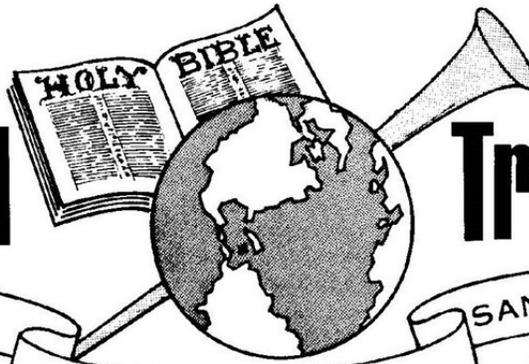


The Gospel



Trumpeter

JUSTIFICATION

"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."

Ezekiel 34:12
Jeremiah 32:39

SANCTIFICATION

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished."

Revelation 10:7
Matthew 24:31

UNITY & TRUTH

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 52 March 2022 No. 3



Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

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

Psalms 122:1

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

Guest Editorial

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

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

Email: pastor@godsacres.us
Phone: 740-344-2543

Print Shop Phone: 740-345-1312

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

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN

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

SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

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

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

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Vol. 52 March 2022 No. 3

Four Nights and Three Days in Heavenly Places

Winter 2021 Camp Meeting Report

It is hard to believe that another year has swiftly passed by and another wonderful camp meeting is now history. The winter camp meeting is always short; it was only four nights and three days, but much good was accomplished, and for that we are thankful. Camp meeting was a great help to the saints. It brought strength and might to the inner man, as Paul spoke of in Ephesians 3:16. It was also, as Peter stated, a time to "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance" (2 Peter 3:1). Most of all it was another opportunity to present the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to the lost.

Monday evening, December 27, 2021, winter camp meeting began here at God's Acres. Saints from far and near were welcomed as they gathered into the worship services. They were encouraged to be in every service possible. Prayer was offered up to God for His presence to guide and direct in the meeting. Although the winter camp meeting was short, it was highly blessed as the Holy Spirit overshadowed the services. Thank the Lord, it was truly a precious time of fellowshiping with the saints, sitting in heavenly places, and feasting

on the good Word of God.

It was a delight to see the ministerial brethren who attended the meeting. Their presence was greatly appreciated. Brother Abraham Burton was the evening evangelist. He began Monday evening with a two-part message on, "Lord, Help Me Not to Lose My Focus." His text was taken from Luke 21:34-36. Using these Scriptures, he admonished the words of Jesus to us. We were profoundly warned to not allow ourselves to be overcharged by worldly cares. He challenged the people of God to be watchful and prayerful of things that would derail our Christian walk.

On Tuesday morning, Brother Josh Thilmoney so wonderfully told us about God's "Exceeding Abundant Grace." In his sermon, he expounded on the power there is in God's grace to help in every time of need and situation. That evening, Brother Burton continued the second part of his sermon started the night before. On Wednesday morning, Brother Allen Borders spoke on the thought of encouraging us to look into "The Mirror of God's Word." He reflected on the importance of how God's Word

[continued on page 7]

Psalm 112:1 Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious,

and full of compassion, and righteous.

5 A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

6 Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

8 His heart is established, he

shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.

9 He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

A Heart Fixed With Purpose



Brother Roger L. Decker

Getting Your Heart Fixed

This Psalm speaks of a good man. The psalmist said, concerning a God-fearing man, "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD." The word *fixed* means "set, permanent, unchanging, preset, and predetermined." All these benefits came upon this God-fearing man because his heart was fixed. Too many times people's hearts are not really settled or fixed. They do not keep serving God long enough to reap good things. They have been out in sin sowing to the flesh, and they are reaping the things of the

flesh.

When you come to God, you need to stay with Him, get good seed planted, and give it time to grow. Too many do not stay around. Some hear messages that they cannot handle due to a lack of depth in their experience with God. Others just wander off. Nevertheless, the promises of God are true. Galatians 6:7-8 tells us: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Some people get deceived when they think they can escape reaping what they sow. That is the great deception found in sin. A man who robs a bank may actually think he can get away with it, and maybe he will. However, if you commit sin, you are not dealing with federal authorities, but you are dealing with Almighty God.

Some professing Christians are like babies. They have never gotten out of the baby state. They pout, they throw temper tantrums, and then they put on a smile when they come to church. If that is your condition, you need to get your heart fixed.

Your heart is unstable. Something is wrong when a professing Christian fights and fusses in the home, throws tantrums, pouts, and carries on as a worldly person would. Something is wrong in their heart. Our hearts need to be fixed.

Let us look at some Old Testament brethren who had their hearts fixed. Daniel 1:1-8 reads: "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

"And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

"Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore

he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself."

Daniel Purposed in His Heart

Daniel was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. Eventually, he was elevated to a high rank in the Babylonian and Persian kingdoms. The Babylonians sought to remove the traces of Daniel's nationality and religion. They changed his name to Belteshazzar, but Daniel purposed in his heart.

Daniel was taken from Judah to Babylon in his youth at the battle of Carchemish in B.C. 605. The Scripture does not indicate his age, but some say that he was around fourteen years of age. I want you to think about that, young person. He was trained in the arts, the letters, and in wisdom in the Babylonian capital. He rose to a high rank among the Babylonian men of wisdom, but he had something in his heart that many people lack today. He had a purpose and a determination in his heart. He was not in the most ideal place to serve God. He was not sitting in a Church of God congregation. He was sitting in the kingdom of Babylon with Babylonian laws, rules, and decrees, as well as the possible threat of the kings. He purposed in his heart, and his mind was made up that he was going to serve God.

Daniel asked permission from the prince of the eunuchs to abstain from the king's food and drink. Again, Daniel 1:8 states, "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." Rather than get the prince of the eunuchs in trouble, he went and talked to him. Verse 9 says,

"Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs."

Someone may ask, "What do you think would have happened if he had not gotten permission?" Possibly he would have been cast into a lion's den. He threw himself on the mercy of God. If the prince of the eunuchs had turned him down and had not given him permission, I believe he would have refrained from eating the king's meat and drinking the king's wine and would have thrown himself on the mercy of God.

Daniel was active throughout the long reign of King Nebuchadnezzar. He was in Babylon when Cyrus the Persian captured Babylon, and was a high ranking government official during the reign of Cyrus. He served during his old age into the reign of Darius the First, and he probably would have celebrated his one hundredth birthday during the reign of Darius. At an early age, he demonstrated great depth of knowledge, wisdom, and leadership. Throughout Daniel's entire life, he demonstrated an unshakable faith in God. It took boldness and courage for him to resist the temptations and the threats that daily confronted him. His heart was fixed and settled that he was not going to defile himself with Babylon or any other country foreign to Judah. Throughout Daniel's lifetime, because of his commitment to God, God remained faithful to him.

The Bible tells us in 2 Chronicles 15:1-2: "And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded: And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; the LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you."

God will not turn away from

you. If there is any turning away, it will be on your part. Daniel remained true even in the heat of the battle. God gave him the interpretation of the dreams. The temptations, the persecutions, and the trials that came upon Daniel were severe. The kings of that day did not have much long-suffering like Christ. They had zero tolerance for people who disobeyed, and the only way anything could be changed was for God to move on the situation.

Daniel's Uncompromising Faith

Let us look at another trial. Daniel, Chapter 6, tells us that Darius set over his kingdom one hundred twenty princes who were to rule the whole kingdom. Over the one hundred twenty were three presidents, with Daniel being the first. The other princes had to give account to him. The king had thoughts of putting Daniel over the whole realm, but that stirred up jealousy, envy, and hatred. Sometimes that works on people today when someone gets elevated to a position. The other presidents and princes tried to find something against Daniel concerning the kingdom, but they could not find anything. He was faithful, loyal, and trustworthy. He never grew lax in his duties. Daniel 6:5 reads, "Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." That is where people find fault with the saints yet today, on their so-called in-

terpretations of the Word of God.

Those men were not about to give up, so they sought something to accuse him of, and they knew the only way to get him was in his worship to God. Knowing the loyalty of Daniel to his God, the men consulted together and presented to Darius a royal and firm decree that whosoever asked petition of any god or man for thirty days would be cast into the den of lions.

Daniel 6:4-10 reads: "Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever.

"All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

"Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

Daniel did not change what he did every day because of the

decree. His heart was fixed. Daniel knew the writing was signed. No doubt, the devil bombarded his mind. Daniel knew what was going to happen if he disobeyed. Daniel knew that if he prayed, he would be thrown into the den of lions, yet he would not compromise his worship to God. His heart was fixed, and it remained that way throughout his life. If you are saved and you have a wife or a husband who is unsaved, do not compromise. Daniel would not compromise even though he knew what the consequences would be. He also knew what disobedience would cost him. God moved upon those lions, just as He did on the prince of the eunuchs. God brought Daniel through with victory. If you compromise to please an unsaved companion, you will get yourself in trouble with God and you will not win your companion.

Joseph Remained True to God

Joseph was cast into prison due to the false accusations of Potiphar's wife. Even when he was in prison, God was with him. Genesis 39:21 states, "But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison." When a person stands against wrong, God will be there to protect him and to turn his situation around for good. Why was God so good to Daniel and Joseph? The reason is that both Daniel and Joseph were true to God.

I want you to read the account of Joseph and Potiphar's wife. Genesis 39:1-10 reads: "And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man;



and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.

"And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her."

Joseph said it would be great wickedness and sin for him to take Potiphar's wife. Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. Therefore, he would not partake of the king's meat or wine. Had God not intervened for these two faithful men, they would have been dead men. Their hearts were fixed and settled. They were ready to pay the price no matter what the consequences were. Their desire was to stay clean and holy and to please God.

Enoch's Testimony

In Genesis, Chapter 5, you can read of another man. The Bible does not tell us a lot about him, but his name was Enoch. Genesis 5:22-24 states: "And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."

Enoch walked with God for more than three hundred years. The name Enoch comes from the word *Chanoch*, which means "to instruct, to initiate, and to dedicate." From his conduct, we believe he was instructed early in life in the things of God. He set out on a walk with God. He was settled, fixed, and determined to live for God. If you read the next chapter, you will find that is when God destroyed the world with the Flood.

Enoch walked with God in the midst of much evil, but his heart was fixed. Look at the circumstances in which he was placed. He was considered a patriarch, a king, a priest, and a prophet of a large family. He was one to administer justice and perform all the rights and ceremonies of religion. He taught the way of Truth and righteousness by precept and example. He was a married man with a family, but he walked with God. The Hebrew writer mentioned him in Hebrews 11:5, which reads, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." His heart was fixed.

It is possible to live so that you do not offend God and so that you do not sin against Him. God searches the heart. If it was possible then, it is possible now.

God is still the same today. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Thessalonians that the Thessalonians stood against him. They accused him of having impure motives, and they did not want to receive him well. So, in 1 Thessalonians 2:10 Paul said, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." They could not find a flaw in his life. They had blasphemed and slandered him. When Paul went there, he behaved himself holily and justly, and they could find no fault in him.

Dear one, this comes right down close to us. Do you really have a purpose in your heart? Is your heart really fixed and settled? The psalmist said that David's heart was fixed. Daniel purposed in his heart, but how about you?

Having a Strong Determination

In Psalm 112 you can read of some attributes of one whose heart is fixed. Psalm 112:6 states, "Surely he shall not be moved for ever." He will remain firm, stable, and prosperous. He will not be driven from place to place. He will have a steady reputation and a constant influence.

Psalm 112:7 reads, "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings [in other words, he will not be afraid of bad news, reverses, losses of property, floods, or the famines of war]: his heart is fixed [he has full confidence in God and commits his life calmly into His hands, which shows that someone besides himself is supporting him], trusting in the LORD." Psalm 28:7 states, "The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him."

Psalm 18:3 says, "I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved

from mine enemies." It is sure that God is well pleased with a life settled and fixed in Him. That really pleases God, and God is right there to back one in his stand for Truth. It pleases God to the point that God is there to help the man and woman through every phase of life. The Spirit of God told Asa that the Lord was with him as long as he stayed with God. Those who stand out in the Word of God had a strong determination to stay with the Lord.

In Colossians 1:21-23 Paul wrote: "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which

is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister."

People are getting moved away from the hope of the Gospel. Your only hope is to believe the Gospel. The Gospel is what brought hope into your life. There is no hope in sin. There is no hope in drinking a bottle of beer. There is no hope in the dives of this world. Hope is in the Gospel.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ will bring hope into your life. As long as you remain holy, unblameable, and unproveable, people cannot bring any accusations against you in His sight. When you go to work, school, or shopping, you need to remain holy, unblameable, and unproveable in His sight. Having the grace of God is how you accomplish that.

Joseph could have gotten a nasty attitude and become bitter. He was slandered and lied on, but he remained faithful and true, and God remained true to

him. Pharaoh elevated him to second in command because his heart was fixed and settled. It is not difficult to serve God unless your heart is not really fixed. When you kneel at an altar of prayer, you should not walk away empty. You should get up with the Holy Spirit. He provides the power that you need to live each day.

Some people fail to keep up their experience with God. You have to work at your salvation. God is not going to force you to do it. For example, suppose someone were to offer you a good job with good pay. The offer would be there, but you would have to put forth the effort to do it. That is the same way with salvation. God offers salvation, but you have to put forth effort. You have to receive it and maintain it. Is your heart fixed?

(Compact Disc TR-2012)

[Winter CM Report continued from page 2] reveals any impurities in our experience that need to be addressed. Wednesday evening, the Lord changed the order of the service with an altar call before the preaching. After several received spiritual help, Brother Burton preached his final message for this meeting. His sermon was centered on the thought, "Give God Your Whole Heart." Thursday morning, Brother Brandon Gonzalez brought a message entitled "We Are to Be Witnesses." He reminded us of the great importance of living a righteous life wherever we are.

Every afternoon at three o'clock, Brother Earl Borders conducted a teaching seminar on the "Three-Fold Nature of Man." In his studies, he expounded on man being a "body, soul, and

spirit." These lessons more clearly explained the function of each part. We would not want to fail to mention our camp meeting Bible school held each afternoon for the children. During this time, Sister Karen Wilks taught young minds about Jesus and the good things the Lord has to offer them. The children spent time singing spiritual songs and had play time.

Thursday night, the climax of this wonderful camp meeting, Brother Allen Polston delivered a beautiful message. It was entitled "Closing Out the Year With a Good Report." Brother Polston directed our minds toward looking to God to find things that will help us prosper spiritually in the coming year. He certainly stirred up the fire in our souls in a beautiful manner.

Surely we want to offer praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for the marvelous way He blessed in each service. There was much good accomplished in the meeting, and many souls were helped. We certainly attribute all the success to His dear Name. The Lord instructs us to call on Him for the help and direction needed. Prayer to God was the vital key to having a successful meeting.

Finally, we want to remind you that the DVDs of the main services, as well as the CDs of the afternoon teaching lessons, may be obtained. To order your copy, please call (740) 345-1312 or write to CD Ministry at The Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055. You can find a list of the services on page 27 of this issue.

1 Peter 5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but

willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Humility



Brother Abraham Burton

A Broken and a Contrite Heart

Our Scripture text says in verse 5 to "be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud." Are you clothed with humility? The Greek word "clothed" is a reference to an apron that the slaves wore back in that time. They wrapped it around them really tight to work in. God wants you to have the humility of God in your soul. What does that tell you? You need all the humility you can get, and then some. You have to be clothed in it at all times, because "your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

The Word of God is your pro-

tection. Your obedience to it is what helps you and keeps you saved. In Matthew 18:3 you can read that Jesus brought a little child in the midst and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." God's thoughts are salvation with humility.

You cannot get saved unless you have humility. The latter part of Psalm 51:17 says, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." You have to be broken up, be humble, and have contrition in your heart in order to know God. You must have humility like a child in order to get saved. When God sees

in your heart that you are sorry in a godly manner, that you are broken up, that you mean business, and that you are tired of your sins, you can be saved. The Bible says in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God will do it for you when He sees a broken heart and a heart of humility. For example, you could say: "Lord, my life is a mess. I cannot do anything. If You don't help me and put my life together, I will not be able to make it."

When God looks down at your heart and sees that you mean business with Him and that you are sorry, you have touched

the heart of God, because God is merciful. When He sees that you are really sorry, you will be able to affect Bible repentance. Many people cannot break through because they are not really sorry and broken. A lot of people are addicted to drugs or have other addictions. They cannot break through because they are not broken. As long as there is an ounce of pride where you think you can handle it and work it out, you are not going to get deliverance.

The only way you can be delivered is to humble yourself before God, because God has to do it. You cannot do it. When pride is in your heart, God said that He would resist you and stand against you. Do you want God to be for you or against you? You need to ask yourself that question. Do you want the favor of God? Do you want the power of God behind you in what you do?

Humble Yourself

Proverbs 3:5-6 reads: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Why? Because you need direction and help.

The humble are favored of God. He will work for them, defend them, and exalt them. The Bible states in 1 Peter 5:6, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." Sometimes people do us wrong. They may hurt us, betray us, or lie about us, but the Bible says in Romans 12:19-20: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." It

takes humility to show love, to have forgiveness in your heart, to be able to look to God to settle a problem, to look to God to cure a problem, and to look to God for deliverance.

Anger is not going to deliver you, no matter how angry you get. James 1:20 says, "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." You have to humble yourself and say: "Lord, I ask You to fix this and to help me. I need Your power and Your favor." You have to get self out of the way. You cannot have your own way in this salvation. David said in Psalm 23:1, "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." You should want the Lord to have His way.

Did you know that a lot of things happen out of God's divine providence? You cannot control it. You may not understand certain things are happening, but you have to submit and humble yourself. It is out of your control. Why fight against it? Why are you resisting it? You have to humble yourself and look to God and say: "Lord, You have to show me how to go through this. I do not know how." Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation [if you are humble and clothed with humility] also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Sometimes people are not humble enough and wonder why they are not making progress in their experience with God and why they are not getting closer to God. It is because they are not humble. Are you humble to your pastor? Do you submit when you do not agree? Do you follow leadership? Are you humble? Can you follow instructions? Can he count on you? If you cannot be a help, do not be a hindrance.

We do not have time for the flesh to be on display. We preach Christ. It is about Christ, and we want to perfect you in Christ. It is not about us.

We know the brethren of Joseph had a problem with Joseph. They were jealous and envious. They did not like the relationship he had with his father. Parents should not want to choose one child over another and cause a problem. They should love them the same. They should not show favoritism or partiality. However, God permitted this for a reason. He wanted to preserve the people of God, and He chose Joseph to do it. In their anger, envy, jealousy, and despising of him, they were the cause of him being sold into slavery down in Egypt.

Pride Precedes Destruction

Isaiah 57:15 says, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." God dwells in that high and holy place. The song entitled "Reigning in This Life" by D. S. Warner says: "*Oh, what grace and high promotion, That in Jesus I should be; Raised from sin to royal honor, Even reigning, Lord, with Thee.*"

It is because of salvation that God has put in our hearts that we are reigning and are elevated where God is not ashamed to call us brethren, where He is dwelling in the midst, as long as we meet the standard of holiness and as long as the fruit of the Spirit is being manifested in our lives. He needs people who are humble, and He works through people who are humble. In essence, He said, "I dwell in a high and holy place, with them that are of a contrite heart." Is your

heart contrite?

Sometimes you may not be as watchful as you should be. You may make mistakes, but you should clear them up. If you get out of order at home, you should clear it up at home. You should not go to church praising God and lifting up your hand when your wife is sitting there and can hardly take it because of how you have acted in the home. We have to be humble. Whatever God shows me, I have to walk in the light. I cannot have my way. If God shows me I am wrong, I want to hasten to correct it. The Bible says to "repent quickly."

Are you humble enough to submit to the Word of God and ask God for mercy, or are you going to resist? That same Word is not going to look the same tomorrow as it does when God shines that spotlight. You need to humble yourself and say: "Lord, not my way, but Your way. I want to make it." Proverbs 16:18 reads, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." It might look like it is not going to happen, but when you are proud and will not be humble, destruction is waiting. God has ordained that. The Scripture says that pride precedes destruction and haughtiness precedes a fall.

You can tell when people are on bad ground and on their way out because the pastor cannot tell them anything anymore. They need to be humble, listen to counsel, and follow directions. You cannot tell some people anything. They want to correct you, yet you are just trying to help them stay saved.

Going back to Joseph, he could not handle Potiphar's wife, yet he had to go to work. However, he ran when God told him to run. You have to be in some situations, but if you do not have to be in them, you are tempting God. You are being arrogant and proud.

Submitting to Authority

You have to be careful when you mess with a man of God, because he wants to help you. You do not see the end of the consequences that you put in place when you are disobedient. God's Word is going to be fulfilled. Problems can be long lasting when you do not stay saved.

We each have to humble ourselves. Sometimes my wife is right. Just because I am a man does not mean that I am right all the time. Sister, if your husband does not see that you are right, you still have to submit. Just because I am right does not mean that something might go my way. Sometimes as a saint, you can be right, but you have to submit. You have to respect authority. You cannot go on a job and take over because you think you are right. You might know the best way to do a job, and it might even save the company money, but if the company does not want to do it that way, you need to submit. You should not get upset or angry.

It is sad when you see people who want to take over. That is nothing but pride. Proverbs 18:12 tells us, "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility." Humility precedes honour. You may want God to use you, but where is the humility? You need to be humble. You do not know when God might exalt you. Do not put a timetable on God. In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 10, Paul gave an example of what took place in the wilderness. As a child of God, you are faced with the same five senses and with the same issues that they faced in the wilderness. Their biggest problem was, they did not want to be pastored. That is a bad spirit when you do not want to submit to a pastor. We all need a pastor. That is the reason God styled the people of God as humble sheep and

lambs, because they can be led and taught. We need a shepherd.

First Corinthians 10:12 tells us, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Paul said in verse 11, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Paul wrote in verse 6, "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." They were arrogant and proud.

Again, verse 12 says, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The same thing that happened to them can happen to you. They thought they could handle it. Some of them thought they could handle Moses, but you had better be careful, because God was behind Moses, and you cannot fight with God. If the pastor is in God's hands, obeying God and laboring before God and before the people of God, you would do better trying to fight fire.

Having the Mind of Christ

In Philippians 2:5-9 Paul wrote: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." Christ is our perfect example. He humbled Himself, and I have to humble myself.

Do you have a humble mindset? The Bible says, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). You should have a prayerful atti-

tude all day. Do you want to rise up or do you want to be humble? What do you immediately do when something happens? Do you rise up or do you take the low side and wait and pray: "Lord, what would You have me to do? I have acknowledged You. Lord, direct me and show me how I should handle this." Let this mind of Christ be in you.

Jesus was the Son of God. He was equal with God, but He took on the form of a servant. He humbled Himself to become a man, to suffer and die for you and me. What am I willing to suffer? Sometimes in a marriage, people want everything to be perfect. The husband wants the wife to be perfect, and the wife wants the husband to be perfect. Everything will not always be perfect. You have to forbear one another. Both the husband and the wife need to stay humble, stay sweet, and have a sweet attitude, because everyone has faults. None of us has wings clipped on our back and a halo over our head. Everything you do is not right all the time, although it might seem right to you. Therefore, you have to take a humble attitude and ask God to help you to forbear.

God dwells with humble people, and God will revive the humble. Sometimes you need to be refreshed. You need God to come and give you something in your soul. Sometimes you need God to do something for you at home in your personal devotions. You might have been in some battles for a long time, so you need God to bear witness with your spirit that He is still with you. However, He cannot do that if you are not humble. Do you realize the power and the grace of God that is at your disposal? All you have to do is be humble.

Talking to the Philadelphian church in Revelation 3:8, Jesus said, "I know thy works: behold,

I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Are you keeping His Word? Do you have little strength? "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." When you have a little strength, God can work with you. As long as you look little, God is big. As long as you are weak, God is strong. However, when you are strong, God is weak. When you are big, God is little. That is the order of things. He esteems His Word above His name. We have to meet His conditions. If you want the power of God in your life, it is through humility. The way up with God is down.

Give Heed to Godly Counsel

I want to talk to you about King Saul. God chose King Saul, and he felt so unworthy. First Samuel 15:16a says, "Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night." Sometimes your pastor might say, "Stay here; I need to talk to you." Are you open? Often God gives His ministry discernment. Your pastor may see something working on you or see an area where you need to improve. God may direct him to talk to you individually and not work through a message. Are you open to that? Could you receive that? "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety" (Proverbs 11:14).

The devil has years and years of experience. You cannot handle the devil. The Bible says in Ephesians 4:27, "Neither give place to the devil." I have to trust God and let Him fight my battles, so I have to stay humble and take heed to godly counsel. I learned a long time ago to give my pastor the benefit of the doubt. I do not know about you, but if he has something that he is telling me

and I think it is one way, I submit my thinking because I respect him, and I know he is a man of God. You need a good pastor. What does the Bible say? "Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper" (2 Chronicles 20:20). If you think you are going to prosper independently of your pastor, you are deceived.

First Samuel 15:16-17 says: "Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night [God had revealed something to the Prophet Samuel about King Saul]. And he said unto him, Stay on. And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, [A man of God cannot have fear of someone because he pays a lot of money in tithes or because he is very talented or because work is going on at the church and he is the best carpenter. A pastor should not have any fear of people.] wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel [God exalted him], and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?" God had done great things for King Saul, but something happened to him. He was reminded of how God started him out, but he did not stay faithful to the light. When instructions were given on the Amalekites, he did not obey. He leaned to his own understanding.

When you get a direct message from God and He enlightens you as to what you ought to do, you had better do it or you are not going to stay saved. Your salvation is on the line. King Saul leaned to his understanding and was worried about the people. You should not confer with people. This is not a democracy. We trust in God, and we are looking to God. God works through divine leadership. This is not a consensus where you ask others, "What do you think?" You need to be led by God.

Saul was the king, but he was

supposed to obey. We each have to obey. No one is exempt, but King Saul lied and was deceitful. Proverbs 28:13 states, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Why did Saul not humble himself when the man of God came? Why did he not obey? He lied and said he had performed the commandment of the Lord. So Samuel asked him, in essence, "Then what about the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen that I hear?" God exposed Saul. The Prophet Samuel was bearing witness with what God told him. Saul was lying.

Next, here came King Agag. When Samuel saw that King Saul spared King Agag, Samuel killed Agag with a sword. That is how we are supposed to hate the devil. That is how strong we are supposed to be against wrong and disobedience. The Prophet Samuel cut him down. That is the way we are to be about everything unlike God. Samuel showed Israel how to execute judgment against an enemy. King Saul kept on lying, so God rejected him. God deals with us in a space of time, and we do not know when that space has ended. You should not play around with your soul and think you can straighten it up later. You had better straighten it up now. Saul did not straighten it up when he could have. When he tried later, there was no room for straightening up. He should have stayed humble. He should have stayed little in his own sight, but he became proud.

Are You at Your Brother's Feet?

The ordinance of feet washing is a beautiful ordinance, and our Lord instituted it. He was our example in it. He got on His knees at the Passover meal and began to wash the disciples' feet. We know the tradition. Basically,

during that time when a person was a traveler and came to a middle eastern home, the servants or the wife washed the children's feet and a traveler's feet. The master of the house did not do the feet washing, but here we have a reversal of this. The Master was washing the servants' feet.

What is the message there? You think you are so great, why are you not washing anyone's feet? Why are you not at feet level? When we do this ordinance, it is to remind us that we are supposed to be at one another's feet. This is where we are supposed to live: at feet level in our hearts. Are you at your brother's feet?

I am talking about Bible humility. Jesus showed us a way, and He said in John 13:14, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." The Prophet Isaiah penned in Isaiah 52:7, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" Have you ever wondered why he was talking about the feet? That is where they were, looking at feet. We are at one another's feet. The ministry is at your feet. This is what keeps the presence of God in the midst. We have to stay at one another's feet. We have to keep love and keep our hearts clear.

Some people do not have their hearts clear. They do not act right. God will expose wrong spirits. "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:16). Someone might have wronged you, but you should not wrong that person.

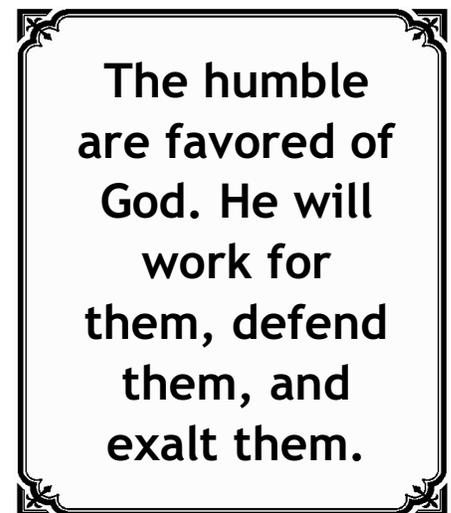
When people do wrong to you, it is easy for you to become

wrong. You have to humble yourself, because if you do not stay humble, you are going to become wrong too. You have to forgive. If you tell someone something, and they do not see it, you ought to leave it in God's hands. Do not keep pressing it.

Some people have a lack of love and humility and will not take reproof. No matter how long you have been saved or how long you have been in the ministry, you should be open to reproof. Reproof, or correction, and instruction are a way of life. My pastor was more than eighty years of age, and he practiced that. If someone reproved him, he would say: "You are right. I did not handle that right. Will you forgive me?" He was not too proud to ask for forgiveness. Some preachers do not want to humble themselves. If you are wrong, if you made a mistake, you ought to humble yourself.

Having humility helps to bring restoration. If you want to be restored, it takes humility. If you want to help people get restored, it takes humility. Galatians 6:1 reads, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

(Compact Disc TR-2134)



Isaiah 66:8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.

10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye

that mourn for her:

11 That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

Travailing for Souls



Brother Larry Dishman

The Miracle of Birth

Zion is the Church of the Living God. The Bible says in Hebrews 12:22-23: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

Our text in Isaiah lets us know that when Zion, or the church, travailed, she brought

forth children. I thank God for the church. There is probably no greater natural miracle than the birth of a little baby. What a miracle that is! You cannot explain the feeling of seeing the birth of your child. I was there with my wife when all eight of our children were born. The only miracle that is greater is the supernatural miracle of the birth of a boy, girl, man, or woman when he or she is born into the Kingdom of God. The greatest miracle of all is to see a lost person be born again.

The Bible likens the church giving birth to a lost soul to that

of a woman giving birth to a child. Paul said in Galatians 4:19, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." Travailing is that impassioned, deep level of intercession. I am talking about prayer that affects the spiritual atmosphere so that the lost can hear the Gospel, repent of their sins, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that through intercession, or prayer, we can actually push back the blinding, depressing power of the enemy so that the Gospel can penetrate the heart of the sinner.

Effective soul winning can never be done without a burden, anguish, and true weeping for souls in prayer. Life is never intended to end in itself. According to God's law and principle, the only justification is that it reproduces, and so the law of travailing is linked with reproduction. That is what God wants. That runs through the whole realm of grace and through a large part of the realm of nature. Reproduction will never happen without travail. Souls will not be born into the Kingdom of God without travail. So travail becomes the basis of the justification of existence. If we are without travail, there is no justification for our existence. We must travail in giving birth to the lost as a woman does in giving birth to her child. When Zion travailed, or had birth pains, she brought forth her children. If there is no pain, there is no gain.

Sowing in Tears, Reaping in Joy

Let us look at some benefits of travailing in birth. Friend, there has never been a physical birth without pain, and there is never going to be a spiritual birth without pain. Genesis 3:16 reads, "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

Friend, you would not be here today had your mother not gone through the pain, the discomfort, and the sorrow that it took to bring you into this world. There has never been a person born into the Kingdom of God without someone going through a little pain, discomfort, and sorrow. There was some praying and travailing going on. Somebody prayed for you, and somebody prayed for me. Somebody

travailed for us. I believe we ought to do the same for others. John 3:16 tells us, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Think of the sorrow and the pain that the Father and the Son went through so that we can have spiritual life. God will not bring you to the point of delivery and not give you birth if you travail in birth. The Bible says as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

Do you know what else the Bible says? Psalm 126:5-6 states: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." One of the greatest joys in this world is to hold a newborn baby in your arms. One of the greatest joys in the ministry is to be there when someone in the congregation has a little baby and see the joy that it brings on the mother and father's heart and life. However, the greatest of all joys is to watch a mother who has been praying for her son or daughter and watch that one come to an altar of prayer and be born again. Oh, the look on the mother's and father's faces when that one who has been out in sin comes home and gets saved.

The Bible lets us know in Luke 15:6, "And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." Verse 10 says, "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

Jesus said in John 16:21, "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." The joy of seeing a lost soul saved will cause you to forget the pain, the discomfort, and

the sorrow involved in giving birth to that person in the Kingdom of God. The church can only be satisfied after she has given birth.

The Unsung Heroes

The baby is secure in the arms of his parents. He experiences a peace and a contentment that he cannot find anywhere else but in their arms, especially in the arms of his mother. Oh, the comfort and the peace when a baby is in the arms of his mother.

Paul wrote in Galatians 4:26, "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." The church is the mother of us all. There is no growing or sustaining revival without travailing prayer. Did you know that the price for revival is the same as it has always been? The price for revival is travailing. I think of the unsung heroes, the souls that travail. They are back in the closet. Often they are not in the pulpit. There are many exciting historical accounts of revivals that happened because the saints of God were moved to pray and travail for souls. When the saints of God got under a burden, great things happened.

When Jonathan Edwards gave that famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," the Spirit of God was poured out in a great way. God so manifested His power and His holiness. During the preaching of that message, the elders threw their arms around the pillars of the church and cried, "Lord, save us, because we are slipping down into hell." It was a powerful message. We tend to focus on that great sermon and think about the power of the Holy Spirit that was poured out when the brother preached that message, but what helped pave the way for such a great move of the Holy Spirit? It was travailing for souls. A lot of people leave that

out. The whole congregation of the church was in fervent prayer all night long the previous night. You do not hear too much about that.

When we look into the history, we see some men and women of God who successfully brought souls into the salvation experience through their travail, through their prayers. I am aware of some unsung heroes travailing behind the scenes in secret and souls being saved. Some time back, I was called to go to another state to preach a funeral. The dear man was a wonderful brother. His wife said there was not one day that he did not call out my name in prayer. We do not know who is really carrying a burden and travailing for souls. The Lord has eternal rewards reserved for those who pray for sinners and travail for souls behind the scenes.

Fervent prayers were going forth in the Upper Room before the Day of Pentecost had fully come. What happened? Three thousand people got saved. Will we ever see such things again? I am telling you that God's arm is not shortened that He cannot save. God is the same today as He was on the Day of Pentecost. What God has done in the past, He can do again.

The Cost of Travailing

Travailing implies something costly. God has written in the universe the law that anything of Him, whether in Creation or in grace, has a price attached to it. It is a costly thing; it is infinitely precious and valuable, and it is worth suffering for. I believe souls being saved is worth travailing for. We do not really love what we get cheaply and easily, but that which is costly and binds our hearts to it becomes a matter of the heart. It becomes a matter of love. By travailing the soul is saved from lightness, carelessness,

and cheapness. It is brought to recognize something infinitely precious. The love of Christ constrains us to seek the wandering souls of men with cries and entreaties and tears to snatch them from the fiery way.

What does this travail of the church imply? Travailing is an intense, prayerful desire for the salvation of men, women, boys, and girls. Do you have an intense, prayerful desire for the lost souls around you? It is a strong, unwavering faith. You may ask, "Why is this travail necessary?" If there is no labor, there is no profit. As it is in the natural world, so it is in the spiritual world.

My friend, can you put your finger upon any instance in the Bible where there had been a falling away where God moved without travail? I do not know of an instance in the Word of God when there was a falling away, when God sent revival without the people humbling themselves, seeking the face of God, and praying.

Every fresh measure of Christ and every bit of spiritual increase is brought with a fresh baptism into His passion. This travail is more than just desiring it. You must fix your attention upon the facts. What will be the results of this travail? The church will increase. When the church is really anxious for conversions to Christ, sinners will soon become anxious to be converted. Sinners will not become anxious to be converted until the saints become anxious for the conversion of the sinner.

We had a midwife in our house with several of our children, and often the midwife said, "Don't associate your pain with the environment, because the environment that you are in is what you need in order to bring forth a healthy baby." The midwife said, "Everything you need is right here in this place of your greatest pain." Today I say the

same thing to the Church of God. Do not associate your pain and your travail with the environment. Do not allow Satan to trick you into leaving the proper place of travail and delivery.

Enduring Birth Pains

The midwife often said, "Cry out, travail, and birth it out." We must understand that Zion is God's church, a womb that is impregnated with the purpose and the plan of God that He once executed in the earth. Therefore, God is calling the church to cry out and travail so that we can see souls born into the Kingdom of God. God is listening for the sound of wailing to come from Zion. Crying is a dimension of prayer and one of the languages of travail.

Someone once said, "The tears are a language that God understands." Crying is an indication of the travail, and the travail signifies there will be a birth. As it is released in prayer, crying brings an intensity that gets God's attention. To this day, if one of my daughters or my wife cries, it gets my attention. It pulls on my heart's strings to see one of my daughters cry, or even one of my grandchildren. I believe it gets God's attention when He sees His church travailing and going forth weeping.

Travailing is a place in prayer where you labor in the Spirit to position yourself to release what God has placed in your spirit. It is intense. It is a place of positioning yourself in order to birth the baby. Birthing out is that time after crying and travailing that God allows you to bring forth, through prayer in the Spirit, that which He has placed in your spirit. Therefore, I say to the body of Christ, it is time to cry out and travail and birth out what God has been allowing you to carry. When you pray, especially during intercession, you

are sowing seeds of intimacy with God.

The Bible says that the Father who sees you in secret will reward you openly. When you invest quality time with God, conceiving the seed of His Word, you will be able to operate from a higher level, or a higher dimension, and great things will happen. You will experience God's supernatural power in your life. There will be comfort and peace and contentment within the church when the church gives birth.

We need to be wrestlers with God to wrestle for souls. We

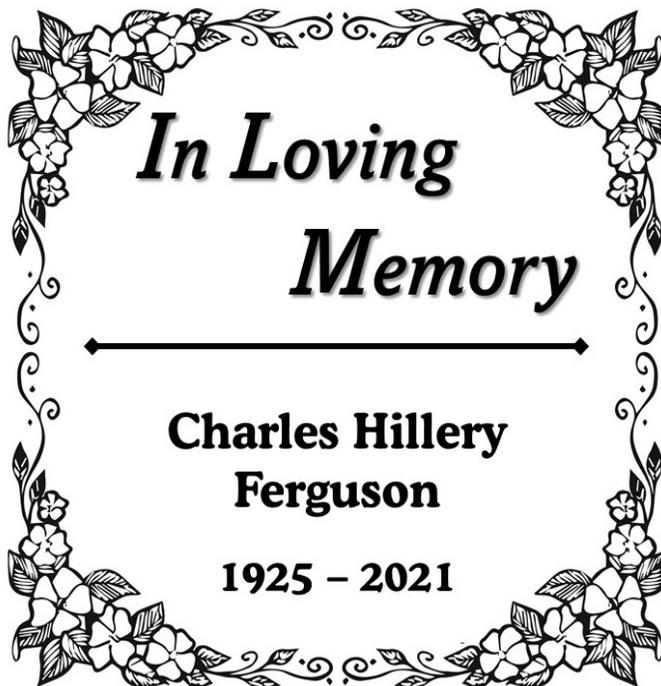
need to become like Jacob was when he said he was not going to turn the angel loose until he blessed him. Sometimes I believe we ought to wrestle with God. We need to travail. Jacob was not going to let up until he prevailed with God. We need to say: "Lord, I want You to bless me with souls. I want You to bless me with seeing those around me saved — my lost family, friends, and lost family members of the church."

We need to boil the water and sterilize the instruments and get ready to give birth as the church. Are you willing to en-

sure the birth pains? The Bible says in 2 Kings 19:3, "And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth."

Will you travail for souls? If the church can be satisfied without conversions, we will not have conversions. The church must be fruitful or rot. Of all things, an unfruitful church is offensive to God. Will you get under the spirit of travail?

(Compact Disc TR-2423)



Charles Hillery Ferguson, age 96, passed away on Saturday, November 13, 2021. Charles was born June 16, 1925, in Elbridge, Tennessee. He and his wife gave their hearts to God on April 8, 1961, in their home in Phoenix, Arizona. They started to attend church on West McDowell Road in Phoenix with Brother Harold Watson as the pastor. Brother Ferguson was ordained in 1966 as the assistant pastor to Brother Watson,

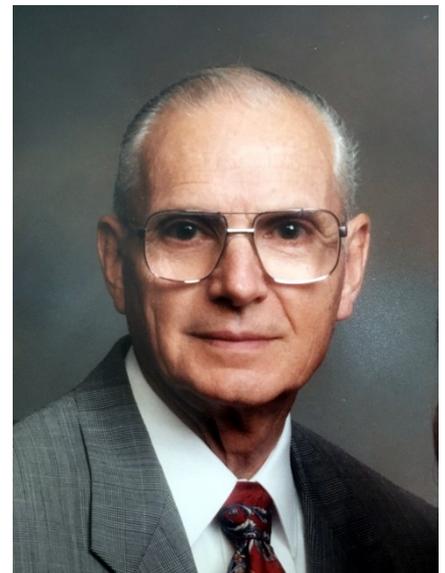
whom he faithfully served with impressive obedience.

Brother Ferguson was a wonderful support and remained subservient to Brother Watson until he felt the call to become the pastor at Orofino, Idaho, in the early 70's. He labored there for about five years. He then attended the Church of God in Canby, Oregon, with Brother David Stegmeier. In 1978, he moved back to Phoenix

and started a work in Gary and Ginny Ogden's home. The congregation later moved to a shopping center until they found the church building that was purchased in 1986 on 3450 West Grovers Avenue in Phoenix, Arizona.

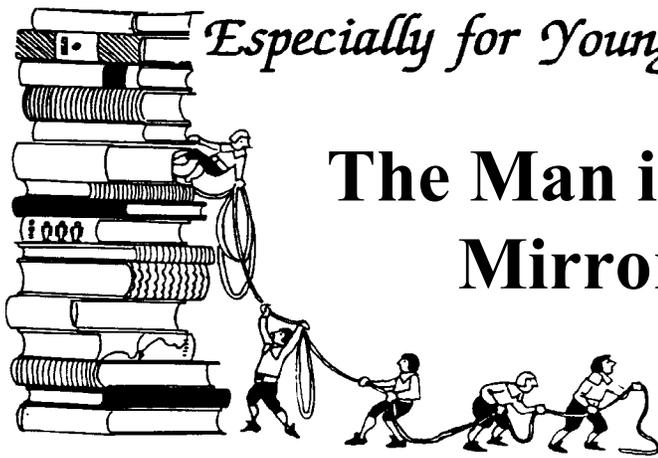
Revelation 14:13 says, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they

may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Surely, this could be said about Brother Ferguson. The fruits of his labor continue on in the lives of those who came to know God under his ministry. One sister still faithfully supports and attends the Canby, Oregon, congregation. Her mother was saved in Orofino, Idaho, while Brother Ferguson was the pastor there. Brother Ferguson was an example in every way of a true man of God. The church will certainly miss him.



Especially for Young People

The Man in the Mirror



James 1:22-25 says: "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. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

I would like to consider verse 23. "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like [like what?] unto a man [or a woman] beholding [or viewing] his natural face in a glass [or that word means mirror]."

There are many interesting facts about mirrors. If you stare into a mirror for several minutes, you may notice your face actually begins to distort. Seeing monsters in mirrors has long been an effective horror movie device, and rich for urban legends. Did you know that a cell phone can be used as a mirror? I see high school students take out their phones and check themselves out.

The next time you look into a mirror, say one positive comment about the image that you see. How does that make you feel? The person we have the most

control over, the person who affects who we are, what we do, what we accomplish, and how we feel about ourselves is that person staring back at us in the mirror. This is also the person we should spend the most time on.

Young person, as you travel this life and navigate through decisions, such as college and career choice, marriage, and a place to live, the person staring back at you from the mirror has the greatest influence on what you do and what you become. Many times, we look around and become discontented because of what this one or that one has. Some may even point fingers and say, "It is because of that one or this one I am the way I am." God has a part of who you are if God is in you. However, everything you have become and everything you do, is because of the person in the mirror.

Every decision you make, everywhere you go, you should ask yourself these questions: Is this the right decision? How is this going to affect me? and How is this going to affect my relationship with God? James said if any man be a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks into that glass, or the mirror, goes his way, and forgets what he saw. This is similar to one who looks into a mirror, sees ketchup all over his face, and then just walks away, never do-

ing anything about it. Spiritually speaking, it is dangerous when God points out things in your life as you sit in church services, hear messages, or read from God's Word and walk away without doing anything about it. You can suddenly become discouraged, downcast, and disheartened because you are not working on the person staring back at you in the mirror.

I want you to think about working on the man (or the person) in the mirror. You can look in the mirror and say, "Oh, I look pretty good!" You can ask your friend, "Tell me one thing that I can improve on." However, the most important person, the One who should matter the most in our lives, is God. What does God think about you? The Bible tells us that the Lord does not see as man sees. Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

The reality is that all of us are viewed by friends and acquaintances in a certain way. When someone walks in the room, you may have thoughts, such as: "He is nice," or "She is fun to be around," or "That person always tells funny stories." Immediately, you see an image, and that image brings something to your mind. It matters what we do with this man in the mirror because our influence is everywhere we go.

The Bible says we are epis-

bles, or letters, known and read of all men. This is why we are instructed to look into the mirror of God's Word. Our lives are affecting others. Young person, your life is affecting someone else. I have learned this in education. If I can get one of the leaders, someone the other kids look up to, involved in an activity, the rest will soon join in and follow along. Again, our image is important. I want to encourage you not to just look on the outward appearance, but think about the heart. Consider your attitudes and your decisions. When you look at the mirror at the end of the day, are you satisfied with who you are, with the decisions you are making, and where you are going? There is always room for improvement, but we can live in such a way that we can be satisfied with who we are.

Christians should have a pleasant countenance. I work as an elective teacher, and the students choose to be in my class. They are not forced to be in band or orchestra. It is my job to make it enjoyable. If I come into class with a sad, unpleasant countenance, how many students would want to play in band? It is important how we act and how we carry ourselves.

It is possible to be satisfied with the person in the mirror, if you obey God. You can have the right attitude and carry yourself in a positive manner all the time. Will you have hard places and difficult situations? Yes, and you will experience even more difficult things as you get older. However, we do not need to walk around downtrodden with downcast thoughts and feelings because we realize that God can take care of those things.

Young person, you may be interested in courtship and marriage, and that is wonderful, but the most important person you need to work on is yourself. God wants to work with you and de-

velop you. He wants to make you better and more beautiful.

The Bible lets you know the glass spoken of in James, Chapter 1, is the Word of God. Over and over, you read the expression, "the Word." The Bible is the glass, or the mirror, Christians should be looking into. We fix our outward appearance with a natural mirror, but the heart is fixed with the Bible. I want to encourage you, young person, to get into the Bible and work on yourself.

What is the purpose of looking into a mirror? You want to make sure you look all right. Why else would you look in a mirror? What if someone tells you there is something on your face? You would go look in a mirror. Are you in the habit of looking in a mirror? Most people have a routine of looking into the mirror. Other times we look into a mirror would be prior to meeting the public or interacting with people. We use the mirror as a tool to help us interact with people and navigate through life.

You do not look into a mirror to check someone else out, you look into a mirror to check yourself out. That is the person you can control. Some people get into bad situations because they are worried about what this one is doing, and what that one is not doing, and they get frustrated. We cannot control what others do or do not do, but we can control the attitude of the person in the mirror. You may be treated wrongly, others may be mean to you. Certainly, we have all been there, but you cannot change that. However, you can change how you are going to react to it.

We look into a mirror with the intent and willingness to fix what needs fixing. I do not know of anyone who goes to a mirror, sees ketchup all over their face, and then walks away, not cleaning it off. It is the same way with God's Word. When we look into

God's Word, we should not walk away with the attitude: "Oh, well. God is telling me to fix that, but I do not want to fix it." You should look with the intent to fix it. I want to encourage you to look at God's Word with the same mindset as you look into a literal mirror, with a willingness to fix what needs fixing.

A literal mirror only reflects my image when I look into it. The same is true when I look into God's Word. We should look at God's Word with an open heart, let it search us and show us our true condition.

We also read in James about behavior, or conduct. James 1:19-21 says: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." God could be telling you, as you view yourself in the mirror, that there are some behaviors that need changed. Behavior affects our conduct, the way in which we act, especially toward others.

Someone said this, "Be a good listener, your ears will never get you in trouble." James also said, "Be swift to hear, slow to speak." What gets us in trouble? Our mouth. James 1:19, in the Amplified Bible says, "Understand [this], my beloved brethren. Let every man be quick to hear [a ready listener], slow to speak, slow to take offense and to get angry."

Then James goes on to tell us what to get rid of to avoid being stirred to wrath. In essence, anything that makes us possess attitudes which are unlike God, we need to cast aside. He talks about "superfluity." That is a word we do not hear very often, but it means unnecessary, excess, luxurious living habits or desires.

These things get in the way of our service to God. James said to get rid of them.

We must be honest with ourselves when it comes to dealing with those things that are near and dear to our hearts, such as our hobbies, or our interests. Those things also reveal who we are. Did you know that your social media posts, your friends, and your likes reveal the man in the mirror? They show exactly who you are, the real you, and act as a mirror into your soul. If you want to find information about someone, all you have to do is go to their social media page. In fact, your boss, or someone who is interviewing you for a position, may do this.

You may know how to act and how to dress at church, but how do you act when you are out in the community? How do you act when you are at school? Young person, it is important for you to know, you take God with you everywhere you go. If you want God to be with you, you have to act right everywhere you go. You have to be honest with the man in the mirror.

Let us think about something else. When you look in the mirror, there might be some things you need to put on. Colossians 3:12 says, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering." When you look at the man in the mirror, God may tell you that you need to be more merciful, more kind, more humble, more meek, and more longsuffering.

The first mirrors used by humans were most likely pools of dark, still water. The water needed to be still. If not, the rippling would cause a distorted view. That is profound. In other words, if your life is not at rest and is turbulent, if you are not at peace with God, your view of the world will be distorted. Again, the first

mirrors were pools of dark, still, or calm water, collected in a primitive vessel of some sort. Is that not good? If we want God's image to be reflected in our lives, we need to be at peace with Him. A pond only reflects an image when it is still. In order to reflect God's image, our soul must be still.

How often do you look at a physical mirror? How often are you looking into the mirror of the Word of God? We certainly need to get into this mirror every day. The Bible says we need to examine ourselves.

Then James goes on to say in verse 22, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves [or deceiving yourself]." Young person, maybe you have been raised in a Christian home, or maybe you have tremendous head knowledge. The danger or the deception is that you feel your knowledge is sufficient. "I know what the Truth is, and I am doing fine." The question is, Are you living everything that you know? James said not to be "hearers only," but "doers of the Word."

I want to challenge you, young person, as you look into the mirror of God's Word, as you read God's Word, and as you are in church services, listen and obey everything God is telling you to do. Be honest with yourself. When God shows you something, fix it. When you do that, you will be blessed.

Also, in this Scripture passage, we find the key to satisfaction in life and in life pursuits. When it comes to success in life and success in our walk with God, no one is more responsible for our future outcomes than the man in the mirror. In working with people, young people and others from all ages of life, I have seen real success stories come from some very troubled homes. Obviously, it affects them. Our upbringing is important, but

there are ones who have worked on themselves. There is only so much we can control. We cannot control who our parents are. Some of you may have come from difficult homes. You cannot control that. That is where God placed you, but what you can control is what you are doing with yourself right now.

Whatever is in your future, I encourage you to work on the man in the mirror. When you do that, you will be satisfied and happy with yourself. The greatest enemy is not out in the world. It is not the person who is attacking you and saying bad things about you. The greatest enemy we have is the man staring back at us in the mirror.

I want to share a poem entitled "The Guy in the Glass," written by Dale Wimbrow:

*When you get what you want in
your struggle for pelf,
And the world makes you King for a
day,
Then go to the mirror and look at
yourself,
And see what that guy has to say.*

*For it isn't your Father, or Mother,
or Wife,
Who judgement upon you must
pass.
The feller whose verdict counts most
in your life
Is the guy staring back from the
glass.*

*He's the feller to please, never mind
all the rest,
For he's with you clear up to the
end,
And you've passed your most dan-
gerous, difficult test
If the guy in the glass is your friend.*

*You may be like Jack Horner and
"chisel" a plum,
And think you're a wonderful guy,
But the man in the glass says you're
only a bum
If you can't look him straight in the
eye.*

*You can fool the whole world down
the pathway of years,
And get pats on the back as you pass,
But your final reward will be heart-
aches and tears
If you've cheated the guy in the
glass.*

Being raised in the Church of God, having the unique privilege of sitting under the Truth, does not guarantee you are going to make Heaven someday, if you

have cheated the man in the glass. You do not have to cheat yourself if you fix what God reveals to you. Notice in James, he moves from "doers of the word" (verse 22) to "a doer of the work" (verse 25). There is a reason for that. Fixing what God reveals is going to take work.

When you look in the mirror, what is the mirror telling you? What does it say about your life? Again, we need to not be a hear-

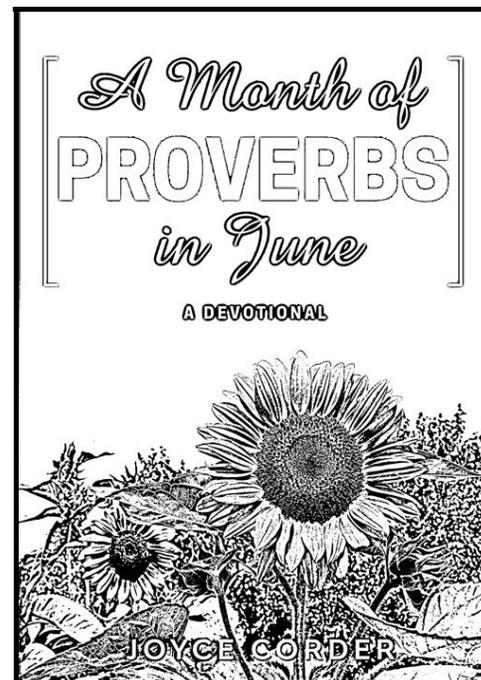
er only, but a doer. You may have behaviors or attitudes that God wants to work with you on. Maybe God has talked to you about something. God may be telling you to be a little kinder, a little more longsuffering, and more patient with others. Whatever it is, make sure you work on the man or woman in the mirror.

Brother Reggie Stegmeier

NEW BOOK

One Scripture that you understand, that touches your heart, that stays with you all day, and changes your life is better than hours of study without understanding. And a quick nibble is definitely better than nothing at all! That is my proverb! It is my desire to provide a place to begin studying the Word of God and stir up your appetite for more. The Book of Proverbs gives instruction for our daily living. Since this Book of Proverbs does not flow like a story, we can take one verse and dwell on how to make it work in our life.

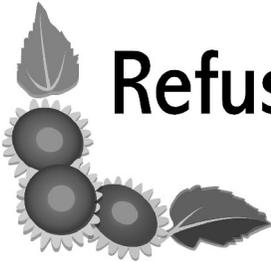
A Month of Proverbs in June
by Joyce Corder



This book can be downloaded at GodsAcres.org (click on "Resources").
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I Called and You Refused



Proverbs 1:24 Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

33 But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

In today's verses, we see a loving God, calling, stretching out His hand, giving counsel and reproof in an effort to divert people from making wrong choices. We do not have to look far in our world today to see many refusing God's call, disregarding Him completely, making fun of Godly counsel and completely ignoring His correction. Verse 26 tells the consequence for such action.

The words used in verses 24-25, showing what God will do, are all positive words, such as: "called," "stretched out my hand," and offered "counsel." God offers us everything we need to succeed in our Christian walk. He calls us to walk with Him, He stretches out His hand to help and guide us, and He will give us wonderful counsel that will show the right way to go. But

what we do with His provision is up to us. The people in our Scripture refused God's call. They said in their heart: "We do not want to serve, worship, or live for the Almighty God. We want nothing to do with Him." God, through Jesus Christ, has stretched out His hand of mercy and help to the lost world, but they just walk on past Him, disregarding the nail prints in His hands and the mercy in His eyes.

God gives us good counsel. Revelation 3:18 says, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." God tells us to seek after righteousness and holiness, but people today say: "You do not have to live that good. Holiness is just an old-fashioned term that no one can attain to. Do not worry about it; just do your own thing." John 16:8 says, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." The world wants nothing to do with God. The only time many will acknowledge God is when they are in trouble that they cannot find any way out of. They do not want any of God's reproof for their sinful lifestyles.

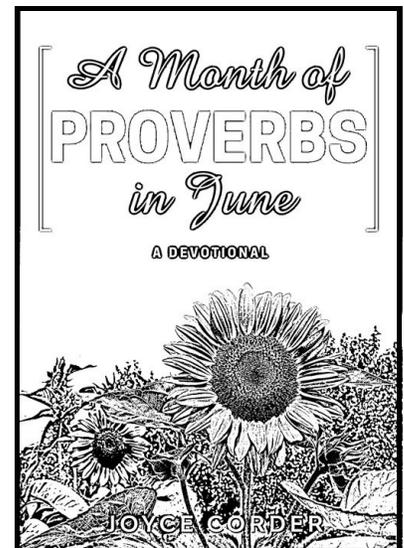
There will come a time when God's mercy runs out. If we shun Him and denounce His ways as useless and unnecessary, He will leave us to our own thinking. But be assured that our ways will lead us into calamity and fear. That is when God has every right to laugh. The word "mock" in *Strong's Concordance* means "to speak unintelligibly, stammering, or to have in derision." God speaks His commandments very clearly. He gives us plain instructions on what is good and what is not. When we cannot understand what God is telling us, we cannot

figure out how we can ever get out of the circumstances we got ourselves into, God is laughing at us! How terrible to need God's help and not be able to find it, to be afraid and have no place to go for consolation.

If we will not listen to God when He lovingly tries to help us, we will have to feel His wrath. He is a God of love, but He is also a God of judgment. We know that for every deed, there is a consequence — whether good or bad. The same is true spiritually. If you ignore God, He will ignore you. But I am glad I can direct you to verse 33. If you will hearken or listen to God's direction and guidance, you will find safety and a quiet place from fear of evil. That is not saying you will never be afraid of anything or anyone, but it is saying you can run to God for His protection and He will not let you down. I would much rather have God's favor than His wrath. Do not ignore God; He is trying to help you.

Sister Joyce Corder

This devotion is **DAY 1** from the book *A Month of Proverbs in June*. See ad on page 20 for more information.





The Blessings of the Mercies of God

Brother Prince Moon

Giving and Receiving Mercy

I want you to notice verse 7 of our Scripture text, which reads, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." I cannot say enough about God's mercies. In fact, if you study the scenario here, you will see that mercy is the only one that, when you get it, you are to give it. If you do not show mercy, you will not receive it. Therefore, it is an essential in life. You are going to need God's mercies sooner or later. There will come a time in life when you are going to need mercy. The word *mercy* means to withhold punishment when justice is demanded. In fact, some might need to be a little more

merciful.

An individual whom I knew years ago at a certain place was going on his honeymoon with his wife, and they had a flat tire. He said, "Honey, I'm going to have to teach you how to change a flat tire." So he had his wife change the flat tire on the way to their honeymoon; that was not mercy.

Lamentations 3:22-23 gives another scenario of the blessings and mercies of God. It reads: "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." I am sure that you have an idea of what mercy is to you.

When I was eight to ten years

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

of age, a friend and I were in my parents' garage. There were two dogs there and four or five puppies. It was wintertime, and we made a fire in the garage, and then we thought we put it out. I went to bed that night, and then I heard someone call out: "The garage is on fire! The garage is on fire!" I woke up, and the whole garage was in flames. I saw my dad out there trying to put it out with the garden hose, and it was so pathetic. When I went out, I was crying and just drunk with pain and sorrow. He looked at me and did not say a word. He put out the fire and never brought it up. He could have smacked me or scolded me, but instead he showed

mercy. "Blessed are the merciful" (Matthew 5:7).

Mercy is when you deserve punishment and do not receive it. Mercy is of God, and that is a good thing. That is the reason I want to give it and receive it. I want to be merciful. You cannot go wrong by being merciful. Some people are so quick to judge or so quick to hurt. You can damage folks by not being merciful. Mercy is a good thing because it rejuvenates.

I will never forget that day when the garage burned. It has been almost fifty years ago. My father never mentioned it, and it taught me what mercy was. It cost him thousands of dollars to get the garage torn down. The next day I went into the garage, and I saw those dogs. They all died in the fire. Nothing was even said about that. My father cleaned up the mess and went on. I thank God for mercy!

Friend, mercy has to be received and given, and God's mercies are new every day. For a moment, think of the mercies that God has shown you down through the years when you were driving. Think about when you were sick and did not know how you were going to make it, and God healed you. Perhaps the boss on your job was always on your back, so to speak, and suddenly the company transferred him. Maybe you went to the Lord, saying, "How am I going to make it?" God made a way for you when seemingly there was no way. I thank God for mercy. You cannot earn it or buy it. God has to give it to you. If God gives mercy to you, you should give it to other people. You need to pass it on and thank God.

Presuming on the Mercy of God

There are limits to mercy. There is a doctrine of mercy, and people may say, "Mercy endureth forever." However, there is more

to it than that. Romans 9:15 gives a clear demarcation of how to work with this idea of mercy, because it is a beautiful thing. You should thank the Lord when God gives you mercy. Romans 9:15-16 states: "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

Verse 18 says, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." You cannot make God show mercy to you. You cannot force it. He has to give it to you. Unfortunately, some people presume that God will always have mercy.

I want to introduce you to a man in the Bible named Saul. Saul was Israel's first king. He was a tall man from a good family, and his father's name was Kish. Saul had a wonderful son named Jonathan. I think Saul knew more about mercy than any man who has ever lived on earth. Saul had a lot of things going for him, but I want you to notice what the Bible says about him. Second Samuel 7:15 tells us, "But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee."

I have read through the Bible over and over in the past fifteen years, and no other verse arrests my soul like this one, knowing this man had the mercy of God, and God said He removed His mercy from him. If God took His mercy from you and me, where would we be? Some people think it is guaranteed or it is due them, but that is not true. God decides to whom He gives mercy and to whom He will harden.

How did King Saul end up having mercy removed from his soul? Let us find out. God told him to destroy the Amalekites. Did Saul obey God? First of all,

he did not obey all of what God commanded him to do, and that was one strike against him. Second, he took the duties of the office of a priest upon himself and offered sacrifices. He was not authorized to do that. King Uzziah tried that and got leprosy. Moses' sister Miriam tried taking too much upon herself, and she got leprosy. When Saul did that, that began to change some things.

I believe Saul began to presume on the mercies of God. I think he was beginning to believe, "I can do a little wrong and God will forgive me." Again, God gives mercy as He wants to give it. You cannot make Him give mercy. After so long, the mercy was gone, and Saul lost his reasoning ability and became mentally unstable. Then he went to seek a witch who lived in Endor. Do you know how Saul died? He fell on his own sword and killed himself.

When God Removes His Mercy

Dear one, you cannot commit suicide and go to Heaven. There was a preacher who was about forty years of age. He had a big building program going on, but he shot himself in the chest and died on the spot. The preacher who preached his funeral said: "Look, we go through things sometimes. We have problems, and so believe it, the man went to Heaven." No, sir! The Bible says, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13).

If you decide to do things that may not be altogether right and yet you do them anyway, you are presuming on the mercy of God, just as Saul did. That is a dangerous place to be. God's mercy is a wonderful thing, but do not waste it on frivolous activities. Maybe God let you know that you should not go to a certain website anymore, and you said: "Lord, forgive me. I will not do it

again. No more of that website." However, something about those pop-ups drew you back one more time. Do you not know that might be your last time for God's mercy? Some people do not believe that, but it is true. God removed His mercy from King Saul.

Unfortunately, I know of some who decided to leave God. One man came back to Bible study and said, "Preach hard to me; preach judgment to me." Sad to say, he went to Babylon and got mixed up and caught the HIV virus. The devil will take you down further than you want to go.

God removed His mercy from King Saul, and that changed his life completely. Saul began trying to kill David. He also tried to kill his own son and lied against his daughter. He went down because the mercy of God was gone from his life. He was totally lost, demented, depressed, and on his way to a devil's hell. Dear one, if you are not careful and prayerful, this can happen to you too. The mercy of God is precious, more precious than fine gold. If you are not saved, you are living on borrowed time.

There was a young man who had been saved for about eight years. He was twenty-three to twenty-five years of age. He had a couple of children and a nice wife. He decided to go to a club one night. He accidentally bumped into someone, and the guy became angry. The young man went to his car, and the guy he bumped into came outside and put five bullets in his body and one in his head, which killed him on the spot. He stepped out of line just one time, and the mercy of God was not there. What a sad testimony! He lived eight years for God and backslid, and he died in a car at a bar.

The mercy of God is so needed. Others need it, your neigh-

bors need it, and your children need it. As I go through these verses, may God help us to remember the importance of enjoying God's mercy. I thank God that He gives us His mercy to enjoy.

I remember years ago that I was doing something that was not sinful, but I sensed that I did not have God's full approval. I want God's approval everywhere I go and in everything I do. So one day, it came to a head, and I said: "What am I going to do? I can sense that this thing is not glorifying God." I had to cut that thing out of my life, because I did not want to gamble on God's mercy. I do not know how much mercy He has given me or how much I might have left. I would rather obey God and obey His Spirit. He is precious.

A Place of Torments

Again, King Saul had a good son and a nice daughter. In fact, David married his daughter. Saul was doing so well for a while, but then as he began to turn, somewhere in that process, God pulled His mercy away from him. I wonder if Saul sensed that. Could he sense the darkness? Could he sense the loneliness? I worked with suicide prevention for about four years. Some statistics say that in America approximately thirty thousand people attempt suicide every year. Half of the people are under fifty years of age, and half of them are under thirty years of age. Some say that in Japan, seventy thousand people a year commit suicide. What happened? Those people felt hopeless. They looked up, and all they could see was the bottom. There was a darkness there.

God no longer talked to King Saul, and he became hopeless because the mercy of God was gone. My prayer is that the same thing does not happen to you. I

pray that you will hold on to the mercy of God and show others the mercy of God, because when you give it, you will receive more of it. It is a very precious thing.

In Luke 16:23 Jesus said, "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." Do you believe in a literal hell? Unfortunately, I grew up in Detroit during the drug culture, and the devil drew me into that. I remember the night that I came home and the whole room was spinning, and something said to me, "If you die tonight, where would you go?" I knew then that if I died, I would have gone to hell.

Hell is a real place. When you close your eyes in death, if you are not living for God, that is where you will end up. Hell was not designed for us, but for the devil and his angels. Those who decide to presume on God's mercy and choose not to obey Him are going to open their eyes in a devil's hell. That is too much for the human mind to comprehend, because people know what they could have been and where they could have gone. They could have served God and said, "I am not going to do wrong." How sad to have preached the Gospel and to have sung the songs of Zion and then go to hell. Many people are in hell who knew the Gospel, but once people are there, that is it.

In Luke 16:24 Jesus said, "And he [speaking of the rich man] cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Hell is a place of torments. I cannot stand pain; how about you? What a terrible thing that would be to go to hell, when you knew that you did not have to be there, living with regrets. It could have been different, but once you are there,

you are there.

Someone may say, "I don't believe in hell." Well, you do not really want to find out, because once you are there, that is it. Another may say, "They tell me there will be partying down there." Friend, there will be no partying down there. The Bible says the man was "in torments," which is plural.

"Many Are Called, but Few Are Chosen"

Titus 2:11-12 tells us: "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." If you know to do better and do not do it, then that is sin. James said in James 4:17, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

Saint of God and friend, to not have God's mercy on your soul is darkness. That is a chilling thing. I can imagine that Saul had dreams at night. He ended up becoming psychotic and tormented. In fact, God sent him that spirit, and he was tormented while he was still living. By trying to kill David, he was trying to kill his help. What a bad dream to end up down in hell!

Some statistics say that more than fifty million people die each year. Can you imagine that? I wonder how many of those who died were saved? The Bible says in Matthew 22:14, "For many are called, but few are chosen." Matthew 7:14 reads, "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Statistics indicate that, in America, every Sunday approximately one hundred fifty ministers and pastors give up. That is astounding! What happened? They presumed on the mercies of God. They reached out for His grace and it

was not there and they went down.

The devil is a liar. You can stay saved. You can serve God and rebuke the devil, but you have to submit to God and obey Him, and you will be all right. When you do your part, God will do His part.

Friend, maybe you are not as merciful as you ought to be at home to your wife or your husband, because you get pressured sometimes. It is not easy caring for children in this day and time. A beautiful prayer is: "Lord, have mercy! You know what is going on. Just have mercy." I was told that in the schools today, they see students of the same sex, holding hands and kissing in the hallways. That was not done thirty years ago. That is a spirit, and it is after our children.

Praying for Mercy

It is too late for the rich man in hell to pray for mercy, although he craves it and might beg for it. You need to cry out for mercy now while you can. You need to do what you are going to do now. You need to put things behind you and go forward for God. You need to close the door on the old sinful life and go forward and say, "Lord, please have mercy." If you are saved, praise the Lord! That is good, but you still need to pray, "Lord, have mercy and keep me."

The devil is as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour to eat him up greedily. Mercy can forgive sin, sanctify, bless, bless a marriage, and put a marriage back together. It can bless the home, the church, your finances, your life, and even your car.

A while back, a woman's car broke down and she prayed for it and it started up again. Praise the Lord, the mercy of God works. Our heater went out at the house, and we did not have heat for about two weeks. My wife got up

and prayed for the heater, and guess what happened? It started working again, and it is still working.

Mercy is a good thing, so while you can, you need to ask the Lord for it. Someone might be on the edge, trying to hold on, trying to stay afloat, but he feels the world pulling. Maybe your school friends are affecting you. Perhaps you have not sinned, but the world's influence is strong. You can feel it in the schools or the lunchroom. If you are on the edge, you can pray, "Lord, have mercy." You do not have to pray an hour-long prayer, but just say, "Lord, have mercy," and He will come to your rescue.

Dear one, if you are not saved, you need mercy. If you do not want to get saved, at least say, "Lord, have mercy." That will not cost you anything. Maybe you have not been as merciful as you should have been, but you can pray: "Lord, help me to be merciful in my finances, in dealing with my neighbors, in the church, or wherever I am. Help me to be merciful, because I do not want to end up like King Saul." God withheld His mercy from Saul, and he had no hope after that. That was it for King Saul.

The devil knows that he can push you, but God has victory for you. If you are not saved, I pray that you will get saved. You need to take time to pray. Salvation is good. I tried the world for more than twenty years, but I have been saved for thirty-four years, and it is wonderful! You cannot compare the two. The best thing I know of is salvation. I want to share that with you. If you are not saved, now is the time, because you may not have tomorrow. You never know what tomorrow will bring. Yesterday is gone, but you do have right now.

(Compact Disc TR-2205)

Upcoming Meetings



CANBY, OR

March 27 - April 1

Revival Meeting: Church of God, 522 NW 2nd Ave., Canby, OR 97013

Evangelist: Brother Steve Strelecky, Newark, OH

Service times: Sunday 10:45 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.; Monday - Friday 7:00 p.m.

For further information, contact: Pastor E. David Stegmeier at: 503-266-9297.

MT. PLEASANT, PA

April 16

Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666

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

SUMMERSVILLE, WV

April 25 - May 1

Revival & Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 74 Armstrong Rd, Summersville, WV 26651

Evening Evangelist: Brother Allen Polston, New Castle, IN

Service times: Monday - Thursday 7:00 p.m.; Friday 10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.;

Saturday & Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

Meals will be provided by the congregation following the services on Friday through Sunday.

For lodging options, or other information, contact Pastor Earl R. Borders at: 304-872-4047.

Visit our website: www.ChurchofGodSummersvilleWV.com

MT. PLEASANT, PA

May 2 - 8

Revival: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666

Evangelist: Brother Larry Dishman, Hurley, MS

Service times: Monday - Saturday 7:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.

For further information, contact: Pastor Paul W. Prinkey, 109 Salvation Lane,

Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666. Telephone: 724-547-2151



Important Deadlines

When submitting an upcoming meeting or revival announcement, please note that we need these at least six weeks in advance as *The Gospel Trumpeter* goes to press four weeks before the publication date.

Please send meeting and revival information to Pastor Roger L. Decker.

Email: pastor@godsacres.us

Phone: 740-344-2543

Thank you!

Winter 2021 Camp Meeting Recordings

Record. No.	Date	Message Title	Minister
TR-2754	12-27-2021	Lord, Help Me to Not Lose My Focus (Part 1)	Bro. Abraham Burton
TR-2755	12-28-2021	Exceeding, Abundant Grace	Bro. Josh Thilmony
TR-2756		The Threefold Nature of Man: The Body	Bro. Earl R. Borders
TR-2757		Lord, Help Me to Not Lose My Focus (Part 2)	Bro. Abraham Burton
TR-2758	12-29-2021	The Mirror of God's Word	Bro. Allen Borders
TR-2759		The Threefold Nature of Man: The Soul	Bro. Earl R. Borders
TR-2760		Give God Your Whole Heart	Bro. Abraham Burton
TR-2761	12-30-2021	We Are to Be a Witness	Bro. Brandon Gonzalez
TR-2762		The Threefold Nature of Man: The Spirit	Bro. Earl R. Borders
TR-2763		Closing Out the Year With a Good Report	Bro. Allen Polston
TM-455	2021	Winter Camp Meeting Songs #1	
TM-456		Winter Camp Meeting Songs #2	
	2021	Winter Camp Meeting Choirs Songs #1	
		All Camp Meeting Messages in MP3 format	
		All Songs in MP3 format	

All messages and music recordings are available only on regular CDs or MP3 format. The suggested donation for regular CDs is \$3.00 each and for DVDs is \$5.00 each. (DVDs are not available for the afternoon teaching services.) The suggested donation for MP3s is \$10.00 each. The postage is \$3.00 for one CD or MP3 and \$0.35 for each additional one. Recordings may be ordered by writing *The Gospel Trumpeter*, CD Ministry, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, Ohio 43055, or by calling (740) 345-1312, the Print Shop. Please make check or money order in U.S. funds, payable to *The Gospel Trumpeter*.



2022 God's Acres Winter Camp Meeting

Monday - Thursday
December 26 – 29, 2022

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