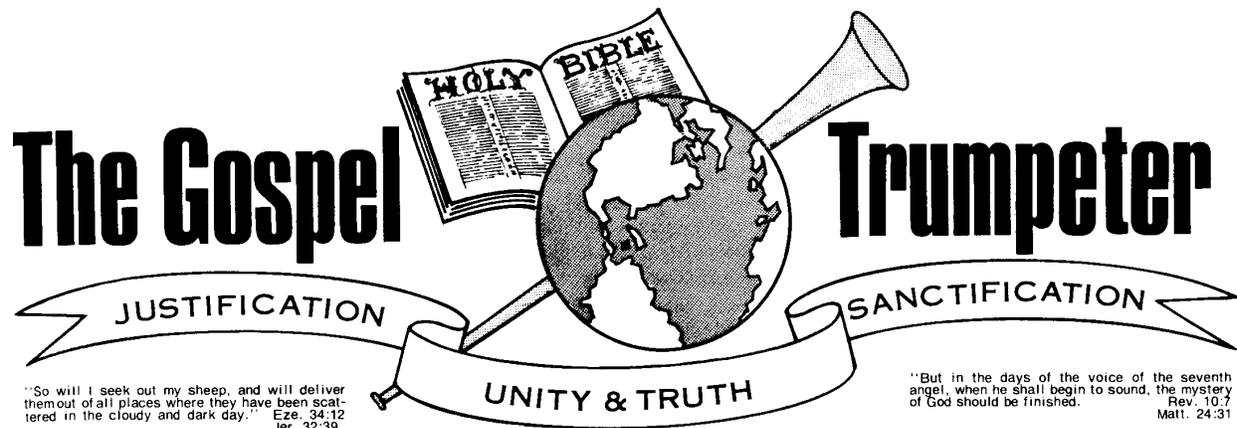


The Gospel Trumpeter



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 November 2019 No. 11



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

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

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

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

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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material for any reason. Not responsible for unsolicited
articles or items.

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Vol. 49 November 2019 No. 11

Guest Editorial

*"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now
is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of
our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser
of our brethren is cast down, which accused them
before our God day and night."*

Revelation 12:10

Being Falsely Condemned (False Accusations)

No doubt, a great number of conscientious souls suffer under the plague of Satan's false condemnation. Many of these people love God and want to please Him in every way possible. Regardless of what they do for the Lord or how much time they spend in prayer or reading the Bible, it is never enough to satisfy the devil. Standing in the dark shadows, he hurls darts of accusations at them. Being void of understanding Satan's many wiles often brings about discouragement to souls, which results in their faltering along the Christian pathway. God's will is that all His children be overcomers.

The devil is ever working in the darkness. Remember, he is not a creature of the light. He cannot work in the light because his deeds are evil and deceitful. His purpose is always to hinder wherever possible. He seeks ways to confuse or to deceive the unsuspecting. Satan wants to harass the mind and rob a soul of peace and joy. The devil will seize every opportunity to retard the Christian's progress, his work, and his usefulness for the Lord.

This demon often accomplishes his mission by sowing accusing thoughts in the mind over some matter of doubtful wrongdoing. He will try to convince a person that he or she has spoken harshly or acted in some way that is unbecoming to Christianity. If this demonic trick is believed, the issue will be pressed to make one feel that he has failed God and departed from Him. What torment this brings to a soul!

Being falsely condemned or viciously accused is not anything new. Satan has successfully used this sly, deceitful tactic on multitudes throughout the centuries. It has proven to be a tool that works effectively to discourage men and women in their Christian walk. Satan knows that real Christianity places a man or a woman on a high plane of holiness. When the burden of sin has been lifted through repentance, the heavy load once carried is gone. The individual feels as if he or she is floating on a cloud. It is like living on the moun-

[continued on page 14]

Mark 5:14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind:

and they were afraid.

16 And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine.

17 And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into

the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

True Repentance



Brother Roger L. Decker

Salvation Brings a Change

In these Scriptures we read the results of Jesus casting the devil out of a man who lived among the tombs. No man could bind him, not even with chains. He came in contact with Jesus Christ, and Jesus cast the unclean spirit out of the man. Verse 15 of our Scripture text reads, "And

they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid." They were not afraid of the man, but they were afraid of Jesus when they saw the manifestation of the power of God. A man had been delivered, but their hogs had been destroyed.

The thing that I want you to see in this lesson is not the attitude of people, but the change that took place when the man was set free from the devil. Is that not what repentance is all about? Friend, you can be set free from the devil. What a change took place in that man's life! Mark 5:5 states, "And always, night and day, he was in the mountains,

and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones."

Have you known of people who cut themselves? That is the work of Satan. This man cut himself with stones and cried, no doubt, because he could not be free from the things that the devil was working in his life. This is a picture of a soul feeling there was no hope, just living day by day. Suddenly a change took place in this man's life that only God could do.

Again, Mark 5:15 tells us, "And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid." This man was not throwing a tantrum or cutting himself or fighting with someone, but he was sitting, clothed, and in his right mind. That is always a good sign when someone repents: being clothed and in his right mind.

What else did true repentance bring forth? Our Scripture text states in verse 18, "And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him." This man did not get salvation that merely lasted a day or a week, and he wanted to go with Jesus. Why? It is very simple: he loved Jesus. When you love someone, you desire to be with that person. If you love God, you desire to be with Him. You want to have a part in the things that pertain to Him. A change took place in this man's life, and he wanted to continue with the One who made that change possible. True repentance brings forth a definite change in one's life.

Some people get "revival salvation" or "prison salvation," but true repentance calls for a change in a person's whole lifestyle. When people go to an altar of prayer, they need to stay there long enough to dig deep and to empty out all those things that

will hold them back. Before I was saved, I was a gambler and a drunk, bound by sinful habits. Also, I had a lot of internal things going on in my life. When I truly repented, a change took place. That was in 1967, and it is still good yet today.

Bringing Forth Fruits Meet for Repentance

John the Baptist was a forerunner of Jesus Christ. John was sent from God, and he appeared in the wilderness. He did not come through the old priesthood. How did John teach repentance? Matthew 3:1-8 reads: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."

What does the phrase "fruits meet for repentance" mean? In Matthew 7:16-20 Jesus said: "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit [that is simple enough to understand]; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring

forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

Just as a tree is known by its fruits, true repentance is also known by its fruit, or by its works. When an individual repents, he is different. He is easily entreated. He does not throw any more temper tantrums, and he is easy to get along with. He wants to do the things that pertain to being a Christian.

Shallow, frivolous repentance brings forth love that is shallow and weak on thankfulness. How long does shallow repentance last? Shallow repentance only lasts until God's will comes against that person's will. One who is shallow in his repentance leaves after a short time and follows Christ no more. Jesus said in Matthew 13:20-22: "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."

The seed represents the Word of God. Many times when a person first hears the Word of God, he is joyous upon hearing what lines up with his own thoughts. At first, he enjoys hearing it and enjoys being around it and obeying what goes forth, but then he falls away.

Counting the Cost

When the Holy Spirit is moving on souls, getting switched over to feeling good instead of true repentance is easy. Some people feel good simply because

they went to an altar, but feeling good emotionally is not true repentance.

When you go to an altar and truly repent, a teaching process will begin in your life. Also, those who truly repent count the cost before they repent. In Luke 14:28 Jesus said, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?"

You need to count the cost when you repent. Are you going to stick with it? Are you going to finish? Finishing means being true to Christ until the end of your life. We are builders, church, and we each need to take into account the cost of having our own personal relationship with Jesus Christ. You should not repent and then go your own way. Genuine repentance is staying in right relationship with God.

Sometimes you may hear something over the pulpit that is upsetting to you. You may not like some things regarding the Bible standard. You may think that something is unnecessary, but keep in mind that you are not the watchman on the wall. You are sitting in the pew. A man of God is directed by God concerning what the congregation needs. He does not preach what is popular. What do you need to do? You need to dig deep and get every obstacle out of the way. If you do not, it will draw you back into your old lifestyle.

If you do not continue in a personal relationship with the Lord, you are not going to make it to Heaven. You may say, "Well, I am Church of God, so I have a pass into Heaven." No, friend. The Jews also thought that. They thought they automatically had a pass that no matter what they did, they were still God's chosen people and would sail through the gates of Heaven. Paul had to let them know that because of

their unbelief, they were broken off.

In John, Chapter 8, Jesus was talking to the Jews, and that is a lot of His recorded conversations. Verse 31 states, "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." Then we read in Acts 2:41-42: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

What would it have been like in those days to follow the apostles? Those who got saved were Jews. About three thousand got saved, but not all the crowd got saved. There was a mass crowd there. No doubt, among that crowd were those who had crucified Jesus, the Jewish sympathizers, and those who were as hostile as they were before. Yet many got saved in a hostile environment when the name Jesus Christ was preached. Three thousand souls accepted Him, but many thousands did not accept Him. To follow the apostles meant that they were declaring war on the enemy. That is what happens when you get saved yet today. You are not fit for the battle until you truly repent.

Do Not Be Deceived or Misled

The Jews of that day who were not saved thought that with Jesus being crucified, they had stomped out the desire to oppose the Jewish faith. In that day it was not a good environment to be a Christian, but those who were converted continued even though their lives were on the line. They stayed with the apostles and their doctrines. What are doctrines? They are rules, principles, and guidelines.

Certainly we need to allow

new converts time to come to the knowledge of the Truth, but what about those who know the Truth and who are acquainted with the message of Truth? What about those who backslide and return to God? They have to come back to the light and understanding that they were walking in when they had real salvation. They should not come back to things lesser than what they know. For example, they probably dressed worldly, and then they went to an altar of prayer and got saved. When you see them the next week, they should be walking in the light and understanding that they knew before, not less light.

When you get saved, you no longer run with the same crowd. Before I got saved, I had a lot of worldly friends at work that I used to keep company with all the time. I played the check pool for every football and basketball game, and I also played a game where they checked numbers for poker. I was in all of that, but once I got saved, I stopped doing those things. One of my friends came to me and said, "Roger, let's go down to the Pine Café when we get off work."

I said, "I'm sorry, but I don't frequent those places anymore since I have gotten saved."

He said: "Roger, what's going on? What happened to you?"

I replied, "I don't have any desire to go to those places anymore."

Finally, he came to the place where he told me, "I would like to have what you have," but sad to say, he never got it.

First Corinthians 15:33 says, "Be not deceived [you are deceived if you think contrary to this]: evil communications corrupt good manners." The word communication means "being together, companionship, close contact, or to converse." I want you to read this verse from *The Amplified Bible*. It reads, "Do not be so deceived and misled! Evil

companionships (communion, associations) corrupt and deprave good manners and morals and character."

Why is it so dangerous not to truly repent? First, it gives the false impression of being a child of God. People will look at you and see no change in your life and think the church has let down the standard. Second, it is mocking God. Galatians 6:7 tells us, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Third, you could die giving a false impression to the church and without having true repentance. Fourth, it hinders others from seeing what true repentance does and from witnessing true Christianity.

Avoid Wasted Years

In the Bible you can read of people who truly repented. The Apostle Paul was one who really sold out to God. When Zacchaeus came out of that tree, he was a changed man. Peter was a disciple who failed the Lord, but he repented and was used mightily of God. In Acts, Chapter 2, we read about the three thousand

souls that were converted on the Day of Pentecost. We read about the man who dwelled in the tombs. We can read of many others who were mentioned in the Word of God, but space would not allow us to list all their names.

A Sunday school teacher once asked a class what repentance meant. One little boy put up his hand and said, "It is being sorry for your sins." A little girl also raised her hand and said, "It is being sorry enough to quit." True repentance has a double aspect: it looks upon things with a weeping eye and upon the future with a watchful eye. A day is coming that if you have not truly repented, you will wish that you had.

I came across this poem, and it reminded me of a trip that I took to New York where I grew up. I saw what the writer of this poem saw. It is entitled "Wasted Years." It reads:

*I looked upon a farm one day,
That once I used to own;
The barn had fallen to the ground
The fields were overgrown.
The house in which my children
grew,*

*Where we had lived for years –
I turned to see it broken down,
And brushed aside the tears.*

*I looked upon my soul one day,
To find it, too, had grown
With thorns and thistles
everywhere
The seeds neglect had sown.
The years had passed while I had
cared
For things of lesser worth;
The things of Heaven I let go
While minding things of earth.*

*To Christ I turned with bitter
tears,
And cried, "O Lord, forgive!
I haven't much time left for Thee,
Not many years to live."
The wasted years forever gone,
The days I can't recall;
If I could live those days again,
I'd make Him Lord of all.*

Dear one, do not let time slip by without getting saved. You need to denounce your stubborn will and humble yourself and truly repent. Do not be too proud to humble yourself before God.

(Compact Disc TR-2115)

*God knows the burden of each heart,
He sees each falling tear;
He can the truest peace impart
In place of doubt and fear.
He watches o'er me constantly,
He knows my feeble frame;
His keeping power, His faithful love
Are evermore the same.*

Mark 12:41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor

widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all

they which have cast into the treasury:

44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

Are You Giving God Your All?



Brother James Presley

Giving All for the Cause of Christ

In our Scripture lesson, Jesus was sitting over against the treasury watching as people cast in their money, and along came a poor widow who caught His attention. Many men were throwing in an abundance of money, but this woman caught Jesus' attention when she tossed in merely a farthing (two mites equaled a farthing). I looked up the value of a farthing, and some commentators say a farthing was

roughly about one quarter of a penny. She cast in all she had.

According to verse 44 of our Scripture text, the others threw in of their abundance. In other words, they had money left over. They had funds left for food and other needs. The poor widow did not have anything left for food or clothing because she gave it all to God. Jesus said she put in more than them all. Jesus said in verse 43 of our Scripture text, "Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which cast into the trea-

sury." Jesus was not speaking of the amount that each individual cast in, but He was saying that this poor woman had nothing left when she cast her money into the treasury. This grabbed His attention, and that is what Jesus wants in our lives. He wants us to cast in everything we have. The others had enough for themselves, but the widow walked away empty-handed, having nothing left. She had given everything she had for His cause.

A song that I heard one day speaks about a little boy sitting in

church, and the preacher said that one dime could feed a hungry boy or girl. The little boy heard this and pulled a dollar bill out of his pocket and asked his mother how many that would feed? His mother told him that it would feed ten, so he reached back into his pocket and pulled out all his money, which was three dollars. He asked her how many that would feed. The boy said: "What if I give all I have? What would that gift do?" The mother said, "My child, a gift like that could change the world; it would feed a multitude."

What would happen if *you* gave all? What would happen if you gave every part of your being to the cause of Christ, to see souls saved, to see the world reached? Does God have your thought life and your time? Do you give Him time to use you for His glory? You may say, "I go to church and sing and pray." That is great, but what about when you are not there? Does He have your time then? Do you have time to be used of God? What happens if you are really tired and you have worked hard all week? Maybe you have children at home and you feel worn out and ready to rest. Suppose God were to say, "I want you to go and witness to your neighbor across the street." Would you be willing to do that? Are you willing to give everything you have for God?

Being Fully Dedicated to God

Christ is looking for people who will give their all to Him, not just a part of their lives. He wants every aspect of your life. He wants everything you have to give so that souls can be saved and brought into the house of God. The last verse of that song says: "*Long ago a father and a son saw the children lost in sin, Can you see the tears in Father's eyes as Jesus said to him, What if I give all I have,*

What will that gift do? My son that gift will change the world. It will free the multitude." As I read that verse, I thought, every time you give your all to God, He is overjoyed that His child is willing to give all to reach the world. I believe God appreciates and loves it when His children want to do everything they can for Him.

Jesus gave all to see us saved. Sometimes it is good to be reminded of how He died for us. Also, He was beaten, bruised, mocked, and scorned. They drove nails through His hands and His feet and hung Him on the Cross. I was drilling through a large beam one day and hit a forty penny nail, which is very big. Nails about that size went through Jesus' hands and feet. Our Lord went through terrible suffering and death for us. Should we not give all for Him to see the lost saved? The chorus of the song says, "What if I give all?" It would change the world. I believe the Apostles in Acts changed the world because they gave everything they had; they followed God. They did what He wanted them to do.

The Bible says in Acts 17:6 that the world was turned upside down. What could you do if you were to truly sell out to God and give Him every ounce of your being? You can always give more to God. The problem is, many people get too busy in everyday living. They get wrapped up in themselves and what is best for them. People need to wake up every morning and say: "Lord, what would You have me to do?" If you lay your day before God, He will have something for you to do. He will have somebody for you to talk to or to pray for. He might want you to witness to someone or visit the sick. You need to give your whole heart to God.

Back in the morning-time church, just a handful of Christians turned the world upside

down. Christians have always been small in number but not in quality. If you live a life fully dedicated to God, what changes could take place around you? The Lord really wants to do a work through His church. The question is, Are you going to let Him work through you?

"Jesus Took the Loaves"

We read in John 6:5-13: "When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?"

"And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten."

Here we find that a lad had something to eat, but there were five thousand men to feed. Philip, one of the disciples, said two hundred pennyworth would not be enough to feed all those men. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said there was a lad who

had five barley loaves and two small fish. I want to point out that he said two *small* fish, not two large fish. Why do you think Jesus said "two small fishes"? Possibly, several hundred years later, someone could have said those two fish probably weighed three hundred pounds each, so He could have easily fed all those people. He also pointed out that the lad had only five barley loaves. Jesus fed five thousand men with two small fish and five barley loaves. He not only fed them, but they ate until they were full. They walked away satisfied.

How did Jesus feed so many people? The key is what happened before they ate. That is the key with everything in life. No matter what you are going through, no matter what you are up against in this life, the key is found in John 6:11, which says, "And Jesus took the loaves. . . ." When you put something in the hands of the Lord and give Him all you have to offer, He can do amazing things.

Getting Self Out of the Way

No matter what you are up against, if you give it all to the Lord, it is marvelous what He can do. I am not talking about giving Him part of it; He wants it all. You may give 99 percent to the Lord, but if you withhold only 1 percent, God will not be able to do as much as He really wants to do. You need to get self out of the way. The little meal that the lad had could never have fed that many people, but Jesus took it and blessed it, and a miracle took place.

When your back is against the wall, so to speak, you need to give all to God. When you wake up in the morning and do not know what to do, you need to say: "Lord, my day is Yours. Direct me in the way You want me to go." If you give all to God, He

can do amazing things with your life. He will take control of your life, and wonderful things will happen. The little lad gave everything he had to Jesus. Is your life fully turned over to God?

There should not be any part of your life that you try to hang on to. You should not try to work out circumstances on your own. It takes the Lord to straighten them out. It takes the Lord to reach down and fix the problems in your life. It takes the Lord to get you through the hard places. You have to turn everything over to God. You must place everything in His hands, and He will fix the problems for you. Some people say they have given all to God, yet they hang on to just a little.

Do you like to put puzzles together? Is it not irritating when you cannot finish the puzzle because one piece is missing? That is the way the Lord feels. He wants to work out the problem, but He needs all the pieces to work out the problem. Are you trying to keep one piece for yourself to figure out where it goes? You need to get yourself completely out of the way. Some people try to hang on to every little thing, possibly a boyfriend or a girlfriend or worldly habits. They try to fix things on their own instead of giving them all to God.

If you will give your life to God 100 percent, God will change some things in your life and give you victory. He will give you the help you need and direct your life. Do you have someone that you desire to see saved? God wants you to give your whole heart to Him and let Him take care of it. Sometimes you need to pray and leave people with God and let Him talk to their hearts. If you know someone who needs to be saved, you ought to pray for that person. If you want to witness to him or her, make sure the Lord is in it. The Bible says those who

win souls are wise. It takes wisdom to win souls. Sometimes nothing needs to be said; just live it before them. You need to really seek God's face and say, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

Are you going through hard circumstances in life? We all have them. Sometimes we do not know what to do or how to fix the problem. The answer is, give it all to God. Suppose you have a problem with your car, and you have no idea what is wrong. You would take it to a mechanic who knows how to fix it. If you have a problem in your life, you need to take it to the One who knows how to fix it. You need to give all to God and let Him take care of the circumstances. You might have some people who talk behind your back. You must pray and ask God not to let you get a wrong attitude or bitterness.

God will take care of circumstances, but you have to give all to Him. You cannot fix a circumstance when you do not give Him all the pieces. The devil will throw troubles and trials your way. Maybe you feel that you cannot get the victory over temptations. Perhaps you are not giving all to God and asking Him for the full deliverance that you desire. Maybe you are trying to work it out yourself. You need to give God everything.

You must give your all if you want help from the Lord. Many people pray and ask God to work out situations, but they never want to give Him all. You need to give God everything in your life. Are you trying to hold something back from God? Do you have bitterness toward somebody that you do not want to let go of? The flesh likes to cling to bitterness and wrong attitudes. It will work on you; it is just human nature.

If you have a certain opinion, you need to keep your mind open so that God can reveal things to you. You can get wrong attitudes and bitterness by dis-

agreeing with another. That is how the devil works within the church. He tries to get people to disagree with each other, and then a wrong attitude or bitterness starts to swell up. You cannot let the devil have his way.

Maybe you are struggling with sin. God can give you victory if you turn it all over to Him. How sad it is when people have things that they are hanging on to, such as bitterness and wrong attitudes. One day you will have to let go of those things, one way or another, and you will face the Judgment. These things can cost you your soul. Bitterness is not worth going to hell for. If you have a disagreement with another, you need to work it out. Time is too short to argue and fuss. You cannot help the world in that condition. The sole purpose of getting saved and becoming a Christian is to reach a lost and dying world.

Suffering for Christ

The Apostle Paul gave his all to God. He wrote in 2 Corinthians 11:22-28: "Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

"Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those

things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

I wonder how many Christians today could have stood the same tests that Paul stood. How many could have walked in his shoes? He was sold out completely for the cause of Christ, and he was willing to die for Christ. Some Christians would have stopped the first time they were beaten. They say they are on fire for God, but if someone started beating and torturing them, it would show them what they really have. It would test their inner strength.

We do not know where this world is heading, so Christians may face such persecution again. It may come to where the church doors will be locked. If you do assemble, they might kick in the doors. It is happening in foreign lands now. They are dragging Christians out of their houses and putting them in prison and beating them. You need to be fortified in your spiritual strength so that you can withstand anything that the devil throws at you. Nothing should move you if you have given your all to Christ.

Paul went through so much, but nothing moved him. How much are you willing to go through for Christ? Are you willing to go through physical suffering, beatings, abuse, or maybe even death? Are you willing to pay the cost? Are you willing to give all? Some people get upset because someone told lies about them. People are going to tell lies about you. Some may try to ruin your reputation.

Noah's reputation was ruined. He preached one hundred twenty years, and people made fun of him. They laughed and scorned him and probably ignored him when he was preaching to them. No doubt, people told all kinds of stories about that man, such as: "He is a

crazy old man. That old man is out in the desert building a boat. He says it is going to rain. What is rain?" Nevertheless, that did not stop Noah. He kept right on building, preaching, and telling people about the flood that was coming.

As a Christian, you are going to be talked about, and your reputation may be ruined. What should you do? You need to keep right on building up the Kingdom of God. Keep telling people about the coming of Christ, how they need to be saved, and that hell is waiting for those who are lost. Noah kept right on working, and he gave all to God. We are going to have to give all to God too.

We are living in a day when some people will laugh and make fun of you for witnessing to them, and they may ignore you. Have you ever started talking to someone about God and that person just walked away from you? You need to do just as Noah did and keep building and keep working for God. You should not let anything or anyone sway you. If you have given all to God, you can do that. Those who have not given all to God struggle when people talk about them, laugh at them, or tell stories about them. If you have given all to God, you will make it through these tests. You can get the victory through these things.

A statistic that I read says that 75 percent of polled American in the United States profess to be Christians. If that were truly the case, the United States would be far better than it is nowadays. Abortions would not legally take place. There would be no patting teenagers on the back when they have premarital sex. Many of the evils in the United States would be taken care of if that percentage of our population truly gave all to God. If that percentage of the United States gave all to God, a lot would be changed for the

better.

What can be changed in your life? Have you really given all to God? Are you holding something back? If you give all to God, you are not going to worry about the future, because you know that God is in control. I am so thankful for that. When I first got saved, God showed me there are two things you cannot change: you cannot change people or circumstances. Only God can do that. Trying circumstances of life are going to come. When you are dealt adversity, you can know that God is in control. He is taking care of you. You can pray and ask God if there is anything you need to do. He will give you the strength to get through those trials. You must have confidence that the will of God will be done in everything. God is going to have His way.

The Boldness of Stephen

How people feel about you or tell stories about you should not affect you because you know that God is in control. Do you think Paul ever said, "People are just beating me, Lord"? He watched Stephen get stoned to death. That was part of the reason he was saved. He knew that when he had to suffer, it was going to benefit someone down the road. When you suffer for the Lord, it will benefit somebody, as long as you are suffering for the cause of Christ. You must give all to God and you will have victory over whatever the devil throws your way.

In Acts, Chapter 7, we find the story of Stephen. In talking to the Sanhedrin, he said in verses 51-60: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of

the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

Stephen had given all to God. He was willing to die for the cause of Christ. He did not back down, but he told them their true condition. How many times have you witnessed to someone and the devil kept you from saying what you really should have said because you did not want to offend that person? Perhaps you were afraid that person might never talk to you again. Sometimes you have to speak plainly to people when the Lord directs you to do so. When the life that someone is living is wrong and does not line up with the Word, God will be faithful to that person's heart.

I noticed something in this account about Stephen. First, he was outnumbered and standing by himself. No other brother or sister was there to encourage him or to help him. He was standing alone in the midst of an angry mob that was ready to kill him.

Could you stand alone in the midst of an angry mob of people and yet tell them exactly what is wrong with them? Stephen was able to do that because he had given all to God, no matter what circumstances came his way.

I want to point out that Stephen was not a great preacher. He was not like Paul, Peter, or one of the other apostles. He took care of cleaning the tables. This thing is not just for the preachers; it is for everybody. You need to sell out to God completely so that you are in a position to stand for what is right. Have you given up ground because of intimidation or because the devil made you fearful of what might be said or done?

Even though this crowd was angry and ready to kill Stephen, he stood firmly because he had given his all to God. That is what it is going to take to see souls saved. The Christian ought to be honest with people. People need to have their eyes opened to some things. Many religious people are living in sin, and they think they are right.

Selling Out to God Completely

Many worldly people feel it is acceptable to live their sinful lifestyles. They think everyone is going to Heaven. Have you ever heard people say that hell is here on earth? You need to be honest with those who believe such falsehoods. The ones who are saddest are those who know they are wrong but refuse to do anything about it. Some people know they need to measure to the Word of God, yet they refuse. Do you know why? It is because they are not willing to give all to God. They are not willing to sell out to God completely.

As a saint of God, you need to check yourself and make sure that you are sold out completely. Do you want to see souls saved and see your influence reach out

to others? It is going to take complete dedication to God. You need the boldness of Stephen, and you need to stand against what the devil throws your way. You cannot stand against the devil in your own strength. The devil is stronger than you are. He can knock you off your feet easily. It takes the Spirit of God in your life and being fully dedicated to Him to get the victory.

Revelation 20:9 reads, "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." All the evils of the world are trying to surround the camp of the saints. We are surrounded by sin every day. As you drive down the road, sinful vices are displayed on the billboards. Also, you hear them advertised on the radio. Today you see people walking around wearing very little clothes. All these things are on display in the schools, in the government, and even in some religions that claim to know the Truth. We are being surrounded by ungodliness. How can you make it through this sinful world? You must turn your life over to God completely. He can take care of your problems, and you can have the victory.

God has your best interest in mind. You may say, "Well, I am suffering so much." If God is in your life and you turn everything over to Him, you can rest assured that "all things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28). Now, all things will not be enjoyable, but they are going to work for good. When the widow put her money in the treasury, she gave everything she had. She did not hold back anything. That is some people's problem nowadays. They may hear the message and go to an altar of prayer, but they hold

back one little thing. They do not want to confess everything to God, even though He already knows. They do not want to let go of something, even though they know they ought to. They have not given all to God. Dear one, giving God your all is the only way that you are going to get help from God.

Do you want victory in your life? If you do, you must confess everything to God. Perhaps you have been struggling with temptations or maybe you have committed sin. You may say, "It is embarrassing to tell God about it." Friend, God was there when you sinned, so He already knows. You are going to have to confess to God to get the victory.

If you need help in a circumstance, you have to turn it over to God and let Him do the correcting. You cannot work it out in your own wisdom. God is so much wiser than we are. He needs to have full control.

We read in Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." I want you to notice that the writer said to acknowledge Him in *all* your ways, not just some of them that you think you might need help in.

You should not hold back on the Lord. When you say you are going to trust Him, then you need to trust Him. You need to keep yourself out of God's way. Often people like to blame others for their problems, but the problem could be themselves.

Reaching Out to Help Others

Now I want to change the focus of the message and talk about the need of the Christian to help others. As Christians, we should be ready to help others. Sometimes they may need a shoulder to cry on or someone to

listen. Have you done something for someone who was in need? Have you sent someone a card or written a note of encouragement or called? Have you visited someone who is unable to attend the worship services? Sometimes visiting shut-ins have been the best times I have ever spent. They are eager for fellowship.

When was the last time you stepped outside your comfort zone and reached out to someone? When was the last time you made yourself uncomfortable for the Lord? Often when God wants you to do something, the devil does not want you to feel comfortable in doing it. God wants you to call on Him and ask Him to help you.

I read an article about a man who was to become the new pastor of a very large church. They were going to introduce him on one particular Sunday, so he decided to dress as a bum. Out of a large crowd of people, only three spoke to him. He walked to the front row and sat down, but an usher came and asked him to move to the back. He asked some people for coffee money but they refused.

When the service started, they introduced the new pastor, and he came walking to the front. He quoted the Scripture in Matthew 25:45, which states, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." That really taught me a lesson. What are we doing to help people in the world? What are we doing to reach souls? We can do more for God. In general, the world avoids people standing along the street that need help. Yes, some are frauds. There are scams in everything, but one study says there are seven hundred thousand to one million homeless people in the United States. How many are you passing by?

How many times have you passed someone sitting in a bro-

ken down vehicle along the road without helping? God could have sent an angel down there to see if you were going to help. Where is your love? You should not close your eyes and turn away. Giving your all includes helping people.

You should treat others as you would treat Christ if He were right there. If Christ knocked on your door, would you open the door and give Him your best seat and your best food? Would you make sure that He was comfortable? You would do that for Christ, but what about your enemies? What about people who have treated you wrong? Would you treat them bad or as Jesus would treat them? Everybody is equal in the eyes of the Lord. They need to see the love of God, and they are not going to see it if we, as Christians, are not doing everything that we can.

You might have a neighbor that is really a bad neighbor. What are you doing to help him? Are you taking cookies over and waving to him? You need to treat everybody right. Kindness can get hold of hearts, and God can deal with souls. Are you giving your all to God?

Jesus did not say to treat the people well who treat you well. What did He say? In Luke 6:32-33 He said: "For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same." You need to reach out to a lost world. In order to do that, you have to totally give your all to God.

Making Excuses

Sometimes people make excuses about why they do not talk to people about the Lord. Some may say, "I would witness to others if I could, but I am not the kind that knows what to say." Mark 13:11 says, "But when they

shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." If you have been saved a long time, no doubt, you have witnessed to somebody, and perhaps you could not understand where the thoughts came from. That is what the Scripture is talking about. God will give you the words to say.

Another excuse that people use for not helping someone or doing what they can is that someone else will help them. If God brought someone who needs help to your attention, He may want you to help that person.

Luke 10:30-36 tells us: "And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

"And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?"

We find in these verses of Scripture that a certain man went

down from Jerusalem to Jericho and was robbed by thieves and beaten. The first person who walked by was a priest. He saw a need and refused to help. The next person was a Levite, someone who worked in the sanctuary of God and took care of spiritual things. He walked over and looked at the injured man, and then passed by on the other side. It took a Samaritan, someone with whom the Jews had no dealings, to bind up the man's wounds, pick him up and put him on his own donkey, and take him to an inn. He did not just drop him off. He took care of him.

When the Samaritan had to leave, he told the innkeeper that if he had to spend more, he would take care of it when he returned. This Samaritan went out of his way to help this poor soul. How many Christian people would do that? God wants each of us to do our part to reach a lost world. Sometimes that comes by helping others with their general lives. Maybe they need food taken to their house, maybe they need their car fixed, or maybe they need someone to watch their children. Perhaps you will get a chance to invite them to church.

What is another excuse that people make for not helping others? They may say: "I am unable to help people. I can barely take care of myself." You need to ask God, "What can I do to help others?" It is a matter of having a willing heart. Are you giving your all to God?

It took Jesus giving His all to make a way for souls to be saved. We cannot give any less back to God. If you have not given your all to God, you are not going to make it to Heaven. You have to sell out completely. You may say, "I have been saved for forty years." Are you as fully sold out to God now as you were forty years ago? Millions of martyrs have died for the cause of Christ.

The church was built by Christians giving their all. Are you going to help build up the great Church of God?

A man once told me: "If you want to start a business, work for somebody who has a great business and learn what he does. Watch his example and replicate it, and you will have a good business." We can see how the church

was built in the early ages. It was built by those who gave all to the Lord, those who sold out completely. If you want to build up the church, it is going to take being sold out completely to the Lord.

If you have a need and you have not fully dedicated your life to God in every aspect, you need to pray. Are you dedicated to

reading the Bible and praying? Is there one thing that you are holding back? Maybe you are not witnessing as you should. Maybe you do not pray as you should. You need to ask God to help you. God will give you the victory. He will give you help, but you must sell out to Him completely.

(Compact Disc TR-1209M)

What you possess in this world will go to someone else when you die, but what you are will be yours forever.

[Guest Editorial—continued from p. 2]
taintop. Serving God is wonderful, and being a Christian brings contentment, peace, and joy into a person's life.

One must realize that these exalted feelings will not always be present. The Spirit of God is not always going to be felt in a mighty way. Sometimes a man or a woman will go through a valley. God allows this so that person can grow and mature spiritually. There will be times when the Christian will feel that he is all alone. It may seem as though the Lord has departed. Dear Christian, you can be assured that God has not departed. He will never leave a person who has been true and faithful.

During these periods of feeling alone, empty, and in a low state, the enemy will make his attack. Taking advantage of the opportunity, he suggests that something is wrong in your relationship with the Lord. When such suggestions come, the devil will cause you not to feel right and say that you have grieved God. The longer you entertain

those thoughts, the more convincing they will become. The falsely condemned saint must, with God's help, lift up the shield of faith and reject those evil impositions.

So often in a worship service, Satan will impose himself on the conscientious soul. The Apostle Paul stated in 2 Corinthians 11:14, "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." This lets you see that he is capable of disguising himself and, therefore, making himself sound like an angel of light. As a message goes forth, Satan will mask his voice and cause a man or a woman to believe that the preacher is accusingly speaking solely to him or her. This causes a person who strives to be his best for God to fall under false condemnation. Therefore, he goes to the altar and begins to pray for God's help and deliverance. The pastor may come to help and counsel that person regarding his need and ask, "What can I do to help?" The reply is, "I just don't feel as though I'm saved." When asked, "Do you

know of any time that you have sinned or failed God?" The answer is, "No." The enemy of souls is falsely accusing or condemning that person for no definite reason.

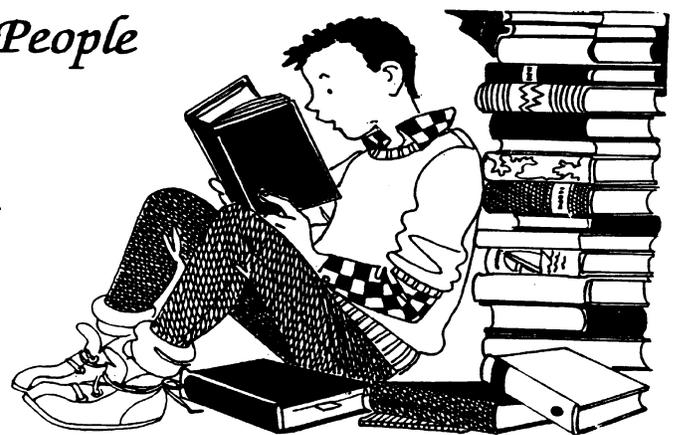
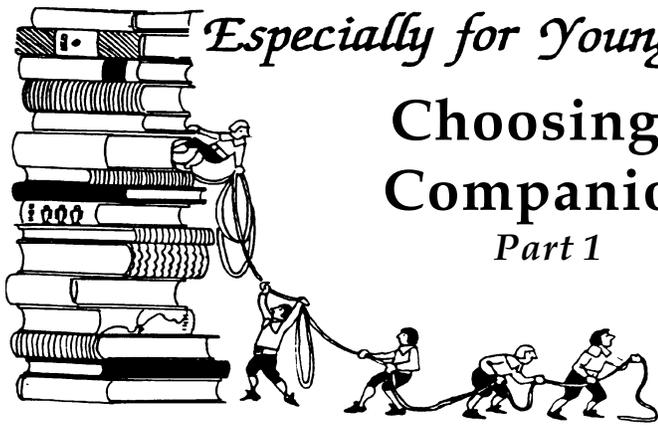
Real condemnation is defined in John 3:19-21, where Jesus said: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." Condemnation from God is brought to reprove those who do wrong, not those who are striving to live for the Lord and who are striving to be pleasing to Him. In 1 John 2:29 we find that "every one that doeth righteousness is born of him [God]."

Selected

Especially for Young People

Choosing a Companion

Part 1



Genesis 24:1-18 reads: "And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac. And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.

"The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again. And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter. And

the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water.

"And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master. And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee,

drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink."

Genesis 24:61-67 states: "And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel [respectfully]. For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a veil, and covered herself [a symbol of subjection to the man]. And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."

Typically, boys and girls begin playing together at a very early age, and then they pass through a time when they want little to do with each other. A veteran second grade teacher said: "My boys want to rough-

house, tackle one another, and roll around in dirt. The girls prefer playing school, jumping rope, or just walking around arm in arm. Once in a while, a boy will cross the playground and get in on the jump roping, and there is always that little powerhouse girl who is right in there with the boys, but these are the exceptions, definitely not the rule."

Did you know there are distinct differences between boys and girls? For example, a boy can go to his closet and say, "I have nothing to wear," and what he actually means is, "I have nothing clean to wear." A girl can go to her closet and say, "I have nothing to wear," but what she means is, "I have nothing that fits me in my closet." Way back at the dawn of creation, the Bible says God created male and female, and He put a difference between them.

In the middle school years, you might hear statements such as these: "She sat by me today at lunch!" or "She looked my way, so I'm sure she must like me!" or "He smells so good; I wonder what cologne he has on." These are the same individuals that they once wanted nothing to do with. They now want to sit close to each other.

As boys make the transition into manhood and girls transition into womanhood, things change internally and externally, and they begin to look differently. Boys begin to ask for things like deodorant and cologne. Girls begin to ask for perfume and other things. From that point on, great care, consideration, concern, and prayer is needed to see that each young person successfully makes it through the challenging years that follow.

Young person, next to the decision of whether or not you are going to follow the Lord, choosing a companion is the most important decision that you will ever make. This decision is

so serious that it actually has the potential to have eternal implications and repercussions. Many people have suffered tremendously and have lost out with God eternally because they chose the wrong companion.

Let us look at our Scripture reading. Abraham is a type of God the Father. Jesus referred to him as "Father Abraham." Eliezar, Abraham's eldest servant, is a type of the Holy Spirit, and he went to seek a companion for Isaac. The message came on camels, which is a type of God's ministry. Proverbs, Chapter 31, lets you know that God has one companion for you, and He knows who it is.

I want to give you some wisdom, counsel, and guidance about how to figure out who that one companion is. God has not left us without understanding or knowledge on this subject. The chapter that we are looking in dwells upon this very thought.

During this time, Abraham was one hundred forty years of age, and Sarah had been dead for about three years. Isaac was forty years of age, and he was still living with his father. Young person, if you have saved parents, the best place for you is at home.

Did you know that God is vitally concerned about who you marry? The same God that created this universe created you and chose you to live in this day, and He has a companion for you. Often young people are close minded and think that all they see now is all there will ever be. God has a companion for you, maybe in another congregation, that He is molding, making, and preparing for you. At the right time, He will show you who that person is.

I am going to give you a realistic picture of marriage. You will not find a true picture of a happy home in Hollywood. At the end of many books, you find that little catch phrase, "And they

lived happily ever after." It would be nice if it were that easy, but it is not. There are trials, struggles, and tribulations in marriage; however, God wants you to have a happy home, and it starts with choosing the right companion.

Bear in mind, young person, with the companion you choose, you will pass through sickness and the birthing and the raising of your children together. You may encounter hard economic times and difficult decisions. Most importantly, you will spend the rest of your life with that individual. If God should permit you to live to old age, you will experience the joy of growing old together. All the serious and important stages of life will be dealt with and handled as husband and wife.

The one that you are interested in is the youngest and the most attractive right now. As you age, your body shape and your looks may change. From that point on, the glory of the aging process goes forward.

I want you to consider the wedding vows. When I got married, although we went through the vows, so many things took place on the day of marriage that it was difficult to take it all in. There was so much going on with all the arrangements, the family, the audience, and the excitement.

Although the marriage vows can vary, basically they go like this: "I (*insert name*), take you (*the opposite sex's name*) to be my wife (*or husband*), to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, from this day forward, till death do us part."

The companion you choose will be someone with whom you will live for the rest of your life. According to God's plan, you will remain together until you part in death. This may amount to fifty,

sixty, or seventy years that you will be husband and wife together. Yes, it is wonderful. Are you beginning to see the importance of this once in a lifetime decision? Getting married is not like getting a Cracker Jack box and pulling out some little surprise. God has chosen one companion for you, and you must seek His face to ask Him who it is.

My desire is not to scare you away from marriage. Hebrews 13:4 tells us, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." Marriage is wonderful. Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:14, "I will [or desire] therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion [reproach] to the adversary to speak reproachfully." The Bible lets us know that it is God's will that the younger women marry.

Marriage is the best institution. It was around before the church was. The church is no greater than the homes that assemble in the church. The homes ought to be at peace. The husband and the wife should see each other alike in harmony and in peacefulness if God's presence is to be in the worship services. God created the institution of marriage back in the Garden of Eden when He took a rib out of Adam's side and then made Eve and made them man and wife. The institution of marriage is awesome, and I would not discourage anyone from marrying in the Lord.

Young person, I simply want you to realize the seriousness of marriage, and I want to warn you of the importance of this decision and the many pitfalls and dangers that could come as a result of choosing the wrong companion. Perhaps you have heard it said that one thing worse than never getting married is getting

married to the wrong one. Do you want a rough life? If you get in a house with a contentious woman or a hard to live with man, you will have a terrible life.

Proverbs 21:19 tells us, "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman." The *New Living Translation* reads: "It's better to live alone in the desert than with a quarrelsome, complaining wife." Living alone is better than dwelling in a home with a crabby, complaining wife or a contentious husband. What an extreme comparison the wise man made!

We know through statistics in the United States alone that almost 50 percent of marriages today end in divorce or separation. This is not good, and God is against it. The Bible teaches against it. Today many couples are doing what is called "cohabitation," which is an arrangement where two people who are not married live together. The point is, marriages in the world are not working.

The counsel for life and marriage is not out in the world with Doctor So-and-So or with a worldly marriage counselor. The best counsel for life and marriage is right in the Bible and with a God-called pastor. The world has nothing to offer the Christian.

If God's plan for choosing a companion for marriage is followed and both spouses remain true to God, divorce is never needed. God's plan for the home is 100 percent divorce proof. If marriage is entered and followed according to the Word of God, it will remain intact for the duration of the couple's lives.

Jesus was questioned by the Pharisees concerning divorce. He took them back to the beginning, right to the blueprint. In Matthew 19:6 He said, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath

joined together, let not man put asunder [the Greek says 'divide or put an end to']." In addition, the marriage union will be a beautiful picture of what God has instituted.

While choosing the right companion will not insure a problem free marriage, it certainly will set you up for a successful one. You can be assured that if God places you together as husband and wife, He can keep you together. Many times that will be an assurance when you go through rough times.

Sometimes the first few years of marriage are difficult. I was twenty-seven years of age when I got married, and I was rather self-sufficient. When I got married, I had to make some adjustments because my wife did not do everything the way I was used to. I did not realize how many pet peeves I had, but we learned to work together so that our home is a peaceful place, as a Christian home should be.

A home should be like Heaven on earth. It should be a place where children want to resort to, not a place where they want to run away from. It should be a place where children want to go, where they can see mom and dad getting along in union and in harmony. There is too much fussing and fighting among married couples, and it is very sad. Children are so innocent and pure minded, as God created them. A child has one childhood through which he will pass, and to think that some parents ruin that by abuse, cursing, and swearing is very sad. Some children who were raised that way suffer the effects of those memories into adulthood. May God help homes to be all that God would have them to be. Christian homes ought to be places of harmony.

Disagreements can be worked out without raising your voice and yelling. You should work them out in a civilized way by

sitting down and talking things through. Also, it is wise for the husband and wife to talk about matters when the children are not around. The husband and wife ought to be careful of how they talk to each other. How parents speak to their children is important as well.

Marriage takes work. Getting married is just the beginning, but it is worth all the effort. Everything that has value costs something. Marriage is the oldest and most valuable institution there is. As I said, a congregation is no greater than the homes that assemble there. If there is chaos and turmoil in the home, the worship services will not be acceptable to God.

Marriage is a God-appointed institution for companionship, for raising children, and for saving souls. It is a way to express God's love for humanity. The institution of marriage also shows God's plan for authority and leadership, and it is a metaphor of His love for the church. In a home the father is the head, as in a local congregation the pastor is the head, and as Christ is the head of the church. The Apostle Paul set that straight in Ephesians, Chapter 5.

Our Scripture reading has keys to finding the right companion. This list is not in chronological order, but it is simply the way it appears in our Scripture reading. Genesis 24:1-4 states: "And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and

take a wife unto my son Isaac."

First of all, young person, to find the right companion, you must look in the right place. I do not believe it is God's plan for the Christian to go to dating sites on the Internet to find a companion. I believe God's plan is still that you find your companion at church. This is the dating headquarters for the people of God. God chooses, God appoints, and God commands. The dating sites for the Church of God are youth gatherings, revivals, and camp meetings. That is where I found my companion. God can still do the same. You should not look to the world or worldly people.

If you were away from God and found a companion somewhere else, and your home is good, intact, and you are serving God together, God has been merciful to you. I am preaching the rule, not the exception. The rule is that you find a companion at church.

Today we see some young people going to theaters, rock concerts, ballrooms, and secular events and finding someone in a worldly crowd, and then they run away and get married. Oftentimes that does not work. Sometimes God might have mercy and bring you together, but that is not God's plan. Again, God's dating site should be the house of God.

Genesis 24:13-14 reads: "Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master." This was a picture of the Holy Spirit, or the drawing out of God's Spirit, His presence, from that well. She was drawing water

and feasting on God's goodness.

Look where Isaac was and look at what he was doing when he met Rebekah. Genesis 24:62-63 tells us: "And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming." This is a far cry from what many young people are doing today. Youth should certainly enjoy some things, but there should also be a time of seriousness. The house of prayer should never be about funny business, because it is a time to operate on the souls of men and women.

Isaac went out to meditate and commune with God. He came from the well from spending time with God, who is our spring of Living Water. He was meditating in a quiet place out in a field when he saw the camels and Rebekah coming. Could you marry your companion in the place where you first met? Many people would be ashamed to go back to where they met. A Christian has no business at a dance hall, at a bar, or at certain worldly activities. Again, the best place to meet a godly companion is at church.

The second thing we find in the Scripture reading is that God laid out the plan for marriage. Marriage should be to someone of the same people that you are of, those of your own country, those of your own dwelling, and those of your own beliefs, which ought to be the Bible beliefs. We are to marry in the Lord. Genesis 24:3-4 reads: "And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my

son Isaac."

You will notice that the bride for Isaac could not be an outsider. In other words, Isaac's bride had to be one from the fold, or from the family of God. As a Christian, it is of utmost importance that you marry a saved individual. When you get married, there will be many decisions to make, and most of your decisions will fall right back on spiri-

tual lines. It is hard to think about any decisions in the course of a day without considering God. Just about every decision we make is, "What would God have us to do?"

If one has a different god at home, there will be conflict and much strife and contention. Why would a young person want strife, contention, and a battle in the home? I am enjoying a happy

home, but it is because I am married to a saved companion. Why would you want bickering, fussing, and fighting? This is what you will get if you marry outside the Lord.

Brother Reggie Stegmeier

(To be continued in the next issue.)

A Yielded Life

A wild horse out on the mesa may be thrilling to watch, but he never carries a rider or pulls a load. His energy, strength, speed, and beauty are wasted until he is broken.

A man can be that way too. He may be quite exciting and attractive when wild and untamed, but he does not pull a load! He needs to be broken for harness. He may hold great promise: purebred, pedigree, intelligence, strength, drive, but until he is broken, all these qualities are dissipated.

That is the point of a broken spirit. It is not that a man's will is smashed, but it is channeled, or directed, to useful and productive ends! Man, broken God's way, is man with all his qualities under control.

A friend of mine owned one of the finest Arabian stallions in the world. He was beautiful, intelligent, fast, and alert. It was a treat just to watch him. He had been broken. He was delicately sensitive and responsive to the slightest command. He had not lost any of his brilliance or speed or strength or intelligence. It was all there, but it was under control. What a stallion!

Being broken conditions a man for success. The man who gets there without it is spoiling instead of maturing. Success

goes to his head, not to his heart. He gets too big for his britches, a little man in a big place, and everyone knows it.

The things to see is that God orders, or allows, things in a man's life that are designed to break him. Hebrews 12:6 tells us, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

Back of this breaking process, this chastening, this discipline, is the infinite wisdom, the changeless love, the perfection of a Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake! He knows just how much a man can bear, just how hot, or how severe, the tempering process needs to be.

God loves a person enough not to stop the discipline short of its perfect goal, never to let it go beyond what a man can endure. He knows a man's mettle.

Some keen disappointment, a heart-breaking tragedy, or an unexpected reversal—in the Father's love and providence—are steps to maturity and supreme usefulness!

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psalm 51:17).

Selected

Revelation 4:1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set

in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty

elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Divine Opportunity



Brother Prince Moon

Sensing God's Timing

Certain opportunities do not happen every day. In order for them to happen and to advance in your experience with God, you need three things to happen. First, you must have a desire: "Lord, I want to progress. I want to advance in the things of God." Second, God has to be in it, so

there has to be an invitation. Third, the timing has to be right.

When John was on the Isle of Patmos, no doubt going through the turmoil of what was happening to God's people on the mainland, he had a desire to go higher in God, or the Bible says "in the Spirit." So the desire was there, God invited him, and the timing was perfect. We have an old say-

ing about being at the right place at the right time. In essence, God said, "John, come on up, and I will show you some things." John had the time to do it, and he took the opportunity. Again, opportunity does not happen every day.

God is for you, but the devil is against you. The devil comes to do three things: to kill, to steal, and to destroy. The Bible lets us

know that Christ can bring life more abundantly. I want more from God. I am not satisfied. When it comes to the things of God, as long as there is more, I want more. How about you? I need more inspiration, more depth in the Word of God, and more effective fasting.

You have to know when the timing is right for certain things. A case in point is found in Numbers, Chapters 13-14. Israel was going to go over to fight the giants, and the timing was right. However, twelve spies were sent to look over the land, and ten of the twelve spies returned with an evil report. Ten of them said, "We cannot do it." Joshua and Caleb said: "We can do it. Let us go up at once." The people listened to the ten spies and cried all night, so God said it was too late, and they could no longer go. Think about that! Joshua and Caleb had to wait forty more years because those ten spies gave an evil report. That must have been a difficult test knowing that they would have to wait for forty more years.

When I was a child, my father had a bald head, a big, deep voice, and big hands, so I was kind of afraid of him. He said, "I must do something kind to connect with my son." One special day came when he put me up on the roof of the garage and said, "Okay, now, son, I want you to jump." I saw that bald head and the trees, and I started crying. He said, "Let's do it; you jump." I was thinking, "I don't want to jump." Then he said, "If you jump, I will catch you." My little knees were knocking, but do you know what I did? I closed my eyes and jumped, and my father did not drop me. He caught me and held me, and that was the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

God is saying: "Come on. I am going to catch you. Now is the time." Jude 1:24 says, "Now

unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." God wants you to take a jump. It is not a jump in the dark. God is light. If you want to draw closer to God, now is the time.

Moses sensed God's timing. Exodus 33:16-17 states: "For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name."

In essence, Moses said: "Wait a minute! I can go a little further. God knows my name, and He has called me up here in the mountain." Moses said, "Lord, show me Your glory." The timing was right, and God said: "Okay, Moses, you cannot see my front side because it would be too much for you. I am going to put you in the cleft of the rock, and you can see Me after I go by." Do you know what happened? Moses saw so much that it made his face shine.

Moses took the opportunity, and God put him in the cleft of a rock and gave him a little glimpse, and that changed his whole life. I am glad God did that, because that lets me know there is help for me too. People may try to stop you or slow you down, but when the Lord opens the door, you need to take the opportunity to do what God opens up a way for you to do.

Exodus 33:18-23 reads: "And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew

mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."

Moses could have gone on down the mountain, but he said, "It is time now," and look what God did. Moses wanted to progress, and God invited him to come, and He blessed Moses.

"Is There Not a Cause?"

First Samuel 17:25 reads, "And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel." David saw opportunity knocking, so in essence, he said: "I sense the need. The door is open, so I am going to take the opportunity."

Verses 26-28 state: "And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him. And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; 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."

David's brother talked to him and said, "You are naughty," which translates to, "You are wicked." When you try to go forth for God, the devil is going to try to talk you out of it. He may say: "This message is not for you. You are doing all right." The devil is a liar, and he was a liar from the beginning. You should say: "Look, Satan, I want all I can get from God. I have a chance to progress, and you are in my way. Move aside." You have a choice.

David said in 1 Samuel 17:29, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Friend, is there not a calling on your life? This is the time, and there is a cause. We need more preachers and more godly fathers and mothers.

Did you know that Susanna Wesley had nineteen children? She did Bible studies when her husband went to jail for a debtor's situation. The last two children, John and Charles, were speaking Hebrew by nine or ten years of age. Her daughter Susanna learned Greek when she was eleven years of age. She was in the home being a godly mother, and look what it produced.

Mother, your son could be a preacher in the Church of God, a missionary, or a leader. You need to pray: "Lord, I want to progress in this thing. I want to go forward in my experience with You." Maybe you prayed about something years ago and put it on the altar, but then you take it back off sometimes. Maybe you put it back on the altar, forget about it for a while, and lose interest because something is not happening, and you go back and forth. You need to put it on the altar and leave it there. Some situations are not for the glory of God. You may need to say, "Lord, I do not see a way out." When there is no way, God will

make a way.

Advancing When God Opens the Door

Again, 1 Samuel 17:28-29 tells us: "And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; 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. And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

If you read the rest of the story, you will find that the young man changed the course of history because he saw an opening. I wonder, could someone else have done that? Maybe King Saul could have done it. We do not know, but we do know the place was right and the time was right. David had the desire burning in his soul, and God was calling. Israel was running from the enemy. Along came a young man who was ready to go to battle against the enemy, and what a battle it was! Goliath fell down, and David killed him with Goliath's own sword and brought back his head.

When Goliath went down and David held up that bloody head, Goliath was dead. There was no doubt about it. Do you have a Goliath in your life that you need to kill? Maybe he has been stalking you, waking you up at night, and causing you to be fearful. Your Goliath can die today. You need to rebuke him in the name of Christ. May God help you. Are you tired of him backing you into a corner? You no longer need to be afraid. There is no fear in love; perfect love will cast out fear. Praise the Lord!

Now, it has to be the right timing. Israel waited forty days, which was much too long. David

came along and said: "What is the problem? Let's take care of it." The desire was there, and God was there. David was saying, "Let's do it," and Goliath was dead within a short time.

When God opens the door, you can advance. Young men want to advance. Sisters want to advance. We are living in a very lukewarm age. This is an age of seduction. The devil will say: "You don't want to be an oddity. Slow down and relax, and it will be all right." The devil's goal is to slow you down. If he can slow you down, then he will put you to sleep.

Many people have gone into a perpetual sleep, and they cannot be awakened. They are drunk with the idea of sleeping. They do not want to be bothered. If you have gone to sleep, you need to pray: "Lord, rebuke that spirit. I want to progress spiritually. I want to progress in my fasting. I want to progress in my Bible study. I want to progress in my quiet time with You. I want to progress and be a more godly parent. I want to progress in my ministry." We all have a ministry. What do you have to do? I have to pray. The Bible says men ought to always pray and not to faint. Do not give up, and do not get weary in well doing, because you shall reap in due season.

Signs That Follow Those Who Believe

Mark 16:16-17 reads: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe. . . ." Signs point you in a certain direction. The Bible says these signs follow those who believe. Our doctrine is perfect, but we need some signs too. Who does God work through? He works through the saints of God. Jesus said in John 14:12, "Greater works than these shall he do."

There have to be some signs. Some people say, "The miracles stopped with the death of the Apostles." No, the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 12:31 to "covet earnestly the best gifts." What are some of them? They are gifts of healing, prophesy, wisdom, and so on. That is all for you and me, thank the Lord.

When it comes to the work of God, the devil will tell you to let someone else do it, because you are too busy. He may say, "You are only this or that." The devil will push you down, but God will lift you up. The devil will try to push you down and tell you that you are a nothing. He will lie to you and say: "The saints don't care about you. You are not worth anything." You need to remember that the devil is a liar. God might have a gift for you, but you have to press your way to make it happen. The timing is right, the desire is right, and God is calling you. Tomorrow may not come. I do not want to die when I could have more of God. I want to die filled with the power of God, filled with divine inspiration, and have signs following me.

In the Bible when Jesus healed the man who was born blind, it was a shock. People asked him, "What happened to you?"

"I was healed."

"Who did it?"

He said: "I don't know, but I know one thing: I was blind, but now I see." The miracle of healing changed his mind. It has to be done through God's people.

The Bible says in Mark 16:18, "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." I want to see more folks healed. So many are sick, and that tears me up. Who will give themselves to God? Who will say: "Yes, Lord, I want that gift. I want to pray about it." Is there not a cause? Yes! Our doctrine is true. There is no doubt about that.

Mark 16:17-20 continues: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven [that was His last divine message on earth in the flesh], and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."

Jesus confirmed the Word with signs and wonders following, and those who were not sure said: "We cannot gainsay this. The man was born blind, and now he can see. What can we say?" When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, in essence, He prayed: "Father, for their sakes I pray this prayer. I know You hear Me always. Lazarus, come forth," and he came forth. It was a notable miracle. You cannot gainsay that. Lazarus was dead for four days, and Jesus was still on time. Is that not something? People could not gainsay that.

God Is Calling

People may try to argue about doctrine, but when a man who was blind from birth had his eyes opened, they could not gainsay that. That convinced them, and some need that. We have to be in our place, because no one else can do these things, Church of God. So, if not us, who? We are living in the last days, so now is the time. Dad, now is the time. Mom, now is the time. Young person, now is the time.

In 1904 Evan Roberts, only nineteen years of age, got a burden, poured out his heart before God, and prayed, "Bend me, bend me, bend me, all, all, all,"

and God did that. A year later, a hundred thousand souls were saved in a great revival.

In 1972 at a college, some students had a burden, so they prayed. They had a revival that went seven days straight all around the country. God will honor those who want to go forth. Do you want to go forth? I want to go forth. I am not satisfied; I want more. God has more for us. Whoever you are, you can pursue more.

Again, Mark 16:20 reads, "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." Now the preaching was good. We need preaching and teaching, but how about the miracles that go along with it? They are what will shut the gainsayer's mouth.

I trust that this desire is with you. If it is not, you really need to pray about that. If that desire is not there, maybe something has died. This is serious! God is calling. I know He is, because there is a cause. We have the desire, we have the cause, and we have the timing of it. We need to dive deeper into this. Your desire for more of God is of God. Grandma, you can do it. Granddad, you are not too old. Rembrandt was a saved man, and he began painting at eighty-five years of age. His paintings have sold for as much as five million dollars. God inspired him.

Johann Sebastian Bach was a saved man. Did you know that he wrote his fifth symphony when he was deaf? He wrote music for twenty different instruments. His music says, "To the glory of God." You are not too old or too young to be used of God.

Have you read about when Peter walked on the water? Peter said, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water" (Matthew 14:28). Did Jesus say:

"Peter, no. You are a new convert. You can't do this"? No! Jesus said, "Come," and Peter started walking on the water. He got a little afraid after a while, but he did walk on the water.

Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Jesus meant that, and I thank God that He meant it. If you are burdened, come to Jesus, not to a preacher, but to Christ. He will relieve your burden. He is the burden bearer, a sanctifier,

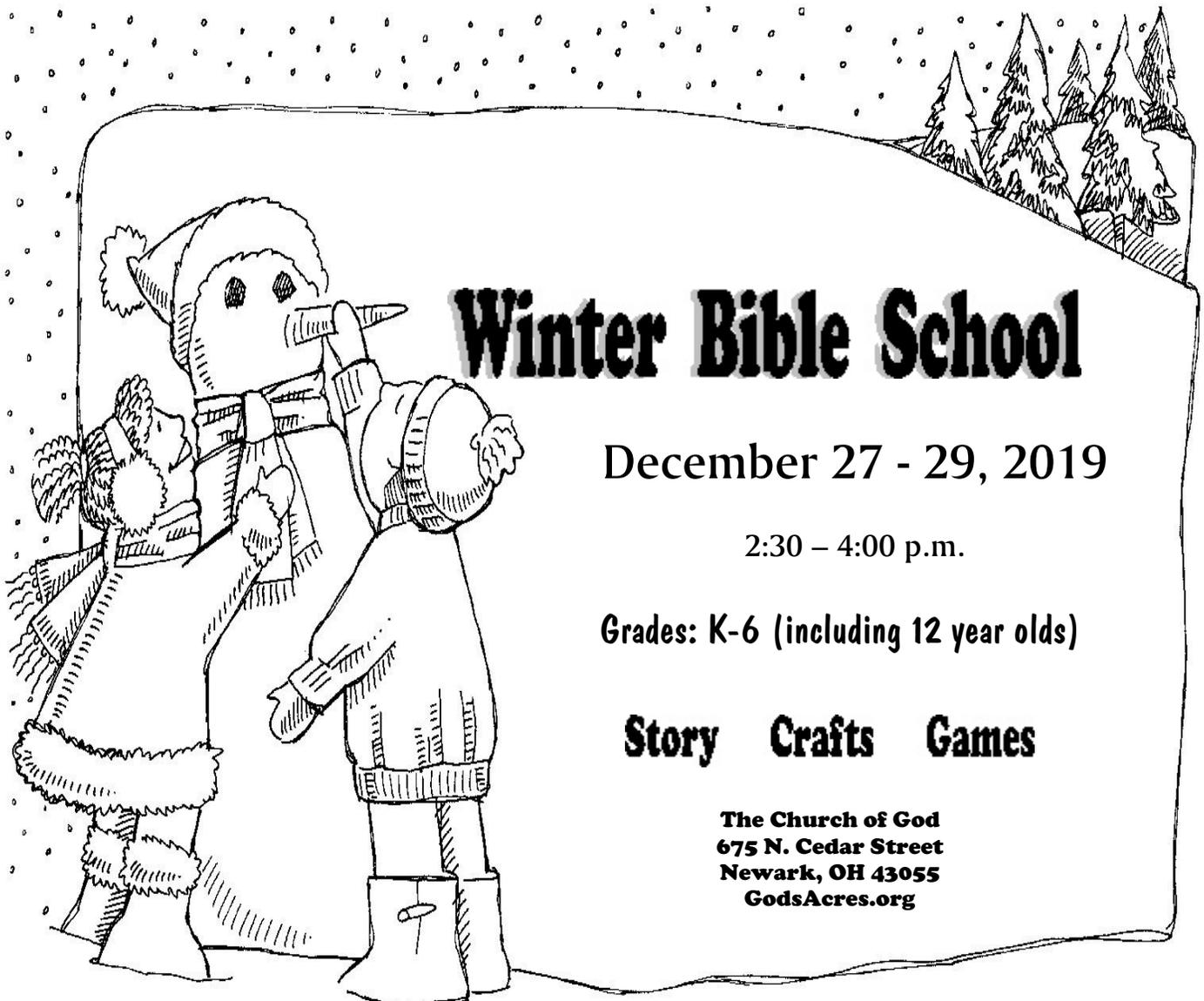
a healer, a helper, a counselor, a guide, a director, a strengthener, a father, and a brother. He will be all of that and more to you. Oh, taste and see that God is good all the time!

I hope you have a desire to press forward today. Yesterday is gone. You can be a new person in Christ now. Tomorrow is not promised. Today God can make your face shine like Moses' face did and give you power like the Apostle Paul had. He can do that because He is no respecter of persons.

You can come to God as you

are, and He will make a change. If you are a teacher, God will make you a better teacher. If you are a father, He will make you a better father. He makes all things better. When you do it right, He will shower His blessings upon you. That is how God works. Let Him rain His blessings down upon you. The world is trying to pull you, but you can go past that and break that chain by the power of God.

(Compact Disc TR-2208)



Winter Bible School

December 27 - 29, 2019

2:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Grades: K-6 (including 12 year olds)

Story Crafts Games

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

Temptation

In Matthew 18:8-9 you can read that Jesus said: "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire."

If you will honestly look at this Scripture, you will begin to gain a very important message from God that present-day humanity rejects. Jesus said it is better for you to suffer great loss and suffering than to remain protected and comfortable if that protection and comfort causes you to sin.

If your foot follows the sinful path or if your hand takes hold of sinful things, it would be better to have life with this depravity than with sin. You would not choose the depravity, yet God said you should rather than lose your life to hellfire.

Sometimes you may wonder why you must suffer certain things as God's child. This Scripture speaks to so much concerning this. It does not seem better to go without an eye or a hand or a foot, but God sees the whole picture, and none of them are worth losing eternal life for.

What causes a person to sin more than any other thing? God's

redeemed do not hate, murder, rob, or steal. His redeemed do not lie and bear false witness. No, God has removed the nature that causes a person to do those things. What are the greatest temptations? They are comfort, plenty, and security.

When a person is enjoying these, it is easy to be lulled to sleep, feeling contented, cozy, full, happy, relaxed, and free. When God nudges you and says, "I want you to go help that person who is in need" or "Go tell that one what I have done for you." Comfort and plenty says, "Don't worry about it, that person won't appreciate it anyway, and if he really cared, he would help himself." Can you see what a great temptation that comfort and plenty can be? Are these really your friends as we have believed them to be?

When Jesus told the rich, young ruler to give up his comfort, plenty, and security and give it to the poor, that young man loved those things so much that he would not give them up. They separated him from the Kingdom of God. They turned out to be his greatest enemies, because they robbed him of life. When Jesus asked if he had obeyed the commandments, he acknowledged that he had kept them all from childhood. The devil did not try to tempt him in these, because they were his strengths. He found and used his weakness, which were his riches

and all that those riches afforded him. The devil used comfort and plenty to bind that young man and keep him from Heaven.

Many are filled with great fear when God allows the natural laws and hurts of this planet to intrude into their comfort and security. The stark reality awakens them and tosses them to and fro, and they have nowhere to turn except to God. Could it be that this is the only place God can draw them to Himself and bring them to simply trust?

Dear Christian reader, we are constantly petitioning our God to open the eyes of the lost. Do you have the courage to ask Him to open your own eyes to all of His Truth? Are you willing to cut off whatever God reveals to you as your real temptation? Are you willing to suffer pain and loss to gain a closer walk with Him?

May you draw closer to God and allow Him to lead you through whatever He sees best. Your eyes see comfort and security as best, yet will you face the reality of His Word? You need to stop and think. Is comfort and plenty to be gained and owned at all cost? No, it has been vastly overrated by a society so great as ours. When God tells you what is better for you, you need to stop looking for causes and learn how to respond. As you lean and trust, He speaks "peace be still."

Selected

Meeting Announcements

Canby, OR
Nov. 27-Dec. 1

Annual Thanksgiving & Fellowship Meeting: Church of God,
522 NW 2nd Ave., Canby, OR
Evangelist: Brother Steve Strelecky, Newark, Ohio
Services times: Wednesday 7:00 p.m.; Thursday-Saturday 10:30 a.m. & 7:00
p.m.; and Sunday 10:45 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor David Stegmeier
Telephone: 503-266-9297

Newark, OH
Dec. 26-29

Camp Meeting: Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055
Three services daily: 10:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
Please Note: The first service begins Thursday evening.
The afternoon services will be teaching services.
For lodging reservation, call Bro. Dave or Sis. Ruby Bush at 740-345-1213.
For further information contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker
Telephone: 740-344-2543

2020 Camp Meeting Dates at God's Acres

June 21-28

August 2-9

December 27-30

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

We welcome everyone!



Winter 2019 Camp Meeting

December 26-29

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

Newark, Ohio

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

Send reservations to:

David L. Bush

725 N. Cedar Street

Newark, Oh 43055

Or call (740) 345-

1213

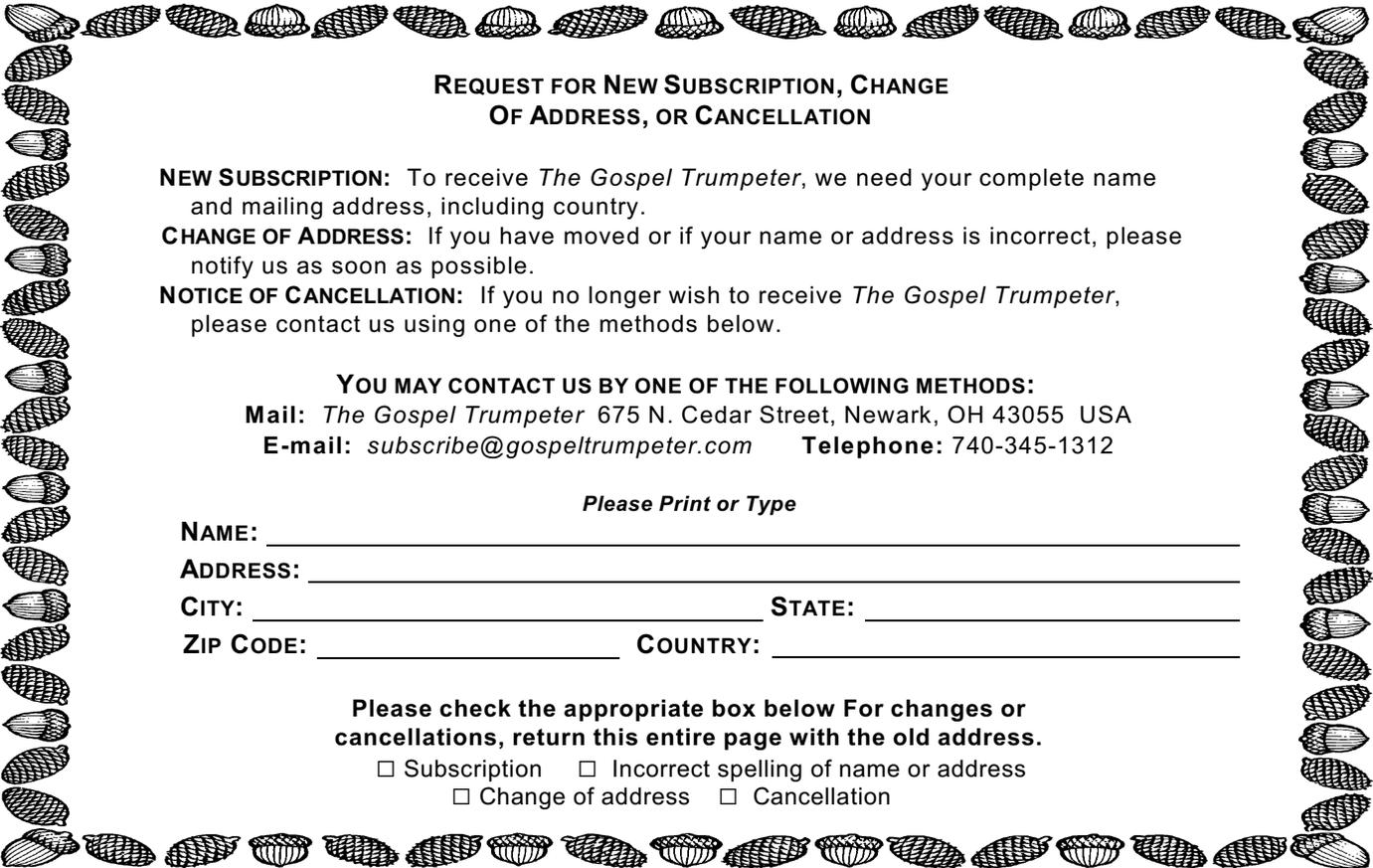


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