

# 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 February 2019 No. 2



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***

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

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# Guest Editorial

## THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER USPS #871620

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

POSTMAN, send form 3579 to the printer:

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

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

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Print Shop Phone: 740-345-1312

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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.

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Brother Roger L. Decker ..... Editor  
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

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### 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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*"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and  
into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in  
destruction and perdition."*

*1 Timothy 6:9*

*"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;  
and all these things shall be added unto you."*

*Matthew 6:33*

### SEEK TRUE RICHES

Our society today has largely  
been overcome by the spirit of  
materialism. In general, people  
seem to be dissatisfied and un-  
happy with the things they have.  
Therefore, they are forever  
searching to find something more  
that will bring happiness. In Luke  
12:15 Jesus let people know that  
true riches cannot be found in the  
things that one possesses. Instead,  
true riches and happiness can only  
be found when Christ is sought  
first.

In no way is it implied that hav-  
ing possessions is sinful, nor is it  
insinuated that being financially  
well off means that a person is  
evil. Being frugal in business mat-  
ters is no indicator that a man or a  
woman is wicked or greedy. Be-  
cause a person holds a prominent  
position is no evidence that he or  
she is crooked in business prac-  
tices.

However, evil comes when a  
person allows worldly riches,  
possessions, or position to gain  
control of his or her heart and life.  
Spending too much time at seeking  
earthly riches can become dan-  
gerous if one is not careful. This  
condition can subtly move in and  
take first place if a Christian does

not stay alert and on guard. Any-  
thing that is placed ahead of  
Christ will soon rob the soul of  
peace and joy, and thus render one  
unfit for true service to the Mas-  
ter.

Being blessed with worldly  
fame or wealth does not prove that  
an individual is in right relation-  
ship with the Lord. There are  
times when riches have been mis-  
taken for spirituality. Some peo-  
ple have thought they were pleas-  
ing God because they have been  
blessed abundantly. God sheds  
His goodness on the unjust man as  
well as the just. When the Lord  
sends the rains, it blesses the  
sinner's crops the same as it  
blesses the righteous person's  
crops.

In 1 Timothy 6:9 Paul tells us:  
"But they that will be rich fall into  
temptation and a snare, and into  
many foolish and hurtful lusts,  
which drown men in destruction  
and perdition." In verse 10 he  
went on to say, "For the love of  
money is the root of all evil:  
which while some coveted after,  
they have erred from the faith, and  
pierced themselves through with  
many sorrows."

*[continued on page 7]*

1 *Thessalonians 2:2* But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time used

we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness:

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

## OUR WALK WITH GOD



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

### **Paul's Experience at Philippi**

The Apostle Paul was writing to a church where he had some problems. There were some opponents at Thessalonica who brought some very strong, slanderous accusations that were false. Paul referred to the impris-

onment and the abuse that he received while at Philippi. He said in verse 2 of our Scripture text, "But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention."

No doubt, the opponents of Paul used this opportunity to try to blemish Paul's record. Now he had a police record and was running from the law. Paul said he was shamefully entreated for what happened at Philippi.

Philippian history says at the time there was no synagogue

from which to have services, but where the Jews were unable to have a synagogue, they had a place of prayer. On the Sabbath Paul and his friends made their way there and talked to some women who met at that place. Acts 16:12-24 reads: "And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.

"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us. And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothing: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

"And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the

magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

"And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." Paul said he was "shamefully entreated." How? He was beaten and cast into prison. The shame of the treatment consisted of the fact that it was wholly undeserved. It was contrary to the laws and was accompanied with circumstances designed to make their punishment as humiliating as possible. Now, the Thessalonians knew this, and the church at Thessalonica knew this.

There were at least three charges against Paul. In 1 Thessalonians 2:3 Paul said, "For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile." Some people spoke slanderous remarks against Paul and stated that he was a deceiver, that his motives were impure, and that he was hypocritical. Verse 4 indicates that he was accused of seeking to please men rather than God. Verses 5 and 9 together hint to the fact that there were those who said that Paul was preaching the Gospel for what he could get out of it.

Verse 6 suggests that Paul was accused of seeking personal prestige. In Chapter 1, verse 5, the Apostle Paul said the Gospel came to "you," not "I" came to you. Again, in Chapter 2, verse 7, it is hinted that he was charged with being harsh, as a dictator. Paul was there to clean up all these slanderous reports in this letter.

Despite all these slanderous accusations against the Apostle Paul, what did he do? He lived right. Verse 10 says he lived before the church "holily and justly and unblameably." Then the Apostle Paul let the church know

that he lived a life before them, was gentle to them, nourished them, and verse 11 says he even comforted them as a father does his children. He let them know that they had a responsibility also before God. He wrote in 1 Thessalonians 2:12, "That ye would walk worthy of God." In other words, he let them know that they should live in such a manner as to honor God.

## Your Daily Living

The thought of the message is regarding daily living. People cannot do anything against your living right. They can accuse, slander, and spread gossip about you, but they cannot stop you from living right, by the grace of God. God has enough grace so that you can live right in any circumstance, and the Bible will back that up. It is in your daily living that the power of God lies in your life. You can testify about the power of God, but what is He doing for you in your life? That is where the power lies. You may make great boasts and profess spirituality to the max, but if a holy life does not back it up, then it is all to no avail.

Paul denied the accusations against him, and he lived in such a way that it brought acceptance to the Gospel. He wrote in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

The convincing part of salvation is in your daily walk. You might be able to sing beautifully, preach outstanding messages, testify of the glory of God, and shout in the aisles, but if your daily walk is coming up short, then it is not being inspired by the Holy Spirit. To live in such

a way that pleases God should be your greatest goal. Hebrews 11:5 says, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation [took place] he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

I read an interesting little story. It was part of a sermon, and the title of the sermon was "Enoch Walked With God." A minister gave the following illustration: A little child gave a most exquisite explanation of walking with God. The little girl came home from Sunday school, and the mother said, "Tell me what you learned at Sunday school."

She said: "Don't you know, Mother? One day Enoch and God went for an extra long walk. They walked on until God said to Enoch: 'You're a long way from home. You had better just come on in and stay,' and he went."

How did Enoch please God? It was not just that he sacrificed to God and was a good person, but rather that he walked with God. Genesis 5:22 reads, "And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters." Enoch walked with God three hundred years. Today it is difficult to get some people to walk with God for three weeks.

We can read of another Old Testament patriarch who walked with God in Genesis 6:9, which states, "These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." Noah lived in such a way that his life honored God, and it so pleased God that someone on this earth, which the Bible says was full of corruption, would consider Him first. Young person, when you put God first, it pleases Him that you would consider Him above all the corruption that is going on. It pleases God that people consider Him in

the factories, in their daily routine, and in their daily job. It pleases God when you consider Him first.

### **Seek Those Things Which Are Above**

I want you to consider your daily living for a while longer. To walk with God brings honor to God. When one is walking with God, his affections and desires are on things above. The Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 3:1-3: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection [God is not going to set your affection; you must set it] on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

What was the Apostle Paul saying? He was saying if you have died to sin and have been resurrected to a new man, then you should be different. What is the difference? The thoughts of the Christian, or the heart of the Christian, is set on higher things. The things of the earth can no longer control your life, but you weigh everything against the background of eternity. You do not withdraw yourself from the work and the activities of this life, but the things of this life seem so trivial when you put them alongside eternity. In other words, they lose their value and seem cheap and vain. We all have to work to maintain a physical life here in this world, but it cannot compare to the work of God. The things that the Christian thought were of great importance when he was in the world suddenly lose their glitter.

I would much rather have done the work of God in my life, such as deal with people on spiritual matters, visit people who are in hospitals and nursing homes, and so on, but it was necessary

for me to support my family. If you put God first, God will bless you and reward you for doing His will. You cannot be lazy. There is work to do if you really want to do it.

Does your testimony fit your life? Are you really doing what you say you are doing with your mouth? The Christian puts giving above getting, serving above ruling, and forgiveness above revenge. The Christian's values will be those of the Lord, not of men. The Christian puts love above hate, the spirit above the flesh, and modest apparel above worldliness. The Christian wants to dress right. He or she does not want the message of the church dragged down into the mud, so to speak. The Christian puts God's will above his or her own will.

Some people's wills are awfully strong, but God has a will too. You must keep this in your mind. God's will always takes you to a greater work. It does not bring you down; it lifts you up. The Christian is concerned about the welfare of others.

### **Mortify Your Members**

The Apostle Paul said in Colossians 3:5-10: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another [some people have an old, lying spirit], seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that

created him."

Paul said to mortify your members. What does the word *mortify* mean? It means to put them to death, to make them inactive. The word means to deprive a thing of its power, its authority, and its destructive nature. You should not use any member of your body to sin against God. To gratify any sensual appetite is to give it the very food and nourishment on which it lives, thrives, and is active. However, the body may suffer by excessive sensual indulgences. The appetite increases with the indulgence.

Romans 6:12 reads, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." What was Paul talking about? He was presenting sin as a king, or as a ruler, or a tyrant, who has the desires of the mind and the members of the body under his control, so that by influencing the passions, he governs the body. He said not to let sin reign, or work in your mortal body. In other words, do not let sin have a place in your soul, because wherever sin governs, less or more, sin will take complete control and will influence you completely.

How is sin known? It is known by evil influences in the mind and evil acts in your life. Do not let evil influences and evil acts have dominion over you. Wherever sin is felt, sin has dominion, because sin is sin only as it works in action or passion against God. Sin cannot be dormant. If it does not work, it does not exist. Paul said not to let sin reign. Do not let it master you. Do not let it get dominion or control over you. How is that possible? Romans 6:11 tells us, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

A man cannot live physically just because you put him in the

air. You cannot take a man who has been dead and say, "We just need to get him some oxygen and stick him out in the air." No, he also has to have the air in him. The same is true in the spiritual realm. Unless you are in Christ and Christ is in you, you cannot be alive to God. Helen Keller once said, "Keep your face to the sunshine, and you cannot see the shadows."

### **Putting Off Carnal Characteristics**

I want you to look at some things that the Apostle Paul said accompanied daily living. First of all, there are some things that you used to be a part of, walking in them, that have to be put away. When you come to Christ, you normally have a "knapsack" with some bad habits, bad characteristics, or strong desires that you have to put away from you.

The Gospel demands complete elimination of everything against God or that prevents you from serving God. Paul mentioned fornication (or illicit sex), and a sexual appetite as some things that need to be controlled, not gratified. Also, he mentioned uncleanness (or being morally unclean), inordinate affection (or lust), evil concupiscence, covetousness, or greediness (a desire for what a man has no right to have).

Colossians 3:7 reads, "In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived [or walked] in them." In other words, it was a part of your life, or an everyday habit. While living in sin, you were considered to be a child of disobedience and under the wrath of God. You cannot walk with God and have these things present in your life.

The Apostle Paul went on to mention other fleshly things that must be put out of your daily living. He mentioned in verse 8 anger (or a burst of temper),

wrath (or long-lasting anger), malice (or viciousness of mind), blasphemy (or slander), and filthy communication out of your mouth (or foul talk). All these sins start with anger. If these things are not controlled, they lead to wrath, malice, and blasphemy. When anger gets in the heart, the mouth spews it out.

People who struggle in their marriage should not run each other down. If you are having trouble, you should deal with it. You should seek counsel from your pastor or a minister, but you should not rip your companion apart and say things against each other. Why? You are going to have to back up and apologize. It is best to keep your mouth shut. If you are not getting along, something is going on in your Christian experience. Your spiritual thermometer has gone down and your fleshly thermometer has gone up. When anger gets in the heart, the mouth lets it out.

When Paul mentioned lying, he was speaking of little lies, white lies, big lies, and all kinds of lies. What are lies a trait of? They are a trait of what a person used to be before he became a Christian. They are not to be included in the daily walk of a Christian.

### **The Bond of Perfectness**

The Apostle Paul mentioned putting off these carnal things and putting something on in place of them. What did he say that you put on? You put on bowels of mercy (or pity), kindness, humbleness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering (or patience), forbearing (or putting up with one another), and forgiving one another. The Christian forbears and forgives. He does so because God forgave him, and only the forgiving can be forgiven.

Paul also mentioned charity. He said in Colossians 3:14 to put

on charity, which is "the bond of perfectness." In other words, it is the foundation of the body; it is a binding power that holds the body of Christ together. Without that love the body would soon drift apart. Love will hold the body of Christ unbreakable and unshakeable.

Then in verse 15 Paul said, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts." That means to let the peace of God be the umpire of all things in your heart. The peace of Jesus Christ is the umpire in one's heart; then when feelings clash and ones are pulled in two different directions at the same time, the decision of Christ will keep them in the way of love. The way to do things right is to have Jesus Christ as the arbitrator of the conflicting emotions in the heart.

You need to keep Jesus Christ

as the arbitrator of your life. He is the One. God can help you to make your mind up and to make the right decisions, but you need to go to Him, talk to Him, and have special audience with Him. It is good to have a special time with the Lord. It is a time when God comes in and encourages and comforts you.

I want you to look at the words of the Apostle Paul in Colossians 3:17, which reads, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." This is the test in your daily living with Christ. If you bring every word and deed into the presence of Jesus Christ, your life is going to please God.

How is your daily walk with God? Is it such that it really pleases God? Can you say that

you feel God is pleased with your life? To be considered for God's Heaven, it is necessary to please Him. To be translated out of this life into the other life in paradise, it is necessary to have a good report, that you pleased Him.

Is God pleased with your walk? If not, do not be embarrassed to talk to Him about it. Do not be embarrassed to get refreshed from God. There are places of refreshment where just a little talk with Jesus will help you to straighten out some things. There may be some little trivial things in your life that you need to talk to God about. If you have a need, you should be honest. God really appreciates it when you are honest.

*(Compact Disc TR-2035)*

**Character needs no epitaph. You can bury a man, but character will beat the hearse back from the graveyard.**

*[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]*

Earthly riches often become a snare because individuals are tempted to put their trust in the riches instead of the God who gave it, much like the rich, young ruler who came to Jesus seeking to find real soul rest. He had obeyed all the commandments from his childhood, yet he lacked one thing. Something was missing in his life. When Jesus required him to go and sell all that he had and share it with the poor, his flesh recoiled. Sadly, he turned and went away empty that day because he loved his wealth more than he loved or wanted Christ.

Jesus desires that all men seek the true and lasting riches, such as living a holy life, having the God-head dwell within the heart, and

having the blessings of working in the kingdom. Visiting the sick and winning souls to the Master is a real delight, as well as doing good deeds that manifest a Christ-filled life. These are valuable riches that are laid up in Heaven that will never fade away or be taken away from you. In Matthew 6:20 Jesus said, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

What are some of the precious riches that men can lay up for themselves? They can live a consistent, righteous life every day before God and their fellowman. They can allow faith to grow and to be built up as they face each test, trial, and hardship. Doing this will cause a person

to be a more effective witness to others of the grace and power of God. They can exercise themselves in godly characteristics and principals of God's Word. Showing a kind and caring attitude to others is essential. As Jesus came here to serve mankind, we must also be ready to serve wherever and whenever possible.

Let your heart be encouraged and challenged to seek the true riches. There is great joy in serving others and striving to be a blessing whenever the opportunity presents itself. Being physically rich may be pleasing, but being spiritually rich is far greater and more rewarding eternally.

Selected

*First Corinthians 11:8 For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.*

*9 Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.*

*10 For this cause ought the*

*woman to have power on her head because of the angels.*

*11 Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. [Both are dependent upon each other, though man holds the dom-*

*inant position of leadership in the world and in the home. He cannot do so without regard to the woman.]*

*12 For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.*

# The Hidden Man of the Heart



*Brother Richard Talbot*

## **The Downward Spiral of Today's Society**

The relationship between a man and a woman is placed under the authority of God. Church of God young people get married under the authority of God. Our lives are not to be lived by the

world's standards, but by God's standards. Our homes are not to be operated by the dictates of society, but by the Word of God. In order for marriage to be honorable in all, it must be entered into by two hearts that have discovered they simply cannot live without each other. However,

godly homes are on God's "endangered species list." In this world godly homes are very rare.

Young people coming to the marrying age need to be reminded of the duties that they are going to soon embrace. Marriage is a wonderful thing, but it has some awesome responsibili-

ties and tremendous requirements. You need to prepare your heart. Each one who is entering into a marriage union should be deeply spiritual with a proven and tested love for God above everything else. The couple should really love God more than they love each other. God should be first in their lives. If you love God and allow Him to have His rightful place, He will cause everything else to come together. In the days of Christ, women were treated no better than slaves, but there was a gradual move by Christ and the Gospel to lift them out of this terrible stigma, to lift women up to a better position in society.

Family life has greatly declined in the last few decades. Many contributing factors play into this downward decline of good, strong, moral characteristics.

One contributing factor is the widening out of society's ideas of what is moral. Another factor is the confusion in society of what constitutes decency. What is truly acceptable has been greatly altered. Also, laws have been changed to disregard the will of the majority in favor of a few who feel out of place in society, thereby effectively doing away with former restraints and guidelines, making depravity legally acceptable and causing moral principles to be silenced.

No society can stand long when it sets aside moral principles while opening its arms to embrace what has always been considered evil and depraved behavior. All great societies of the past that rose to power and dominated the world have fallen and collapsed from within by moral decay and corruption. Rome was one of the latest to fall from world dominance. For a thousand years, Rome ruled Western Europe, but four hundred seventy-six years after Christ, it collapsed, not because

of outside armies but because of moral decay within.

Our own country, the United States of America, is fast following in Rome's footsteps of moral decay and corruption. The breakdown began many years ago as Satan set his aim to bring destruction upon our great country. He began his assault in the minds of men and women.

First, the influence of the French Revolution in 1789-1799 released a firestorm due to the equalitarian influence that spread across the ocean. In that revolution women rose to power for the first time on a large scale. Then you can look back to the suffragette movement, which began in the 1840's in America. Women's voices became a force never before heard in American society.

The God-given role for women in society began to be considered as chains and shackles as early as 1905 by feminist sympathizers. The roaring twenties produced a fuller expression of women's rights, complete with the shearing of their long, glorious hair in favor of bobbed hair, brazen dress, and outlandish behavior.

Next came the force that changed women's role in our society, which was World War II. Women were free to dress, act, and work as men, and this behavior did not end when the war ended. Thereafter, many ladies disdained homemaking, motherhood, femininity, and skirts, and they vigorously cultivated their new liberated role. We are reaping the results of those moves yet today.

The outcome of these misplaced values we now have is in young girls who are down on marriage. Some young brides have no desire for children, and married couples feel no sense of real commitment toward each other. Many want the freedom to be themselves.

## God's Formula for Our Lives

According to the Gospel, God has a formula to guard and protect our homes and our lives. First Peter 3:1-12 reads: "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

As we consider the hidden

man of the heart, in these twelve verses lies a comprehensive summary presented by the Apostle Peter. He was giving counsel and advice toward harmony, workability, and balance, not only between a husband and wife but also our relationships and intermingling with others. Consider these verses for what they are. We have godly counsel by the Holy Spirit of God penned by one of God's greatest apostles and given for our admonishment.

Proverbs 15:22 reminds us that "Without counsel purposes are disappointed." A marriage can be severely disappointing if people do not heed God's counsel. We need the counsel of God. Proverbs 19:20 instructs, "Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end." Proverbs 20:5 reads, "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water [or a deep well]; but a man of understanding will draw it out."

### **The Wife and Her Position in the Home**

Let us look deeper into the well of our Scripture text. In verse 1 we look at the wife and her position. Now, whether the husband is saved or not (all the more reason if he is unsaved), it is important that a wife be in submission to her husband. Some wives are afraid of the term "submission." They do not want to feel that they are losing any of their power, prestige, authority, or the right to have their own way. Submission should not be a negative word. It is not intended to be any kind of punishment in this day and age. It is looked upon by the Word of God as merely part of the formula for God's plan to work perfectly.

A wife has her position and a husband has his position, and if both behave as godly individuals, there will be harmony, love, peace, joy, and unity throughout

their marriage. If a wife gets tired of being what she should be or if a husband stretches out the bounds and behaves in manners and ways that he should not behave, there will be trouble in the home. God never put anything in His Word that would cause difficulty in serving Him or in doing His will. The problem is what is down in the heart, or the hidden man of the heart. That applies to the woman and the man.

This Gospel has to become flesh. The Word of God has to work in a man's life, in a woman's life, and in the lives of every one of us together as the Church of God. The Holy Spirit must possess you and me individually. The Bible specifies that the woman ought to obey her husband.

Ephesians 5:22-24 states: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

I want you to notice that the Bible says "in every thing." The church is subject to Christ in everything, so the wife should be subject to her husband in everything in the Lord. The wife is to submit to her own husband. As a wife, you must listen to your husband. You may think your husband makes some dumb decisions, but you married him. You got what you asked for, so you ought to learn to live with him in the harmony of God's Word. If your husband is unsaved, the most sure way that you can win him to the Lord is to follow the counsel of God in the act of submitting and honoring him. You ought to submit your heart and life to him. You should not nag or criticize him.

I learned a new word the other day. It is "cavil." It means

"to raise irritating and trivial objections; to find fault unnecessarily." Some wives like to dig like a chicken in a pen, pecking at another chicken to get a little blood started, and it keeps pecking until it pecks that other chicken to death. Are you like that? If you are, you need to stop the picking and the fault finding. You should not belittle your husband and be oppressive or overbearing.

What you are in your home is what you are in the sight of God. You may fool people for a while, but you cannot fool God. If you are not decent, proper, and loving at home, you are not fit to claim to be a saint of God. You should not preach to your husband and demand that he do things that you know he has no desire to do. If you have an unsaved husband, you should not try to pressure him and force him to do things that you think are right. He will not want to do that, and the more you try to force him, the more stubborn he is going to get.

Sometimes the wife needs to keep quiet and live the life before her husband. The same teaching that applies to the wife with an unsaved husband applies to the husband with an unsaved wife. The husband and the wife ought to treat each other with honor and respect. A wife must strive to be ideal. Again, she should not nag and criticize her husband.

Galatians 5:22-23 speaks of the fruit of the Spirit as being love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance, or self-control. It applies to us inside the four walls of our homes as well as on the outside. This fruit of the Spirit should be practiced within the four walls of every Christian's home. My wife is living proof that it works. She has been long-suffering and tolerant. She has put up with the guy she chose to marry. There is no time

limit on that. How long is long-suffering? The word "long" is in there because it means just that.

### **The Bible Formula for the Home**

The counsel of the Apostle Peter does not guarantee that an unsaved husband will get saved, but it is the way to live so that you can do all you can to be a good spiritual influence to him and not a hindrance. By being in submission, you show yourself dependent upon him. You must adapt yourself to him so that without the need of preaching with lips, an unsaved husband can come under conviction by observing his godly wife's life. That is the Bible formula. You may say, "It is not working in my home." Well, you need to be long-suffering, bear with him, and pray for him.

A lot of women like to say, "We are equal; God made us equal." Well, He did in one sense. Galatians 3:28 says, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." That is where we are equal. We are all one in Christ, but God made the man different from the female. God made certain positions for the man different from the positions for the wife. In that sense we are not exactly equal. The man is the head, and the wife is just below the head.

If the husband is unsaved, the surest way to win him is to follow this counsel in 1 Peter 3:2, which states, "While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear." While your husband beholds your chaste, pure, holy conduct and behavior, connected with fear or reverence, you ought to show him deep, heartfelt respect. This applies to a home where both are saved. The wife must show deep respect to her husband. However, this is not to

be one-sided. We will get to the other side in a little while. Respect refers to the thought of deferring to him, honoring him, esteeming him, appreciating him, and admiring him. He is yours, so take good care of him. These things touch the heart. You should be devoted to him, deeply love him, and enjoy him. This is the rule, or God's formula.

There are difficulties and circumstances that develop in some marriages that make some things almost impossible to fulfill. I am preaching the rule regarding how God expects you to live. This is God's desire. There are some situations where a man can become almost unbearable to live with. For example, a man can become abusive physically, mentally, or verbally, to the extent that he literally drives the wife away from him. Those things can happen, and in those situations, a woman needs to seek her pastor's godly counsel and advice.

The surest way of winning those whom you love to the Lord is to live a self-denying, holy life. First Peter 3:3-4 reads: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

We have a little saying about a strong woman versus a woman of strength: A strong woman works out every day to keep her body in shape, but a woman of strength kneels daily in prayer to keep her soul in shape. A strong woman says she is not afraid of anything, but a woman of strength shows courage in the midst of her fear. A strong woman will not let anyone get the best of her, but a woman of strength gives her best to everyone. A strong woman walks surefootedly, but a woman of

strength knows that her God will catch her if she falls. A strong woman wears the look of confidence on her face, but a woman of strength wears the assurance of divine grace. A strong woman feels within herself that she is strong enough for the journey, but a woman of strength knows that the journey itself will make her faith in God strong. We need women of strength who know the reality of living for God.

### **Fundamental Principles for the Home**

First Peter 3:7 reads, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them [the wife] according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." Oh, the husband likes the wife to give honor to him and to show respect to him. He likes the comfort of a wife who really thinks he is the greatest, but now we come to the conduct of the husband. He is to honor the wife. He should not look down on her. He should not feel in his heart or mind that women are somehow beneath him.

In many congregations across the land, if there were not any women in them, they would not have a congregation. Women are a powerful force in the Church of God. They were a powerful force in the Bible days during Christ's time. They have their place, and it is not to be frowned upon by masculine men looking down on a woman as someone who is beneath them.

Husband, you ought to honor your wife as the weaker vessel, as being heirs together of the grace of life. Why is that so important? It is important so that your prayers will not be hindered. If you get out of order in your home, your prayers are going to be affected. If you mistreat your

companion, it is going to affect your ability to pray. You cannot do what you want to do as the man of your house without respect and regard to your wife. As a married man, that is a joint relationship. You need to honor your wife with the deepest respect, love, and compassion.

The light of the Gospel changed society's view in the Gospel Day concerning how the wife is to be treated. The husband used to look at the wife as nothing more than a slave, but since Christ has come, salvation has elevated her to a better position in life. Remember, the hidden man of the heart applies to the husband as well as to the wife. Christ Jesus makes you a new creation when the Holy Spirit comes into your heart. Again, you must possess the fruit of the spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. The fruit of the Spirit must be working evidence in your marriage. Fruit of the Spirit is not just fruit to be used in the house of God. It is to affect your whole life, whether you are in the home, on vacation, on a business trip, or wherever you are. The child of God must possess and show the fruit of the Spirit of God.

Again, 1 Peter 3:7 says, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge." What kind of knowledge is this? It is godly knowledge. The husband is instructed to give honor to the wife, the masculine to the feminine, as to the weaker vessel. You need to keep this in mind as being heirs together of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered; in other words, so that your prayers do not become ineffective, empty, useless words.

Ephesians 5:33 states, "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she

reverence her husband." These are God's principles. You cannot take the Book around in your home and say: "Here, wife! Here it says you need to reverence me!" That is not what it is there for. It is just showing you what you will do if you really love God and have God in your heart. You will do these things automatically. A godly woman will automatically reverence her husband, respect him, honor him, give way to him, and adapt herself to him.

Young lady, you will think your new husband is the most wonderful thing that God has ever sent to you, other than salvation. However, a few months down the road, you are going to learn that he has some traits about him that you never knew existed. You are going to find that he has another side to him that you are going to have to adjust yourself to, so you need to accept it and say, "Lord, give me grace." He will. It is a proven fact. You will be a godly wife, and it will be automatic in your heart to respect and reverence your husband.

### **Showing Special Care for Each Other**

In 1 Peter 3:7, Peter said, ". . . giving honour unto the wife." What kind of honor was Peter speaking of? He was speaking of the husband showing special care and preference to the wife. The husband ought to honor his wife, and the wife has to honor her husband, showing special care for each other. In other words, they ought to go out of their way to please each other. They should work at the job of pleasing each other and should think of ways to please each other. The husband should not let selfishness come into his heart and into the marriage, to where he gets the idea that he is the head of the home, and he makes the money, so he can spend it any way he

wants to spend it, such as going out and buying himself a new boat, a new shotgun, a new rifle, or a new fishing rod. You may say that is what you want and you are going hunting. Your wife may need something in the kitchen. She may need something around the house, and you are getting everything you want, but you do not have any money for what she needs. You cannot be selfish or stingy if you want to have a happy home.

I have spent fifty years of my life learning how to be a successful husband, and I have not graduated yet. It seems there is always another lesson to learn, but I am working at it.

What kind of need does your wife have as a weaker vessel? That is not speaking of physical weakness necessarily. Some wives may be able to arm-wrestle their husbands and win. My wife and I have never done that. I am not talking about physical strength, although that is an issue, but more than the physical weakness is the feminine need for emotional support and for comfort in stress. She needs her husband's support and strength. She needs to feel loved and cared for.

The wife needs to feel that her husband really loves her. There is a need in the wife to feel that deep-seated hunger satisfied for comforting words, "I'm with you, and I'm here for you." A wife loves to feel the strength of her husband's arm around her shoulders, pulling her tight and giving her comfort in times of need. She needs him to be a head that she can respect. Some wives have a hard time respecting their husbands because their husbands have never really given them anything to respect. A husband needs to live so that the wife automatically respects him, draws close to him, and seeks his comfort, strength, and even spiritual support. She needs him to be someone on whom she can lean.

She needs someone to be the leader in the home, to take the headship of the home, and to be the anchor of that home.

### **Proper Relationships in the Home**

God put it upon man to be the one who makes sure that the children are nurtured in the admonition of the Lord. He is responsible for the spiritual well-being of the home. He is responsible and needs to take the headship and leadership of the children in their behavior and see that they are raised in the proper way. Although most wives handle that duty, it is the husband's responsibility to see that it is done correctly and efficiently.

You may ask, "Where does all of this come from?" Back in Genesis 3:16 God said to Eve, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." That put her in a slightly lesser place than the husband. Her desire is to be toward her husband, and he is to rule over her. I know it is not generally accepted in society today, but it is God's Word. If we are not careful, the spirit in the world will creep in among the saints and take hold.

Some women want to exert their authority and their freedom. Women like the idea of having a career, having their own business, doing their own thing, and having their own bankroll. Nevertheless, a woman's place is still in the home. If your wife has to work, you need to make sure it is for a need and not for greed. She needs to be in the home with the children. Also, you do not need a big fancy house when you get married. You need to live in God's order and do things God's way; then you will find yourself much more satisfied with life.

Respect cannot be demanded. No man can demand his wife's obedience, and no man should

have to. Respect is earned. If a man lives before God, following the advice and counsel of the Word of God, the wife should have no trouble being all that she should be, and you should enjoy a blessed and happy home. The rest of 1 Peter 3:7 states, ". . . as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." That is important.

I came into my study one day at home, and laying on my desk was a note written in my wife's handwriting. Of course, that always draws my attention. I do not get notes from her very often, and I understood after I read it why the note was there and she was not. This note said: "Dear Lord, I pray for wisdom to understand my man. I pray for love to forgive him, and I pray for patience to put up with his moods, because, Lord, if I prayed for strength, I would beat him to death." We all have issues and areas where we need help, but life goes on every day, week after week, and we are establishing a legacy. Our home and our relationship with each other flows right down to the children.

In treatment of the weaker vessel, a man must not be selfish, self-centered, forgetful, and unmindful of his companion, but he must treat her with tenderness, patience, and kindness. We are joint heirs of God's everlasting life. Jealousy and bickering are opposed to the spirit of prayer.

The thought of being able to be a real child of God requires you to have the hidden man of the heart in full operation in your life. You need to let the Holy Spirit of God be fully in control. This is very serious because if you fail with each other, you fail God altogether. In your home you should be what you ought to be before God.

A zealous little boy was pledging his devotion to his mother when he began to brag on what he would do for her when

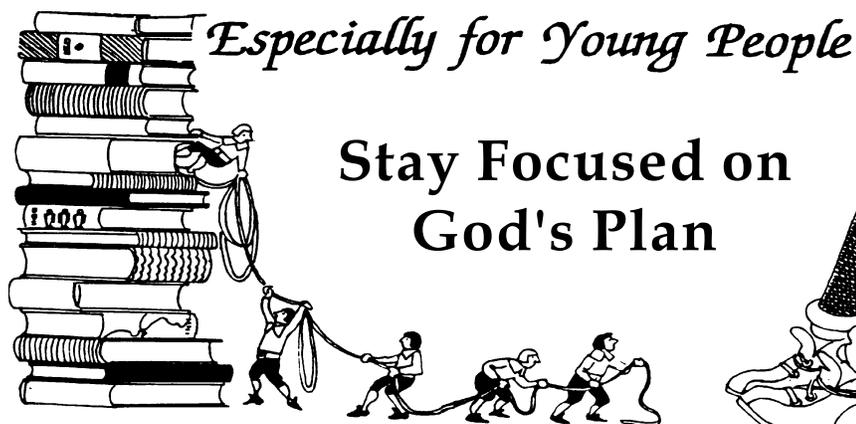
he grew up. He said, "Mom, when I grow up, I am going to buy you an electric can opener, an electric toaster, an electric stove, and an electric chair." Your zeal sometimes can go too far, but let us have zeal for God to do His will and to serve Him with all our hearts.

It is amazing when homes are in their proper order how beautiful life can be! To have a happy home is priceless, but it takes work. It takes overlooking some things. Your wife is not always going to please you, but she will try. The husband is not always going to please her, but they should work together. There were times down through my years of marriage that I have had to go back to my dear wife and say: "Honey, I'm sorry for the way I spoke to you. I'm sorry for being cross. I'm sorry that I spoke out of turn. I should not have done that. Will you forgive me?" Then she does and sweetness returns. You need to keep things clear and right, keep love strong, and be humble with each other. You are together as heirs of God. Let us live with that deep respect, first for God and His Word, and then work to make our homes, our families, and our lives all that they should be for God.

*(Compact Disc TR-1918)*

*"Every way of a  
man is right in his  
own eyes: but the  
LORD pondereth  
the hearts."*

*Proverbs 21:2*



*Especially for Young People*

## Stay Focused on God's Plan



The word *inspire* is a verb that means "to encourage someone to greater effort, enthusiasm, or creativity; to awaken a particular feeling in someone." The key word that I thought about in that definition was "awaken." I believe that a lot of young people have inspiration in their lives, but sometimes they need to be awakened to what they actually need to do in their specific circumstance.

First of all, you need to serve God and make sure you find or remain in a godly congregation. Your most important priority is to be in a place where Truth is preached. That is what my mother and father saw with the Church of God. They made sacrifices to travel to a place where they could get their souls fed, and of course, I went as well, and I am so glad I did. We had to leave about 5:00-5:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings to get to Sunday school, but we did it. I think when you do things like that, you appreciate these things more. When I look back, I have many fond memories of those times.

As I was thinking about the word *inspire*, I also thought about the word *challenge*. Young person, you will have challenges in your life. Even if you have graduated from high school or college, do not think that your challenges are over. Jesus warned that we would have problems in this world.

Jesus said in John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto

you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." When you have Jesus Christ in your life, you can overcome the world. Do not let the world dictate to you what you need to do. You need to trust God in every step of your life. The Lord knows what is best for your life and your future. No college degree can do that, and no amount of money can do that.

The Lord has your best interests at heart, but what do you have to do? You have to keep God's plan in the forefront of your life. You must stay focused on what God wants you to do, not on your ideas or your interests. Jesus endured the Cross, and He is our example. I encourage you to follow His example.

You are going to face adversities. You are not going to get through this life problem free. Life is a series of problems. When you solve one, two or three more might appear, and you will have to take care of those. Trusting God in all facets of your life is the most important thing.

In today's world and with its high demands, it can be very difficult with strenuous schedules, time restraints, constant evaluations, test taking, and peer pressure. Difficult situations do not stop when you get out of high school or college. If you continue your educational process beyond high school, you need to seek God's

face and ask, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" You need to be obedient to God's Word and His Spirit.

Someone once quoted the words, "God's glory is best seen in Jesus Christ." He is the light of the world, and He illuminates God's nature. Because of Jesus, you do not have to be in the dark about what God is really like. Jesus came to earth so that we could fully understand God's glory. Hebrews 13:20-21 reads: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

A lot of things out in this old world can cloud your mind. A lot of billboards try to influence you to go this way or that way, but you need to stay focused on God's plan for your life. You need to get in the church services and do what you need to do to stay spiritual.

The enemy of souls would love to paint a picture of things out in the world that look good. He will tell you to take advantage of worldly enticements while you are young. You need to back away from them. Good questions to ask yourself are: If I do this thing, will it make me more spiritual or less spiritual? Will this cause me a

hardship down the road someday? Will this make me a stronger child of God? Is this going to cause financial ruin in my life? Will it cause me physical deterioration?

I have seen people's pictures in the obituary column in the newspaper and looked at their ages. Sometimes it shows thirty-five to forty year olds who look like they are in their sixty's or seventy's. What causes that? Taking part in the sinful pleasures of this old world will make you look older than you really are. It will cause the body, the mind, and the soul to deteriorate.

It is so sad to see young people indulging in sinful habits. I read in a news release that by the time some children reach nine years of age, a small but significant number of them experience smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, huffing deadly inhalants, smoking marijuana, and trying other drugs. Many fourth graders drink beer and wine coolers and huff inhalants on a monthly basis. One time use of inhalants can produce brain damage. More Americans die from smoking tobacco than from other major causes of death, such as AIDS, car accidents, drug abuse, and homicides. Young person, do not become a statistic. You should make yourself useful in the Kingdom of God.

As a young person just starting out in life, you need to follow God and His path. You will never be sorry. I have never smoked a cigarette or drank alcohol, thank God. It is not anything in me, but it is how I was raised. I wanted to be where I needed to be with my parents. I did not want to disappoint them. Did the devil ever come to me and say, "Wouldn't you like to try this or that to see if you like it?" Of course, he did. If you do not start it, you will not have to battle it. Some people say, "I just cannot stop." Well, why did you even start?

There are many good things that you can get yourself involved

in rather than the sinful habits of this old world. Colossians 1:9-10 states: "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

As you plan your life, young person, you need to remember there are some things that you need to follow. You can relate some things to a literal garden that you plant. A garden does not work itself. It takes planning and work to keep it up. It needs the right nutrients in order to make plants grow. Your soul needs the right things also. Your soul cannot prosper if you let things go or if you let the wrong things in. Someone once said, "To live a good life, one must maintain areas of strength while identifying and improving areas of weakness."

God wants you to grow up, young person. Your Heavenly Father's goal is for you to mature and develop the characteristics of Jesus Christ. Jesus was bold. He did not cower down or back off. Jesus let people know where He stood. God wants you to let the world know where you stand. When you are subjected to ridicule, you should be up front with people and let them know that you are a child of God. When one brother used to be asked why his girls wore dresses, he said, "They wear dresses because they are girls." That is true! If you are a girl, you should wear a dress. If you are a man, you should wear pants. This is the Bible standard.

Sadly, as some young people grow older, they never grow up. Spiritual growth is not automatic. It takes intentional commitment. You must have a desire to grow. Young person, do you want to become a stronger Christian? If

you do, you need to grow in the things of God. You must put forth effort to grow.

Now, in your spiritual garden, you might want to plant some "peas," for peace of mind, peace of heart, and peace of soul. These come from growing your heart and life toward Jesus Christ. In your garden you must be careful of the things that would hinder your spiritual progress. That is where you should plant "squash." Then you will be able to squash the gossip (and there will be gossip). Usually if a person gossips about someone else, he or she is going to gossip about you as well. You need to squash the gossip that comes your way, and squash any indifference that wants to work in your life. The devil will use indifference.

The devil would love to drive a wedge between young people. God wants you to stop any grumbling. We live in a world of grumblers. They complain about this and complain about that. People should be thankful for what God has blessed them with. In order for your garden to prosper, you should water it freely with patience and cultivate it with the love of God. When you do that, fruit will come forth in your life.

The Lord will guide and direct your steps. In Psalm 119:133 the psalmist said, "Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." Have confidence in God. He will remind you of the things that you have been taught. You need to grow in Him. Someone once wrote, "Nothing shapes your life more than the commitment you choose to make."

Young person, your commitments can develop you or destroy you, but either way they will define you. You become what you are committed to. When you are committed to God, you are less likely to drift. It does not do any good to make a halfhearted commitment to Him. You must be definite in your thinking. The most important commitment that you

need to make is a spiritual commitment. People make commitments defining worldly objects, such as becoming rich or famous, but when they fail to obtain those goals, they become extremely disappointed. Oftentimes they become extremely bitter with life altogether.

A single choice that you make in life can have eternal consequences. You need to make your choices wisely, because the choices you make now could have long-lasting effects on your life. You need to pray and seek godly counsel.

Young person, you need to follow the Lord. That is the best investment that you could ever make. Nothing satisfies like Jesus. This world only has trinkets to offer compared to eternal happiness. You need to stay in the center of God's will. Isaiah 55:6 reads, "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." You must call upon Him daily throughout your day to find out what the Lord wants you to do. You need to ask questions such as: Is this where You want me to go? Is this the class You want me to sign up for?

You need to seek God's face earnestly. In Luke 19:10 Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was

lost." He said in Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." They might not be the things that you want, but God can see in your life what is best to be added to you.

I found this poem called "Open the Window" by Brenda Sewell. You need to have that window open for God's presence in your life. It reads:

*Open the window into your life,  
Let the light of the Lord brighten  
your day.*

*You have been in the dark long  
enough,  
Let him guide and show you  
the way.*

*Open the door to your heart,  
Let Jesus lead you out into  
the sun.*

*Let Him comfort you as you walk,  
He is the one . . . let His will  
be done.*

*Give the keys to your heart to Him  
Let Him have entry into your life  
And you will know the peace  
He gives  
For in knowing Him, there is  
no strife.*

*There is no other caretaker  
for your soul.*

*You can trust the Lord to care  
for you,  
To protect you, to love you like  
no other.  
He will lead you down Heaven's  
avenue.*

You may feel down or depressed sometimes in life, but thank God, you do not have to stay there. No one wants to suffer, but through suffering you truly know Jesus Christ.

You can read about Daniel in the Old Testament. God could have kept Daniel out of the lions' den, but He did not. However, He protected him while he was in there. The Lord could have kept Joseph out of jail. He could have kept the three Hebrew boys from being thrown in a fiery furnace, but he did not. Why? God wanted to be magnified. He wanted those people to see the glory of God through what He could do through those individuals. He let those things happen to those individuals to draw people closer to God. That is what God expects you to do in your life. Young person, hang in there. You need to seek God's face in everything you do. You will not go wrong as long as you are truly seeking God's face.

Brother Irwin Seshier

## **My Prayer**

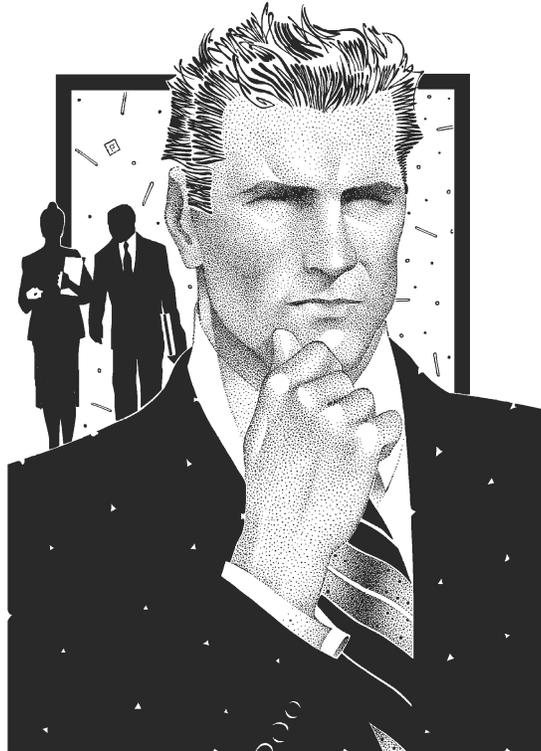
**Teach me, Lord, to keep sweet and gentle in all the events of life, in disappointments, in thoughtlessness of others, in the insincerity of those I trusted, in the unfaithfulness of those on whom I relied.**

**Help me to put myself aside, to think of the happiness of others, to hide my little pains and heartaches, so that I may be the only one to suffer from them.**

**Teach me to profit by the suffering that comes to me. Help me to use it that it may mellow me, not harden and embitter me, that it may make me broad in my forgiveness, kindly, sympathetic, and helpful.**

*Proverbs 10:22 The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.*

# LIVING LIFE WITH NO REGRETS



*Brother Paul Prinkey*

## **Regrets Come From Rejecting Jesus**

Solomon gave the recipe for living life with no regrets. He said that God's blessing makes rich, and there is no sorrow added with it. You will not have any regrets after you have been blessed by God. Paul told Timothy that God has richly blessed us all with all things to enjoy.

God has given us so much that we can enjoy. No regrets come along with God's blessings.

In Matthew 19:16 the rich, young ruler went to Jesus and said, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus quoted some commandments and said he needed to keep the commandments.

The young man said in verse

20, "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?"

In essence, Jesus told him to go and sell everything he had, for he had much goods, and to give away his money to the poor and follow Him. The Bible says that he went away sorrowfully because he had great riches. He was not willing to give them up. Can you imagine the regret that

young man had? He was visited by the Lord and invited to become one of His disciples, but he refused to meet the conditions and turned Jesus down.

As I thought about living life with no regrets, I thought of something that happened to my dad in his life. When I was a young boy growing up, my dad worked in the coal mines, and he liked to hunt and fish. One day he came home from the coal mine, and he had a dog with him. This dog was supposed to be a coon dog. When my dad brought it home, I do not know why he bought the dog, but he paid one hundred dollars to a man who also worked in the coal mines. My dad had never hunted racoons in his life, but for some reason he bought the dog. Maybe that man was a good salesman and talked my dad into it. He brought this dog home, but he did not take it hunting.

That dog would not make a noise all day long. It would lie down in the dog box and rest through the heat of the day, but as soon as it got dark, it would bark all night. The next morning, it would shut up, and we would not hear it until the next night, and it would bark all night again. We became miserable with that dog, and the neighborhood probably became miserable as well. Finally, a friend of mine offered my dad to take it out hunting to see if it would hunt racoons, so we took it out. That dog ran around and sniffed around the bushes and that was about all it did. It never did run a coon. That is the only time I know of that we ever took it hunting.

Finally, everyone got so sick and tired of it that my dad gave it away. The man he gave it to could not do any good with it either. My dad regretted the day that he bought that dog. Have you ever heard someone say, "They will live to regret that"? Well, he did.

## All Things Become New

There are things that we all have done that we have regretted, and I want to make it clear that I am not throwing off on anyone who has done something that they regretted. You might have done things before today that you regret, maybe some serious things, but you do not have to make the same mistakes again in the future.

As a young boy growing up, I was bound to do wrong. I did not give my heart and life to God until I was sixteen years of age. I did not have the power to stop myself from hurting my mom and dad until the day came that God dealt with my soul. God convicted me and I went to an altar of prayer. I made my mind up that this was the way I was going to live for the rest of my life. I pledged my life to God and told God, "If You will help me, I will live for You for the rest of my life." I thank God, by the grace of God, I have never gone back on the Lord since that night. I yielded myself to the Lord, and God helped me so that I could live my life and not bring hurt to my mom and dad. Why did I feel that way? I did not want to have any regrets.

Our Scripture text tells us, "The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." I have never been sorry that I gave my heart to God when I was sixteen years of age. I lived for God for the last few years of my school life. I graduated high school with a testimony that my life had been changed. The boys that I went to school with knew that things were different. Why? I did not have a potty mouth, or a foul-mouth. God cleaned up my speech, took away the sin, and made a new creature out of me. All things became new when old things passed away. My life was changed, and it has been changed

ever since.

I have never been stronger spiritually than I am today in living for the Lord. Every day that I live for God makes me stronger. You do not get weaker when you live for the Lord. In John 10:10 Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." As you increase in the Lord, your spiritual strength increases, and you are stronger in living for God than the day before.

When you live for the devil, you get weaker. Why? He has come to steal, to kill, and to destroy. Your life does not get better with the devil; he makes you weaker, spiritually speaking. Are you living your life with no regrets? Every one of us has made a few mistakes in life, things that we have regretted, but when it comes to living for God and spiritual life, you do not want to make any mistakes that you will regret later.

## Discipline in the Home

When I was a young boy growing up, I appreciate the strictness of my parents. I was raised in the Church of God. My mom and dad were very strict with us. When we came to the camp meetings, we were all seated in the same row of seats with Mom and Dad. We did not go sit with our friends. Mom and Dad watched us no matter how old we were, and we all sat there in one row. Ours was not the only family that was that way.

Growing up in our home, we towed the mark. We dressed the way they wanted us to dress at home, at camp meeting, and with our friends. We did not leave the house dressed the way we wanted to be dressed. When Mom and Dad said it was time for us boys to get a haircut, we made a trip to the barber, and we got it cut the way they wanted it cut or we had

to take a second trip back, and maybe received correction along with it.

The Bible says in Proverbs 22:15, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Whenever Mom or Dad felt that we needed correction, we got it, and it never ruined me or stunted my growth. It straightened out my behavior. Mom called it "the board of education applied to the seat of knowledge." There is something about hard pressure applied in the right place that stimulates the brain to think. You can remember things that you thought you had forgotten. Things that are learned the hard way are not easily forgotten.

Mom and Dad raised us strictly. They made us do things that we did not want to do. I never resented my parents for it. I never said that I regretted the way my mom and dad raised me. I needed it. I can guarantee you there was more correction that I should have had. They did not catch me for some of the things. So any time they corrected me for something that I did not think I needed, it was just making up for the times they missed.

When I decided in my late teens and early twenties to become a husband and to go out and look for a wife, get married, and have a family, I did *not* say: "I am not going to raise my children the way I was raised. My mom and dad were too strict with me, and I am not raising mine the way they raised me." Why? The older I got, the more I learned that what they did was right and for my own good. They told me the wrong I had done, why they were going to correct me, and how I could avoid getting such correction in the future.

There is a proper way to discipline your children, and it does work. It is 100 percent effective. If you are not doing it, you

need to introduce it into your home. My mom and dad taught me right. Whenever it came time for us to be ready to leave the house for church, if we dragged our feet, they encouraged us to speed it up a little. We did not stay home because we had a headache. Dad prayed for us, took us to church, and carried us to the altar if we were not feeling well.

### **Building Christian Character**

We did not take vacations growing up. We attended the camp meetings. If Dad could not get off work early enough, Mom brought us to camp meeting and he caught up with us later. I do not remember resenting Mom and Dad over that, and I do not have any regrets.

Ecclesiastes 11:9 reads, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." How many times have you heard a young person say: "This is my life, and I will do what I want. You are not my boss, so don't try to tell me what to do. I don't need your preaching"? Today some attitudes that I see and hear coming out of children are not good. I call them children because that is the way they act. I do not care if they are twenty-eight. One day a young man that I worked with was complaining because his dad looked at his room and told him that he needed to clean it up. I was standing there and said, "How old are you?"

He said, "I'm twenty-four."

I said: "By the time I was twenty-four, I had been married for three years and had two children. I will tell you what you ought to do. If you are so upset with your dad, just move out." His dad owned the company that

we worked for. I said: "Go get your own job and your own transportation, because your ride to the job is with your dad in his truck. So get your own vehicle and your own insurance. Do your own cooking, and take care of yourself." The young man never brought up the problem again.

Many young people do not want to be told what to do. It is just that innate nature of a young person to rebel against what they are being told, sometimes even when they know it is right. I had those times when I did not want to listen to my dad, but he cured me very quickly. I figured out that it was best to do what my dad said. By the way, I learned quickly growing up that when my mom used my middle name, if I did not move then, I was going to feel it. She just came along behind me and swatted and chased me to where she needed me to go. When she used my middle name, I knew it was my last warning. I knew that I had better listen right then, because she was not going to speak to me about the matter again.

Mark Twain said that when he was eighteen years of age, he was amazed at how ignorant his dad was. He said by the time he turned twenty-one, he was amazed at how much his dad had learned in three years. There is a saying that says, "The bitter tears shed over graves were for words left unsaid and deeds left undone." You get one chance to go around, not two or three. You get one chance to do some things right the first time. There are some things in life that you only get one chance to do it right the first time. If you do not, you will never get a second chance to do it right the second time.

As I was growing up, I did not even think about talking back to my parents. Mom was fast. I do not know where she got her speed from, but she could back-

hand me in a hurry. I never saw it coming. Whenever she backhanded me, she did not just put her hand out. I got the back of the hand and the hand was still raised waiting to see if I wanted to try again. She would say, "Would you like to try for some more?" I never saw her have to come back across and get the other side because the first time was all I needed. She had large hands and big knuckles, and it hurt. She came from a large family, and all of them were big, and she was a good-sized woman herself.

I learned not to backtalk, and whenever she would tell me things, I learned to keep my mouth shut and listen, because whether I believed it or not, it was good for me. Many times it took me saying the same things out of my mouth to my children to realize that is what I did not want to hear my mom and dad say to me when I was growing up. I found myself repeating the same words that my mom and dad said to us.

As I grew up in the Church of God, there is something I believe that was an advantage to every child raised in the church. I have noticed that it seems like there is a trend whenever children get older and begin to move away from where their parents sit and move backward in the pews toward the back of the church. Often it is not long until they end up not being in church at all.

I have also seen another trend that is good. The children who sit with their parents and move forward in the pews to the front yield themselves to the Spirit of God and get saved. Many times those are the ones who are still coming forty years later. They are the ones who are teaching Sunday school and showing up faithfully on work day to make sure the grounds are ready for the next meeting. There is a trend, and it works. Whenever you give

your life to God, He helps build Christian character, and that is something that the world does not know anything about.

### **Serving God in Your Youth**

In the Book of Jude, Jude gave encouragement on building Christian character. Verses 20-21 read: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." What was Jude talking about? The best way you can do that is to give your heart and life to God when you are young. Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 12:1, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." When should you remember your Creator? You should remember Him in your youth.

If you will give your life to God when you are young, God will establish Christian character in you, and you will grow in the Lord. The Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 4:15, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things." As you grow and mature in life, you will grow and mature in your spiritual life and become an asset to the church and not a liability. If you do not give your life to God when you are young, the day is going to come when you are going to say, "I have no pleasure in them."

When you are young, you are making memories. You are living life and reaching out. You have goals and things you want to accomplish, things you are striving for, so you are reaching out to grab everything you can get. As you get older, the reality of life sets in. You may say: "Well, I have done that before. I know what that is all about. I am not

running after that anymore." Those things that you took pleasure in when you were nineteen to twenty-five years of age do not bring as much pleasure as they once did. If you are not saved and your pleasure is not in the Lord, you are going to say as Solomon said, "I have no pleasure in them."

Sin gets old, and your body is going to get old and unable to keep up. The young sinners are going to crowd you out and you will be on the outside looking in, not on the inside looking out. People that you thought were your friends, you find out are not your friends anymore, and you are on your own. Then you are in trouble, because you have found out that it seems like when you get up in your late thirties and early forties, if you are not the one who is sick, one of your friends might be ill. You find that you are going to the funeral home more than you are going to someone's place for a picnic. When I looked at my friend, forty-two years of age and dying from cancer, reality began to set in. I realized that I was not twenty-five anymore, and death is something that is real. It can catch you when you are not expecting it.

Death does not have to wait until you are sixty, seventy, or eighty. Who would think that someone who was full of strength, who worked hard all his life, and who lived a clean life could die of cancer. My friend who was only forty-two years of age who was diagnosed with cancer died five months later, leaving a wife and two young children.

I remember when I first started working as a commercial carpenter. There was a twenty-eight year old carpenter that worked on one of the other crews, and I thought that man was old. I thought: "Twenty-eight years old? He is old. My, I am

only twenty-one." Whenever I became twenty-eight years of age, I did not think that was nearly as old as what I thought it was when I was twenty-one.

### **Taking Care of Your Regrets**

As you get a little older, you will begin to realize that life is not all about living and life is not all about dying. One day there is going to be a Judgment, and you are going to be called away to the judgment seat of God. There, every knee is going to bow and every tongue is going to confess. You are going to confess to God and be judged by the deeds that you have done in your body, whether they have been good or bad.

Do you want to go to the Judgment the way you are living right now? Will you think of that song, "Wasted Years"? Then you will have no pleasure in your life, and you will be filled with regrets. If you will give your heart and life to God today, that would be the best thing you could do, and it will be the beginning of the rest of your life. You can get stronger in the Lord from this day forward, and you will not have any more regrets.

One person was heard saying: "I have no regrets. I would not have lived my life the way that I did if I was going to worry about what people were going to say about me." You need to quit thinking about what other people are going to say about you, what your friends might think, what the boss might say, or how you might be treated at work. You must make a decision based on what you know God would have you do, based on what is best for you. Let the pieces fall into place behind you. You need to live for God and be faithful.

Do you have any regrets? Do you have something you would like to see changed in your life? Have you lived some way in

your life and thought, "If I could just change that." Friend, that is in the past. Many times the past is unchangeable, but there are many things that you can regret. As a child growing up, I always strove to obey my mom and dad.

When I became a Christian, after I asked for God's forgiveness, the first two people that I made an apology to were my mom and dad. I can remember sitting in between my mom and dad in the pickup truck going home, and I said, "Mom and Dad, I want to ask your forgiveness for things that I have done wrong and for any time that I hurt you." They forgave me, and from that day forward, I have lived my life with no regrets toward my mom and dad.

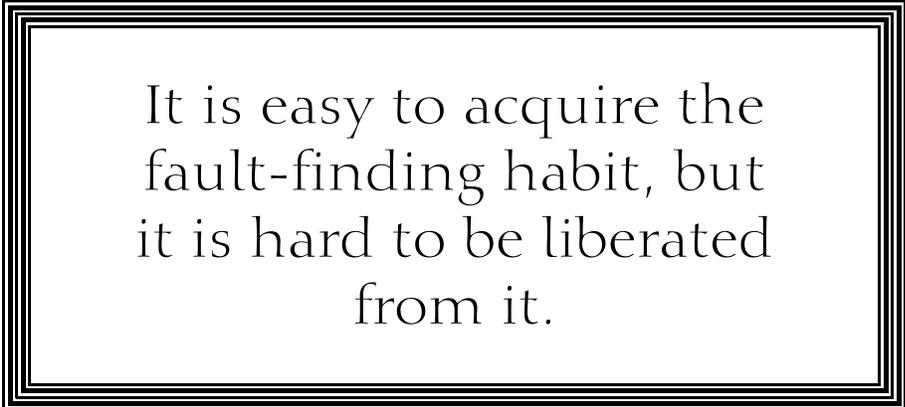
The day came when I had to stand beside the casket of my mother, and eighteen months later, I stood beside the casket of my father, and the tears that I shed were not tears of regret. They were tears of sorrow, tears of loss, and sometimes tears of laughter and joy, but none of them were tears of regret. I have told young people that I have counseled, "You do not want to have to stand beside the casket of your mom or dad and regret that you did not do something that you knew you should have done for them or that you did some

thing against them that you never apologized or asked forgiveness for.

You should want to live life with no regrets. If your mom and dad are still living, or one of your parents is still living, and there is something you have felt in your heart that you would like to say to them or do for them, I encourage you to do it now. You may say: "Oh, but I'm busy. I have a family of my own." Nevertheless, you need to take the time and do it. You will never regret it.

Do you have regrets? Maybe there is someone you need to go to and ask for forgiveness. Maybe there has been something that has been troubling you for a long time and holding you back in giving your life to God. Is something holding you back in your Christian experience because you know you need to do something or because you made a move that you now regret? Perhaps you hurt people, you hurt God, and you need to make it right. Now is the best time to do it. There will never be an easier time to do it than right now. You are with God. God is there to meet and supply your need. If you call, ministers are ready to pray with you. You need to get that regret taken care of.

*(Compact Disc TR-1359)*



It is easy to acquire the  
fault-finding habit, but  
it is hard to be liberated  
from it.

*Malachi 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought*

*upon his name.*

*17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.*

*18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.*

# Let Thy Words Be Few



*Brother Garrett Haylock*

## **Words Are Very Important**

The Book of Ecclesiastes, Chapter 5, has quite a lot to say along the lines of how you ought to behave yourself when you go to the house of the Lord, of how to keep your feet when you go to the house of the Lord, and of being more ready to listen than to speak. As I thought along these lines, from there I came to the

thought of letting your words be few. Living as Christians, we are serving the Living God.

In James 1:26, James said, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." What would render one's religion to be vain is something that you need to avoid. This man's religion is vain, or useless; it is no

good to anyone. There are not many areas in one's life that would cause a person to come to that conclusion as quickly as a person who does not bridle his tongue. As a representative of God, you need to be careful of what you say and of how you live, but I want to deal mostly with what the Christian says. That is a big part of one's life.

James said in James 3:2, "For

in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." If you talk about things that you should not be talking about, it gives a bad image of your profession of faith, and definitely a bad image of the church. You need to be careful of what you say. Sometimes people engage in conversations that are not wholesome. It would be better to leave that place. You cannot stop hearing some things, but if at all possible, you ought to get away from it. Sometimes you may not say anything, but actions speak louder than words. If a conversation is unwholesome, you should not lend an ear to it.

It is said that if an average person can talk and express himself freely, he will speak approximately thirty thousand words a day. I do not know if I talk that much, but that is what a certain survey has concluded. As I read verse 16 of our Scripture text, which reads, "Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it," I thought about the thirty thousand words. Just imagine, in one year you could have three hundred sixty-five volumes where you are the exclusive author. I wonder, would you want anyone else to read it? Your conversation needs to be guarded.

Some of the best advice along these lines is in Ecclesiastes, Chapter 5. As you read that, the writer puts you on guard. It is written by Solomon, so I believe they are wise words. Learning to let your words be few is not always easy. Again, James said, in James 3:2b, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man." I do not like to have to make restitutions, do you?

Ezekiel 33:15 states, "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed. . . ." Sometimes someone can rob a

person by marring that person's character by saying words carelessly. He may go back and try to undo the wrong or the damage, but it takes a lot of grace. Oh, it flowed out of his mouth very easily and thoughtlessly. He did not put much thought into saying it.

### **Careless Words Can Bring Much Hurt**

Once someone spread a bad rumor about a young lady who was a very good friend. I am not going to go into all the details of it, but I can tell you this much, one day God saved him and brought back to him the hurt that he saw on that young lady's face as she explained what she had heard said about her. He did not know how to deal with it, so he said nothing. Years went by, and the young lady had gotten married and had children by the time the young man had gotten saved. One of the hardest restitutions that he had to make was to go back and say to that one who was a close friend, "Do you remember that incident?"

She said, "How could I forget it; it hurt me so much!" With tears in his eyes, he had to say, "It was me that spread that bad rumor."

She said: "I cannot believe it. You have always been my friend."

If I could go into all the details, you would understand better, but it would be best left unsaid. The fact is, those hurtful words spread in that rumor affected this young person.

Many times people hurt others carelessly with their words. There is no other reason that people will condemn you as a Christian quicker than having a little too much to say. It is easy to step out of bounds in conversation. Remember, James said if a person offends not in word, the same is a perfect man. Oftentimes

you cannot call back those words, but at least you can go back and say: "I'm sorry. I overstepped my bounds. Please forgive me." Those words are not always easy to say. You need to be careful about what you say, especially as a child of God. You should not defame a person. Defamatory statements can really destroy and mar a person's career, life, and reputation. Sometimes who says it makes it easier to believe; nevertheless, a lie is a lie, no matter who tells it. When you tell lies and say things that are not right, you ought to go back and straighten it out.

Just think for a moment about those thirty thousand words. I do not know if you want to walk around with a tape recorder for a week just to check your words and see what you said. I have never tried it, but I said, "Well, there may be something to it," but at least it provoked thought if nothing more. Suppose I were to speak thirty thousand words in a day. One day I will have to answer to God for those words, because He is keeping a record. I am not going to be able to hide what I have said. He is God. He does not need to write my words in a book.

### **Walk as He Walked**

Malachi stated in verse 16 of our Scripture text, "The LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written." Husband, if you have a bad day at work, sometimes it is the poor mother and children at home who have to suffer the consequences of that bad day at work. Do you go home and say all kinds of things that you should not say? After you have the weight off your chest concerning the things that you would have liked to have told your boss or fellow employee, do you leave your family upset? If you are not careful, you may not

have the grace to go back and say, "Sweetheart, I'm sorry." I have had to apologize to my wife and children. One day I am going to stand before God, and I am going to have to give an account of the deeds that I have done and the words that I have spoken in this life. I want my sins to go on before me to the Judgment. I want them under the blood.

If you are going to really learn from life or in this life, you have to be careful not to let the same mistakes reoccur in your life. You are going to struggle as you strive to adjust to a life of holiness and righteousness. The Bible says in 1 John 2:6, "He that saith he abideth in him [Christ] ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

In John 8:29 Jesus said, "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." Every time I read that or say it by memory, I think, "Lord, thank You for Your mercies, Your grace, and Your forgiveness," because I really cannot say that I have always done those things that please Him, and I do not suppose you have either. When you do those things that do not please Him, then you need to be man or woman enough to correct the wrong that you have done. How many times have you wished that you had not said those last hasty words? Sometimes a person that you would least want to hear those words coming out of your mouth appears. It may be hurtful.

As a child of God, you have to be careful, because this is one of the many areas in your life where you need to grow in grace and measure up to. The writer was saying that if you say too much, it is a clear sign of vain religion. If you talk too much and get into things that you should not get into, it is going to be bad. It is going to look bad for the church. You need to care about

the church and remember that one day you are going to be judged for the words that you have said, so you need to be careful.

### **Words Are Very Forceful**

You need to pray as Job prayed. He said in Job 6:24-25: "Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred. How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?" You should not argue over things, even right things. If you are not careful, once an argument develops, you need to ask God for the grace to bow out. You may say, "Yes, but that person is going to think that he or she won the argument." Well, it is better for someone to win an argument than for that person to consider your profession of religion vain. Right then, all you are probably thinking about is winning that argument, that you must have the last word.

One time I heard about a husband and a wife arguing about which was the best, a knife or a pair of scissors. The argument became so intense that the husband ran the wife out of the house and headed toward the creek. The wife was saying, "Scissors are the best," and the husband was defending his point that the knife was the best. The argument got really heated. Finally, they got down to the stream. They got into the creek, and it was rising. The argument got so strong that finally the husband grabbed the wife by the throat and said, "The knife is the best," and he held her under the water. It is said that just before she drown, she stuck up two fingers, signifying that scissors were still the best.

Some people just have to win the argument. Arguing does not really prove anything. Besides, you probably do not have

enough grace to back out of an argument. Now, I like to discuss things and get deeper into things. If you can keep it cool where you can have your say and I can have my say, then that is fine. However, when I see that it is becoming an argument, it is better to let the other person win and walk away. It takes grace in one's soul to do that. Arguing is not a good thing. Your words should be few. If you are not careful of what you say, your words will cause you to get into problems.

One older sister told me one time that she had a little saying by W. E. Norris that helped her to be careful with her speech. She said it goes like this: "If your lips would keep from slips, five things observe with care; to whom you speak, of whom you speak, and how, and when, and where." You should want to keep your tongue from slipping. She also told me that the tongue was in a wet place and apt to slip at any time. If you practice that, you will be more careful with the things that you say.

### **Pure Religion**

Sometimes it is not the things that you say that really matter, but to whom you say it and where it is said. Sometimes it is not what you say but *how* you say it. Many times people get the wrong impression. James said in James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." People out in the world do not care about what they say in most cases.

Psalms 39:1 says, "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me." When brethren get together, they need to be careful. The devil will get

two brethren together to talk about two other brethren or to talk about another brother or sister, so you need to be careful about the things that you say and remember that God hears it.

Do you catch yourself looking around because you do not want anyone else to hear what you are saying? Then you say, "Girl, do you know what I heard?" And then it starts. It is best to say, "Just leave it where it was said, okay?" It may stay between the two of you, or so you think, but what about the Book that God is keeping. This Book should be a solemn reminder to you to make sure good things are going into that book.

I love to get together and talk about spiritual things. That is the kind of things that I would like to be written in my book. There have been a few times that I had to go to my wife and ask her to forgive me for my hasty words. There have also been times when we have spent hours talking over things. Sometimes it might have been about a misunderstanding or a problem I was facing with work. God hears our conversations. When striving to resolve something, you need to be careful of what you say. Everything that you say should speak for good.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:37, "But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." When a question is put to you, would it not be a real accomplishment if you could learn to answer the question with a simple yes or no? Sometimes people try to wiggle all around, so to speak, to explain yes or no. Sometimes you do not have to explain. What is there to explain about no? What is there to explain about yes? If the answer to the question is yes, then say yes.

So many times people get into a lot of problems with what they

say. That is the reason arresting officers tell people, "Whatever you say can and will be used against you in a court of law." A day is coming when what you say is really going to matter. There is a record being kept of it, so you need to be careful. Colossians 4:6 reads, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

### **Watch Your Words**

Sometimes an abrupt answer is very necessary. Sometimes a person may overstep his bounds, so you want that individual to know that you do not approve of it. That is the time for an abrupt answer. You have to know how to answer each individual, but let it always be with grace. I think it is simply saying, "Before you speak, make sure that your brain is engaged and you are conscious of what you are saying." Sometimes a person may say no with a smile on his face. If you really mean no, you need to be serious. You should just come right out with it and let the person know that the answer is no.

When God calls you to do something, the answer should be yes. You should not have to think about it for very long. First Samuel 17:28 reads, "And Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle."

Anytime your anger is kindled, remember that whatever you say is being written in a book. Eliab was somewhat embarrassed that they were hiding from Goliath, and David concluded that conversation in verse 29 with the question, "Is there not a cause?" David was wondering,

"Where is our army to deal with this uncircumcised Philistine?" Eliab had heard that David was volunteering to go and fight this giant, so he had a few things to say. The Bible lets us know that his anger was kindled. When your anger is kindled, you need to be careful of what you say.

One brother in the Cayman Islands does a guided tour at a place called Stingray City where people can see many stingrays out in the water. On the boat he has a sign that reads, "Watch your step, and if you miss it, watch your words." I thought that was well said. When anger is kindled, you ought to watch your words. You have learned to talk, but it does not give you a license to say everything that might come to your mind.

Sometimes evil thoughts can come, and if you do not brush them aside, they can be transformed into evil words or hurtful words, words that could cause you much grief. You need to be careful. As a Christian, you need to be very careful of the things that you say as well as the way you deal with things. There are some things that you are not to do.

### **Talebearing**

Leviticus 19:16 says, "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people." Talebearing is something that Christians ought to avoid. It brings much hurt to people. In many cases, it really mars the church's image in the community, because when people find out where you are connected, or where you go to worship, some people may say, "Well, if that is the way those people conduct themselves, that is one place that I know I will not be going."

The Bible says that we should not stand in the way of sinners. You should not get caught up in talebearing. If there is any un-

truth, let others say it, not you. Some people want to beat others to it. Proverbs 11:13 says, "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."

You should not go around as a talebearer. It could mess up your volume in the Book that God is writing. After all, you are going to have to give an account for what you say, so you want it to be good. Proverbs 18:8 states, "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly." If a brother or a sister confides in you, you should not spread it to others. It would really tear up that individual to know that it was only you that he or she told, and now it is all over the place. A talebearer reveals secrets. Going about as a talebearer is very unchristian like. This might be a very basic lesson, but it is needful.

Everyone needs to be more careful with what could be going into the words he speaks each day. Once you learned to talk, no doubt you found that one of the hardest things to do is to keep quiet. God is recording what you say and keeping it for the Judgment.

The Bible was written of

those who feared the Lord. I believe that when the people of God get together and talk about the good things of God, they will be glad that it is on record. One problem today is that we do not have enough authors of good wholesome reading material. There are many false teachers out there, and they are putting out new books every day. I am thankful that we can go on the God's Acres website and download a lot of good material. There are not many places where you can get wholesome material.

Proverbs, Chapter 6, tells about seven things that the Lord hates. Verse 19 says the seventh thing that he hates is "he that soweth discord among brethren." It is a weakness in some people to talk too much, and they do much harm. Many Scriptures warn against it, yet some people sow discord.

Proverbs 20:19 says, "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips." A person who bridles not his tongue deceives his own heart, and James said this person's religion is vain. While there is still time to do something about it, do not make any plans to go to Heaven with vain reli-

gion. You are not going to make it. Vain religion does not take people to Heaven. One of the things that constitutes vain religion is having too much to say. Even preachers need to remember this. Sometimes people can speak too much.

In closing, I want you to read what Jesus, our Lord and Savior, said in Matthew 12:36-37: "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

If the Judgment was tonight, and the last chapter of your book for today was going to be written, could you face that book without fear of it being opened because you know all that you have said was worthy material? My admonition to you is to let your words be few. Unless you are speaking directly for God from His Word, you must be careful of what you say. I trust and pray that these words that I shared with you will be of some spiritual value to you. May God bless your heart.

(Compact Disc TR-1166)

***Blessed is the man whose eyesight will stand as much reading in the Bible as in the Sunday newspaper.***

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***Blessed is the man who can sit as long on a pew in the church as he can on a hard bleacher at a ball game.***

Don't miss these . . .

# 2019 CAMP MEETINGS

**NEWARK, OH**  
June 16-23

**Camp Meeting:** Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055  
The first service begins Sunday 10:00 a.m. Three services daily: 10:00 a.m.,  
3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. Please make reservations in advance, if possible.  
For lodging/camper reservations, please contact Bro. or Sis. Bush at  
740-345-1213.  
For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker  
Telephone: 740-344-2543

**MUNCIE, IN**  
July 10-14

**Camp Meeting:** Ninth Street Church of God, 125 S 9<sup>th</sup> Street, New Castle, IN  
47362. The camp meeting will be held at the Central Friends' Campground,  
5601 E County Road 650 S, Muncie, Indiana. Service times: The first service  
begins Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m.; Thursday - Saturday 9:00 a.m. & 7:30  
p.m.; Sunday 9:00 a.m. For lodging/camping reservations, please contact  
Sis. Michelle Gingerich @ 765-808-8705  
For more information contact: Pastor Allen Polston. Telephone: 765-521-8284

**CANBY, OR**  
July 22-28

**Camp Meeting:** Church of God, 522 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Canby, OR 97013  
The first service begins Monday at 7:00 p.m. Two services daily: 10:30 a.m.  
& 7:00 p.m. Please make reservations in advance, if possible.  
For further information contact: Pastor E. David Stegmeier  
Telephone: 503-266-9297

**NEWARK, OH**  
August 4-11

**Camp Meeting:** Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055  
The first service begins Sunday 10:00 a.m. Three services daily: 10:00 a.m.,  
3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. Please make reservations in advance, if possible.  
For lodging/camper reservations, please contact Bro. or Sis. Bush at  
740-345-1213.  
For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker  
Telephone: 740-344-2543

**NEWARK, OH**  
December 26-29

**Camp Meeting:** Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055  
The first service begins Thursday 10:00 a.m. Three services daily: 10:00 a.m.,  
3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. Please make reservations in advance, if possible.  
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