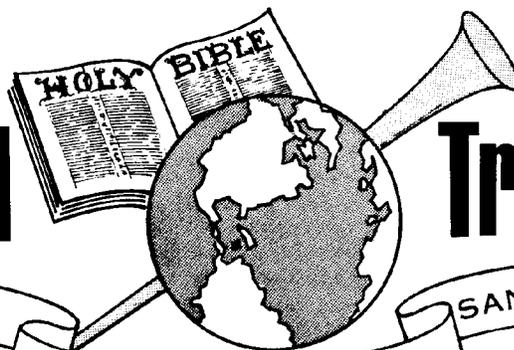


The Gospel



Trumpeter

JUSTIFICATION

SANCTIFICATION

"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

UNITY & TRUTH

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 51 April 2021 No. 4



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalm 122:1

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

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

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

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

CONTENTS

The Two Resurrections	3
"Take Ye Away the Stone"	8
Especially for Young People	14
God's Greatest Gift	16
What Will You Do With Jesus?	21
The Undelivered Pardon	25
Meeting Announcements	26
June Camp Meeting Ad	27

Vol. 51 April 2021 No. 4

2020 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

for *The Gospel Trumpeter*

Once again it is time to give our readers our annual report for publishing the good news of God's Word. Although it has been a difficult year with the pandemic, the Word of God is still being published. Through the printing of this periodical, the Lord is able to accomplish a wonderful work. Precious souls are being exposed to the good news of Christ's love and salvation. God's unadulterated Word is still sounding forth the Truth. It reaches those who are fastened in false religious systems. It brightly shines the revealing light on the old paths for men and women who are seeking it.

The messages that appear in *The Gospel Trumpeter* have been preached by Pastor Roger L. Decker and various other ministers. Our desire is to faithfully labor to present messages that will encourage our readers and help them to grow strong spiritually. Wholesome instruction will challenge God's people to press onward in the good fight of faith.

Each year around this time we publish a financial report of the past year's expenditures for you to view. The purpose of printing this report is to acquaint our readers with the ever-rising costs involved in producing this religious periodical.

As we all know, inflation is and has been on the upsurge for several years. Unfortunately, *The Gospel Trumpeter* is not immune to these increasing costs, and they do affect our budget. For your information, you will find a breakdown of the expenses by the different categories in the Statement of Condition on page 7. These figures show what was paid out as well as the amount received through your contributions.

Although this periodical is being mailed under a second-class permit, the postage rates keep climbing every year. We realize this is a missionary effort, and it requires a large amount of income to operate successfully. The pastor and the saints feel the great responsibility to reach out to lost men and women with the Gospel, to present the salvation message to all those who need freedom from sin and false religious captivity. The workers here desire to see and hear of souls finding the Lord in real salvation. We want men and women to be useful vessels and to live victorious lives for the Savior. It is very rewarding to be a part of an effort that leads individuals from false religion and confusion to the Truth.

As we have done so many times in the past, we want to ask our readers again to take a greater burden for the work of *The Gospel Trumpeter*. Your prayers do contribute a tremendous amount to the success of this effort of missionary endeavor. Your financial support is also needed and appreciated. You may not realize the impact that your sacrifice can make; however, the Lord records every act of love and devotion to His great cause. We trust that God will bless you.

Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their fore-

heads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

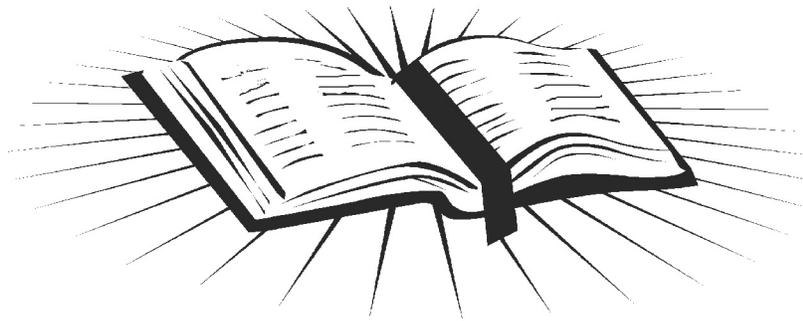
5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on

such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.

The Two Resurrections



Brother Roger L. Decker

Hearing the Voice of Christ

As we look at this chapter, I want to focus on verse 6, which reads, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." When you see the words "first resurrection," that lets you know there is a second one.

Jesus said in John 5:24-29: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The

hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Again, verse 25 states, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the

voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." This is speaking about spiritual life and death.

Verses 28-29 read: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." These verses speak of a physical death and a physical resurrection. When Jesus said, "The hour is coming, and now is," this was supposed to take place when Jesus Christ came in His First Advent and walked upon this earth. Those who heard the voice of Christ

and took heed to His Word had life, and that works the same way yet today. It has never changed. If Truth does not have you, God does not have you.

Those who are living in sin are considered to be dead spiritually. The only chance of living is to hear the voice of Jesus Christ. A man or a woman in sin is considered to be dead, inactive, separated, and cut off from Jesus Christ. When I speak of being dead spiritually, I am talking about being condemned and separated from God.

Sin Separates You From God

Adam had the best of everything. In Genesis 2:15-17 we read: "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam lived to be more than nine hundred years of age, but the day he partook of that tree, he died spiritually. In these verses we read that God placed man in the garden to take care of it. Therefore, we see that right from the beginning, God ordained for man to work.

The commandment was that of every tree of the garden, Adam could freely eat, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Temptation came with that commandment. The result of disobedience was spiritual death the day that they partook of it. Both Adam and Eve disobeyed and fell under condemnation. Under the guilt of sin, Adam and Eve did not enjoy the presence of God. That is one main reason that some people do not get into the house of God. They have things wrong in their lives, and

they are afraid that God will bring it up through a message, a testimony, or a song. Under the guilt of sin, Adam and Eve did not desire the presence of God as they once did.

You can read in Genesis, Chapter 3, that they were aware of their nakedness and tried to cover themselves, and also they hid themselves from the presence of God. They no longer enjoyed sweet communion with God. For the first time, dishonesty was found in Adam and Eve. When they were approached by God to repent, they blamed their sin on each other. This dishonesty exists yet today. If people would really own up to their wrongs, they would get along much better with God.

The Prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 59:2, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." This verse says you are separated from God because of your sin.

"The Soul That Sinneth, It Shall Die"

Ezekiel 18:1-4 reads: "The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die." What was the Prophet Ezekiel saying? The latter part of verse 2 states, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?"

Jeremiah 31:29-30 states: "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's

teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." How far can the moral evil of a parent be extended to his offspring? Are the faults and evil of the parents punished in them? In other words, he was asking if parents transfer their nature to their children, and are their children punished?

Again, Ezekiel 18:3-4 states: "As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: [He is the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and He will deal impartially with every soul.] the soul that sinneth, it shall die." No one will die for another's crimes, and no one will be saved by another's righteousness.

Life comes when a man or a woman does right and turns from that which is forbidden. Ezekiel said in verse 20, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die [he was not talking about physical death, although physical death is sometimes caused by sinful ways]. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

No one living in sin is alive unto God. Although God does not transfer sin from a parent to a child, the parent's influence can lead him into sin much greater and much faster than if he was raised away from sinful influences. For example, my earthly father was a drinker, and I was influenced by that. It was put before me, but it would not have been had I been raised in righteousness. However, when I committed sin, the iniquity fell on me. I was responsible for my own sin. I did not get that sin

from my father. I got it from my own iniquities, and that caused me to become separated from God. This is a difficult truth for those who do not believe in holiness, but the Word of God supports it.

Sin Causes Spiritual Death

The Apostle Paul, talking to saved people, wrote in Ephesians 2:1, "And you hath he quickened [or made alive], who were dead [spiritually] in trespasses and sins." Those who are saved are very much alive in Christ. They were once spiritually dead, but now they have been quickened by the same Spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead. When Paul used the word "you," he was referring to Gentiles. When he used the word "us," he was referring to the Jews. In this verse we see just two types of people: those who have been quickened and those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

The word that the Apostle Paul used for sin is the Greek word *hamartia*, which means "to miss the mark." When a man shoots an arrow at a target and misses, that is "hamartia," because he missed the mark. People commonly have the wrong idea about sin. We all would agree that a robber, a murderer, a molester, an idolater, a drunkard, and a gangster are sinners. We would not have any problems agreeing along that line. We know that such people will not go to Heaven in that condition. They are not even on the road to Heaven.

A lot of people are respectable citizens, and because they are not guilty of any vile sins, they think they are still in good standing with Jesus Christ. They probably would resent being called sinners. You never read about them in the newspaper. You rarely see the word *sin* used. The news, the telecasts, and the

radio do not refer to the word *sin*. If someone commits adultery, people soften it by calling it an affair. People call homosexuality a new lifestyle.

The Word of God uses the word sin very plainly for everyone to understand. Adultery and homosexuality are sin, but the world dresses up these sins to get away from that ugly word called sin. Sin is universal, and it visits all. Paul wrote in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." This was not something theologians thought of, but it is the failure to be what one ought to be and could be. In reality, sin is a killer, and it kills innocence. No one is ever the same when he commits sin. It changes a person. It is like looking into a mirror that has been steamed up.

Sin kills ideas that could have been if the person had left sin alone. No doubt, we all can look back upon our lives and see where sin hindered us along some line. Maybe it was a career, or something else where you could have advanced, but sin got into your life and caused you to go into debt or took away your finances. When you get saved, that is something you have to reap and have to ask God to help you with.

Sin kills the will. At first a man engages in sin because he wants to try it. Next, he engages in sin because he cannot help it. Sin works on the will of man until he no longer resists the temptation.

Sin brings forth death, just as in the beginning. Romans 6:23 reads, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." You need to realize that the world is full of spiritually dead men and women who walk about, have families, go to church, sing, preach, have jobs, lead in government, and fight in the military. The overwhelming

majority of people have never been cleansed from sin.

The First Resurrection

When Jesus spoke of the dead in John 5:25, He was speaking of those who are spiritually dead. What gives a person life? Jesus said in John 5:25, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Romans 1:16 reads, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

In Ezekiel, Chapter 37, the Prophet Ezekiel was talking about the valley of dry bones, or the hopeless condition that God's people had gotten in. God told the prophet to prophesy, to preach, and to hear the Word of God. The only thing that brings a man or a woman off "death row" is hearing the Gospel. In John 5:25 Jesus said only "they that hear shall live."

A hearer of the Word is one who obeys the Word of God. A lot of people go to church and hear the Word of God, but they are only hearers of the Word and not doers. God wants the Word of God to get settled in your heart, and He wants your heart to reach out in obedience to what you have heard. James wrote in James 1:22-24: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."

When it comes to hearing and receiving the Gospel, God is not going to force anyone to obey it. Adam and Eve had a choice. You can turn down the Gospel, mock

it, make fun of it, and go on as though nothing ever happened, but you will have to face the same Gospel you turn down at the Judgment. God will not force feed anyone with the Gospel.

Jesus stated in Mark 16:15-16: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

The first resurrection is deliverance from a dead state in sin to a life in Jesus Christ. Jesus said in John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming [it had not arrived yet], in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

The condition that your soul is in when you die is how you are coming out in the hour of the general resurrection when Jesus Christ comes again. There is a vast difference between these two resurrections. In the first resurrection you will have an opportunity to change your status from being spiritually dead to having new life. You do not have to heed or obey the first resurrection. You can refuse it, but in the general resurrection you will not have an opportunity to change your status. Remember this: how you die is how you are coming out of the grave when Jesus returns. You cannot refuse the general resurrection. You cannot say: "I don't want to come out of the grave right now." If you went into death damned, then you are going to be raised unto damnation.

Having part in the first resurrection makes you blessed and holy. It gives you power over the second death. The second death is separation from God eternally. Taking the Gospel lightly is a very dangerous condi-

tion to get into. You should never shrug off a message or fool around during a worship service. That could bring the wrath of God upon your soul very quickly.

The Final Resurrection

Through the Word of God, I trust that you can understand the two resurrections. One is spiritual when you have passed from spiritual death to spiritual life. The general resurrection is a final resurrection when all will come forth to their final reward. All the dead are going to come forth, but we will not have the same body that we went into the grave with.

The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:35-53: "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

"There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

"And so it is written, The first

man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." We are sown corruptible, but we are raised incorruptible because we belong to another world, a spiritual world.

The Second Death

Second Peter 3:10-12 reads: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" That is telling us that the earth is going to be dissolved, or burned up.

Again, verse 11 states, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." Holiness is required now, and it is going to be required at the Judgment. Hebrews 9:27-28 tells us: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." When Christ appears next, He is not coming to put away sin as He did at the First Advent. He is coming to deal with the sinner.

What manner of life are you living? Are you living holy, taking part in the first resurrection or will you be taken in the second death, which is separation from God eternally? My mind can hardly take in the thought of being separated eternally from everything that is good. If you go to the words of Jesus about the rich man and Lazarus, you will read that one went to hell (where the smallest request was denied), and one went to paradise. That parable was not put in the Bible just to take up space, but it was put there as a warning to you and me. The second death is eternal separation from God. How can you avoid it? You must

take part in the first resurrection. That is a requirement.

I trust that you can understand the difference between the spiritual resurrection and the general resurrection. In the first resurrection, you have a choice. You do not have to be saved. You can turn down the Word of God, but in the second resurrection, or the general resurrection, you will not have a choice. All will hear His voice and will come forth and will go to their eternal rewards. The righteous will go to Heaven, to eternal life, and the unrighteous, to eternal damnation. It is your choice.

(Compact Disc TR-2539)

Miracles of the Dust

An analytical chemist of high reputation declared that the amazing accuracy verbal detail which distinguishes the Bible, even in chemistry, has driven him to render homage to the Book of books as the Word of God. The second chapter of Genesis states that God formed man of the "dust of the ground." These simple words are charged with the deepest scientific meaning. The chemist said that the dust of the ground contains just fourteen out of the ninety-two chemical elements known to science, and that the flesh of man is composed of precisely the same fourteen elements. English scientists also confirm this interesting statement as a recognized fact of chemical science.

Statement of Condition for 12 months ending January 31, 2021

	Income	Expenses
Supplies		\$ 26,807.55
Miscellaneous Expenses		2,908.08
Wages		42,501.63
Payroll Taxes/Insurance/Workers' Comp.		12,324.92
Donations/Offerings	\$26,337.93	
Equipment Maintenance/Repairs.		4,121.30
Postage		75,487.70
Subtotals	\$26,337.93	164,151.18
<i>Balance paid out of the general fund of the Church of God congregation at Newark, OH</i>		<i>\$137,813.25</i>

John 11:32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened

the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead

was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.



"TAKE YE AWAY THE STONE"

Brother Richard Talbot

The Difference Between Mary and Martha

As we consider this event, I want you to look at the scene presented in our Scripture text. When Jesus arrived on the scene, John 11:20 lets you know that He was greeted by a grieving, crying Martha. Verses 20-22 tell us: "Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst

been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." That was a bold statement, but she did not really believe what she said, because later she questioned the very thing she said.

Martha was very outspoken, but Mary sat at Jesus' feet. She studied and heard what Jesus said in Luke 10:41-42: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary

hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." This showed through Mary's life in the days and months following this. Mary was always more confident, more relaxed, more faithful, more pleasing, and calmer, because she spent time with Jesus. Martha said, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

Mary said the same words, but she said them on her knees before Jesus. She was weeping

and worshipping Him. Her tone of voice and her attitude were different from Martha's. Mary was not arguing with Jesus, but she was merely stating a fact. Martha came with the idea of being argumentative and accusing the Lord, but Mary sat still in the house while Martha rushed and found fault with what Jesus had done.

John 11:25-32 reads: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

"As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

We can easily see the difference between Martha and Mary, and sometimes there is a great difference between each of us. We need to be more like Mary, humble and low at the feet of Jesus, never arguing our case before Him, but accepting things as they are until Christ can turn them around, not in accusation, but in a statement of fact. It was her tone of voice.

Do you ever get in trouble because of your tone of voice? That was one of the biggest things that I got in trouble with when I

was growing up. My parents said: "It is not always what you say, Richard, but it is your tone of voice. Straighten that up, and you will be a lot better off."

"All right."

You can say all right lots of different ways, but Mary had a quiet tone, a humble attitude.

Jesus' Approach to the Situation

We read in verse 35 of our Scripture text, "Jesus wept." He groaned in Himself because of the situation He was facing. This affords us a picture of the humanity of our Lord and Savior. He was a man with feelings and emotions, and things stirred Him. He was a merciful man. Before giving proof of His divinity, He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, as the Prophet Isaiah foretold. We do not read in the Word that He laughed, but we read that He wept. Only Jesus knew what He was going to do in this situation. Only Jesus knew that Lazarus was not going to remain a lifeless corpse. However, He endeavored to teach some very important lessons.

Let us consider Jesus' approach to the situation. Some souls could be in much the same situation as Mary and Martha. They were at their wit's end, and their hope was gone. Lazarus, their beloved brother, was dead and buried. Here was the Master, the Divine Creator, who was with God before the foundation of the earth and who had worked numerous miracles. Jesus was the One who walked on water as if it was pavement and empowered another man to do the same. This Man cursed a fig tree and it dried up from its roots by His words. He healed a Roman centurion's daughter by the words of His mouth.

Jesus did marvelous, powerful things in life, and in essence,

those Jews were saying: "This Man has done all these other things. Could He not have prevented Lazarus from dying?" Jesus was teaching a lesson. He could have simply spoken the word and the stone would have rolled away or He could have called angels to move it out of the way. However, there are things that God can do and will do, but there are some things that He will not do. Jesus had come to the grave and was stopped from doing what He had gone there to do. Jesus was filled with desire to satisfy the needs of His friends. He came to heal their broken hearts. He groaned within His spirit a second time.

Sometimes people block themselves from help. Perhaps you have allowed stones or barriers to be erected in your life that God will not break through. God will respect that barrier that you have allowed to be rolled across your heart and life. This stone could be various things in life. It could be a spouse, a job, or other things that are keeping you from connecting to the power of God in your life. It may also be an attitude of selfishness. Maybe you do not want to let certain things go in order to have the glory of God flood your soul.

If you will remove the stone in your life, God will show you that He has provided the Stone that is fit to build on, Jesus Christ, the Chief Cornerstone. You can build on Him and make your life profitable for the Lord, but you must remove the barrier that is laid across your life. Only after the stone was moved was Jesus able to lift their grief-stricken hearts. You need to understand that you must do some things for yourself in order to have God help you. There are many things God could have done for mankind, but He did not because He knew what man could and should do. Jeremiah said in Jeremiah 29:13-14: "And

ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity."

Things That You Must Do

So many people in this day and age do not really desire God in their lives with all their hearts. They want the Lord on their own terms, and they want to go to Heaven on their own terms. They think they can live for God on their terms, but that is not so. A person has to search for the Lord with all his heart. If you will search for God in that way, you will find Him.

God created the Garden of Eden and filled it with trees and good things to eat. He filled the sea, the air, and all the various forms of life because He knew man could not do that. Then He told Adam to take care of the garden. In essence, He said, "Adam, you cultivate and oversee this paradise that I have made for you." He told Adam to do that because He knew that Adam could do it. He allowed Adam to do it, but it is God that gives the increase.

I had a nice-sized garden for many years. I plowed the ground and planted the garden, tilled it, and stepped back and prayed, "Lord, I have done my part, now I am asking You to do Yours." God never took a hoe to cultivate it or to get rid of the weeds for me, and during the hot days of August, He never carried water to pour on the plants. There were things that I had to do if God was going to give the increase.

One year I left the garden alone and told someone that I was letting the Lord take care of it. I found there were things that I had to do if I wanted God to give the increase. That garden got overgrown with weeds, and it was up to me to take care of those weeds.

When it comes to certain

spiritual things, it is up to you to take care of these needs. It is your responsibility to take care of what you are allowing to develop in your life. If you have allowed something to become an obstacle in your life, there are some things that you must do. You have to take care of yourself. You have to watch your attitudes, your spirit, and your feelings. You have to watch what you allow to lodge in your mind. So many things can roll across your spiritual life and block the joy, the happiness, the peace, and the victory. You may be sitting back and wondering why you are not happy, why you are not rejoicing, and why things are not going as they should. Maybe you need to stop and check to see where the blockage is. Perhaps a stone has rolled across your path, and you need to roll it away.

Martha and Mary wept, the crowd wept, and the situation was still the same. Maybe you are weeping and brokenhearted due to circumstances in your life. Others around you may be weeping for you too, but that will not change one thing in your life. You may be hurting, and you could get to the place where you despise your life and blame others for your situation, but it takes more than that to bring about a change.

I can picture Jesus in this day and time groaning in His spirit, desiring to turn your life around. He wants so much to reach out to your soul and lift that heaviness off your life. He wants to bring the joy, the thrill, and the excitement of living for God back into your soul, but He cannot do it unless you do your part.

Letting Go of Hindrances

God has limited Himself to work within the will of man. He will not overpower your sincere, heartfelt desires, but He longs for you to be willing by removing

those things that block Him. There are things you must do. If you are lost, one thing you must develop is a broken spirit and a contrite heart. You must let the Holy Spirit work with your heart, and you must see yourself as you really are before God. If you will humble yourself before the Lord, He will hear you.

If you are saved and under a heavy load, in order to have God help you and set you free, you need to be willing to let go of those things that are hindering you. There may be some situations that you need to let go of, because there is nothing you can do about them. They are affecting you and robbing you of your joy and happiness, and they are robbing you of the power of prayer. Also, they can affect your faith and trust in God. Dear one, it is time to let them go to open the way for the sweetness of God's Spirit to reach down and flood your soul.

Going back to our Scripture lesson, as long as that stone was rolled across the mouth of the cave, Mary and Martha were helpless and hopeless. There was not a thing they could do. Jesus said they needed to roll away the stone. As soon as that stone was rolled away, Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth." You talk about a change! Their prayer was answered, and there was victory, joy, happiness, and excitement in their lives. They could hardly believe what they had seen.

I have had some heavy burdens roll across my life, and I did not think there was any way out or any hope for the situations at all. However, when I finally got to the place where I could get those stones rolled away, God moved. Once I started putting my shoulder to the stones and shoved and said: "Lord, I don't want this stone in my life. I don't want this heaviness over my experience," God came in and lifted that burden from me. And,

oh, what joy flooded my soul!

If you will let God have His way, you can have the victory that you desire. You need to learn to take care of things as they come up. Sometimes people tend to nurse their hurts and wounds and feel sorry for themselves.

I told my children as they were growing up: "Toughen up! That is part of life. You are going to get your feelings hurt, but you should not go around showing it. You need to get hold of yourself and strengthen yourself." Now, it is a lot easier to say that than to do it. Sometimes my parents told me: "Straighten up! Put that behind you and go on with life. You are going to be hurt again and again." It is all part of living among others.

You are going to face difficult things in life, but you do not need to let them become stones, barriers, or fixtures in your life that you cannot overcome. You can conquer anything and everything that comes into your life by the power of God and by your willingness to submit it to God.

Some things can get buried in the events of life and reappear later as a hard place in your life that becomes extremely difficult to remove. There are things that you must do for yourself in order to have God move and free you from the bondage of sin and death. You need to have godly sorrow, true repentance, and a willingness to let some things go.

"Stand Forth"

In Mark 3:1-3 you can read that Jesus saw a man who had a withered hand. He was standing among the rest of the Jews in the synagogue. Jesus could have healed him right where He was, but in verse 3 He said, "Stand forth." Jesus wanted that man to step away from the people and separate himself. The eyes of his peers were watching to see what was going to happen.

How important was it to heal the man's withered hand? It was important to the man who had that condition. How important are the conditions in your soul that need to be healed? How important is it to you to really get healed? In order for this man to be healed, he had to obey the words of Jesus and stand forth. He knew that to accept Christ he could be excommunicated from the temple and separated from his family. The Jews looked upon one who became a follower of Christ as though he was dead, and they had no more to do with him.

This was a big move for that man. It was not easy for him to step forth, but he was the one who had the withered hand. No one else in the crowd had to suffer this condition. It required a lot of courage for that man to stand forth. Jesus could have healed him right where he stood, but He wanted that man to make a move first. When he stood forth, immediately his hand was healed. I do not believe that he regretted stepping forth. I believe that in his heart and soul, he did not care what anyone else thought. He was the one who was healed, and he got the victory.

Today some people refuse to seek God for help because they are afraid of what someone else might say. They are afraid of the position they will be put in. Others are afraid of the effect it will have on their family. If you are the one with the need, you ought to get that need taken care of. You will be so glad that you listened to the Lord.

Sometimes you have to make a move for your own good, not to please your mother and father or anyone else. You have to step forth to get what you need from God. The most important thing is to make sure you are right with God, to have what you need to live happily for the Lord, and to

make Heaven your home in the end. Sometimes you have to take a stand to make yourself clearly known: "Here is where I stand."

Moving the Stone

Many people are weeping down inside where no one else can see. No one knows the deep regrets and the sadness that you have buried in the depths of your heart. I thought about the song entitled "Rescue the Perishing" by Fanny Crosby. Verse 3 reads, *"Down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter, Feelings lie buried that grace can restore; Touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness, Chords that were broken will vibrate once more."*

Dear one, if you are suffering with heaviness in your heart, with a stone rolled across your experience, possibly locked in a situation that you are afraid to take a stand on, you need to realize that God is able to help you if you will do some things yourself.

First of all, you need to let God know that you want help. Once you let God know that you are willing to push this stone out of the way and begin shoving that stone, you need to tell God: "I don't want this in my life anymore. I am tired of being robbed of the best that God has for me." Once you do that, God will come to your rescue and set you free. He will not leave you there.

Many a good saint has learned to live with a heavy heart. Something happened many years ago, and they have been afraid to move it, not knowing the consequences. Martha was afraid to have that stone moved. She said, "Lord, by this time he stinketh." In other words, she was saying, "What good is it to move the stone?"

Satan may be whispering thoughts in your ears, telling you: "There is no sense in trying to move it now. Things are in such a mess. If you try to move

this out of your life, it is going to cause a huge problem." Dear one, what is more important to you? Getting help for your soul and gaining victory in your life should be more important than having heaviness in your heart. What about your soul? Do you want to have peace in your heart? If so, you need to seek the Lord with all your heart. You may not know the consequences, but give God an opportunity to prove what He can do.

Martha did not have any idea in her own heart and mind what was going to happen, but she thought it would be a terrible idea to roll away that stone. All at once they did, and she changed her mind quickly. She could not have imagined that what took place would actually happen.

Prevailing Through Obstacles

In Matthew, Chapter 15, you can read about the woman of Canaan. She had a daughter who was grievously vexed with a devil. She came to Jesus, but He never answered her a word. The disciples finally came to Jesus and pleaded with Him to send her away. She was facing tremendous obstacles and barriers. She was a Samaritan, so it was not expected that she would come to Jesus, since the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus replied to His disciples in her hearing, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (verse 24). When the Canaanite woman heard those words, verse 25 tells us, "Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me." This was the second time the Canaanite woman had approached the Lord, and this time she came and worshiped him. Wow! What a difference!

The first time the woman cried out to Jesus, she said, perhaps standing at a distance and hollering, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David," but He

did not pay any attention to her. When He made that statement to His disciples and she heard that she was not allowed those privileges, He did not send for her. In the face of a total barrier, she came and threw herself down at His feet and worshiped Him.

This Canaanite woman faced rejection from the Lord, but the more she was rejected, the stronger her resolve was in the midst of this; then she came and worshiped Him, and this act opened the way for that barrier to be removed. Jesus knew what this woman was made of. He knew her strength of character, and He knew that she would prevail through this discouragement of rejection. Jesus knew what He was doing all along.

Jesus also knows what you are made of. He knows the character that lies down deep in your heart and soul. He knows when you come to hard places, if you will just put forth the effort, you can break through and get the help that you need. Too many times some are easily put off when their prayers do not get answered quickly. They quit praying if their desire for a greater relationship with God does not seem to develop as they think it should. Therefore, they give up and sit on the sidelines where they live with a less than perfect relationship with the Lord. Dear one, you do not have to live with less. You can have what your heart and soul long for.

Matthew 15:26 says, "But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs." I tried to put myself there, where someone was referring to me as a dog. That would have been crushing to the ego, but she turned right around and said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table" (verse 27).

The Jews looked upon the Samaritans as being worse than

dogs. Jesus was struck by her reasoning. He knew what she was going to say, and He knew what He was going to do. In verse 28 Jesus said, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Her daughter was healed that very hour. *This woman did not give up or let anything block her way. She pursued her request until He granted her petition.*

Sometimes things come into people's lives that they have not asked for. They did not desire them, and they do not even know why they are there, but they are. Some people live with heaviness, sadness, and great burdens. There is a difference between carrying a burden, being burdened, or being crushed with a burden. Jesus came to bear your burdens, but some people allow things to become crushing. However, if you will move toward God, He will move toward you. Christ will immediately come to your rescue.

Deliverance From the Pressures of Life

I have seen God roll the stone out of people's lives, and they were called forth to newness of life as soon as they met God's will. When Jesus cried out, "Lazarus, come forth," He was not yet finished. Lazarus still needed help. Lazarus was bound with grave clothes, so Jesus said, "Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44). We all need to be reminded there is no need to argue with our situations. There is no need to try to find reasons for everything, but there is a reason to get problems out of the way, no matter where they came from or why they are there.

Satan can use many things to depress you as a child of God, but Christ can set you free from all the pressures of life that have you bound and have robbed you of the joy of salvation. Perhaps

some professing Christians have never really felt the deep thrill of spiritual liberty from these weights and situations.

Sometimes you will face situations that you did not ask for, but there is a freshness in Christ that awaits you. You can have a freshness in your Christian experience and a stir in your soul that will do you good if you will put your shoulder to the wheel and begin to push. You can pray: "Lord, I do not want to stay like this. I do not want to live under this cloud. I do not want this heaviness in my life any longer. I do not know how to get out of this, but I know You know a way. You know how to help me."

If you will begin to push on that thing and let God know that you are sincere and really want to get rid of that or be released from it, God will set you free. As long as you nurse that heaviness and put up with the lack of real joy in your life, you will remain in that condition. I enjoy being joyful, and I love life. Oh, I have encountered lots of problems, but I refuse to let those problems stop me from loving life. I love God, I

love salvation, and I love what the Lord has done for me. I enjoy my earthly experience with God to the fullest extent. I do not want to walk around with a long face and nurse the blues, feel defeated, feel crushed, and feel like I have all kinds of problems.

Friend, God has a release for you. He can help your soul. God has deliverance from all the pressures of life that are crushing in upon you. If you cannot get victory with God, there is a reason for it, and there is an answer. You can have salvation and gain victory, peace, and joy down in the depths of your being. It is there for you, but you must let God know that you are ready to roll away that stone. You can break through that barrier. You cannot do it alone, but you need to let God know that you are ready.

Some people are buried under unforgiveness. It has become a barrier, or a stone rolled across the heart. There are certain types of injuries that you may suffer that are extremely hard to forgive in the human. There are some things you may

encounter that are almost impossible to forgive, but if you will let God know that you want to forgive and roll away the stone, God will come to your rescue. You can pray: "Lord, I want to forgive that person, but I cannot do it myself. I want to have a heart of forgiveness. I know I should not harbor a grudge or ill feelings." I know of many instances where God has broken through in people's lives and has given them the sweetness of divine forgiveness for tremendous hurts and injuries. God is still able to do that.

Do not hold on to anything that will block your victory with the Lord. You can put the devil in his place if you will let God have His way. He said to Mary and Martha, and He says to you, "Roll away the stone." You might be surprised by what God can do. Will you let the Lord help you? Will you yield to the Holy Spirit? May His will be done in your life.

(Compact Disc TR-2322)

Those Christ Saves

A man brought to a summer camp meeting a young man thirty years old who was paralyzed from his hips down. As he sat beside the soul winner on the bench under the trees, he expressed his desire to be saved. He said, "I believe everything in the Bible," but it gave him no peace. The Christian then inquired of him whether he knew he was lost, to which he replied he did. The inquiry was then made as to whether he knew that Christ is the One who saves and the only One who can save. He replied also to this that he believed it. Just at this point, a public bus drove up in front of the grounds and the Christian said to his lame friend, "That bus is intended to carry everybody into the city, is it not?"

"Yes," he replied.

"Does it carry everyone?" I asked him.

"No, only those who get on the bus." He had hardly made this statement when the light of God broke into his soul. "I see!" he said. "Christ came to save everybody, but He only saves those who take Him." He then gave his heart to the Savior. The light of Heaven flooded his soul, and his face became radiant with joy.

Selected

Especially for Young People

We Are Not Meant to Be Alone



As I was in a youth service one evening, I felt kind of lonely. It really was not a good feeling. It prompted me to ask myself the question, "Could I finish the Christian walk if I were alone?" I came to the conclusion that, yes, now I could make it if I had to, but the experience definitely would not be as good if I had to be alone. If I would have had to start alone from the beginning of my Christian experience, it would have been very shaky. I really am not sure that I could have made it. Others reached out to me, and with their friendship I gained understanding that what I was going through was not so different from what they go through.

The word that came to me as I was thinking about this was the opposite of what I was feeling that night. The word is "together." I believe that each of us is better and stronger in every way if we are together. Psalm 133:1 reads, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" I would like to talk about three words from that Scripture: good, pleasant, and unity.

The word "good" is basically like saying it is beautiful, and the word "pleasant" is like saying it is sweet. The word "unity" can be defined as to be alike or to be one. You may say, "Some of the experiences that I have been through are unlike those of other

young people." I have said that myself when I first entered the youth group. When I first got saved, I thought: "I'm not going to fit in with those guys. They have not experienced the same things that I have experienced." However, I quickly found out that was not true, because two things really unite us as Christians: the Spirit of God and Jesus. Jesus is the Savior to us all. We all have to come in the same way, and that is what really unites us.

You may say: "That is great Ashton, but what does this mean to me? I can make it on my own. I'm strong enough. God and I can do it. We've got this." I would say honestly that you are missing the point. Yes, you might be able to make it on your own and you might be able to make it with just God and you, but Christianity is not all about us. Someone within the youth group may need you. You might not need them right away, but they might need *you*.

Humanity as a whole was not meant to live alone. This past year provides a good case study for this point that I am bringing out. Self-isolation and self-quarantining proves my point. You can hear in the news that suicides are up, drug and alcohol use are up, and depression has gone up. Aside from that, you can look around and see that sometimes people lose out with God when they are isolated. One reason they lose out might be

because they feel alone. We feed off one another, and a bond comes from being together. This shows us, as Christians and as humans, that we are meant to be around one another.

There is an extreme value in being together, and deep down everyone knows that. God knows it, we know it, and the devil definitely knows it. That is the reason he works so hard to put space between us and tries to drive a wedge between us. The devil tries to divide people by using small things. He does not normally start with big things because then we would recognize exactly what he is trying to do. He uses small things like gossip, but we have to be mature and get past that. We have to understand there are going to be times when someone may say something about us and we might get offended. In my opinion, as Christians, we live in a generation that is too sensitive, and people get offended by really small things. We need to be almost unoffendable. There are going to be disagreements, but we have to be big enough to be able to disagree and still love one another.

Some people like to pick sides. For example, you might not like a person just because one of your friends does not like that person. You might not want to hang out with a certain person because it does not seem cool. I have to say that popularity and

Christian purpose do not always go hand in hand.

Being together and staying together is one of the biggest offenses we have against the enemy. I would like to emphasize that division does not really start big; it starts small. The devil uses small tactics. Song of Solomon 2:15 tells us, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." Our spiritual fruits are tender, and our spiritual relationships are tender. They need to be fostered and cared for. Also, they need to be built and bonded so they can be stronger. We have to find a way to put these little foxes to rest.

One thing I also consider

when I think of little offenses building up is the breaking up of something really good, such as a newly married couple. Often with a newly married couple, you may think: "Wow! They are so in love! They will last forever, for sure." Then ten years down the road a divorce may happen, and people who once loved each other can hardly stand to be in the same room. A part of me wonders: "How did they get there? They once loved each other, but now they can hardly stand to be in the same room together." I am not talking about the big offenses. Big things can definitely happen, but little cares of life can come in and build up. Eventually little problems can

turn into something big if the couple does not get those little things taken care of.

Being together and staying together takes effort, but I believe the benefits and the spiritual strength that we gain from it far outweigh the challenges in the differences we have. Being together is one of the basic fundamentals of our Christian walk. It is not quite as important as reading and praying, but I definitely think that feeding off one another and being together is highly important, especially for a young person.

Brother Ashton Myers

Always New!

Old Brother John was a man of God and loved his village chapel. One day he was stopped by an acquaintance, who, by the way, was an ardent fisherman, "I have often wondered what attraction there is at the village chapel. You go week after week at the same old chapel, see the same folks, sing the same hymns—"

"Wait a minute," interrupted John. "You fish very often at the same spot, and in the same water, do you not?"

"Yes, that's true," said the other man.

John smiled, and then he exclaimed, "Well, you do not, for the water you fished in yesterday has passed on to the sea, and every time I go up to the chapel, the Lord has something fresh for me."

Selected

"Therefore if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!"

2 Corinthians 5:17

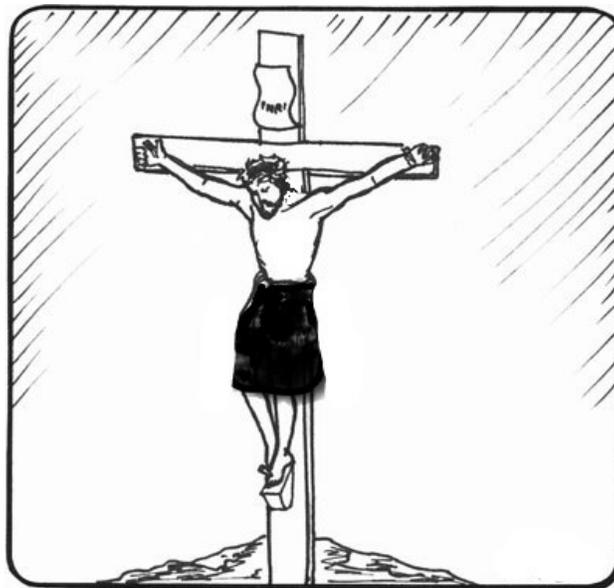
John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is

not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

God's Greatest Gift



Brother David Watson

The Great Plan of Salvation

God has given us such a great gift. Oh, what a gift He gave when He sent Jesus into this world! The most needed gift was for Jesus to bring this great plan of salvation. The world was standing in need of a far greater work than the old Law could do. God looked down in His great love and mercy and gave His only Son to a lost world needing a Savior to redeem and to lift people out of a miserable life of sin. He came to bring peace, joy, and satisfaction.

Hebrews 9:14 tells us that Jesus offered Himself to the Father. It reads, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" God gave His Son, but then Jesus turned around and gave Himself to the Father for the sacrifice needed for my sins and your sins and for the great Church of God so that He could redeem us through His precious blood. Under the old covenant, the lambs, the doves, the goats, and all the

other sacrifices that were made could not cleanse man's conscience. When Jesus went to the Cross of Calvary, He gave Himself to the Father, shed His life's blood, and laid His life down freely. His blood can wash a man's conscience and cleanse him so there is no sin in his life. You may say: "Maybe I am too mean for God to save me and redeem me. I have gone too far in sin. I don't know if there is any help for me." When Jesus died on the Cross of Calvary, He fixed it so that His blood could reach deeper than any stain of sin has

ever gone.

Hebrews 7:25 states, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." How far will Jesus forgive sin? Think of Saul (who later was named Paul) who persecuted and laid his hands on the servants of God and committed the evil of putting God's people to death. Jesus so loved that man that He looked beyond all of that and saw a diamond in the rough, so to speak. God sent the Holy Ghost of God to blind Saul's eyes and bring him down on the road to Damascus. Then He lifted him out of sin and removed that old spirit of persecution, murder, malice, envy, and strife and cleaned him up and put him on the highway of holiness toward Heaven. He redeemed that man.

You may say, "Preacher, do you mean that God saved a man who was against His church and against Him in every way?" Jesus' blood reached deeper than the stain of sin had gone. God is still the same today. He washes, cleanses, saves, makes whole, and forgives sin. I thank God for Jesus, whose blood reaches deeper than the stain of sin. You may ask, "What do I have to do to be right with God?" The Bible states very plainly what you must do in order to come to Jesus Christ. Romans 10:9 reads, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

You have to be saved by faith, not by feelings. I have prayed with people and tried to help people to understand how to turn it all over to Jesus, and they kept waiting on a feeling. Well, if I offer you a gift, you will not receive that gift until you take hold of it. You have to take hold by faith and believe that Jesus is the Son of God. He was

sent here by God because God so loved this world that He gave His only Son. Jesus so loved us that He gave Himself to the Father for an offering for my sins and your sins.

A New Life in Jesus Christ

You have to believe that Jesus laid down His life, that He went through the crucifixion, that He died, was buried, and was resurrected. Thank God, He lives so that you and I can live. We are not serving a dead God. He is alive and living in every soul that will trust Him, believe in Him, and come through the operation of faith. If you have repented, He has forgiven you, raised you up, and set you on the highway toward home. As sure as you believe in God, He will move in and give you peace in your heart.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? [This is not speaking of water baptism, but rather spiritual baptism, when the Holy Ghost is working to quicken you, empower you, and bring you in through Jesus Christ. His death is that which you operate in when you come to repentance. You must die out to sin through Him. You must die out to this world and the lusts of this world. You have to give up everything and lay it all down. I thank God for the baptism of the Holy Ghost of God that raises one to a new life in Jesus Christ.] Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

There is a change that takes place when you go through death with Jesus and the Holy Ghost quickens you, spiritually speaking. Then the power of God hits your soul, resurrects you, and

brings you to a new life in Jesus Christ. It is like planting a grain of corn. You put it in the earth, it is quickened and regenerated, and when it comes out of the ground, it does not look like the kernel of corn that you planted. It has a new form. It grows, and looks different.

Similarly, when God moves in, He changes you from the old man to a brand-new creation in Jesus Christ. Your name will change from sinner to saint. Hallelujah! When the old man dies, sin stops, right then and there. You are no more a sinner, but you become a saint of God saved by the grace of God. You are brought from an old world to a new world in the Son of God. You are changed from the top of your head to the soles of your feet. When that happens, you will feel something in your soul that you have never felt before. You will know there is a difference because God is there. Oh, how good it is when Jesus moves in!

The Gift of the Holy Ghost

On the Day of Pentecost, a great thing took place. Something happened there that had never happened before. Acts 2:38 reads, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent. . . ." Repenting means that you stop sinning. You must turn your back on sin and go the other way. You die out to the sinful way of living and no longer walk that way. You die out to sin, but thank God you have a resurrection. God resurrects you.

Paul wrote in Philippians 3:13, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." You must set your mind on the goal before you. Thank God, regardless of the cost, it is cheap compared to what you will find ahead of you because of the glory and the blessings of knowing

God as your personal Savior. The Captain of your salvation has given you a spiritual home, and He has given you a hope in your soul. That is something that you could never have without Christ. I find it worthwhile to live for Christ because I am journeying with the joy of salvation in my soul. Praise God, it is good to be saved and to be on my way home.

Acts 2:38 continues, ". . . and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

In Acts 16:30 the jailer asked Paul, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul preached them a sermon. He went down to the jailer's house and had a meeting, and the whole family got saved. He did not wait until daylight. Then Paul took them out at midnight and baptized them. They got an experience with God, and when they got a taste from Heaven, in essence, they said, "Take us further." They went down into a watery grave (water baptism) and came up to show that they had been buried and resurrected through the power of the Holy Ghost of God.

When do you receive the Holy Ghost? You receive the Holy Ghost when you get saved. What is the Holy Ghost? He is the gift of God. I got a new tongue when I got saved. God took all the bad language out of me. He took away the swearing, the cursing, and all the filthy language from me. I had a brand-new tongue. I thank God that I was speaking different from how I had talked, and I wanted to be sure that what I was saying was correct.

What happened to me? The Holy Ghost quickened my soul and brought me to a new life. That new life and that new language in my soul was talking right, praise God! When I spoke,

I spoke about Jesus. I want you to know that the Holy Ghost moves into your soul the very minute that you get saved. How do I know that I got saved? No one had to tell me when the Holy Ghost moved in; He told me. If you are looking for feelings, He is there.

Yielding Yourself to God

When I went to the river to be baptized, as I came out of the water, it seemed as if Heaven met my soul. I gave a shout in my soul because God had resurrected me with Him.

Water baptism is an operation of faith. It is a witness to what has already happened in the soul. When I was baptized in the water, the Holy Ghost witnessed to my soul that He brought me out of death and resurrected me, made me a new creature, and made me a joint heir with Jesus. I went down poor as poor could be and came up as rich as I could be, spiritually speaking. Praise God, I had something with the Lord that I never had before.

The Apostle Paul said that when you become a new man, arm yourself to live the Christian life. He said in Romans 6:11-13: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord [a sinner is not a saint and a saint does not sin]. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. [You do not have to sin. Sin corrupts you, gives you a bad name, and ruins your character; but when Jesus moves in, He will heal your soul. Maybe you have committed things that are hard to overcome, but God will forgive you, and you need to forgive yourself. You have to put things behind you and know that you are dead to sin. You become alive in Jesus Christ and become a new

creature.] Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Your hands, your eyes, your senses, and your total person are to be yielded to God. You need to give your all to God. He can help you to live a holy life. Someone may say, "Preacher, I don't know if I can live it." If you will let God have control, you can live it. God will help you every step of the way. Every time you step toward Him, He will step toward you.

In James 4:8a James said, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." You can walk a new walk and live close to God if you want to. There is nothing like old-time salvation!

Romans 6:16 reads, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" When you are a sinner, you do things pertaining to sin. You do what the devil wants you to do. You like your worldly music. When I was in sin, I loved my rock-n-roll music. When Jesus moved in, I forgot all of that. Thank God, He gave me a new song of "Amazing Grace," that saved an old sinner like me. He reached way down and lifted my feet from the miry clay.

Living By the Word of God

David wrote in Psalm 40:2-3: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth." David sang because God put joy in his soul and let him have something that made him want to sing for God. You will want to sing a song that gives God praise and glory. You can

hold your head high, give this old world a smile, and say, "Beat this if you can." They do not have anything anywhere that will beat this. This is the best thing going. David said in Psalm 103:1, "Bless the LORD, O my soul."

The Apostle Paul was talking to those Thessalonian brethren, and he wanted them to live close to God. Do you know what being sanctified means? It means to live by the Word and to let the Word have control. You need to follow the Word of God and let it be the rule that you live by, walk by, and practice. Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:1-3: "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication."

Do you want to be closer to the Lord than you have been? You can do that through His Word. You can read it, pray about it, and ask God to enlighten you. He can help you to understand His Word, fortify you with His wisdom, and direct your heart in His understanding. You will please God if you are seeking heavenly things and not earthly things. You need to set your mind on heavenly things. Instead of looking down, you need to look up toward greater things. God has great things in store for those who serve Him.

You should not flirt with Babylon. False religion brings confusion. No matter how much confidence you have in someone in Babylon, you need to remember that God saved you out of sin, and He wants you to go where Truth is preached. He does not want you to be in a false system of worship. That is spiritual fornication. You need to get

out of false religion if you are in it, and you need to stay out of it. You need to walk close to God and let the Word of God be your rule, your authority, and your control. The Holy Ghost is pleased with you when you are walking to please God.

"Come Out From Among Them, and Be Ye Separate"

When God saved me, I did not want a thing that false religion had. I wanted something better, something that would satisfy my soul. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 4:4, "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour." What is your vessel? It is the body, where God's Spirit dwells when you are saved. The latter part of Isaiah 52:11 reads, "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD." God wants your fellowship to be clean.

The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 7:1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." He said in 2 Corinthians 6:15-18: "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God [that is your vessel] with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." He was talking about coming out from under those creeds.

When a person gets saved and is young in his experience,

he needs the knowledge that those creeds written by men are not ordained of the Holy Ghost and are not under the blood of Christ. If you are among such, you need to come out of it. It is unclean, and its spirit is unclean. You need to separate from everything that is unclean and walk in newness of life with a brand-new spirit.

You need to know that when God saves you, He does not force anything on you. No one forced Jesus to die. In John 10:18a He said, "No man taketh it [His life] from me, but I lay it down of myself." You have to volunteer what you do for God.

You might have family or friends down in false religion. They might not have heard what you have heard, and they might not have seen what you have seen, but do not go back and unchristianize them. You just need to get out of it yourself, walk with God, and help them every time you can to see what God has done for you. I like what God does. I love His Holy Spirit and His goodness. Sometimes some things may seem hard to you, but you will get a blessing.

Sanctified Through the Truth

God sanctifies people who obey Him. Before Jesus went to the Cross of Calvary, He knew what His followers were going to face, so He prayed to the Father in John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." What was He saying? We are to be sanctified through Truth. The Word of God is Truth. If you live to all the knowledge and wisdom that God gives you when you get saved and do what He says to do every day, putting on more of Jesus as you study the Word of God, He is sanctifying your soul each step of the way.

The Jews wanted to bring their traditions over in the grace age, but Ephesians 5:26 lets us

know that God cleansed them by the Word. You see, God had to take some things away from the Jews by washing them with His Word and letting them know the will of God. The Word of God is His covenant, or His law, and it will wash the conscience and give you grace. When God takes something away from you, He will give you something better, and you will enjoy it better because He fixed it that way. That is my experience with the Lord, and it gets better and better.

I do not know about you, but I hunger and thirst for the Word of God, because I realize that the more I know, the more I do not know. The more I see, the more I realize I do not see. The more I understand, the more I realize there is much that I do not understand. Therefore, I study all day long. Sometimes I say: "Lord, it seems like I am more confused now than I was when I started," but God says, "Just keep on studying, and keep on eating." You see, you have to eat the Word and obey the Word. Just keep digging deep. God will keep feeding your soul, leading you, blessing you, and filling you with His knowledge and understanding. There is nothing better in this world than knowing the Truth and the Word of God. I love the sword that Jesus gave me, and it comes out of the mouth of God.

John 17:18-20 continues: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. [We are in the world, but we are not of the world. He is praying that we will let the Word of Truth keep us sanctified as we walk in the world.] And for their

sakes I sanctify myself, [Jesus was the Son of God, but the Book of Hebrews says He learned obedience. You would think that being the Son of God He would have known everything there was to learn, but He came here and took on a human body. There were things for Him to learn and to experience. Since He did that, He has already been down the road that you and I are traveling, and He knows how to deliver us. He said He sanctified Himself. In other words, He was setting Himself apart for what was ahead of Him.] that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." In Jesus' prayer for His disciples, He wanted them to so fix themselves on His Word that they would be set apart from the world.

The Captain of Our Salvation

Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 28:19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." He gave them power.

You and I are to live Christlike in this world. We will suffer persecutions, trials, and tests, but remember this: we are to keep the Word of God and be like Jesus in all of it. The Bible tells us in Romans 8:36, "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Do not let people get you upset because they tongue-lash you. Just remember that you are being crucified all day long,

but you still belong to Jesus Christ. You are a sheep, and you are walking toward home.

One day this battle will be over. Jesus is going to come. One day we will see who is waiting at the top of the hill. That will be a great day. I do not know who all is going to be there, but I want to see the Captain of my salvation. I want to see Him, the One who has done so much for me. I want to thank Him for all He has done for me. He has done more for me than anyone has done. This old world has been rough on me, but God reached down one day and said, "I love you, so come My way." I turned to Jesus and found Someone to love and care for me, and He has helped me every step of the way. When the world has forsaken you, there is Someone who still has His eye on you, and that is King Jesus. I thank God for salvation.

If the world has you down and sin has hold of you, let me tell you, Jesus is coming before long. You can see what kind of shape the world is in with all the drugs, alcohol, chaos, and killings. Also, look at all the same-sex marriages, the sins of Sodom, killing the effect of the Word of God in their lives. You need to come to Jesus and obtain this peace, righteousness, and the joy of salvation. You need to turn to the Lord while you can. If you will give your heart to Him, you will never be sorry. You need to forget what is behind you and reach forth for what is before you. May God bless you.

(Compact Disc TR-2178)

**One of the most important pieces of furniture
for the home is the family altar.**

Matthew 27:1 When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:

2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?

18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him,

Let him be crucified.

23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.



What Will You Do With Jesus?

Brother Garrett Haylock

Dealing With Jesus

The all-important question that we each must answer in life is, "What shall I do then with Jesus?" If you have Jesus, you have more wealth in your soul than this whole world comprises.

If you get Jesus into your heart, you will have the greatest treasure that is possible to possess in this life.

Upon looking at this scenario, we can see that Jesus went through the mockery of a trial. Verses 1-2 of our Scripture text

state: "When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor." The position that

Pilate was put in is a similar situation that we each face in this life. Pilate had no way of evading this. He had to deal with Jesus. There was no way for him to avoid the responsibility that was his. The Jews brought Jesus to Pilate because Pilate had the power either to release Him or to crucify Him. This is a responsibility that every one of us has.

The Bible lets us know it was customary for the governor to release a prisoner to the people at the feast. The Scripture says they had a notable prisoner called Barabbas. When Pilate was faced with Jesus, the Bible tells us in verse 18, "For he knew that for envy they had delivered him." Jesus was doing things that the Jews could not do. They lived under a form of religion. They were religious leaders, but all they were doing was holding the people in bondage. Jesus came with the message to repent and believe the Gospel. The throng started to follow Jesus, and the Jews began to envy the influence that He had over the people. They brought Him to Pilate and said He must be crucified. Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil hath He done?"

Pilate found no fault in Jesus. He was hoping that when he presented Barabbas and Christ to the people that they would choose Christ over Barabbas, because of the good things that Jesus was doing and had done. However, the world has greater influence over people than Christ does, even today. Most people choose to give their lives away to the world and to the things that the world has to offer.

Jesus knew that He stood before Pilate because of the envy of the Jews. Pilate was hoping that the people would make the decision of what to do with Jesus for him. No doubt, Pilate thought, "If I let Jesus go, then the Jews will say that I chose Him over Caesar; therefore, if I

let them choose, then I will not have to deal with the outcome." When Pilate sat upon the judgment seat, his wife was troubled throughout the day by dreams. She sent a message to him, urging him to have nothing to do with Jesus.

Maybe you wish that someone would deal with the decision of what to do with Jesus for you, but they cannot. No one else can fill your shoes or take your place regarding this decision. Just as with Pilate, you must deal with it personally. Pilate's wife was asking an impossible thing when she urged him to have nothing to do with Jesus. You may try many things to avoid having to make a decision about what you are going to do with Jesus, but you will still have to deal with the question.

Taking Responsibility for Your Actions

The Bible lets us know in Hebrews 4:13 that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." There is no getting away from this question: "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" You have to decide. Are you going to accept Him as your Savior and serve Him and stay true to Him or are you going to let the world allure you and pull you away from Him? Maybe you are a backslider. The good news is, Jesus is still seeking to save the lost.

The devil wants everyone who is saved to backslide. He wants to pull us away from God, so you have to decide what you are going to do with Jesus every time He works on you. If you hold back on God, you are responsible for your actions. What are you going to do with Jesus?

You may be professing to be a Christian, but are you really where you know you ought to be? If not, it is not Jesus' fault. He

paid the price for every one of us to have a good experience with Him. He does not give one person a greater privilege than another. We each have the same right to eternal life. Each of us has the right to find Jesus and to know Him as Lord and Savior.

Some people have many obstacles to overcome when dealing with this all-important question of what they are going to do with Jesus. I believe that Pilate saw himself as being responsible for his actions. Do you see yourself as responsible for your actions? Whatever your decision is, you are responsible for your own actions. May God help you as you consider this all-important question. You will face this same Jesus one day. Today you may be deciding your fate. What will you do with Jesus? Friend, my advice is to seek Him for salvation with all your heart if you are unsaved, and then ask Him for the grace to stay saved. Grace saves you and grace teaches you how to stay saved. God can keep you, but He will not keep you against your will.

Titus 2:11-12 says: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." This is not speaking of something to look for out in the future; it is right now. The grace of God saves you and teaches you. Some people do not want to be taught. Some people merely have a form of godliness and think that will be sufficient. Jesus is the head of the church, the door of the church, and the foundation of the church. There is only one true church. What will you do with Jesus? What makes this question so important? You have to face up to the fact that you are responsible regarding how you deal with it. What you do with Him will determine your eternal

destiny.

Pilate was troubled and wanted the people to give him a way out, but they said, "Let him be crucified." The people backed away from him, and he was left to deal with Jesus. Pilate then asked the question, "Why, what evil hath He done?" Of course, he received no answer. The Bible tells us in John 19:7, "The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." Matthew 3:17 reads, "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Verse 24 of our Scripture text says, "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." This was the same person who said that he had the power to release Jesus or to crucify Him. Just like Pilate, you have the power to accept Him or reject Him.

Are You Betraying Jesus?

The Bible tells us about a disciple in Matthew 27:3-4: "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that." Those thirty pieces of silver seemed to mean so much to Judas that he was willing to turn Christ over to them. Nothing is worth selling Jesus for.

As you live in this world, the devil will play tricks on you. He will dangle things before you. Friend, no matter what you get in this life, you will never outlive the need for Jesus. The question still stands: What will you do

with Jesus? Judas answered that question by betraying Him. When you get into situations where you should stand up and defend Christ, what do you do?

The Bible lets us know how Pilate finally dealt with it. Since you are still living, the final chapter of your life has not yet been lived. The decisions that you make could chart a dark ending for you because of what you do with Jesus.

Jesus said in Luke 11:23, "He that is not with me is against me." You cannot represent Christ and the world at the same time. You have to decide who you are going to serve. What are you going to do with Jesus? He is the One that you should follow, and He is the One that paid the ultimate price for you.

Just like Pilate, others have had to deal with this question. Peter denied Him. Matthew 26:58 tells us that Peter followed Jesus afar off. Peter got too close to the world. Someone accused him of being a follower of Christ, and he said, "I know not what thou sayest" (Matthew 26:70). Another maid saw Peter and said he was with Jesus, and he said he did not know the man. When Peter was following Jesus afar off, he became weaker and weaker. The third time Peter denied the Lord, he began to curse.

Jesus deals with every aspect of your life that pertains to Him. There comes a time when you have to stand up and say: "Yes, I'm a child of God. I am born again, and Jesus Christ lives in my heart. I don't regret it, and I will not deny it."

Have you ever denied Him? You should stand up for Him. Sometimes people harshly judge Peter, but they find themselves not being as strong as they ought to be. If you find yourself like that, God, through Jesus Christ, loves and cares about you. After Christ's resurrection, an angel at the empty tomb told Mary

Magdalene and the other Mary, "Go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee" (Matthew 28:7).

The Bible says that after Peter denied the Lord the third time, he "remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly" (Matthew 26:75). Peter was sorrowful because Jesus had warned him that he was going down, but in essence, Peter said: "Not me!"

Do you feel stronger than you really are? Friend, without Jesus Christ in your heart, you are no match for the enemy. Jesus wants to redeem the lost and reclaim the backslidden. Backsliding is not an unpardonable sin. You need to ask Him to strengthen and help you.

The Drawing Power of the Holy Spirit

The Bible tells of two individuals that I would like to share with you. Acts 24:24-25 reads: "And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

Felix, the governor, had to deal with what Paul said to him. Conviction is something you have to deal with. In John 6:44 Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Jesus draws a person through His convicting power of the Holy Spirit. He will show you your needs. Like Felix, you have to decide what you are going to do with Jesus. Maybe you are an important public figure, but do you know Jesus?

Through His Holy Spirit, He may start to deal with your soul. You may be religious, but you have to answer this all-important question of what you are going to do with Jesus. This is one question that you will face as long as your life lasts.

Felix trembled. Conviction can make you tremble. I have seen it and felt it personally. I trembled and feared when God first started to talk to me. I feared walking out of a church service without knowing Jesus as my personal Savior, so I dealt with Jesus. I said, "Lord, if You will come into my heart and forgive me for my sins, I will live for You for as long as You give me breath." That was the best decision I ever made. I was relatively young when God saved me, and He has kept me. Do not lose this opportunity to deal with this question. I remember getting saved. I started examining myself and asked, "Am I really saved or not?" It made me feel so responsible.

A responsibility comes with knowing that you are saved. You do not want to take chances concerning salvation. I had to search, and I had to know. Salvation is not "once saved always saved." It does not work that way. You have to work at it. However, salvation is not by works; it is by grace that you are saved and by grace that you are kept. You have to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. By the help of God, you have to strive to stay within the will of God. Getting saved is one thing, but staying saved is another. Remember, God never forced you to get saved, and He is not going to stop you from leaving. He will never fail a person who wants to stay saved. There are not enough devils in hell to pull someone away from God when he wants to remain saved.

Felix told Paul to go his way. My advice to you is, do not talk

to the Holy Spirit like that. If you grieve the Holy Spirit, you could commit the unpardonable sin and the Holy Spirit will cease to draw you. When the Holy Spirit starts to work on you, you need to answer fearfully. Felix did not.

Almost Persuaded

In Acts 26:20 we see that King Agrippa had to answer the same question. Paul also dealt with King Agrippa. Acts 26:24-28 states: "And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Paul said in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Many times pride hinders people from going to an altar of prayer.

Paul said he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Agrippa said he was almost persuaded to be a Christian. First John 1:9 reads, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God will be faithful and just to forgive you, but you have to deal with Him. What will you do with Jesus?

Friend, it would be a shame for you to be almost persuaded to be a Christian and then die in that condition. How sad to be that close to being saved and miss Heaven by the same margin. That is what it means to be almost persuaded. You need to be fully persuaded and ask Him to come all the way into your heart. In Acts 26:29 Paul said, "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

Do not be almost persuaded. You need to ask Jesus to come into your heart and fully surrender your life to Him. I want to remind you that whatever your decision is, you are going to face it at the Judgment. At the Judgment, it will no longer be a question of what you are going to do with Jesus, but what will He do with You?

(Compact Disc TR-2004)

A Good Pilot

"Captain, I suppose you know every sandbank in this river," said a passenger on a Mississippi steamboat in the old days.

"No, I don't," the gruff old man who had learned many things from Old Man River replied. "It would be a waste of time."

"What! A waste of time?" exclaimed the passenger. "If you do not know where the sandbanks are, how can you pilot the boat?"

"Yes, it is a waste of time," the captain repeated. "Why should I go knocking about among the sandbanks? I know where the deep waters are. That is enough for me."

The Undelivered Pardon

The prisoner was being led from prison to the gallows, amid the shouts of the crowd, while a great distance off a messenger on a foam-flecked horse galloped desperately with a pardon. As the grim procession moved slowly through the streets, the rider of the horse whipped his beast in a frenzy of haste, frantically trying to cover the remaining miles in time.

The crowd and the prisoner reached the marketplace. At a neighboring town, the messenger traded animals and leaped upon the fresh horse to urge it at a breakneck speed along the narrow highway.

The prisoner was bound and stood pale and silent before the gallows while the proclamation of his execution was read aloud. Into the approach to the town dashed the messenger, his animal wild-eyed and almost uncontrolled in its frenzied haste.

In the market square the prisoner ascended the fateful stairs and listened while prayer was made for him. In the hush that fell upon the crowd, distant hoofbeats sounded as the messenger entered the town gates, lashing his horse like a madman.

The black hood was placed upon the head of the prisoner, and the noose slipped around his neck. Then, amid a cloud of dust, the messenger urged his exhausted beast pell-mell into the crowd, and flung himself gasping and spent at the foot of the gallows, his precious message outstretched before him.

Saved by a pardon! A pardon delivered just in time.

I read another story, too. It, however, had a very sad ending, for the messenger was forcibly delayed against his will, and although he did his best he arrived just a moment too late. The story was a great tragedy. I felt sorry for the prisoner and also for the messenger who tried so hard.

But what of a story that told of a messenger who was entrusted with the pardon, and sent on his way by a king himself, urged to bend every effort to deliver it, and then who whiled away his time at a local inn, unconcerned about the issues at stake? Surely the reader would be filled with despair at the thought of the pardon duly signed and sealed, lying in the pouch of the messenger, who is enjoying food and drink and the comradeship of the servants at the inn. Such callousness and indifference would make the story a double tragedy, for it would mean not only the death of the prisoner, but the disgrace of the messenger as well.

An undelivered pardon, a double tragedy.

"Well," you say, "those are only stories anyway, so what does it matter? Such things don't happen in real life!"

I'm not so sure. I see a parallel to the double tragedy of the undelivered pardon. There is a pardon that has been procured at tremendous cost by the Prince of Peace. It has been entrusted to

messengers by the King of kings. He has plainly commanded the messengers to take it to those who lie bound in the prison house of sin, and to spare no effort to see that it is delivered.

We are the messengers, and we are responsible before God to deliver the message of salvation to those for whom Christ died. Yet today there are millions (yes, millions) who have no hope of pardon from the penalty of sin. They do not know that Christ has paid the price of sin in their stead, and today He offers them pardon.

What answer shall we give to the King when we stand before Him and are asked why so many did not receive the word of the salvation that He has provided? Will you answer as indifferent messengers who have been more interested in the acclaim of the world, the attractions of society, of the comforts of a well-paid job?

Every day thousands of people are being led off into a lost eternity by the inevitable hand of time. How many more will pass along before we realize the urgency of our commission and put our hearts into delivering the message?

What will it be, young person? The main burden of actually going to these unreached places with the Gospel rests with you. All of us have a part, it is true, but in almost every case, it is the young person who must go. This is a responsibility and a privilege given by God Himself, which cannot be ignored. We cannot avoid a reply to His command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

True, all young people cannot go to a foreign mission field. There is work at home too. Many millions are still without the message of God's love. Will you be a messenger?

Selected

Meeting Announcements

NEWTON, KS
April 13-18

Revival: Church of God, 400 N. Meridian Road, Newton, KS 67114
Evangelist: Brother David Stegmeier, Canby, Oregon
Service times: Tues. - Fri. 7:00 p.m., Sat. 10:45 a.m. & 7:00 p.m., Sun. 10:45 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor Brandon Gonzalez. Telephone: 316-217-2696

MT. PLEASANT, PA
April 17

Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA
Service time: 10:30 a.m. A meal will be served by the local congregation. **MOTELS:** *Holiday Inn Express*, 724-547-2095 (This is on the same road as the church. Please mention that you are there for the church meeting.); *Super 8 Motel in New Stanton*, 724-925-8915 on I-70W, 10 miles north of the church); *Melody Motor Lodge*, 724-628-9600 on 119N in Connellsville).
For more information contact: Pastor Paul W. Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666. Telephone: 724-547-2151

WARRENSVILLE, NC
April 23-25

Weekend Revival: The Church of God, 2042 Teaberry Road, Warrensville, NC 28693
Evangelist: Brother David Stegmeier, Canby, Oregon
Service times: Fri. & Sat. at 7:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor Allen Borders at 336-384-8859 or 740-485-8881

SUMMERSVILLE, WV
April 25-May 2

Revelation Meeting & Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd., Summersville, WV
Service times: Meeting begins Sunday evening @ 6:00 p.m., Mon. - Thurs. @ 7:00 p.m., Fri. 10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m., Sat. & Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. Fri. - Sun.
Meals will be provided by the local congregation following each service.
For lodging or for more information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders at 304-872-4047
Visit the website: www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com

SUMMERSVILLE, WV
May 31-June 6

Revival & Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd., Summersville, WV 26651
Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, Mississippi
Service times: Mon. - Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 6:00 p.m. & Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders. Telephone: 304-872-4047

WHITE PINE, TN
June 13-20

Camp Meeting: Church of God at Douglas Lake, 185 Hwy 25E, White Pine, TN
Services times: 10:00 a.m., 2:30 p.m., & 7:00 p.m. First service Sun., June 13 @ 10:00 a.m.
Children & youth services daily. Campers welcome, but please make reservations. Bring your own bedding for the dorms. For reservations contact: Bro. or Sis. Williams @ 678-215-1540 or 770-507-7404 or email: jwil6568@bellsouth.net. Or you may contact the pastor.
For more information contact: Pastor Roger Nethers. Telephone: 770-206-0786 or email: rogernethers@bellsouth.net. If you make reservations & can't make it, please call & cancel.

NEWARK, OH
June 20-27

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

MUNCIE, IN
July 7-11

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

CANBY, OR
July 19-25
**PLEASE NOTE
DATE CHANGE**

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

Spring Camp Meeting

June 20-27

*We welcome you to attend our
old-fashioned camp meeting at
God's Acres, Newark, Ohio*

Three Services Daily: 10:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
(The afternoon service will be a teaching service.)

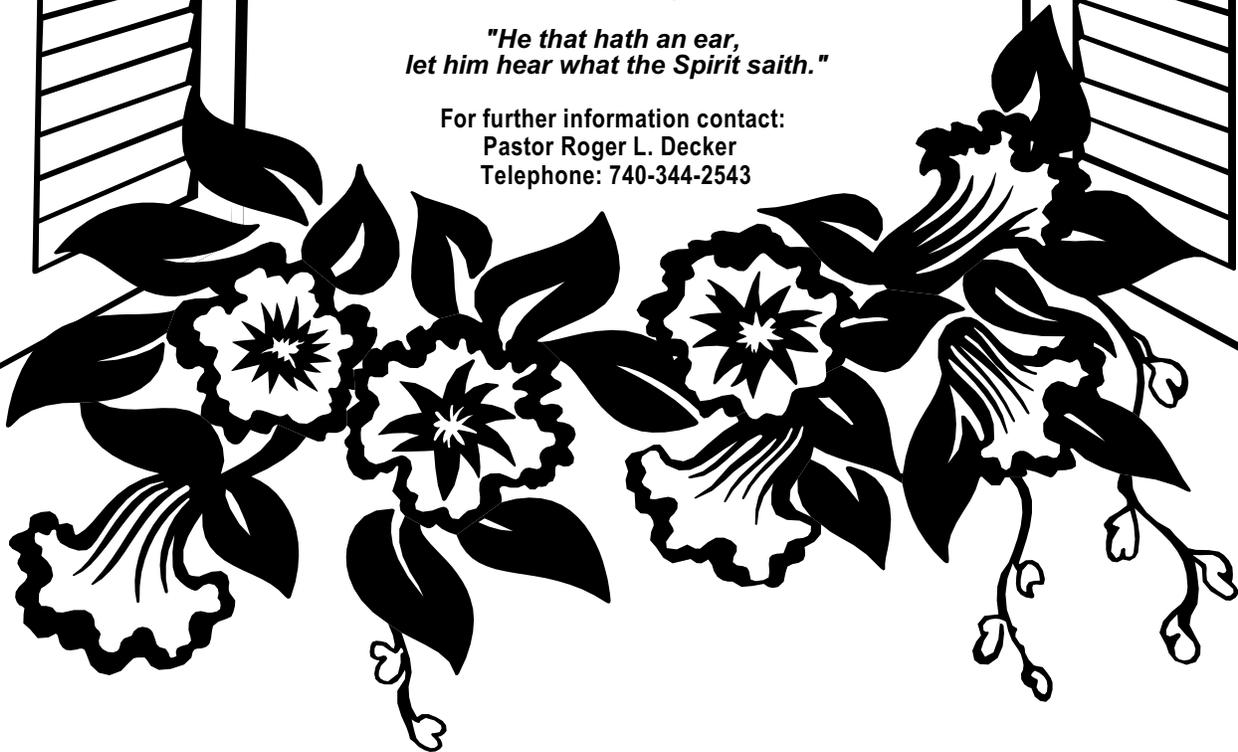
We have special services for the children,
youth services, morning prayer services,
inspirational singing, Holy Ghost preaching,
divine healing, and fellowship with the saints.

The saints of God prepare hot delicious, meals and
freshly baked desserts in a large, air-conditioned
dining hall. Meals are reasonably priced.
Snack stand will be open after the evening services.
Rooms, dormitories, book store, and so much more.

We invite you to bring your Bible and come to
hear anointed men of God preach the Truth.

*"He that hath an ear,
let him hear what the Spirit saith."*

For further information contact:
Pastor Roger L. Decker
Telephone: 740-344-2543



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