can happen to you. That is the greatest experience that you can have here on this earth. God is still in the soul saving business. He wants you to be saved, but first He is working on His own people.

You need to realize that you cannot hide from God. If God looks down from Heaven and sees that you are lax, sees your failures, and calls your ways wicked, you had better repent and say: "Lord, forgive me and have mercy upon me. Give me grace and help me to pray more. Help me to be up in my church attendance." As a Christian, you may be up in your church attendance and up in your tithes and offerings, but that is not all you have to do. You should not omit other matters.

Prayer is something that every child of God does and needs to do. If you are going to stay saved and if you are really going to be encouraged to live for God, you need to pray. The disciples said to Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray." He taught us how we should address the Father and that we should conclude in Jesus' name. That is profound, because

if you practice it when you pray, you will learn how to pray a more effectual prayer. Praying to God has an effect, even if your words are not eloquent. God, through the Holy Spirit, knows exactly what you are asking, and He knows what your needs are. He is dealing with it.

In a revival, prayer is important. All our prayers are important. Not one of us should feel, "I don't need to pray, because the preacher is going to bring the message, the very words that are going to be said, and then we are going to see revival." Everyone needs to feel obligated to do his part. If we fail, sinners may be eternally lost because we failed, maybe even some of our own loved ones. We cannot afford to fail.

Prayer is a wonderful thing, no matter what the situation is or whatever you are passing through. In the Old Testament, in 2 Chronicles, Chapter 20, you can read how the news came to Jehoshaphat of a great host that was coming against them. When the news came to Jehoshaphat that a great force was coming, he sought the Lord.

Second Chronicles 20:3-5 reads: "And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD. [This whole chapter delivers a beautiful and victorious story of how God came to

their rescue.] And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court."

### God Can Heal Our Land

The people of Judah started to cry out to God for help. Their land was about to be invaded by a mighty force, so they cried out to God. Their little ones were in danger. If we fail, more than likely, our children are going to fail. We cannot afford to fail. We have to realize that we are just being used by our Heavenly Father, and we have a Heavenly Father that we can cry out to. Jehoshaphat cried out, and they came out of the whole of Judah to ask help of the Lord.

Verse 15 says, "And he said [this is the prophet of God that came], Harken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." The battle is God's, and He is asking you to seek Him so that you may have true revival. Something needs to turn around. Our land needs healing, and people need to be saved. The Lord is calling on you to cooperate with Him to bring this about. He said He would heal the land. Do you want to see the land healed? It is possible through the help of God.

If you want revival, you have to start by looking within your-

self and by praying as the Psalmist did when he said in Psalm 139:23, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts." In other words, he was saying: "Look into my heart and see if there is something that I am overlooking, something that no one else knows. Lord, I realize that I cannot hide it from You. Search me, and show me where I really am in my Christian walk with you. Is it pleasing to you, sufficient to where I can be used to help bring about revival? If not, then, Lord, help me." May God help you so that you may align yourself, humble yourself, and pray. That is where it starts. The Scripture says you must turn from your wicked ways. Are you willing to have God show you what is not right in your life?

By the help of God, let us be people that He can depend on. Will you fall on your face and pray and invoke His presence, His power, and His Spirit to work? The Bible says in Zechariah 4:6, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." In prayer meetings I have seen sinners fall at an altar of prayer when God was blessing someone's soul and crying out in thanksgiving. God can do all things. Let us cry out to God so that He may have His way and His will. May God bless you is my prayer.

*(Compact Disc TR-1999)*

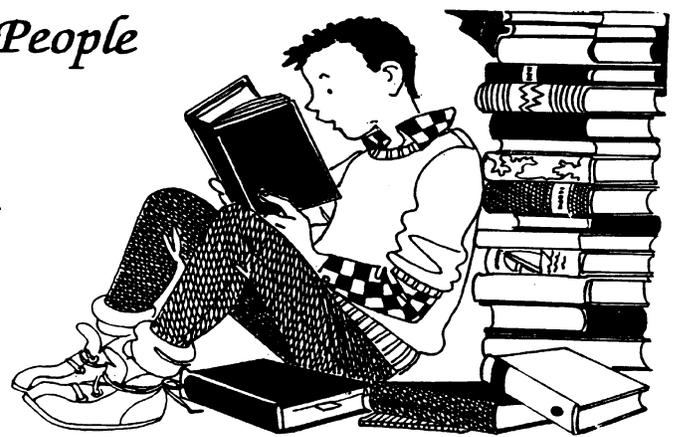
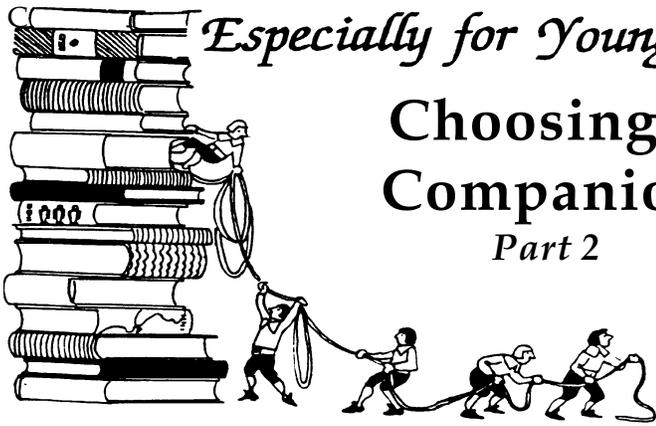
**"Out of one hundred men, one will read the Bible,  
the other ninety-nine will read the Christian."**

D. L. Moody

*Especially for Young People*

## Choosing a Companion

Part 2



In the first part of this series on choosing a companion, we found that the best place for a Christian to find a companion is at church, not out in the world. Again, I am preaching the rule, not the exception to the rule. The second thing we found was that God has laid out a plan for marriage.

We read in Genesis 6:1-3: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair [beautiful, or attractive]; and they took them wives of all which they chose [not of God's choosing]. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."

We know that one reason God brought destruction on the antediluvian age was that the sons of God saw the daughters of men and married wives of their own choosing. The mere mention of this in Genesis, Chapter 6, lets us know how serious choosing a companion is.

God wants saved households, not just saved individuals. One way we win people is to bring them into our homes and let them see how we live. It is easy to go out in the public and look respectable, but in the home we are a little more relaxed. I re-

member some making favorable comments about our home when they saw the interaction and love flowing. That can win people to the Truth. If our homes are not this way, it is hard to win people. I bring this to encourage you to keep living for God.

God spared Noah and his sons and their wives. This lets us know that God was pleased with their marriages. God destroyed everyone else. Oh, how important this is! Noah's sons must have chosen companions with whom God was pleased. Again, we must marry in the Lord.

Deuteronomy 7:1-4 tells us: "When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled

against you, and destroy thee suddenly."

Parents should counsel their children to marry in the Lord. If that one you are interested in, who you think is so handsome or so cute, is not serving God, you need to discontinue that relationship and pray for God's guidance. There is a misconception that when you get married, salvation automatically enters the house, but that is not true. Many times it is much harder to see an individual saved after you get married. We are God's chosen people, and God requires the same thing of us as He did back in Moses' day.

God's plan is still that you marry a saved companion, one who is walking in the light and is of the same persuasion that you are. The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:15-16: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh." This was the Apostle Paul's advice to the Church of God. Paul preached the same message that Moses did some 1,500 years or so earlier.

Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 7:39, "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be

dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." This is still God's plan. If you are single or if your spouse passed away and you have been set at liberty to marry, or if you are a young person and you are looking for a companion, you can marry, but you must follow this provision if you want God to bless your home. You must marry in the Lord; in other words, you must marry a saved companion. If you are not saved and you want to get married, you should get saved first, and God will give you the best companion that you could ever ask for.

In the Old Testament, you can read about Samson and Solomon. What was their problem? They lusted after many strange women who were not of their own people, and those worldly women turned their hearts away from God. The Bible warns in 2 Corinthians 6:14, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" Your hearts must be equally interested and invested in the same things. If not, this will gender strife and contention in the marriage and in the home.

The third thing that we learn from our Scripture lesson is that you should not force the issue of marriage. Many young people get their sights and their minds made up, much like Balaam. God talked to him three times. Twice God told him not to go, and then when Balaam kept pressing the issue, God allowed him to go, but He told him to speak only what He told him to say. Balaam was forcing the issue, and that displeased the Lord.

Young person, I want to encourage you not to force the issue. If it is meant to be, it will work out. You may say: "Someone else likes him. Someone else is going to take him away, so I

have to do it now." Then maybe that person is not the right one for you.

Genesis 24:7-8 tells us: "The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath."

If Rebekah would not have been willing to submit, Abraham's servant was not to take her. Young brother, God commands you to lay down the law in the home. God still holds the husband responsible to take control of the home. It is a union where both of you are equal and should work together, but the authority starts with the man. It starts with the head of the home. In the Old Testament, when Eve had her problem, God did not call to her. He called for Adam and asked, "Where art thou?"

A husband must take the leadership in the home. He should command Bible study, get the Word of God out at home, have prayer, and take the leadership in decisions. When my wife goes to make a decision, even the smallest of matters, we talk about them. The wife should not say, "I am going to do this no matter what you say." The husband and wife ought to work together, but the husband must take the leading role.

If a young man or a young lady is the right one for you, you will know, and it will work itself out perfectly. Much heartache has come to those who have forced their way and married outside the well wishes of their parents, their pastor, and the Lord's consent. Again, do not force the issue.

When Balaam saw the angel

of the Lord standing in the way, Numbers 22:34 tells us, "And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me." God was trying to prevent Balaam from going.

Many times God stands in the way of a marriage that is not His will, yet some people force it. Do you know what happens? The marriage ends in shipwreck. They get married, and the husband may end up running out and cheating on the wife, and she is left in bitter tears with a child on the way.

The decision of choosing a companion is very serious. Some people get in the way and others are in the way, so that God can lead them. Do you remember what the Bible says about Eliezar as he went out to seek a companion for Isaac? The Bible says in Genesis 24:27, "I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."

God has ways, thoughts, and plans that are far beyond your own reasoning and thinking ability. You may look at a situation and say, "There is no way" or "There is no one for me," but God can still furnish a table in the wilderness. He can still make something out of nothing. God has that ability, so trust Him. God will lead you in the right path. The only way to insure the right results is to travel the right path. Proverbs 3:6 says, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Young person, do not get in a hurry. God has a period of time called waiting that is so extremely important. During this time of courting, do not rush anything. If the person you are courting wants to get married right away, there may be a problem. There is nothing wrong with waiting. During that time of courting, you get to learn about each other, know each other, not in the way the world operates,

but you should talk a lot about life, about raising children, and about the Truth. You should talk and become better acquainted. During that waiting period, God fashions you and works on you. If you do not even have anyone in mind right now, that is okay. God is going to work on you, and He is working on your companion, wherever that person may be.

I read a poem that speaks about having to wait, entitled "Wait" by Russell Kelfer. It reads:

*Desperately, helplessly, longingly,  
I cried.  
Quietly, patiently, lovingly,  
He replied.  
I pleaded, and I wept for a clue  
to my fate,  
And the Master so gently said,  
"Child, you must wait."*

*"Wait? You say wait?" my  
indignant reply.  
"Lord, I need answers, I need  
to know why.  
Is Your hand shortened? Or have  
You not heard?  
By faith I have asked, and I'm  
claiming Your Word.*

*"My future, and all to which  
I can relate  
Hangs in the balance, and You  
tell me 'wait' ?  
I'm needing a 'yes,' or a go-ahead  
sign,  
Or even a 'no,' to which I can  
resign.*

*"And Lord, you have promised  
that if we believe,  
We need but ask, and we shall  
receive.  
And Lord, I've been asking,  
and this is my cry:*

*"I'm weary of asking: I need a  
reply!"*

*Then quietly, softly, I learned of  
my fate  
As my Master replied once again,  
"You must wait."  
So I slumped in my chair, defeated*

*and taut,  
And grumbled to God; "So I'm  
waiting, for what?"*

*He seemed then to kneel and  
His eyes met with mine  
And He tenderly said, "I could  
give you a sign.  
I could shake the heavens, darken  
the sun,  
Raise the dead, cause the  
mountains to run.*

*"All you see I could give, and  
pleased you would be.  
You would have what you want,  
but you wouldn't know Me.  
You'd not know the depth of love  
for each saint;  
You'd not know the power that  
I give to the faint.*

*"You'd not learn to see through  
the clouds of despair;  
You'd not learn to trust, just by  
knowing I'm there.  
You'd not know the joy of resting  
in Me,  
When darkness and silence was  
all you could see.*

*"You would never experience that  
fullness of love  
As the peace of My Spirit descends  
like a dove.  
You would know that I give, and  
I save, for a start,  
But you'd not know the depth  
and the beat of My heart.*

*"The glow of My comfort late in  
the night  
The faith that I give when you walk  
without sight;  
The depth that's beyond getting  
just what you ask  
From an infinite God who makes  
what you have last.*

*"And you never would know,  
should your pain quickly flee,  
What it means that 'My grace is  
sufficient for thee.'  
Yes, your dreams for that loved one  
o'ernight could come true,  
But the loss! if you lost what  
I'm doing in you.*

*"So be silent, my child, and in time  
you will see  
That the greatest of gifts is to get  
to know Me.  
And though oft' may My answers  
seem terribly late,  
My most precious answer of all . . .  
is still . . . wait."*

There is nothing wrong with waiting. I repeat, do not force the issue. Precious young person, we want you to progress and prosper in this life and in the things of God. Next to salvation, choosing the right companion is the most important decision you will ever make. If you choose to go out and reject the message and choose a companion on your own without seeking God, you will pay.

If you have not made a decision regarding this matter yet, I trust that this will serve as a warning to you to consider who you are dating right now or maybe who you are interested in dating. Could you see yourself engaging in a life-long relationship with that person?

Suppose someone said: "He is just fun to be with. We are going to date for a while, and then we will plan to break it off. Then we will get serious about serving God." Let me tell you the problem with this scenario. Feelings can get intertwined, and then you become connected. The wise man said in Ecclesiastes 4:12 that "a threefold cord is not quickly [or easily] broken." When your connections and your emotions get intertwined, they are hard to break. When you get connected with an individual, you can be emotionally attached.

Young man, I do not believe it is right that you get involved with many girls and then expect God to give you a perfect, chaste virgin of a wife someday. That is not fair. Young lady, it is not fair to mess around and do things you should not be doing and expect God to give you a chaste,

saved, clean companion. God may do that, and that would be mercy, but you should not overstep the Word of God and operate presumptuously. Young person, consider the one you are interested in or dating. Is he or she someone with whom you would be willing to grow old? Could you build a godly home with that person?

I want to warn you again to be careful of a person who wants to rush through courtship and have a quick wedding. There is nothing wrong with postponing a wedding for a little while. You will know when it is the right time. When the minister pronounces you husband and wife,

that is it. It is a final transaction that should not be overturned. Certainly, it is not God's plan that you overturn it.

Remember, when dating, you are seeing that individual at his or her very best. Once you are married, watch out, unless he or she is a saved person. A person can dress his best, smell his best, and act his best, but that person may change after marriage.

Precious young person, you need to take your time and be sure that the person you are getting close to is truly the one that God has chosen for you. If you are not interested in anyone now, take this message to heart and store it away, because someday

you will be. You may say, "I'm never getting married." Someday someone will come along and sweep you off your feet, so to speak, and you will enter this realm of happiness, but only if God is in it.

I ask you to take heed to the message and be careful. You need to be careful of the connections that the person with whom you are involved has. God will send a companion when you are ready and when that companion is ready.

Brother Reggie Stegmeier

*(continued in the next issue)*

## Soiled Garments

A young woman who was defending her continual attendance at some doubtful places of amusement once said, "I think a Christian can go anywhere."

"Certainly she can, rejoined her friend, "but I am reminded of a little incident which happened last summer when I went with a party of friends to explore a coal mine. One of the young women appeared dressed in a dainty white gown. When her friends remonstrated with her, she appealed to the old miner who was to act as guide to the party.

"Can't I wear a white dress into the mine?" she asked petulantly.

"Yes," replied the old man, "there is nothing to keep you from wearing a white frock down there, but there will be considerable to keep you from wearing one back."

Selected

# Be Still, Stand Still, and Peace Be Still



*Brother Steve Strelecky*

## **God Is in Control**

I am so thankful that God never fails to help us when we are having problems or trials. I appreciate the Lord. When we are pressed down or going through hard places and it seems there is no way out, God is there to help us. As we go through difficult situations, God tells us to be still and to know that He is God. Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

The word *still* in the dictionary means, "to abstain from motion, uttering no sound; to be free from noise or turbulence; to become motionless or silent."

This chapter begins by saying in verses 1-3: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah."

Sometimes we go through situations and feel that our world is crashing down around us. We feel that the earth is being shaken or turned upside down, but God is telling us, "Be still, and know that I am God."

You will go through many challenging situations throughout life. You can be troubled in

soul and spirit. The enemy of souls wants you to get caught up in all the noise, the commotion, the turbulence, and the confusion. He wants you to think on situations that look impossible. Sometimes things look dark, and the enemy wants you to focus on those things. He wants you to think the worst of every situation. Things may look dark, but God is saying, "Be still, and know that I am God."

In the midst of turmoil, you can lose sight of God and who He really is. You can lose your focus on God. He is the Creator of the universe. He put all of this in motion, so He can take care of your problems.

Think about the Prophet Eli-

jah. He was fleeing from Queen Jezebel because she had threatened his life. He ended up running and hiding in a cave. God sent a great and strong wind, then an earthquake, and then a fire, but God was not in any of that noise, commotion, or confusion. What was God in? After the fire, the Lord spoke in a still, small voice. If you get caught up in all the noise and confusion, how are you going to hear His voice? Again, God is saying, "Be still, and know that I am God." Sometimes you have to still yourself to hear His voice. Oftentimes it requires you to sit down, read your Bible, pray, and meditate on who God really is. So many things in the Bible are there to encourage us, and sometimes that is the thing that is most neglected.

God wants you to know that whatever you are facing, He is in control. It is amazing what God can do to calm your troubled soul if you get to the place where you are still and quiet and let Him talk. You can get in the habit of doing all the talking and not letting God do the talking. You have to be a good listener to hear that still, small voice.

### **Facing Intense Adversity**

Let us look at a couple of instances in the Bible that looked humanly impossible. Exodus 14:13 reads, "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever." Leading up to this seemingly impossible situation, God did a miracle in freeing them from Egyptian bondage.

Sometimes I try to imagine myself in that place, wondering what it would have been like to leave Egypt. I think about the rejoicing and the joy that must

have been going on. Maybe they were singing, "Free, free, free!" or "Victory, hallelujah! We are free!" Egypt was a type of sin. Think about what you would be feeling if you were released from such hard bondage. If you are saved, you have been freed from the bondage of sin. You can rejoice in the fact that you have been freed! Those of us who are saved sing about it, testify about it, and rejoice in that fact.

God's presence was with the Israelites as God led them out of Egypt. Think about that! God led them with a pillar of cloud by day and with a pillar of fire by night. His presence was there, but it was not long until their rejoicing came to an abrupt halt. As they were traveling toward the Red Sea and camped there, Pharaoh began to think: "What did I do? I let all my slave labor go free." God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he took six hundred chariots and pursued the Israelites. They were camped along the Red Sea. In Exodus 14:10 we read, "And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD." Their joy turned to fear immediately.

As a Christian, you have been freed from sinful bondage, and you can rejoice in that fact. However, if the enemy has his way, you will not be rejoicing very long. He wants you back in bondage. He wants you to be filled with fear and to get your eyes off God.

Remember, the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire did not leave the Israelites, but what did they see? They saw the Egyptian army coming behind them, the Red Sea in front of them, and mountains on both sides. They felt as though they were caught between the proverbial rock and a hard place. They could not see a way out.

What happened? The people started making accusations against Moses. In so many words, the people complained: "Why did you bring us out here to die? It would have been better to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."

As a side note, I am thankful for a godly leader so that when things get tough, he is right there with us. He is going to stand no matter what happens, and I appreciate that. When things start going wrong, who takes the heat? Often it is the pastor, or the leader. I am thankful for a leader who will stand and follow what the Lord tells him to do.

As a Christian, you need to be mindful that people are watching to see how you handle adversity. The people you work with, the people you live around, and the people you associate with are watching to see how you are handling adversity. Parents, your children are watching how you handle adversity. Are you keeping the right spirit when you go through hard places? Do you throw accusations toward the pastor? Are you doing the right thing in the midst of adversity? Others are watching you, and they are going to see whether or not you are true to God through and through. When the trials come, that is when you are going to be put to the test.

### **God Works Mighty Miracles**

The situation seemed impossible to the Israelites when the Egyptians were in pursuit. The Red Sea was before them with no place to go. I can imagine that things might have been about ready to get totally out of control. A mighty miracle took place back in Egypt, but how quickly the people forgot! That should be a warning to each of us. When God works a miracle in your life, you should not forget about it. That miracle should build up your

faith so that when the next hard place comes along, you know that God is going to carry you through it.

When your children come to you with problems, you should always point them to God, whatever the situation may be. As they get older and the trials get tougher, pointing them to God will help to build their faith and confidence in what God can do for them.

The Israelites were ready to go back to Egypt at the first sign of adversity, but Exodus 14:13 tells us, "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD." When I read that, I thought about Moses' response, and the song came to my mind that says, "*Stand still and let God move, Standing still is hard to do, When you feel you have reached the end, He'll make a way for you, Stand still and let God move.*"

I did some research about Egypt a while back. You may think of Egypt as an arid, sandy, flat, desert place, but that is not the case everywhere in that area. In some areas close to the Red Sea, the area is full of canyons and passes, so it was not like the people of Israel could scatter. They were stuck. They could not go in any direction but toward the water or toward the Egyptians. Many times we are in places where no one but God can help us.

It could be that you have had a victory and things seem to be going smoothly, but watch out! There may be a Red Sea experience just ahead of you with the enemy in pursuit and no place left for you to go. What should you do? You need to stand still and let God move. You may say, "That way of thinking does not fit in with this generation anymore." Often people want to see solutions and results right away. We live in a society that expects things instantly. For example,

you can go to an automatic bank machine and withdraw money from your bank account instantly. You can go to a fast food restaurant and go through the drive-thru and get food quickly. You can place a meal in the microwave oven, and the food is ready in a few minutes. Although we live in an instant society, sometimes God will tell you to "stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD." Do you suppose that God allows circumstances to arise to show you how big He really is? God may allow certain things to come your way not only to build up your faith but also to show you what He can do if you will have faith in Him.

Whether you have been saved recently or you have been saved for many years, the enemy is working to get you back. He is not going to stop until your last day on this earth. Just as the Egyptians came after the Israelites because the pharaoh wanted them back in captivity, the same is true with the enemy of souls. He wants you back in captivity. Maybe you are in a place where the enemy is making it seem impossible for you to get out of. Maybe you are in a bad financial situation. Perhaps you are having health problems. Maybe you are having difficulty with a relationship. Possibly you are having a battle in your mind or a problem with a bad habit or an addiction. There are many, many more problems that I could mention that work on people. Sometimes those situations seem impossible. You may be wondering, "How am I going to get out of this?" You might have a health issue that medical science cannot cure, but God can.

Often I think back to when I had a stroke. At the time, it seemed as though it was an impossible situation. One day I felt like I was in perfect health, and then "boom!" I felt as if someone had hit me in the back of the

head with a sledgehammer. For a while, I did not know which end was up, so to speak, but finally I got to the point where I did know which end was up. However, I had to relearn how to walk, how to talk, and how to keep my balance. I had no motor control over my right arm. I tell you, it was a treat to learn how to shave again.

My physical situation seemed impossible. There I was thirty-six years of age with a family and a house to take care of. Also, I had a job that I did not know if I was going to be able to go back to. Many things looked impossible at the time. I am living proof that God can work miracles. God can do mighty things, but at the time it looked totally impossible. I am so thankful that we serve a great, big God and that He will take care of our problems.

### **The Key to Having Victory**

The enemy wants to instill fear, and fear is a powerful tool of the enemy of souls. I work in the public school system now, and we went through some safety training concerning how to handle a dangerous situation if someone were to enter the building and threaten people with a knife or a gun. We taught the students about what our reactions should be. Sometimes you do not know how you are going to react until you are put in that situation. Some people may become immobile because they are so paralyzed with fear. Some may want to bolt and run. Others may want to fight. You really do not know what will happen until you are faced with that situation.

If the enemy can keep you in a fearful state all the time, he has done a big work. That is where the Israelites were at that particular time. They were in fear. The enemy wants you to get caught up in fear, as the Israelites were in all that turmoil, and get your eyes off God. You may try to

solve problems by your own human abilities, but many times your human abilities are so limited that you could not do anything if you tried.

I am a very hands-on type of person, and if something is broken, I want to fix it. Sometimes I have a hard time at school because of that. For example, something may be a brand-new fabrication or it may be something that needs to be fixed. In the course of teaching students welding, we try to do a little of everything to try to prepare them for real on the job situations. Sometimes they might have to work from blueprints. Many times I can see that they are heading for a problem, and it is really tough for me to keep my hands off the project because I want to fix it for them. Instead I offer them advice and direction regarding how they should proceed. When they fail to heed my advice, things can get in a real mess.

The same thing is true spiritually. Your pastor may see you heading in the wrong direction, or someone else may see you heading in the wrong direction; therefore, you ought to heed his advice. You may tell one of your children, "You are heading for big problems." You can offer advice and counsel, but if that child proceeds in the same direction without heeding your warning or advice, he may get into a really big mess.

As I work with my students and their projects, if I am not careful, I could let that "I want to fix it" mentality over into my spiritual life. If I am not careful, I will try to fix situations and make a bigger mess. That is where a person has to let God move. Sometimes I have a hard time sitting still, which can make a situation worse. We each need to listen to godly counsel. Whatever the situation may be, God has a way of escape.

As the situation with the

Israelites progressed, God told Moses what to do, and Moses obeyed. One key to having victory is being obedient. When God tells you to do something, or if you heed godly counsel and obey what God tells you to do, things are going to work for good. What did God tell Moses to do? He told him to stretch forth his hand over the sea, and God caused a strong east wind to divide the sea, and the Israelites walked over on dry land. A lesson can be learned here. Moses obeyed, and again God started things into motion.

Your miracle may be at hand, but if you lack obedience and fail to follow through with what God has commanded you to do, you will fall short of that miracle happening. It will not be a failure on God's part. The failure will be on your part. Your miracle may be at hand, so you need to take courage, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. Also, remember that the Scripture says to fear not.

### **Calming the Storm**

I want you to look at one more example found in Mark, Chapter 4. Here Jesus was teaching a great multitude of people using parables. This multitude was so great that He had to enter a ship and teach the people from the ship. At the end of the day, when evening came, Jesus told His disciples that He wanted to go to the other side of the sea, so He dismissed the multitude and started sailing to the other side.

Mark 4:37-41 reads: "And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a

great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

You may be going through a great storm. The clouds are dark, the wind is blowing, and the waves are beating upon you to the degree that you think it is going to beat you to bits. We all go through those difficult times. Saints and sinners go through those times, and I am so glad that I have God to turn to in those times. We all go through situations where we think that we are going to be beat to bits. The enemy of souls will make you think that God does not care.

The disciples found Jesus asleep on a pillow and awoke Him. That storm did not bother Him. Why? Because He is the Master of the storm. The disciples said, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Fear was working on them. The enemy wants to make your situation look like that situation. He will cause you to think there is no solution to the problem. The disciples did not think that Jesus cared, but I am so glad that Jesus does care.

I thought about another song entitled "Does Jesus Care." The chorus begins, "Oh, yes, He cares, I know He cares." Jesus really cares about your situation, your storm, and the things that you go through. I am talking about our Creator, the Creator of the universe, the Master of the seas. What happened after the disciples woke up Jesus? He rebuked the wind, and there was a great calm. Storms still cease at His command.

If you are going through a storm, you need to hold on! Jesus cares, and all He has to do is say the word and that storm will cease. You will come out of that storm, and you will see bright skies and sunshine just on the

other side of that storm. I have seen video footage of hurricanes and planes that fly through the walls of a hurricane. As they fly through the hurricane walls, people are tossed around in the plane and papers are tossed all over the place. Some storms are so violent that they shake the planes fiercely, but once the plane breaks through the wall into the eye of the storm, it is beautiful. The sun is shining and the wind is calm.

You need to hold on if you are going through a storm and you are getting beaten fiercely. God is the master of that storm, and just on the other side, when you break through that wall, it is going to be calm, the sun will be shining, and you will have victory. Jesus can do exceedingly

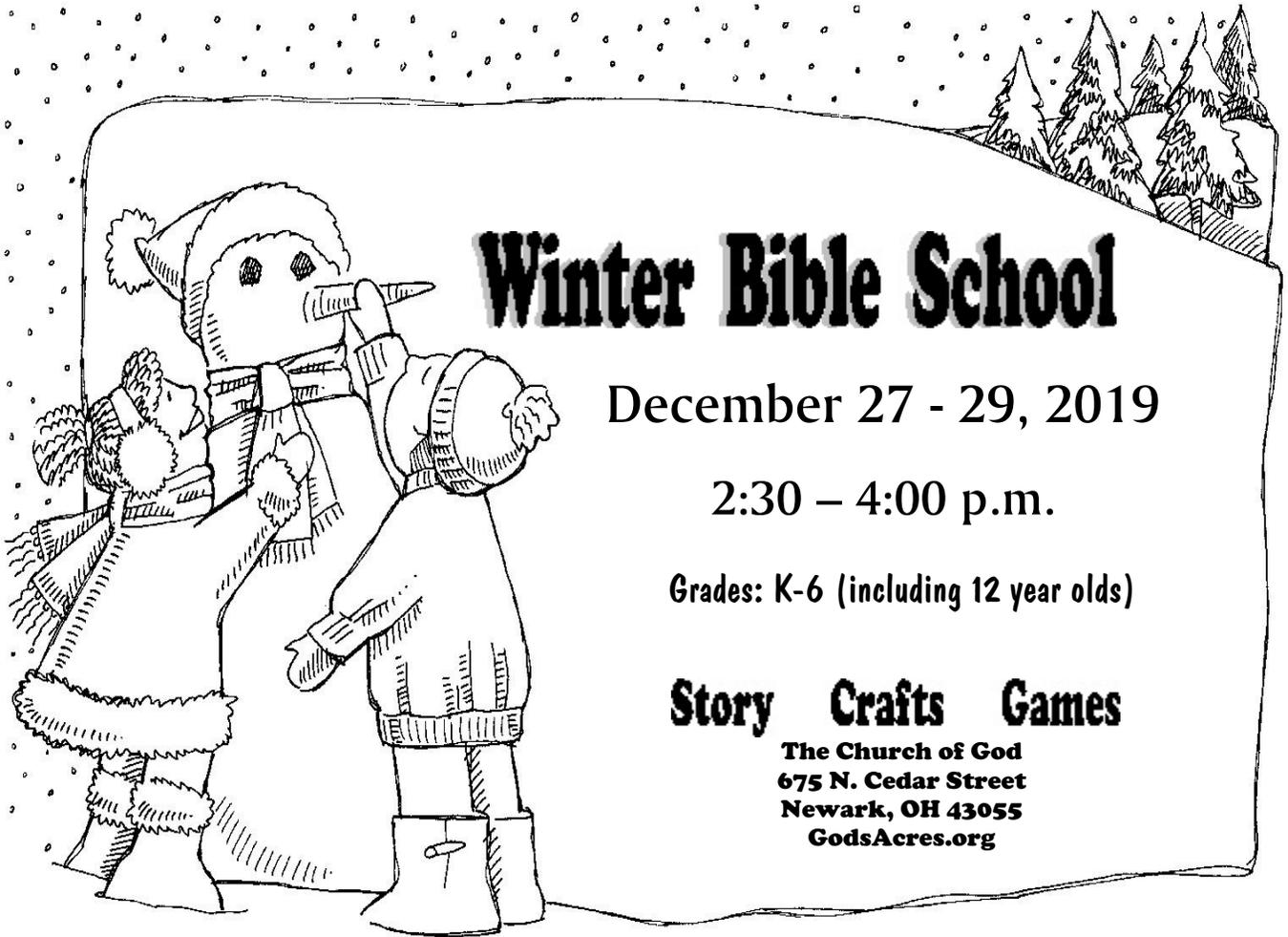
abundantly above all that you can ask or think. Jesus can calm the troubled waters of your soul. When your soul is troubled, when you are troubled in spirit, God can calm the troubled waters of your soul.

As I close the message, a couple of verses come to my mind. Psalm 89:9 says, "Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them." God stills the storm. He stills the raging waves. Psalm 107:29 reads, "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." Sometimes God does not calm the storm right away. It may be a situation where He has to calm you. He may want to get you to sit still, be still, and let Him do His work.

Maybe you are in the midst of

an impossible situation and there seems to be no way out. You need to put your situation in God's hands. Is there a storm in your life that needs to be calmed? Jesus cares, and He will calm the storm in the midst of raging strife. Are you in the bondage of sin? Maybe you feel that it is impossible to get out of the clutches of the enemy, but God has deliverance for you. If you have a need, talk to God. He has the answers. He can calm that storm. He can calm the situation that you are going through, whatever it may be. He has the answer, and I am so thankful that He does.

*(Compact Disc TR-1164E)*



# Winter Bible School

December 27 - 29, 2019

2:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Grades: K-6 (including 12 year olds)

**Story Crafts Games**

**The Church of God**  
**675 N. Cedar Street**  
**Newark, OH 43055**  
**GodsAcres.org**

# Three Minutes to Go

The brainwashing had been going on for weeks, up to fourteen hours a day—48 hours straight on one occasion, yet the man held his ground. He would not yield. The place was a Communist prison camp in China. The man was a radiant Chinese Christian.

Finally, after repeated grilling, mockery, and torture, the Christian told his oppressors: "You are wasting your time, sirs. My faith is rooted deeper than any torture you might inflict upon me. It is rooted eternally in God's Son, Jesus Christ."

Furious, the Communist indoctrinator slapped him across the face and screamed: "Drop to your knees! Drop to your knees! Because in three minutes, we're going to put a bullet through your head!"

While the indoctrinator, an

armed guard, and fifty more of the man's fellow prisoners looked on, he did as he was told.

"Lord," the man began to pray, "I thank Thee for the faith which makes it possible for me to believe that in spite of my oppressors, my Heavenly Father sits upon His throne, able at any moment to silence forever the lips of these who blaspheme His name. Lord, at this moment, Thou art able to prove Thy power to these two men. Thou art able to show Thyself to be God. In a moment, Thy power could strike these men dead and —"

He didn't get to finish his prayer, for gasping with pain, the two Communists, the indoctrinator and the guard, fell simultaneously to the floor. In a few hours, both of them were dead.

The Christian was set free,

and at last report some years ago, continued to live unmolested in his home with his wife and children. No Communist dared go near his door.

You, too, reader, may one day be required to stand before Communist or other godless men. You may lose your life for your stand, as have thousands of other heroic Christians.

But be sure of this: God has not been taken by surprise. Eternal happiness in the presence of the Savior awaits each believer, no matter what earthly life holds in store for him. Today may seem darkness, but tomorrow always belongs to God!

The above incident was personally witnessed by a missionary man in China during his own imprisonment by the Communists.

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PS Form 3828, July 2014 (Page 2 of 4)



*2020 Camp Meeting Dates*

*God's Acres*

June 21-28

August 2-9

December 27-30

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*Muncie, Indiana*

July 8-12

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*Canby, Oregon*

July 20-26

We hope you will plan to join us  
for these old-fashioned camp meetings.



# Winter 2019 Camp Meeting

*December 26-29*

*Make your reservations now to come and  
worship the Lord with us in an  
old-fashioned meeting at God's Acres,*

*Newark, Ohio*

*The first service begins Thursday  
evening at 7:00 p.m.*

*Send reservations to:*

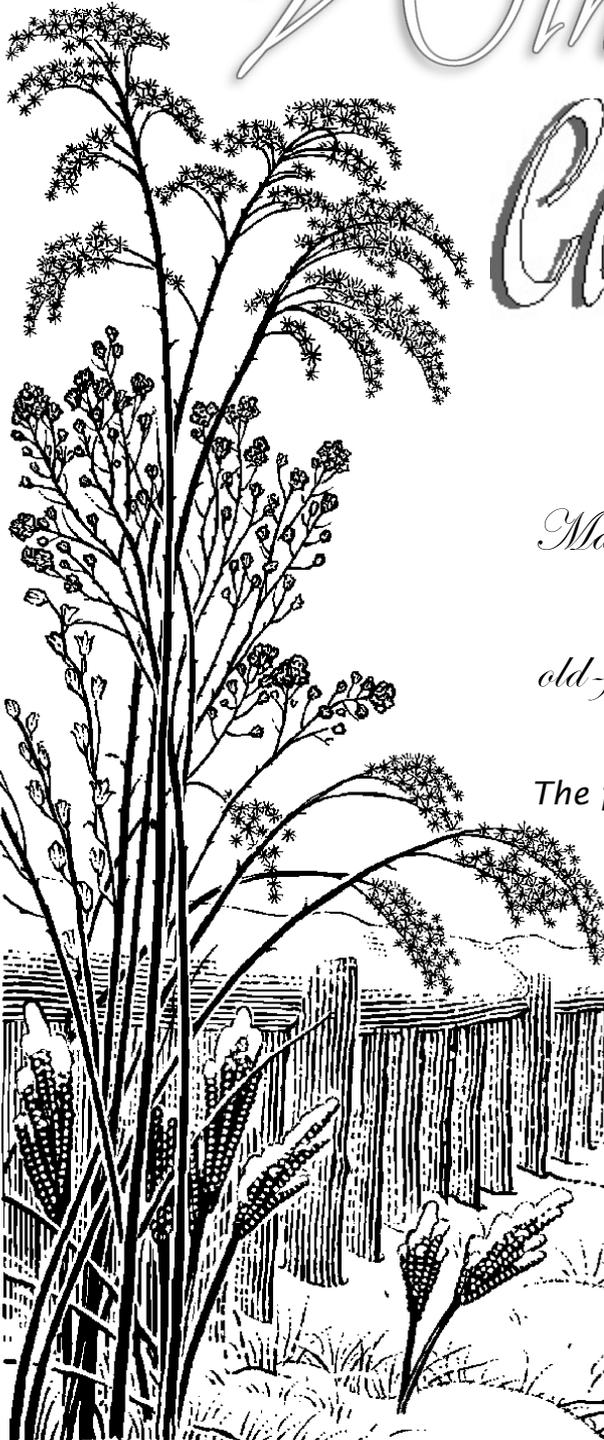
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## Winter Camp Meeting

December 26-29, 2019

*Make your reservations now to come and worship  
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camp meeting at God's Acres, Newark, Ohio.*

*(See page 27 inside for more information.)*