

PARALLEL
Lectures

by
EMERSON WILSON

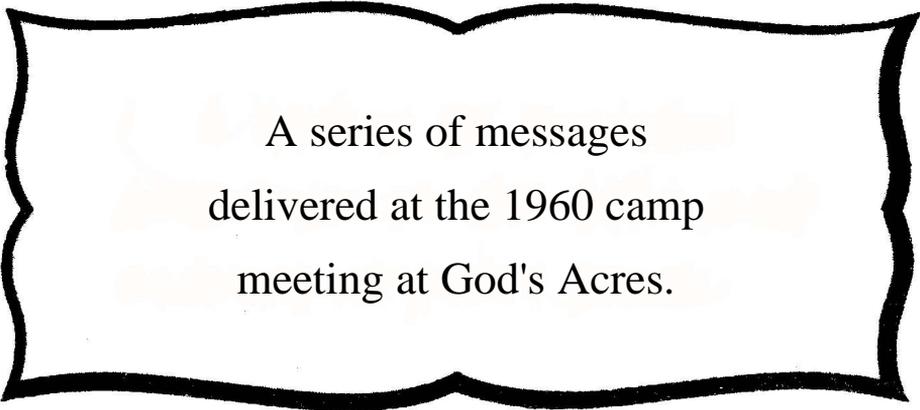
Parallel Lectures

ON THE

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM & CHURCHES OF ASIA

by

EMERSON WILSON



A series of messages
delivered at the 1960 camp
meeting at God's Acres.

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Author: Emerson A. Wilson

Dedication:

To the loving memory of my father,
W. A. Wilson, whose faithfulness
to the truth has been an inspiration to
all who knew him.

Note From the Editor:

The *Parallel Lectures* is a compilation of a series of messages that were preached during a camp meeting in 1960 by Brother Emerson A. Wilson. These messages beautifully parallel the seven parables in Matthew, Chapter 13, with the letters to the seven churches in Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3.

With greater truth comes greater light. Years after the *Parallel Lectures* was printed, God began dealing with Brother Emerson Wilson concerning the error of the doctrine concerning two works of grace. On July 1, 1972, Brother Emerson Wilson preached a message entitled "When Does Sin Appear?" In this message he told how God had revealed the truth on the doctrine of sanctification. The letter on the next page was inserted into the previously printed copies of *The Sounding of the Seven Trumpets* and the *Parallel Lectures*.

It is our prayer as you begin to read this book that you will ask God to help you to discern the truth concerning the two works of grace and carnality doctrines. To help you in this study, we have included at the end of this book a message by Brother Emerson A. Wilson entitled "Sanctification and Justification." This message was printed in the May 21, 1978, issue of *The Gospel Trumpeter*.

The message "When Does Sin Appear" can be ordered by writing to: *The Gospel Trumpeter*, 675 N. Cedar Street, Newark, OH, 43055.
Reference cassette #C-929.

For clarity and grammatical accuracy, the *Parallel Lectures* has been slightly edited. We trust that it will be a blessing and help to you!

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SUBJECT: One versus Two Works of Grace

Dear Reader:

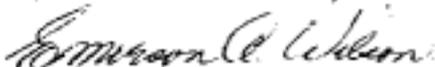
Incorporated within this booklet you will find the old doctrinal teaching of two works of grace. For some long time, our understanding was of such that in order to be completely saved and sanctified we were required to have two separate and definite cleansings. Today, through greater revelation of the Scripture we can now more clearly see that this teaching is not correct.

We regret because of the shortness of space contained herein that it would be impossible to give an adequate explanation pertaining to this subject. However, if you would care to look into this matter in a greater way, we urge you to obtain any of the booklets covering this topic by writing:

Brother Earl R. Wilson
c/o Rock Chapel Church of God
49 North Main Street
Granite Falls, NC 28630

We have chosen this means of alerting you rather than discarding the large number of these booklets we now have on hand.

Yours in His service,



Emerson A. Wilson
Pastor

EAW:sr

The Sower

Matthew 13:3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.



FOREWORD

Paul, when writing to Timothy, said that it was the desire and will of God that all men might be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. The second part of that verse is often being forgotten. Mass evangelism is working hard to get people to God and then leaves them to starve spiritually, or because of no depth of a real experience, they get into a worse condition than if they had made no profession of faith. It is the desire of our heart that all men be brought to an understanding of God's Word so that they may be on a solid foundation and be able to stand in this evil day.

In Matthew, Chapter 13, the seven parables are recorded. We want to teach you by God's eternal Word and by His eternal Spirit that these seven parables coincide with the seven letters to the seven churches. These seven letters (we have proven by the Word of God) cover seven periods of time throughout the Gospel Day, from A.D. 33 unto the end of time.

Many people do not see the kingdom. There are two main reasons: Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Many people are trying to see it, and even teach it, who have not been born again. Many are teaching large congregations about the kingdom, yet fighting the definite teaching of the new birth. Second, some have been truly born again by the Spirit of God, having laid hold to a certain extent of the truth thereby, and then because of erroneous doctrine and false teachings, they have been led astray to look for some millennial or literal reign of the kingdom here on earth. We have made the statement that these seven churches cover the Gospel Day in its completeness, and we will prove it by the Bible. When you begin to see that, you will begin to understand the message of God's Word in a greater way.

First, let us say that the morning church was represented by a rider on a white horse, who went forth conquering and to conquer, and the early church ate the Word of God. We are living in a day and age when there is a great deal of talk about the Word of God. The ministry say, "We must have truth, for the truth will set us free." They say, "We must get back to the Word," but they fail to give the people the Word.

Also, we have many people like Pilate, who, when Jesus spoke about truth, said, "What is truth?" In Matthew, Chapter 24, Jesus was asked three questions by the disciples: First, when would the destruction of Jerusalem take place? Second, what would be the sign of His coming? Third, what would be the sign of the end of the world? He answered the last question first and gave us a resume of the Gospel Day. He said, "Take heed that no man deceive you." Also, He said that many false Christs would come, claiming to be the true Son of God. He told of the darkness that would come on the earth and of a time when the Christians would be delivered up to their enemies and would be hated by all men for His sake and there would be an apostasy and men would betray one another. He was not talking about things that would be among the worldly, but things that would exist among His followers.

Jesus said also that kingdom would rise against kingdom and nation against nation. Radio preachers take hold of that and say that wars and rumors of wars are a sign of the end. However, He said that is *one* of the signs, the sign of the beginning of despair and sorrow. In the twelfth chapter of Revelation, we see kingdom rising

against kingdom. The old dragon and beast kingdoms and that which the Revelation calls the kingdom of this world rose up against the Kingdom of God and the church went through the Dark Ages and martyrdom. False prophets arose and deceived many. There were 1260 years of the Dark Ages, and then came the day of the false prophet, or the deceptive teaching of the Protestant Church for a period of 350 years. After that period what happened? Matthew 24:12-13 says: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Some will say, "Will we be able to make it?" Yes. Turn to 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, and get the spirit of that message: Charity "endureth all things" (verse 7). Those who endure until the end shall be saved. If the last sign of the end of the world is not wars and earthquakes, then what is the sign of the end? "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world . . . and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). We are right on the threshold of the closing of the Gospel Day, and there is a renewing of holy effort going forth to all men, then shall the end come.

Jesus declared it would go forth as a witness. All men will not receive it, but it must be preached for a witness before the end. There will be two witnesses at the judgment bar of God. The Word and the Spirit are the two witnesses all through the Gospel Day, and when we come up to the judgment bar of God, the Word and the Spirit will witness for or against us according to our loyalty to God and truth.

When I served in the Armed Forces, I was a first sergeant, and it was one of my duties to have the Articles of War read to the men at least once every thirty days. They did not like to hear it. None of us did. The reading of this material took about forty-five minutes of our time. We had the best lieutenant we could find who would quickly mumble through it so we could say that it had been read. When a man was court-martialed, the first thing they did was to look up the record and see how long it had been since the Articles of War had been read. Then they could say, no matter what he had done, "You knew better. You just had it read to you eight or ten days ago."

Now, the same is true with God. Man has led God's people far from the way of truth. God is circling this old world once more with the pure, unadulterated Gospel of Jesus Christ, so that men cannot say that they have not heard or that they forgot or that they did not know. It will be fresh on our minds when Jesus comes.

I thank God that I can live on this old earth with the glorious Gospel of the kingdom going forth one last time. We are being brought down to a time when the golden Gospel is preached again. Three times it goes forth in the Gospel Day. It was preached in the morning time in all of its fullness, and the darkness fled away. Again, in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation (about the year 1880) when God had gathered a people out on Mount Zion, there came an angel or ministry with the everlasting Gospel to preach. Now it is going out once more for us, but because of lukewarmness and coldness there has been a compromising spirit and a turning away from it as a whole over the land. Yet, thank God, there is a returning and this everlasting Gospel of the kingdom is going forth again and it will bring the same result if you hear it, see it, and do it. I pray God will help us to see it.

Parallel Chart

The Seven Parables of Christ and the Seven Churches of Asia

Ephesus – Revelation 2:1-7 Parable of the Sower – Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23 (Morning-Time Church of God)		237 years	33 A.D.
Smyrna – Revelation 2:8-11 Parable of the Tares – Matthew 13:24-30, 37-43 (Pagan Rome)		260 years	270
Pergamos – Revelation 2:12-17 Parable of the Mustard Seed – Matthew 13:31-32 (Papal Rome)		1000 years	530
Thyatira – Revelation 2:18-29 Parable of the Leaven – Matthew 13:33 (Lutheranism – Justification by Faith)		200 years	1530
Sardis – Revelation 3:1-6 Parable of the Treasure – Matthew 13:44 (Methodism – Justification & Sanctification)		150 years	1730
Preliminary	Philadelphia – Revelation 3:7-13 Parable of the Pearl – Matthew 13:45-46 (Church of God – Justification, Sanctification & Unity)	50 years	1880
Judgment	Laodicea – Revelation 3:14-22 Parable of the Net – Matthew 13:47-50 (A Lukewarm Condition)	??	1930
			??

The Camp of the Saints

Revelation 20:9

INTRODUCTION

We read in Matthew 13:1-9: "The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

God used this verse of Scripture to awaken me to the fact that the seven letters of Revelation and these parables belong together. Jesus closed both passages with the same expression. Let us read on (verses 10-16): "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."

Revelation 20:6 says, "Blessed and holy is he [or she] that hath part in the first resurrection." The first resurrection is a spiritual resurrection. When we are resurrected from our dead condition of trespasses and sin, we are blessed as individuals. We have blessed eyes, blessed ears, blessed feet, and blessed hands. He told us in Matthew 13:16-17: "But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

As we deal with the seven letters and the seven parables, keep in mind the fact that *seven* in the Word of God is an important number. There are seven parables and seven letters; seven churches and seven angels; seven lamps and seven seals; seven trumpets and seven thunders; and seven heads and seven horns. In the Old Testament you can read about seven cattle and seven ears. It is all very important. Matthew 13:11 tells us why Christ dealt with parables.

I have a great burden to keep the simplicity of the Gospel. God used these parables to teach the kingdom. Could we find anything better? Let us look at Matthew 13:11. Jesus said, "Because it is given unto you [His disciples] to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Let us understand that word *given* and get it fixed in our minds that it is a gift—it is not earned. We are living in a day when in the religious world a man is not qualified if he has not earned certain things, but this is something that is given. "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." It is not given to those who have not opened their hearts and minds to receive the blessed truth.

There are two words here that we want to study in the beginning. Jesus said to know the "mysteries of the kingdom" of Heaven (and He used the plural). I would like to say that for every mystery there is about the kingdom, it has been given to us to know the mystery. When they have been given to us through a medium, we can understand the mysteries of the Kingdom of God and see them alike. Let us emphasize the word *mystery*. Webster defines it as "that which is beyond human comprehension." We are going to leave off that which can be gained by intellectual power and try to get hold of something Jesus tried to give Nicodemus if we ever learn of the kingdom. He said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:3, 6). We can surely agree that there are many mysteries, and we will mention just a few.

There is the mystery of Christ, the mystery of the faith, the mystery of God, the mystery of the seven stars, the mystery of iniquity, and the mystery of Babylon. We want to emphasize again to you as we study this lesson, even as Jesus did, the necessity of the aid of the Holy Spirit of God to understand spiritual things. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:9, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Most people quit there and say, "We just cannot know." However, let us read verse 10: "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Then he went on to say in verse 14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Chapter 2

IT IS GIVEN UNTO YOU TO KNOW

When someone calls himself a member of the Church of God and refers to the Word of God as foolishness, he is a natural man. We read in Matthew 13:12, "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." Also, dealing

with the same parable in Luke 8:18, it reads: ". . . that which he seemeth to have." This is a give-and-take proposition. Whosoever hath, to him there shall be more given.

Now, as we deal with these parables, if you have truth and have truly been born of the Spirit of God, more will be added to you, but if you have false conceptions of God's Word, that which you have will be taken away. If you ever get anything from God, you must trade something in. Too many people want to be given things without giving anything themselves. But we must turn something into God. You are not going to hold onto your old false conceptions of God's eternal Word and expect to get right. When you are ready to trade the other in and to take it God's way, then He will deal with you.

In the sixteenth chapter of Revelation, which deals with this same thought, we read of the vials and why they were poured out. They were given to take men's false hiding places away. Men are hiding under the fact that they joined a church and made some kind of profession. These vials were poured out so that men may stand out naked with no place to hide and God can better reach their souls. God is interested in dealing truth to men and has been since the fall, but there have been so many false hiding places for men to hide behind that it was necessary to pour out the vials of God's eternal truth and do away with the hiding places and pull back the cover, as it were, so that men may stand out with no place to hide. Then God will deal with man through His Word and give him the true experience he stands in need of.

We realize that a mystery is beyond human comprehension. The next thing to consider is the parable. I want to refresh your memory for our common benefit. Jesus said, "I spake unto them in parables." For what reason? That the lesson might be revealed to some and at the same time hidden to others. He said in so many words, "I spoke in parables that I might get the message to some people and it might remain hid to others." In Luke 10:24 Jesus told the people that some of them were blessed because kings and prophets and righteous men in their day desired to hear the things they were hearing.

Parables are used all through the Word of God. The pillar of cloud and fire is a parable. The same pillar of fire brought darkness on the Egyptians and confounded them on their side of it, and on the other side it brought light to Israel and lit their pathway. God deals in parables and symbols. Why? I should like to express it this way: When in the service I operated a radio for the Colonel of the regiment. We had what we called an MG-09 converter, and when we sent messages in enemy territory, I took the message from the Colonel, set up a couple of letters on that converter, and ran the message through. When it came out, it was just a jumbled mess of letters of the alphabet. I would also get the keys and send them over the air. The first two letters that I sent were the keys that I used to my machine. The operator on the other end had a machine just like mine. He would get those two keys and set them up on his machine and send the message back plain, but the enemy could not make anything out of it. That is why God deals in parables and symbols. He has the enemy spotted. We know the devil is working today. Paul said that we are not ignorant of his

devices. The truth is hidden, but God reveals it to us through His Holy Spirit. The parable is like the pillar of cloud and fire. While it confounds the enemy, it lights and comforts the children of God.

The parable is like a shell. It keeps the fruit for the diligent and keeps it from the slothful. Christ said: "I thank thee, O Father, . . . that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent" (Luke 10:21). How did He hide it? In parables, in symbols, and in the Word of God where only the Spirit can reveal it to the reader. In the Book of the Song of Solomon we have the greatest love story that ever was written between Christ and the church. The deepest truths of the Revelation are in there. You can follow the Revelation right through the Song of Solomon.

In the sixth chapter and the eleventh verse, Christ took the church down in the valley of nuts. The Word of God uses easy symbols and expressions. Why did He do this? So He could crack the shell and give us the meat therein. The modern ministers of today are, through the revised versions and other means, looking over these expressions of God's eternal Word. They examine it, pick on it, see nothing there, and throw it away. I thank God I have been picking it up, cracking the shell, and finding meat for souls in it.

I spoke to the congregation in Newark along certain lines, and they were thrilled and said, "Brother Wilson, we enjoyed that." I answered, "If I had been preaching from a revised version, I could not have preached that message because the Scriptures I used are not in there." God's Word contains spiritually rich food for the soul. The great need of the hour is for the church to turn back to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. He and He alone can open the Scriptures,

Christ said, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom." Then He proceeded to give the seven parables. He showed us the preceding age back of Ephesus, which we know was the sowing age, and He presented here a story of different kinds of ground that covers all mankind. Every one of us is represented by one kind of ground or the other: either wayside ground, stony ground, thorny ground, or good ground. That was Christ's way to begin the teachings of the Kingdom of God.

Looking at the seven parables we see that they compare with the seven churches of Asia. Some people may say, "Those were just seven letters addressed to seven congregations of the church at that particular location. Leave them there." Let us think it over. Consider for an example the letter written to the church at Philadelphia. First of all, if this letter were just addressed to this congregation and written for them alone to read, why was it put in the Bible?

Paul wrote to the church at Corinth. Should we not preach out of it anymore, because it was just written to the church at Corinth? He wrote to the church at Thessalonica. Should we leave it right there? When the Spirit of God sees people getting into the same shape as the people at Colosse were in, that letter comes to them also. Why did Christ close every letter by saying, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"? Because those letters were written for the congregations down through the generations and different periods of time.

The next thing we want to consider is this: Why around the throne of God was the Holy Spirit symbolized as having seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God? There is only one Spirit. Why did the Lamb have seven horns? Because it symbolizes God's power of salvation through these seven different ages of time as the light was given. The seven spirits of God symbolize one Holy Spirit working through the seven ages of time as was needed.

Now, we must have the letters to understand the parables. Some will say, "I don't think that you need the letters, for I have dealt with those parables." In the fourth parable where the woman took three measures of meal and put leaven in, you tell me who the woman is, by the Bible, and tell me what the leaven and the meal are. You cannot do it unless you go to the fourth letter. There you will learn who the woman is, what the meal is, what the leaven is, and what the outcome of it was. It all works together and will show us the kingdom in its completeness right on through.

We will deal here with the Ephesian age after we consider the different kinds of ground. Christ said, "A sower went forth to sow." Now, when He began to teach about the kingdom, the Word of God tells us in Matthew 13:37 that Christ is the Sower. Luke 8:11 says, "The seed is the word of God." Also, Matthew 13:19 says that the seed is "the word of the kingdom." So, the Word of God and the Word of the kingdom are the same thing,

If we preach the Word of God, we will be building the Kingdom of God. To build up anything else besides the Word in the hearts of men and women, we will have to teach them something else. In Matthew we read that when he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured it. This is the wayside seed, or the first kind of ground of which Jesus spoke. We must remember that four types of people, as well as four types of ground, are mentioned. There is no middle place; we are either wayside soil, stony, thorny, or good soil. We will locate them all in time.

I am glad that the disciples asked about them. Some people never learn because they are not humble enough to ask. The best way to find out about anything in which you are interested is to inquire. Jesus said, "Ask and ye shall receive."

When He talked about these parables, they did not understand, so He gave them understanding. Matthew wrote it down so you and I could get it. He said in Matthew 13:19, "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side."

Chapter 3

THE WAYSIDE GROUND

The wayside ground, as Jesus would show us, represents those who just happen to be around where the seed is falling. He may be in a funeral service, or he may

have just visited the house of God on an invitation from a friend. He might hear it on the radio as he went on some errand or journey. The seed was sown, but it did no good. Why? Because of the condition of the wayside ground. There was no desire for the Word of God. It was that of just falling upon ground, and it brought forth no fruit. It may make somewhat of an impression; it may change his life somewhat. Yet, he is not interested enough to come to the place of getting an understanding of the Word of God. When you do not understand the Word, you do not have it. You are open to all of the attacks of the fowls of the air and are liable to lose it at any time and have something else put in its place. We must have the Word of God if we would hold and keep it.

We are told of the one that "heareth the word . . . and understandeth it not" (Matthew 13:19), then the wicked one comes or, as expressed in verse 4, "The fowls came and devoured them." That individual is called wayside ground because his life is taken up in other things. He is just too busy to serve God. When the Word is sown on him, it merely falls by the wayside. The very center of his life is taken up in earthly and human interests. When the Word falls around the edges, it will never bring forth an experience with God.

If the Word of God ever takes root, the seed must fall in the center of an open, honest heart. Wayside earth never did and never will produce an experience with God. There needs to be much plowing done. This wayside ground must be plowed up. Surely God does not want a lot of wayside ground around the church. The ministers and the lay members need to get the ground in shape for the seed so that when it falls, it can take root and bring forth for God.

Thank God, in the midst of the very age in which we live, I can make this statement faithfully by God's eternal Word: "We can understand the Word of God." Many people think you cannot understand it, but Jesus said in Matthew 7:7, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Many are putting the understanding of the Kingdom of God, along with other rich things, until some other age. But we can understand it now, thank God! People are asking, "Why is it necessary to preach that?" That attitude is creeping like a paralysis among the people of God. People, once saddled in the truth, often make such remarks as: "What makes the difference whether there is a millennium or not?" It makes all the difference in the world. God has given us understanding, and He wants us to ask of Him. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God . . . and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). Some are content to sing, "We'll understand it better by and by." That song was written back in the days of confusion. The true saints are singing, "Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ." We can have an understanding if we look into God's eternal Word.

When Christ spoke to Nicodemus of a new birth, he could not understand how a man could enter a second time into his mother's womb. That thought came from an educated but confused mind. People today look back and say, "What was wrong with that poor fellow?" Even so, he was ahead of the educators of today. They cannot figure out how Christ, the Son of God, was born of a virgin the first time. They are

a step behind Nicodemus. Yet, these men are the religious leaders of the (nominal) church today. Only the Spirit of God can give us spiritual understanding.

The only way to get a real understanding of the precious Word is to get an experience of salvation through an experience in the heart and be spiritually born again. Then the Spirit of God will unlock and give you an understanding, for these things are spiritually discerned. When men do not have understanding, they are open to the attacks of the fowls of the air. We read in Luke 8:5 that "the fowls of the air devoured it." If you do not understand the Word, someone can come along and take it away and give you something else in its place. When you understand the truth through the Spirit of God, no one can rob you of it. Christ takes the material things in the Word of God to teach us. He takes the natural things to teach us the spiritual.

If a man goes out and sows seed on ground that has not been cultivated and worked, it is still hard. The seed lies on top, and the birds come along and take it away. When the Word of God falls on hearts that are hard, no understanding is gained. It is not hard for false ministers to come along and take away the good that has been done with their watered-down teachings of the Word, robbing that soul of what it did have. Unless the heart of man is open and receptive to the seed enclosed within it through the Spirit of God and born again, he does not gain an understanding, and the seed can be taken away.

Revelation 19:17 says, "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven" The fowls are false ministers coming to pick up the true seed. Someone may ask, "How do they pick it up?" A person can hear the Word of God and it will make some kind of impression on him and he may become awakened. It may be that he heard the Word in a funeral message and saw the condition of his soul. He began to talk to a friend who took him to some false preacher to get help. The person tells how he heard a minister say that if a man does not get right with God and be born again, his soul will be lost in hell.

The modern minister will say, "Tut! Tut! There is nothing to that. You cannot pay attention to that fellow." Then he will put some other idea in that man's mind in place of the simple truth, and he will pick up that seed. People will hear a message of how God's people are being called back to the oneness and unity of the morning church, and then some false one will come around and pick it up and put something else in its place.

Again, Revelation 19:17 says, "And I saw an angel standing in the sun . . . saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God." Here is another supper table. Someone may say, "How do you know it is a different table?" Because it has different things on it. The other table had the true sayings of God on it. What is on this table? The answer is found in verse 18: "That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses"

THE GREAT SUPPERS

In Revelation when we deal with kings, we deal with the mighty men and the captains. These are what religious people are having to eat today. You may say, "Do you mean the flesh of men?" No! It is the sayings of these men, their beliefs and creeds, brought down from the heads of different organizations. The flesh of horses is the teachings that these men put out instead of the true Word of God. All some of them have to say when they get in the pulpits are words of other men and their opinions, both of today and of the past.

In John 6:53 Jesus said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man . . . ye have no life in you." Yet, ministers today are trying to feed people the flesh (or words) of men rather than God. We must partake of the body and blood of Jesus Christ if we would live. When we take of His Word, we partake of His flesh. In the Bible we read, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). There is a great supper going on, and Babylon has her table spread; but there are some who will not sit down to it. They are God's true children. Why will they not sit down at this table? Because they have already eaten something better. Thank God!

In Revelation, Chapter 19, we read, "And after these things [speaking of the fulfillment of Chapter 18] . . ." The Word of God has been turned loose on old Babylon. She is fallen and God reaps out of her a people. Those reaped are gathering together. God's true ministry sets Babylon on fire with God's eternal Word and the Holy Spirit. When we set Babylon on fire the holy saints of God, wherever they are, start rejoicing. There is one thing the saints rejoice in and that is old-time, Holy Ghost, fire and brimstone preaching of God's eternal Word.

In the sounding of the trumpets, you will find in Revelation, Chapter 9, that they had hellfire preaching and put an end to the sin business. Through that preaching men either died in their sins or they died out to sin and became alive unto Christ. Reading further, we find that "with them [their heads] they do hurt" (verse 19). I am not preaching on that now, but just carry the thought with you and you will be able to see what has happened to us in the very day in which we live. In Revelation 19:1-4 we read: "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore [old Babylon], which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia." Here we have symbolized the saints of all ages, which represent the four dispensations of time: Antediluvian, Mosaic, Prophetic, and the Holy Ghost. God had people under all four of them.

In Revelation, Chapter 4, the four beasts had eyes before and behind. Those four

beasts symbolize the saints of all ages. Those in the Old Testament had eyes before. They looked forward to Calvary. They believed in Him who was to come. Paul said that when Christ died on the Cross, the transgressions of those under the Law were forgiven. They had eyes before. We, who live on this side of Calvary, look back to Calvary. Ezekiel saw them as living creatures. He saw the same vision that John saw in the Revelation: the four and twenty elders symbolizing the prophets and the apostles (twelve each). What did they do? Revelation 19:4-6 tells us they "fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants [that takes in you and me], and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

This is a glimpse of the saints of all ages, a multitude that no man can number. In Revelation, Chapter 7, we see a group. Verse 9 reads, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." This was a group that came out of Babylon in A.D. 1880. This was the group that John did not know about. John had only lived in the morning time of the church. John said (in so many words), "Who are these? I know about the morning-time church, but who are these coming in white?" *These* are the people that have come out of the tribulation which came on the morning church. These are the saints of the evening light.

In essence, John said, "Let us rejoice." When we come out of Babylon and experience the victory that God has for His people, over the beast and his image, his mark, and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass mingled with fire, why should we not rejoice and give honor unto Him? "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God" (Revelation 19:7-9).

Many people want to take the Word of God in a literal way, especially millennialists who are looking forward to a big marriage supper at the Second Coming of Christ. They seem to think that when Jesus comes we are going to have chicken and beans (a literal meal). There is some flesh that needs to be crucified. These are spiritual things. The marriage supper of the Lamb is going on right now. What are the saints feasting on? The saints are feasting on the precious Word of God at the marriage supper of the Lamb. We will have no literal marriage supper. Some say, "We are not the wife of Christ yet." The Scripture did not say His girlfriend or His fiancée. She is already His wife and has made herself ready.

Paul said in Romans, Chapter 7, that we are freed from the old law of sin and death "that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead" (verse 4). First Corinthians 12:13, 26-27 states: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body And whether one member [of the body] suffer, all the

members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

You may say, "I don't believe we will have a marriage supper until the Second Coming of Christ." YOU can put it off until then if YOU want, but YOU will miss it both here and there. The marriage supper begins for you when you sell out from all those false lovers, cut out the spiritual fornication, and swear allegiance unto Christ, His Word, and His Word alone. Allow Him to be your Husband and Governor. Then you can sit down to the marriage supper. There is another supper prepared at the close of the day. That supper took place before the coming of Christ ever appeared in the vision.

Again, this is not literal. A time is not going to come when men will sit down to a supper and eat the flesh of men and horses. This is spiritual. John 6:53-58 tells us: "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." This is no literal food. They ate the literal bread and they are dead. This is a different kind of bread. It came down from Heaven. Verse 63 states, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

I speak with all kindness when I say that because of falling away, drifting from God's eternal truth, and rejecting some principles of God's Word, many have gone to literalism until they are now looking for everything of a literal nature. They are looking for Christ to come back and set up His literal kingdom. We hear over the radio that He is going to return and sit on a literal throne. Jesus' feet will never touch the earth again.

The kingdom that Jesus came to set up is in the hearts of men and women. Concerning this kingdom, He said, "It cometh not with observation" and "My kingdom is not of this world, if it were, my servants would fight." The body of Christ is assembling. The church is gathering together for the time when Jesus comes back to gather His bride. There are fowls that are called together to gather at this supper table. We read in Job 28:7, "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." There is a place where one can hide this seed and where the fowls cannot get hold of it? Where is it?

Chapter 5

THE HIDING PLACE

When God sows the seed, you need to open your heart's door. Let Him sow the seed in your heart and close it up. As He says, a little later, hide it in the very center

of your heart. That is the place where it cannot be taken away from you. The seed that is sown on the wayside ground is he that hears and has no understanding, and the fowls come and pick it up. This type of person gets no experience with God.

Concerning the kingdom, God made it very plain by saying, "It is within you." It is a kingdom of life. In Romans 5:17 Paul said, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." We open our heart's door to God by old-time repentance, confession of our sin, and turning from sin. I would like to deal with the thought of turning from sin.

Repentance changes the purpose of our lives. Repentance means to quit sinning. There is Scripture telling us that God repented. Do you mean to tell me that He quit sinning? No. He changed His purpose. So, repentance means to change purpose. We confess our sins unto God, and He takes them away. When Christ finds us out in the world, the purpose of our lives is to satisfy ourselves. We live after the lust of the flesh. We seek after the natural things. When we hear of the goodness of God, it leads us to come to an altar of prayer; and that is when we change the purpose of our lives. We then tell God that the purpose of our lives will be different. We must purpose to do His will and not to satisfy ourselves as in days of yore. When we confess our sins, He removes them as far as the east is from the west, never to be remembered against us again. I thank God for His wonderful goodness!

Supper time is at the close of the day. The Revelation tells us there are two suppers going on. God has sent the Word out to gather in the people. The enemy is using his unclean spirits to gather in the people also. We are either being gathered into the supper of the Lamb or to the feast of the fowls of the air. Either we are gathering into the camp of the saints or the camp of their enemies.

Some people are afraid of the frogs (the three mentioned in Revelation), but they need not be if they stay alive. If your experience gets stagnant, then the enemy will see that a frog or two is there; but if you keep it flowing, frogs cannot live in moving, gurgling water. Let the river of life flow right through you, and there will be no frogs there. The devil is working on people to let their experience get stagnant. When your spiritual life begins to shrivel up, you are very liable to inherit one of these frog spirits. If you will keep your life open to God, you do not need to worry about cleaning it out. The river of life will do that. If we will own ourselves as we really are, God will make a new creature out of us.

There are four kinds of ground that cover all mankind. They are the wayside, the stony, the thorny, and the good ground. We cannot mention much about the church until we come to the good ground. God can never bring forth a people or bring forth fruit unto Himself in stony and thorny ground. When we come to the good ground, then we see the very body of Christ come into being.

Mystery is that which is beyond human comprehension. Christ was teaching us in these parables the mysteries of the kingdom. Every one of them is beyond that which the human can lay hold on. We must be born again. One of the greatest reasons that we have so much confusion on the thought of the kingdom is because

men that have never been born again (ones who do not possess the Spirit of God and so make light of the new birth) try to teach the kingdom and tell all about it. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

There are multitudes that have never been born again, but they think they see it and try to teach it. Others have been born again, but because of erroneous doctrine and false leadership they have lost sight of the kingdom. They get so bold as to teach from Daniel's prophecy that the sixty-nine weeks have passed, but God stopped His clock. We want to be able to see through these parables that Christ set up a kingdom in His First Advent, what kind of a kingdom it is, and if it will truly never be destroyed. It is an everlasting kingdom and will never be left to other people.

Chapter 6

THE STONY PLACE

Let us turn to Daniel, Chapter 2. That little Stone, which was Christ, was cut out of the mountain—the old Law. The church became a mountain on the Day of Pentecost. When an individual receives Christ into his life, everything else is crowded out of the earth—his earthen vessel; each believer then becomes a part of this great mountain—the church. That little Stone was to smite the image.

Millenarians will agree about that image very well, but let us look and reason together. That image is past. All those kingdoms and powers that were covered in that image are past; yet many tell about the coming of another kingdom. Let me show you by God's eternal Word that the stone was to smite the image. Let us consider those ten toes, which represent the ten kingdoms. Millenarians draw those toes out for many hundreds of years, saying that the millennium is yet to come and the stone is going to strike in the toes. Let us study that image and the smiting by the stone. The stone smote the image and it fell and was ground together. All of the toes were there when the stone hit it. This brings us up to the day Christ was born.

When the Roman Empire was reaching out and killing the Word of God, a decree went out from Caesar concerning the taxation of all the then-known world. It was then that the rock was cut out without hands, teaching us of Christ's immaculate conception. Man had nothing to do with it. It smote the image, and it fell. I pray God will help us to see these things are spiritual mysteries and one must have the Spirit of God to comprehend them.

Let us turn to Matthew, Chapter 13. Verses 1-11 say: "The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."

The understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom is not attained by studying the subject a certain length of time, but it is given as a gift. "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom." We studied the wayside earth and have proven by the Word that the wayside earth never gets an experience with God. These are individuals whose lives are involved with other things. The Word is sown in their hearts, but it never takes root because it has no place to take root. The Book of Revelation tells us that the fowls of the air (false prophets) come and pick up the seed and carry it away.

Let us discuss the stony places by the Word of God. Verses 5-6 say: "Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away."

We are living in an age where we see people withering and being scorched. We must deal with this teaching of Christ so that men and women may be led to a deeper experience with God. Jesus Christ came to bring everlasting life. He came to give men and women an experience they could live with on earth and die with peace in their souls and be ready to live with Him throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

Gaining the experience of salvation is far deeper than the average man realizes. Jesus said in Matthew 7:14, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." In verse 13 He said, "Broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction." Some err in comprehension, and they say, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find the way." This idea is incorrect. The antecedent of the word *it* is *life*. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Find what? Find *life*. Because they will not take the narrow way that leads to it. You will never convince me that we will never find the narrow way. God puts it before every man and woman. That idea has been taught too long. People say they cannot find the way. I am not serving that kind of God who has hidden the light. He said, "If it is hidden from you, it is hidden to those who are lost." They know they are lost. They refuse it. When He said, "Few there be that find it," He meant *life*. Because there is a broad way that is so much easier to travel, people will choose that way. I am speaking at this time about the light that lighteth every man who comes into the world. Do not tell me people cannot find this way. I mention, also, a stumbling block. Everyone is going to stumble over this somewhere along his pathway. Too many receive wrong conceptions of the Scriptures and become confused. The real meaning of this Scripture is that there be few that find *life*. That is not the way to life, but life itself.

I daresay that there is not a man or woman reading this book who does not know the way to life.

We are living in a day and age when it is not a situation of people not knowing what to do. If I would question people on a street corner, I would find that 95 percent know how a Christian should live. It is not that they do not *know*, only that they do not *do*.

Do not blame the Holy Spirit. He is doing the will of God. He said He would reprove the world of sin and He does. Many servants of God have been faithless in their ministry. When they fail, God is able to take any means at hand and get the truth to the people. Do not be deceived by thinking that if we do not preach it, it will not be preached. God will find a way.

The Bible message is a light that lights every man who comes into the world. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth." God is going to get that truth to you. The reason many people never find life is because of the way in which it is presented to them; it is too narrow, too straight, too hard, and it costs too much. Because of that, they never find life. That is what Christ was dealing with in these parables. He took the whole world and divided it into four groups. They all heard the Word, but the first three groups rejected it. They preferred continuing their lives of folly to following the way of God. I thank God that this salvation is not hidden as some wish it were. All are going to hear it. Whether you will find this life through Jesus Christ depends upon whether or not you are ready to resign yourself to the will of God. You cannot sow something besides God's Word to produce the Kingdom of God. The Word of God is the Word of the kingdom.

When leaving our cities one sees painted billboards telling us, "Go to the church of your choice." One has said, "Why do we have all these hundreds of different churches until man is so terribly deceived?" but that is just what people are doing. Perhaps down on the corner there is a big church building. The people that attend there do so because it is the church of their choice. When they are ready for baptism, they will ask you which you choose—sprinkled, poured, or immersed? If your religion is spotted, you ought to be sprinkled. If it is striped, you ought to be poured. If you have died out to sin and are ready to be buried, then you should be immersed.

The Gospel is very simple. Paul, in the Book of Corinthians, says that just as Satan beguiled Eve, he would lead us away from the simplicity that is in Christ. Jesus came down here and yielded His own life on Calvary that we might have life. In the tenth chapter of the Book of John, He taught us that Christ is the door to the sheepfold, or to the church. Jesus said that a good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep—that is just what He did. If we will choose the life of Christ, we can live just as He did and all be one people.

In the sixth verse of Matthew, Chapter 13, we see where some of the precious seed fell on stony places where they had not much earth. People get a little nervous about the symbols in the Revelation and some are actually afraid of them. (Then again there are some who are not afraid of the Revelation that ought to be.) If you possess the Spirit of God, or rather if He possesses you and you are resigned to

God's will, your heart and mind are unbiased; you are in good shape to understand the Revelation. There is no need to be afraid—it is God's will to reveal the Revelation unto you.

Symbols are used all through the Word of God. The prophets used them in olden time, yet when we begin to preach in Revelation, people begin to get a bit apprehensive if we mention symbols. The parables under consideration are somewhat symbolical. Jesus spoke of stony places and in so doing took the natural things to reveal the spiritual. There were five prophets that He called wolves in sheep's clothing. All you have to do is watch those fellows a bit. They will make either a wolf track or a sheep track. The character of people can be concealed by their clothing, but they will be revealed by their "tracks." God does not want us to be deceived.

The Scripture says that some of this seed fell on stony places where they had not much earth, taking again the natural things to explain the spiritual. Remember that this kingdom is that which we receive into our heart and life through a born-again experience.

Paul, when speaking of the kingdom, said, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7). Jesus taught us to pray in Matthew 6:10, saying, "Thy kingdom come . . . *in* earth [not *on* earth]." So, what is the kingdom? God's will being done *in* our hearts and lives. That is the kingdom from one end to the other. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Whenever we find people that will do God's will here on earth, even as the angels do in Heaven, we have a heavenly Jerusalem right here on the earth. It is not hard to see the church. It is not hard to see the kingdom. It is made up of people that do God's will here, and when we do God's will here on earth, even as it is done in Heaven, we have a heavenly atmosphere right here. It is no wonder the Revelation calls us angels. Paul said in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, ". . . to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn . . ." (verses 22-23). What was he talking about? God's will being done here just as the angels are doing it in Heaven. He wrote to the angel of the church at Ephesus. Whom was he writing to? He was talking about a faithful man who was doing God's will down here on the earth, just as the angels do in Heaven.

This seed fell on stony places, and it had not much earth. Right away we begin to know there is a type of individual who does not give the Word any root. Remember, we receive it in earthen vessels. When He spoke of having not much earth, He spoke of the person not giving it much room. Matthew 13:5-6 tells us: "They had not much earth: and forthwith [or because of it] they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away." In verses 20-21 He gave us this explanation: "He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while." He did not say *beareth*. He said *dureth* (or endures) it. When tribulations arise, he is offended because of the Word. There is a symbol that many

people cannot understand—the symbol of the woman clothed in the sun. Jesus said (in the parable), "When the sun was up, they were scorched." What did Jesus mean when He gave the explanation, "When the Word comes"?

This type of individual never gets a real experience of salvation with God. Those that really are saved bear fruit, but the one spoken of was an enduring individual and that only for a while. Then when tribulation and persecution arose (not because of the devil but because of the Word), he was offended.

Ministers serving in the time of the sixth-seal period thought that one had to have a great deal of historical knowledge to be able to preach Revelation. Also, it was necessary to have some understanding of certain individuals to understand the symbols. Let me say that the answer to every symbol is in the Book. The sun is a symbol of the Word. Jesus said, "When the sun is up, it scorches them."

John 16:13 tells us, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will" do the whole work. People say, "If we could just get an educated ministry," but this is fallacy. A man who had been preaching for twenty-five years claimed to see real unity for the first time. If that were true, then something was certainly wrong with his education. I was in a certain state holding a camp meeting where the college dominates the ministers, controls the state, runs the camp meetings, and the system runs just like oiled machinery. Yet, I cannot find Scripture that tells me that all must be sent to the same school to have true unity. All must have the same Holy Spirit to have unity. "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come," He will show you all things. If we have the same Holy Teacher, we will have the same lessons and see "eye to eye."

Notice that the individual received the seed. "The same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it." He just took it down quickly and failed to swallow it. God does not ask us just to "get" the Word and say, "That is it." God says, "Let us reason." We are told that the sport of fishing is to wrestle with the fish for a long time and finally bring him in to shore. Even so, we need to take time with the Word of God. It will make room for itself. We must make sure that we are truly born again.

It is dangerous to claim salvation in a life that has never been regenerated. Jesus Himself said it was dangerous. He said, "Don't put new wine in old bottles." Why? Because there will be an explosion. Now you know why there are so many "blowups," or explosions in the church. Another mystery of the kingdom is that some people think the Word sounds good, and they try to take some of it (putting new wine in old bottles). Then the Word begins to grow. If any room is given for the Word, it will grow. If you have not been rejuvenated by the new birth and do not have a new flexible soul that will expand with the Word, there will surely be a bursting open and an explosion sooner or later.

What is meant by all this? Simply that to accept the Word without a real change of heart and a real experience of old-fashioned bedrock salvation and to try to go on living as a Christian will only last so long. For the Word will find out the lack as it, from day to day, works in the heart. If you are not able to grow thereby, it is not long until a day of reckoning comes, and you must either get down to bedrock or be sure

you will fall by the wayside.

Such an individual will move at the time but have no depth of experience. Jesus told us why. There are too many stones in the soil, and it springs up before it reaches down and takes root. No plant will ever bear fruit until it first takes root. One sees a lot of things in the fields that have just sprung up. Many plants spring up after a warm rain. What is meant (in the spiritual life) by a warm rain?

The warmth and refreshment of the Holy Spirit and old-time powerful preaching of the Gospel will sometimes warm the hearts of people, and they are actually warmed by it to the extent that they think they have an experience with God. If they did not really repent and go to the bedrock and have a change of heart, it was something that just sprung up. It did not take root, and there will be no fruit in that life. It will only be a question of time until it withers away. What a great need there is for the church to get back to some old solid truths and lead the people in their search for eternal life to more solid ground.

Chapter 7

A HEART OF FLESH GIVEN

Let us consider the metaphor of the stony ground. People come to an altar when they have a need, but they must get on a foundation where they can stand no matter what befalls them. God wants His people to get to a place of good, solid ground and get an experience that, whether it rains or shines, they can continue living for God. It would be foolish for a farmer to try to work the areas that are very stony. A farmer knows better than to sow in a stone patch, so he picks up the stones and clears them off before he begins anything. May God help the ministry to realize that today. The stones are impediments, which hinder the growth of the plant. They take the moisture that belongs to the plant. Because of this Christ said these individuals never get an experience. These stones lay on the surface of the ground as a sign that the earth is thin and that solid rock is underneath. There is not much earth with which to work. In this way Christ pictured a hardhearted individual. He is utterly selfish and has no capacity for self-denial. Let us mentally picture this type of individual. He has a quickness of perception. He quickly takes hold of the Word. This type of individual is often heard shouting in the services on Sunday, but we seldom see him in prayer meeting. Why? He has no depth, true root, or love of God in his heart. His is just a light, emotional case. Beneath the surface the heart is still hard and cold as a rock.

In Ezekiel 11:19 God spoke of the people in the time of Christ's First Coming. He said, "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." In Proverbs 4:23 we read, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." The heart is the core of the whole life. If we have people with a *new* heart, we will not have to deal with many *old* issues. When we have a new heart, we will

receive a new issue. Paul referred to that very fact when he explained that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). When God gives us one heart, we will act alike, and we will have the same standard of dress. Someone may say, "What makes you think so?" Consider this: "I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them" (Ezekiel 11:19-20). People who have this new heart will walk in God's statutes and keep His ordinances. He will be their God.

There are some other stones. In Isaiah, Chapter 63, God gave a commission to the ministry. It takes the love of God to pour out the wrath of God on a false spirit and a false system and yet have enough love of God so that the man to whom you are preaching will know that you love him as you are preaching to him.

One of the dangers of today is that the enemy will strive to get people to compromise, apostatize, and turn from truth. Then he will get other people to dislike those who have turned from the truth and look down on them. You must love them. If a brother errs in the truth, God orders us to work to convert him, not to brush him off and say we are no longer a brother of his.

"Groupitis" (to identify oneself with a particular group of people and exclude everyone else) is one of the greatest problems that has ever troubled God's people. A question I am often confronted with is: "With which group are you?" I just answer, "I am a member of that group spoken of in Revelation 14:4, the ones that follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, those that stand on the sea of glass mingled with fire, and the ones who have victory over the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name." That answer takes care of any of the devil's work that he has contrived or that he can devise. If we are not careful, the enemy will do a harmful and damaging work on the body of Christ. You do not need to put any of your own personal emotion into this. God put enough into it. If you preach the Word of God to any man and he is guilty, he is hurt badly enough without you giving him a "cold shoulder." Some people wither under it. I know what kind of an experience they have.

We have not preached anything yet that is not Bible—we have just raised the sun a little. The ministry, the divine ploughman, has a big job. In Isaiah 62:10 God gave the ministers their commissions. He said, "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people." Why are there some people that cannot get along with the ministry preparing the way? Why are there so many sects and divisions? It is because false ministers prepared a way. In Jeremiah 23:1 the Lord said, "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" Christ said, "There is one way" and prepared a ministry to tell of that one way. Any man who is saved is in the palm of God's hand and is in Christ's fold. Unless a false preacher lets the fence down some place, the people will never get out. "Prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway" (Isaiah 62:10). If you ever get on the highway of holiness, you are as sure of Zion as if you were there already, because that is where the highway ends. The highway of holiness leads to Zion. The way is so

simple that "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein" (Isaiah 35:8). Again, it is only understood by those that pass on it.

If you would get on Route 40 and go west, your end would be San Francisco. God said that there would be a highway and a way to get on it. It is like the turnpike. Anyone can get on it, but not just at any place. Jesus said, "I am the way." There is only one way to get on the highway of holiness, and that is through Jesus Christ, the Lord. Isaiah said that there will be a highway above the ground, above the old way you have traveled—a highway and a way to get on it. The unclean shall not pass on it. There will be no lion, nor any ravenous beast. These are symbols. The different animals show the different dispositions of man. Every animal is different and has a different disposition. All men are made the same but have different dispositions. God went back to the animals to show us the different dispositions of men. No lion will be there. The lion represents the individual who has a bold and evil spirit. The devil is like a roaring lion. That fellow has a hateful disposition, a hard heart, and is always growling.

We are commanded to cast up the highway. Some people are trying to pull it down. They would like to level the highway to where anyone can get on it. God called a ministry to cast it up. You cannot lift it any higher than it is, but raise it before the people. Preach the Gospel, and cast it up before the minds of men. Keep the highway of holiness lifted up in all its beauty.

Get out the stones. Lift up the standard for the people. We see people come, sit under the Word, and God reveals things in their lives that will be a hindrance to them. The Scripture refers to the hindrances as stones. Too often the ministry is putting on a sham. They are creating false hiding places. Too many, even in the so-called Church of God, are hiding behind the idea: "It is not my duty to execute the Church of God, just to preach it." I ask them, "Why do your people pay you a good salary?" God's people love the kind of man that lifts up the standard. They know that he is being true to their souls. False ministers know if they overstep, the people (because of friendship) will let them continue to preach. In other words, the true saints love straight preaching, while mere professors will put up with anyone who preaches to please the people.

Returning to the parable, we will consider Matthew 13:6, which says, "And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away." We have already learned that the sun is the symbol of God's eternal Word. Let us refresh our minds with the thought that God takes natural things to teach the spiritual.

The Psalmist meant this when he said in Psalm 1:5 that the sinners cannot stand in the congregation of the righteous. We need sinners to attend the services or we will never win any to be saints. When the Word of God goes forth, it lets every man know where he stands, even the sinner. The Word of God comes so close that he will be able to see himself and where he is. Even though he knows you love him, he cannot stand. He will wither under the preaching of God's Word. God does not want people to think that they are right when they are wrong.

The sower is the Son of Man. He sowed seeds. That is where the harvest comes from. He said the fields are white unto harvest. A harvest does not just come. Someone has to *sow* it first. Where was His field? He walked up and down the shores of Galilee and over the mountains sowing the precious seed in the hearts and lives of mankind. While He was sowing, the poor Gentile was pushed back and could not come into the midst, being counted only as a dog by the Jews.

It was as though He said, "When the Holy Ghost comes, He will give you the sickle; for you must have a sickle to reap. When He comes, He will take the things of Mine and give them unto you. Then you can go out and start reaping." Multitudes followed after Him and He fed them. Once a group of people followed Him for three days. There is something about the Word of God that gets hold of men. They followed Him from the city out into the country where there were no grocery stores for miles around. They pressed so close about Him that He was compelled to get into a boat and push out a little that all might be able to hear His message. God stands ready to anoint His followers today by sending the Holy Spirit upon them and causing men to hunger when there is real consecration and dying out to the world.

By reading further, we find that when the sun began to rise, when Jesus began to lay down the facts of discipleship and what it entailed, the people turned away and left Him. Then He turned to His disciples asking them if they, too, were going to leave, but they only answered, "To whom shall we go?"

Today we see many people getting offended by the same Word that they claim was the means of their salvation. What causes men to become offended at the Word of God? They do not always understand it. So, because they do not understand it, they become offended by it. It is necessary to understand the Word of God or some false prophet will take it away from you. You, too, if you do not understand it, may become offended by it. In Matthew, Chapter 11, we read that John, the forerunner of Christ, was greater than all of the other prophets. Why? John came preaching repentance—he was a good preacher; he executed the will of God and preached the Word. He advised people to confess their sin. When those old birds, the scribes and Pharisees, got in line, he was frank with them and told them the true condition of their hearts. He called out to them, "Who hath warned you of the wrath to come?" This he said because he, being filled with the Spirit, could discern what was in their hearts. He bade them to show forth fruit worthy of repentance.

We read in the Book of John, when John was baptizing, that Christ appeared and John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. . . . I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true" (John 1:29; 3:28-33).

There are people that want to build a church and name it after John. A Baptist minister once said that Christ did not call him John, the Methodist; or John, the Lutheran; but John, the Baptist. But Jesus, in referring to John, said, "He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matthew 11:11). John was just an advocate or an advertiser for Christ. When a circus comes to town, people are sent ahead to post bills and advertise it. Now we know that any member of the circus is more important than the advertiser of it. John was the forerunner for Christ. John stood and declared the truth to men.

John preached in the "sunrise" of the Gospel. He did not have the light that we have today. For four hundred years there had been darkness in Israel. Since the last writings of the Prophet Malachi, no one had brought a message from above. If we do not hear from God, we go into darkness. It was not like turning on the electricity. But in that darkened sky there appeared a star over the Judean hills that led men who were wise to the Christ.

John stood in partial darkness, just as the light was breaking. He knew it was coming; he stood in the light he had and preached the Gospel. But the day never broke until Jesus appeared, preaching the Gospel, and coming as the Lamb of God. Then, when John was put in prison and ready to be beheaded, he began to have some doubts. Perhaps if you or I were in his position, we, too, would begin to doubt. When he had his freedom, eating locusts and wild honey and preaching the Gospel freely, it seemed real and he entertained no doubts. Down in prison with all hope of opportunity to do the beloved work gone, he became uncertain and sent some of his disciples to question the Master. Yet, this same man had said of Him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

John's disciples went to Jesus and asked, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another" (Matthew 11:3)? To this inquiry Jesus answered and said, "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Matthew 11:4-6). At this time Jesus was very busy healing the sick and preaching the Gospel. We are reminded of John's own words in John 3:30 when he said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." The outcome was just as John prophesied. It was time for John to decrease as Christ was pressing forward on the increase.

Why did John get confused and apparently even a bit offended? The events were not going as he thought they should. Men and women today get offended because the fulfillment of Scripture and especially prophecy does not happen as they had it all settled in their own biased minds. Then someone comes preaching and shedding light on some particular part of the Word. When it does not exactly dovetail with their own interpretation, instead of receiving some enlightenment on the Word, they become offended. Many are still holding on to what little light they received long ago and expect to go to the judgment leaning on that little bit. Their spirit is that of the Pharisee refusing to accept any new message from Christ.

God does not want people to get saved in a "cloudy" or confusing way. We are living today in the evening light. Zechariah said there would come a time when it would be neither dark nor light, but in the evening it would be light. God wants people saved in the light so they will know what is expected of them. If you do not lift up the standard, the people will fall short of it and the whole congregation will go into spiritual darkness.

We read in Revelation 21:27, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." What happened to that young man who came to the altar? Well, the sun came up that Sunday morning—the truth was preached as to the true conditions that must be met to receive salvation—and that fellow withered and has never been seen since. He was shown by the Word just what it would cost to be a child of God—a complete turn around and a different purpose in one's life. One of the tricks of Satan is to get people of the world to come in among the saints and attempt to make saints of them. It cannot be done. Let the sun shine on them at the very beginning and let them know what kind of "heat" they are going to have to take if they make a decision to serve God. We are getting out the stones when we tell people what it will cost to really be a child of God.

Chapter 8

THE WAY TO TRUE PEACE

In Luke 19:41 we read that Christ entered into Jerusalem. We live in a day when we need to go back to the truth, that is, get back to the Word of God. Too many people in the world and alas, in the religious realm today, are like Pilate, who said, "What is truth?" Many know that we need the truth to set us free. Well, we need to get that truth out to the people. When Christ came near and beheld the city of Jerusalem, He wept over it. Today if Christ would come and behold us as a church in our city, would He not weep over us also?

Why did He weep? The people were crying, "Hosanna! Peace on earth," but they did not know anything about peace. There are some things that go with peace, and you cannot get peace without them. Let us consider another thing about Christ's entry into Jerusalem. Christ told His disciples to get a mule, the foal of an ass. Christ's entry into Jerusalem on this lowly animal put an end to the idea that Christ would come in splendor in a triumphant manner and set up an earthly kingdom. Instead, He came meekly, sitting on the foal of an ass.

Jesus told them where they could find a mule, the foal of an ass. Here is a significant point that may be overlooked. It was to be a colt on which no man had ever sat. Just any colt would not do. Down through the history of Israel, the king rode on a mule. The mule was white, and the king rode that mule until it died. Nobody ever sat on that mule but the king. When that king died and they were ready

to crown another, the mule was passed on. Whenever anyone saw someone riding that mule, they knew that he was a king.

In 1 Kings, Chapter 1, we read that King David called Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. They came before the king. The king told them to take with them the servants of their lord and cause Solomon to ride upon King David's own mule and bring him down to Gihon. It was in this manner that David let all Israel know that Solomon was his successor.

When Christ entered Jerusalem, He sat on a mule on which no man had ever sat before. This represented a kingdom to be set up, not one that was being handed down. This is the Kingdom of God and not a kingdom of man. So, no man had ever sat before on this mule. Men who handle mules know that you do not stay on a mule's colt the first time you try to ride on it. Moreover, the crowd was crying out, throwing their hands in the air, and there was much excitement. In the midst of it all, Christ rode that mule straight into Jerusalem. The mule acknowledged his Master even if man did not. Why was it that Jesus wept? Because they did not know the things that belonged to peace. We are living in that kind of a day and age.

When the Word of God goes forth, it reveals to every man where he stands before God. A sinner cannot stand because he withers under the preaching of God's Word. God does not want people deceived as to where they stand in His sight. He does not want them to think they are all right when they are not where they should be. Thank God, through the name of Jesus there is an ointment that contains an oil to heal every sinful condition, whatever it may be. If you ever have real peace in your heart, you will have to have the wounds of sin completely healed,

People today are in the "sin-more-or-less" business, crying peace when there is no peace. The sin business must be completely stopped. The healing appearance is like a cancer or some other terrible sore that has healed over on the outside. It leads one to believe that it is healed completely when it has only crusted over. If that place continues to appear healed, sin will manifest itself some other place. Why? Because it is in the bloodstream. Christ does not heal from the outside. He goes to the source of the sin. Christ covers the heart with His own precious blood and purifies the very center of infection in our lives. He puts a new heart within us. Again, I say that we cannot have peace without righteousness.

In Psalm 85:10 the Psalmist wrote, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." John said in John 1:17, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." If you want righteousness, peace will come right along. Do you want peace? You will have to take righteousness too. They are living together in Jesus Christ. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (Isaiah 32:17).

"The work of righteousness shall be peace." James was definite in his writing (James 3:13-18) that righteousness is a necessity for peace. "Who is a wise man and endowed with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your

hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." Righteousness and peace go together; they coexist. You will never know an ounce of peace until you become a righteous individual.

That is why John wrote to the church of Laodicea (a church with a spiritual condition prophetic of the spiritual situation in the day and age in which we are living), saying that they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. God's people who have apostatized and compromised are miserable. They have forgotten their resting place. They have gone too far back into the world and are reaching out into it. Why? They are not getting any satisfaction out of their experience of salvation.

Again, James 3:13 tells us, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." Christian cannibalism, biting and devouring one another, is widespread among the religious world. If you bite one another, you are consuming one another; where there is strife, there is confusion. James said in verse 17, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." You have to be righteous. You must be pure to know an ounce of peace. You must also be gentle, easily entreated, full of mercy, and bear good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. There is a lot of earthly and devilish wisdom prevalent today. The fruit of wisdom is sown in peace. Do you want peace? Then sow righteousness, and you will bring forth a crop of peace. If you are not living right, you can only cry peace where there is no peace. Peace is the result of righteousness.

Light evangelism is a curse to our land. The practice of raising hands and making mass decisions for Christ without the bedrock repentance required in the Word of God is deceiving multitudes today. Some people who do not look deeply into the results declare that these evangelists are doing well. They (the evangelists that do this) are sowing seed in stony places and so erecting a wall about their converts, making those that are deceived all the harder to reach with the real Gospel message of truth. Those that make a decision for Christ under the influence of the service, the singing of touching invitation songs, and melting deathbed stories, when they leave the service are often soon led away. Souls cannot make real decisions for Christ merely under the influence of moving songs and deathbed stories. Also, the telling of Heaven and not explaining that they will have to remain here on earth a few years and fight the devil will not lead to an experience of real salvation.

In Revelation we read about the pouring out of the vial. The opening of the sixth seal took place in the proximity of 1880. God gave a commission to His ministers to leave Babylon and pour out the truth upon her. By leaving they avoided the plagues that came upon her. The sixth-seal ministers put up their Revelation charts and poured out the truth on Babylon. People came out of her and stood for truth

against ridicule and persecution. But the Word of God says to give her a second cup. Now, who is going to give Babylon a second cup?

In these last days and right here on earth, judgment must be put on Babylon. We have a generation of young people who have never heard such men as F. G. Smith, C. E. Byers, and others preach, brethren who were true to the call of God. The cup must be poured out on these young people also. The fourth seal was poured out on the sun, or the New Testament. For what purpose? The objective of the opening of the fourth seal was to revive the people and put them in a position to pour out the last three seals. "Come out of her, my people," the message of the three opening seals, was also the message of the last four seals, although it was expanded. Roman Catholicism will tell you that they are not what they used to be. However, they have the same spirit, backed by the same evil power that has always animated this great false system, and God's will is to have the truth poured out on it.

We are living in the day and age of which Paul wrote to Timothy concerning the perilous times that would come on the church. The world has always been in a perilous condition. In these times people will profess to love God but love the world and worldly pleasures more. Ministers say that they cannot get people to come out to church service on Sunday nights. Why? People want to go boating, driving, or watch television. They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Timothy 3:5). The ministers of these people say, "We are still preaching the Word." Maybe so, but where is your power? Old-fashioned, Holy Ghost power still makes the sinner tremble. If you give him a vision of hell under the power of the Holy Spirit, it will not run off like water from a duck's back. I once saw a man standing in the back of the building, shaking under conviction. I went back, laid my hands on him, and said, "Brother, God loves you." That man went to the altar. He said afterward, "Brother, when you laid your hands on me, God put me in the furnace." He had never sweated as hard unloading coal as he did under conviction for his sins. The power of God was working on his soul and that power is just the same today. Do not believe that there is no conviction for sin in these days. God fashioned the hearts of men alike. If mankind has changed, then Christ would have to change, but He is the same today and forever. He will never change. His power is as great as it ever was. Be sure, my friend, that power from on high will be given to the ministry of today that is willing to pay the price. Thank God, I know when it came. When God led me forth from the sixth seal, gave me a glimpse into the seventh-seal age, touched my soul with power that I might know, and sent me forth again, I was given the greatest boost I have had in a long time!

Power has been given to the ministry of today that will walk humbly and not be ashamed to be led of God. In this dark hour the ministry will scorch men with the truth of the Word of God. Why must men be scorched? Too much self is present in the lives of men. Revelation 16:9 tells us, "And men were scorched with great heat." Men are the only recipients of the scorching from this great heat. There is a movement that calls itself the Church of God, and it is becoming an organization of

men with its committees, societies, and *men*. The ministers are preaching *men's* thoughts, reading *men's* books, and repeating *men's* excerpts. Their ministers think that people will not receive a message anymore unless Matthew Henry or Adam Clarke have been quoted. These writers have given some good words along the lines of history, but we are living in a day and age when we cannot afford to look back. We must get our messages directly from God and march on from there.

The two witnesses, the Word and the Spirit, lay dead for 360 years or thirty-one centuries. The people gave gifts to one another, or gave degrees of honor for learning and higher education. If you see this happening around a Church of God congregation, then you will know that this place is one where the witnesses are dead. When someone studies for a number of years, he, of course, is in a more elevated position than his fellows. He wears a black hat with tassels on it and receives a D.D. degree or some sort of recognition for his educational attainment. But Jesus said that we were all brethren. So, if we are all on the same level, why bestow gifts of honor and acknowledgment upon each other? When the two witnesses are alive, God will give us all gifts. When honor began to be shown to one another, that is when this practice got started in the church. It happened right among the saints.

When the saints have inflated ideas about being so big in their own eyes that they can learn nothing from the older brethren, brethren who have suffered and sacrificed to carry this message through the years, then they will seek a minister who, although he has no vision of the true body of Christ, the church, has earned a degree in higher education. That degree is supposed to qualify him to preach his ideas to the church. When these circumstances prevail, we are just bringing in stones from Babylon. Now, this is the beginning of the trouble. Do not bring these stones in. We do not need them. The church has a foundation, and it does not include stones from old Babylon.

In Psalm 85:6 David wrote, "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" I am a firm believer that we have reached the time when this Gospel is making its last round. With plain and true preaching of the precious Word, we will see old-time rejoicing; we will see crutches laid aside; we will see everything that the Gospel brought with it in the apostolic days. What are people rejoicing over today? They are rejoicing over love instead of the Lover, over the blessing instead of the Blesser, and over the gift instead of the Giver. God wants the church to rejoice in Him even if He has done nothing outstanding at the particular time. Do lovers wait to show their love after some special attention? No. They love to be in the very presence of each other, and it is not necessary to perform some special deed of merit to praise and appreciate one another. So, our love for God must reach that place where we can worship and adore Him for Himself.

SOME FELL AMONG THORNS

There are seven parables in Matthew, Chapter 13, that coincide with the seven letters to the seven churches in Asia in the Book of Revelation. Each one of these will help to clear up the other, and we will get into the parables after awhile. We have been dealing with the four kinds of ground on which the Word of God falls. I made a statement before, and I want to make it again: The four kinds of ground cover all humanity—wayside hearers, stony places, thorny places (or thorny ground), and good ground.

Every one of us is one kind of ground. God would have us deal with His Word so that we might get located. He wants us to be good ground. Also, we are going to prove by God's Word that all of God's children must bring forth one hundredfold. God will not put up with anything less than that anymore. The false hiding places are not only in denominationalism, but there are a lot of false hiding places around that which calls itself the Church of God. This business of bearing some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundredfold is nothing more than a false hiding place that people get in and try to excuse themselves for only bringing forth thirty and sixtyfold. There is no excuse! The Word of God will shake up all the bushes they are hiding behind and put them out in the open.

We dealt with the wayside hearers in the preceding chapter, and in the stony places we found that neither one of these individuals had a solid experience with God. The one in the stony place sprung up, but it had no root; and you cannot bear fruit if you have no roots. There is nothing that bears fruit that does not first have roots. Just as soon as the sun (the sun, as we have proved by the Bible, is the Word of God) came up, the plant was scorched; it withered away and died. Many people get that kind of an experience.

We want to look at that which fell among thorns. In Matthew 13:7 we read, "And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them." Jesus gave the explanation of this in verse 22 of this same chapter: "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." This is the work of Satan. Jesus' teachings seemed simple, but the parables are as deep as the Revelation and hid in the same shell. The seed took root in this individual. It *had* to bear fruit, and we will prove it by God's Word. Some fell among thorns, though they had not sprung up yet. In other words, there were some laying under the earth that had not sprouted yet. The seed of the Word of God took root and sprung up, then the thorns also grew up and choked the seed out.

I am wholeheartedly against the teaching of growing into the second work of

grace (sanctification).¹ Jesus plainly taught that it is an impossibility. The seed did not choke out the thorns as surely would have been done if there were a gradual growth in grace, but the thorns choked out the seed of the Word. The second work of grace is an instantaneous operation of the Holy Ghost as much as the first work of salvation. The Word of God says that the thorns sprung up and choked them and they became unfruitful. That is an awful blow to eternal security.

It is possible to become unfruitful after you have been fruitful. Today we are facing a multitude of people who are looking back to a day when their experience was a glorious pledge for God, bearing beautiful fruit of an experience of righteousness and true holiness, yet today they are unfruitful. The stones of yesterday morning have spoiled the roots. The root experience of stony ground was that the root could not take hold.

In the parable of the thorny ground, the individual actually was born again and justified before God. He had to be in order to bear fruit. Jesus said in John 15:2 and 5: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. . . . He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." The stony ground kept the root from working, and now we see the thorns working on the fruit. We also see the works of Satan. Some preachers are preaching how the devil works through false religious systems, but I say he works on individuals. The thing that keeps men from getting a root experience with God will also keep ones from getting saved in the first place. Even after you get saved, the devil has another tool he uses on you to choke out your fruit after you begin to bear. But, thank God, there is an easy way to put Satan out of business. By the Word of God you can destroy the very works of the devil. Jesus Himself was made manifest that He might destroy the works of the devil. In Ephesians 4:8 we read that He led captivity captive.

There is an experience you can get with God where you can do as Isaiah said in Isaiah 44:23, "Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth." We can shout, "Glory be to God," right while the devil is fighting us, and if the devil carries on too much, God also has the power to let you cast him out. First Peter 5:8 tells us that the devil goes about as a roaring lion. He is not an actual lion; he is an actor. There is only one lion in the Word of God and that is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Yet, the devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. There was a day before Jesus came with this GREAT salvation when it was easier for him. We are told in the Book of Job, Chapter 1, that Satan was walking up and down in the earth having a good time, and when the sons of God came to present themselves, the devil came too. Everywhere the sons of God present themselves, he comes along too. He cannot stop the Gospel, but he wants to hinder it. When he begins to spread himself, God puts the truth on him. Jesus said he was a liar. In fact, he was a liar from the beginning.

¹See page **d** for more information concerning this doctrine.

In Matthew, Chapter 4, we read that the devil took Jesus up on a mountain and in essence said, "I will give you all the kingdoms of the world," but Jesus did not pay a bit of attention because He knew the devil did not have anything to give. Why? God said that the world and all that is in it is His. It does not belong to the devil. I would not like to believe that God did anything for Job that He would not do for me. Remember, He delivered him and rewarded him for resisting evil. Be sure that when you are tempted and tried that God sees it is good for you. You need to get shook around and cultivated a little. If you do not get tempted and tried once in a while, you will not know what you have. If we do not go through some persecution, there will be no real shouting. I do not like this light business of shouting at the drop of a hat. If there is any real shouting in the camp of the saints, it is because there has been a battle won. No battle won, no real shout. Since Jesus Christ came, the devil is the prince of this old world, the prince of the power of the air, as the Scripture calls him. Now, in any country that still has a king instead of a democracy (as we have), the prince is next in command when the king is not there. But when the king comes riding on a mule, the prince must step down.

First Peter 5:8, as we stated previously, says the devil goes around as a roaring lion. He is not devouring whosoever will, or whosoever wants to, for there are some he cannot devour. "Seeking whom he may devour." When the devil knocks at your door, just send Jesus. Satan will remember how Jesus won the battle with him and walk away. The devil has no kingdoms to give. Maybe you are saying, "How do you know?" In the Scripture there was a man on an island with legions of devils, bound by Satan. Jesus made a trip across that lake, and the only work He did there was to free that man. Then He got in the boat and went back. The man came running, trembling. He had jumped on people and tore the clothes off them, but when he saw the Son of God, he trembled. The devil in this man who had offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world begged Jesus that he might go into the pigs down the mountain. The fact is that he did not even own a pig and had to ask permission to go into one. He has lied to men and done a work in them and has held them under sway, but Jesus Christ came that we might know the truth about him, and the truth will make you free.

In Job 1:8 God said to Satan, "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" The devil said in verse 10, "Hast not thou made an hedge [or fence] about him?" The devil cannot even tempt you unless he gets a pass from God. It would be sad to believe that God did something for Job that He would not do for me. He led captivity captive. There is surely a second work of grace, and it is for those who will be fruitful and stay fruitful for God.¹ When an individual hears the Word of God and through old-time repentance and confession of his sins comes to Christ, that Holy Ghost experience (or what we call the first work of grace) cuts the thorns down level

¹See page **d** for more information concerning this doctrine.

to the earth; God forgives him of every transgression and every sin he ever committed. But there is a root left, and something will happen if we do not get rid of this root.

Christ specified in Matthew 13:22 what the thorns are: "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." In 1 John 2:15 we read, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." In Mark 4:19 Jesus said, "And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." Christ mentioned the care, or love, of this world, and 1 John, Chapter 2, tells us what it is. The next thing He mentioned was the deceitfulness of riches. We want to get to the root of this thing.

Jesus called them thorns. The cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things are symbolized by Christ as thorns. Why? They are entangling, aggravating, agitating, and irritating. What are we talking about? The cares of this world. To those still hanging onto cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches and the lust of other things, they are truly thorns in our experience. We read in Luke 8:14, "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." There is a deceitfulness in riches.

One brother was trying to work out a business with oil wells, and another brother in another situation said, "Pray that God will help us to prosper as God knows He will get His share." I said, "Brother, you had better pray to God and ask Him if it is His will for you to have this business, for with the money comes a spirit." If we are wholeheartedly sold out to God and consecrated to Him, He will let us have all the money we can handle. If we get any more, it will handle us. There is a deceitfulness in riches, for there is a spirit that goes with riches that will capsize you and make you come to the place where you cannot make a proper estimate of things as you once did.

Let me explain. Often when a need comes up a man who is working and not making very big wages will give one hundred dollars of his hard-earned wages quicker than the rich man. Why? They are not looking out of the same pair of eyes. A ten-dollar bill looks bigger to the rich man than a hundred dollars does to the poor man who is consecrated to God. Someone may say, "Brother Wilson, money talks." Yes, but it never tells the truth. We read in Proverbs 23:5, "For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven."

I have seen people that did not have a thing when God got hold of them. They were in such a situation that the church helped them to get a little furniture and keep food on the table. We finally got the truth across to them of God's plan of financing, and they began to square up their business with God. After a time God, true to His Word, put them on their feet. They finally got everything paid up and fixed up and a little in reserve. What happened then? They got a different spirit. Once they had a little money, they made themselves wings. They no longer needed the church like

they once did. They became more and more independent of the moving of God.

This is happening all over our land, because God has blessed our land with prosperity and men are resting on the prosperity of the land instead of the blessings of God. They become more and more independent of God and feel that they can get along by themselves. Thus, riches are deceitful and get into one's system like alcohol causing him to crave more and more. It is a dangerous thing to have great possessions.

Can God use a man with money? You may say that He needs the man with money because he has wherewith to do things. No, He does not. Why not? Because God can get all the money He needs without him, and in the end it will all be God's anyhow. Someone may say, "Well, He is not going to get any of mine. I will leave it to my children, and they to theirs, etc., etc." Well, in the end it is still in the possession of God. Let us seek first the Kingdom of God, and He will add these things unto us. I repeat that it is dangerous to have great possessions.

Chapter 10

THORNS CAUSE WASTE

What are great possessions? Anything that is too much to give up to follow Christ. In their deceit they will rob us of the pearl of great price, which we will study about. It was demonstrated through Ananias and Sapphira in Acts, Chapter 5. They held back part of the price and missed the whole bargain. Great possessions will cause you to end up trying to feed your soul on that which the flesh feeds on, and when that happens, you are really deceived. In fact, I do not believe there is much hope for you. Somebody may ask, "What makes you think so?" As soon as the rich man got in that kind of shape, God required his soul. Why? Whenever a person is that far gone, there is no way of reaching him.

The whole trouble is in these things that Christ mentioned: the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things. How can they be stopped? The flesh needs to be crucified, with its affections and its lusts. You can stop them all at once. You do not have to nip one thorn off at a time, but you can get rid of the whole thorn bush. That is the work of the flesh. It is just an old thorn bush, and if you will give me time, I will prove it to you by the Scriptures. There is an old thorn bush that grows in every man's or woman's heart. Too many are trying to trim it. God does not trim it; He burns it. The Word of God teaches us that flesh is carnal; it came from the fall. God said in His Word that because Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, thorns would come forth on the earth. They came, in the curse back there, literally. Just as the thorns came forth on the earth because of the curse put on mankind, even so there was a carnal nature wrought within man from the fall that does the same thing within man that the literal thorns do upon the earth. This is a type of carnality. We could give it to you from several Scriptures. Let us turn to the Book

of Isaiah and bring him to the witness stand.

Let us begin by reading in Isaiah 32:13, which tells us of the pitiful condition of mankind. He used symbols and metaphors in his poetic language to teach us the pitiful condition of mankind before Christ came, or before the Spirit of God was given. Listen to him: "Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers." How do we know he was speaking of spiritual things? Read on: "Yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city: Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks; Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field" (Isaiah 32:13-15).

Now we know Isaiah was not talking about the earth and terra firma because pouring the Holy Ghost out upon the earth would not kill the natural thorns or clean the literal briers out. Friend, these thorns and briers are the working of the old carnal nature through our lives. That is what our lives were when Christ found us—a brier patch and a thorn patch. We never brought forth the first fruit of righteousness. When you see a field covered with thorns and briers, you would say it is wasted. If you let the thorns start, they will take the whole field. It is something like the man who bought a farm where there were berry bushes around the fence row, and every year he let them grow. After a while they got such a hold on the land that he just gave up. The briers took over the whole place. The berries would come and fall off, and the bushes would get thicker. One day some people went out there to pick berries, and he ran them off. He said, "Get out of here. If you weren't so lazy, you could raise some of your own."

This work has a little beginning. All you need to do is just let it be. Every time you pet it, you cultivate it and give it more room until it will spread out in your life and you will be wasted too, just as wasted as a brier patch is in a field that could be used to produce something. God's Word shows us man's pitiful or wasted condition before the Spirit is poured out upon him from on high. Glory be to God! What will happen then? The wilderness will be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field will be counted for a forest. Thank God for His eternal Word!

Chapter 11

THORNS THAT CHOKE

Thorns have always been used to symbolize something that chokes out the Word of Life. Why did they crown Christ's head with thorns? What was that a symbol of? They thought they were choking out the Word of Life that Jesus Christ was scattering around the country. They thought they were putting an end to it. Poor fellows, little did they know they were just spreading it out.

All through the Word of God, the thorns are a type of the works of the flesh. In Song of Solomon, Chapter 2, Christ was talking to the church. Christ gave us a

picture of the church when He spoke of her in verse 2: "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Do you think you could find a lily in a thorn patch? Well, you *can* find the church among this confusion. Why did God liken her to a lily among thorns? These churches and man-made organizations are works of the flesh. Any church that you can join was started by some man or group of men. It is an earthly thing. That second beast came up out of the earth, or out of the minds of men.

God's church is the only one that came down out of Heaven. Christ likened her to a lily among thorns. I believe there are many people that see her, but they are not willing to take the scratching to get to her. She is like a lily among thorns, and the thorns will scratch you and work on you. You will get scratched up. It will take some persecution to get there. But if you are willing to pay the price and take the trip through the brier patch, you can get in the church.

Isaiah 55:7-8 will help us understand better that thorns are a work of the flesh. It states: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD." If you will throw away your thoughts and your ways and take God's thoughts and God's ways, we can all go together. The thing that divides God's people is *their* thoughts. We had better cast them aside and find out what God thinks. The Word of God is the mind of God. Only an old, deceitful spirit and false doctrine would tell people that "we do not know what God's mind is in the matter." Go to the Word, and if He never spoke any later than that, it will be just as He said. If you will believe, you can have it that way. The Word of God is the mind of God, searching our thoughts and searching our ways. If you will take God's way, we can go together. Isaiah 55:9 reads, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

When we get lifted to the place that we take God's way and when we get a revelation of God's truths, we sit together in a heavenly place right here on earth. While men are operating what they think, God's people are in a heavenly atmosphere walking in what God thinks. Praise the Lord! Isaiah 55:10-11 tells us: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

What will happen to you when the Word hits you? We read in Isaiah 55:12, "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Those trees are righteous individuals. In Isaiah 61:3 we read, ". . . that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD . . ." Isaiah was trying to show us here that when we get back to God, get right with God, and get back to where man fell from nature, it will even cheer us on our own. He used nature

to show us that when we are out of harmony with God, we are out of harmony with nature. His world does not look as beautiful as it should, and we begin to be sick with the whole thing.

If we will begin to see this thing as God wants us to see it, nature will move us on and encourage us. When the people turn you down, refuse the message, and persecute you, just shut your eyes and say, as the Psalmist of old said in Psalm 121:1, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." Get out alone with God. He will use nature to cheer you on. The birds will sing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Isaiah 55:13 says, "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, [Glory be to God!] and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: [What will it be?] and it shall be to the LORD for a name."

What will be for a name? A people or a congregation of fir trees and myrtle trees with no briars and no thorns. Certain groups say they are God's people, but they have too many thorns and brier patches in among the fir trees. God says, "I will not put My name on it." I declare unto you that when we get far enough into studying the church in Asia, we will see that there is a certain condition that must be met before God says, "I will write My name on it." Isaiah told us what it is. When we get rid of carnality and the works of the flesh, when we become a sanctified people, baptized by one Spirit into one body, a grove of fir trees and myrtle trees, then God says, "It shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign" (Isaiah 55:13). Here is a sign that will work everywhere God's people are, because there is always a need for this. Speaking in tongues is not a sign.

How can you find the church? When you find a place where there are fir trees and myrtle trees and no thorns and briars, that is God's people that "shall be to the LORD for a name." In Song of Solomon 1:17 we read, "The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir." The Church of God cannot be built out of thorns and briars. It is built out of fir trees and myrtle trees. There are a lot of people today that are trying to build everything into the church. What a monstrosity! It is no wonder it does not stand. God builds solid things into the church. He uses the best lumber there is to signify it that way. He also uses the stones, something solid. Yet, men and women today are endeavoring to build these briars and thorns in. God help us to see it.

The Scripture shows us that the old carnal nature chokes out the Word and causes ones to become unfruitful. We are made to realize again that there is a need of a second work of grace upon the souls of men if they remain fruitful.¹ When Jesus taught sanctification in John, Chapter 15, He said in verse 16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." In other words, He was saying, "So that you can remain fruitful."

In Hebrews 6:8 Paul, taking the same symbol, said, "But that which beareth

¹See page **d** for more information concerning this doctrine.

thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." Justified individuals are going to find out that thorns and briars will come forth and choke out the Word, if they do not get rid of the root.

I want to repeat that I come in contact with a lot of people that hold to the thought that once you are born again, a babe for Christ, then you grow into this second work of grace. However, I declare again that it is a definite work of grace, a divine act of God just as much as the first work. There are many types that I could show you that deal with two works of grace.¹ We see them in the two crossings back there. We see them in the two rooms of the tabernacle. God help us to see it. We see it in John, Chapter 15. Then, in Jeremiah 4:3 we read, "For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns." Jeremiah was talking about the same thing I am talking about—how to get rid of thorns and circumcise yourself unto the Lord.

The only way to get rid of these thorns is Bible sanctification. It is a great need. This thing troubles me. I do not know whether it does you or not. There is too much of the attitude among the saints: "Well, what of it? What makes the difference?" I am running into preachers that tell me about other ministers that preach one work of grace one time, then two works of grace the next—and they preach it powerfully both ways. What kind of power? That kind of an attitude will wreck everyone. We need to have a love for this Word and a love and concern for the souls of men that they get the Word as it is.

Chapter 12

THE THORNS MUST BE BURNED

We must be saved and sanctified to be a spiritual Jew. When one was born an Israelite, there was a seal of the covenant, which was the type of the seal of the Holy Spirit sealing our lives. It is the second work of grace.¹ In Colossians, Chapter 2, Paul spoke of it as the circumcision without hands. Again, Paul called it the second blessing and receiving of the fullness of God. The Psalmist said in Psalm 34:8, "O taste and see that the LORD is good." There is a vast difference between tasting of the Lord and being filled with the fullness of the Lord.

The disciples had tasted of the Lord and found it good before Pentecost. That is why they followed Him wheresoever He went, but they received an infilling of the fullness of God on the Day of Pentecost. Sin is twofold in nature, that of wrong being and wrong doing. God created man, and through the transgression of Adam and Eve the whole human family was thrown into sin. Every little babe who is born into the world comes with that old seed of the carnal nature.¹ Very soon the evidence will

¹See page **d** for more information concerning this doctrine.

come to prove that a little child is carnal. Psalm 51:5 tells us, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Psalm 58:3 states, "They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."

There is something that works within, and when we come to the age of accountability, we know right from wrong. Titus 2:11 states, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." According to their teaching, light to know right from wrong breaks out for some earlier in life than others. We all know when it came to us in childhood after or at the time we did some wrong. If the preachers of today will not be true to you, the grace of God will teach you right. Paul said, speaking of the Gentiles, that they had a law right down in their members teaching them something. What was that law?

That law was the very grace of God dealing with every man and woman. That is why very few people can do wrong and get to any age and not feel bad and blush about it when caught. The little child who has not come to the age of accountability can do things, and it does not hurt him a bit. But if a man tries the same and knows better and does not feel ashamed, we ought to have the paddy wagon after him, for something is wrong and he needs to be shut up somewhere.

When we reach the age of accountability and know right from wrong, though we may have done wrong freely before, as soon as we know it is a sin, to still persist in doing the thing is to commit sin. We have willingly done wrong and transgressed God's law. This does away with the thought that we are lost for Adam's sin. Thank God, we are *not* lost for Adam's sin. Adam dragged us into sin, but we make the decision about willful sin for which we must die. If an infant dies before the age of accountability, that soul goes forth into the presence of God. The blood of Jesus Christ has already atoned for his soul.

Paul said in Romans 7:9, "I was alive." The soul of a child is alive before the time of accountability, and that is why they are so sweet. The Scripture says that their angel faces are always before God. Let us look again at Romans 7:9. Paul said, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." There are thorns. The seed was sown among thorns, and they sprang up. Sin revived. What was it that revived? The old thing that had been lying dormant there for those few years before he knew right from wrong.

Paul was alive and preaching when he said that, so it was not a physical death that he spoke of but a spiritual death. He lost that which God had given him in the beginning through committed sin. The old man within listens to the Word of God and runs. Why? Because he can only stand so much. The Word will get the best of the carnal nature.

When we know right from wrong and this thing within us revives and causes us to transgress, then comes some of the thorns, which is the work of the flesh. I remember the first nickel I ever stole from my mother's pocketbook after I knew it was wrong. I thank God it did not get any larger than that. I was going down the street and a police car went by and I thought, "Oh, somebody told." What was wrong? I knew better and condemnation was on me. The thing within that had lain dormant had

taken root and brought forth fruit. We read in James 4:17, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Sin separates us from God.

First John 1:9 tells us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Thank God! When we come through old-time repentance and confession of our sins, we are lifted right back to a childlike state. Jesus said in Matthew 19:14, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." In Matthew 18:3 He said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." The thorns that have been growing have been cut off by the Word and the Holy Spirit, but the root is still there. Another seed has been planted in the heart—the seed of the Word. It begins to grow and bear fruit.

The root that is still there will soon spring forth and choke out the fruit that begins to bring forth for God. In Hebrews 6:1 we read, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." You are ready to leave the principles of Christ when you have measured up to them. There are some principles that come through a born-again experience. People come around and say, "Brother Wilson, can you give us any Scripture for this or that?" No. There are lots of things that are wrong that I cannot give you any Scripture for, but if you ever really get born again, there will be some principles within you that will cause you not to do those things. There are plenty of things that are wrong that are not specifically mentioned in the Bible. Some say, "I'm just taking the Bible." Some people forget that God is still alive and that He still speaks through His ministers just as He spoke through His prophets of old.

What God shows His true ministers will not be contrary to the principles of God's eternal Word. But there are some things in this day and age that are just as wrong as those sins mentioned in God's eternal Word. The Spirit of God, if reigning within you, will witness to you that this is true. These principles come through the experience of the new birth. When I talk with a man who wants to know why it is wrong to use tobacco, I say, "Brother, there is no Bible that I can give you, but if you are truly born again by the Spirit of God, you will receive a knowledge of principles that will convince you."

As saints of God we need to be careful lest we lose some principles that we must have to truly be the children of God. I have one Scripture that suffices for those who come asking these questions as I travel about preaching the Gospel. We preach against the devil's devices and the entertainment that he has invented to keep the saints home from church and feed the old lust of the flesh (there is no man or woman who needs to feed the flesh, it grows too fast as it is). Often people ask, "Brother Wilson, have you any Scripture against the television?" I say, "Yes." Then they ask, "What is it?" I quote 1 Corinthians 10:31, which says, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." If God is not glorified in the television, you had better shun it.

I am preaching on thorns, and that old television has entangled more souls than any other work of the devil in the day and age in which we live. I am speaking from

a pastoral standpoint. Ask the saints who once drifted away from God and have now returned, what caused them to drift. You do not have to take my word for it. They will tell you that television got them. The Word of God says to shun every appearance of evil. Why does God say that? Because it is necessary. Once someone said to me, "Brother Wilson, did you know that 90 percent of the Church of God ministers have televisions? You should just give up preaching against it!" Give up? After hearing that, I was determined to work harder than I did before. I did not know I was so alone. We were in a big crowd that evening and it was a real pull to stand for God, but I said, "The Word of God says to shun the very appearance of evil, but the devil has some of you fellows so deceived and so brazen about it, that you say you can watch anything." They would hate to think that God did not give them enough power to watch anything and not be defiled by it. Also, they feel that anyone who could not is a weaker brother.

I know what I am talking about. I will show you a blind Laodicean. There is no man or woman who can watch the ungodly business that comes out of Hollywood with the scenes depicted thereon and the half-dressed women and keep their minds pure. Why did Christ shun the very appearance of evil? Because it makes no difference how sanctified you are, you are still human.

David was a man blessed of God, but he looked over the housetops and saw that woman. The first look was innocent for it was not intentional, but when he looked the second time, he was feeling a lustful spirit. Some may argue that you see half-dressed people on the streets, and that is true. You cannot help that, but when you deliberately hire a group of them to come to your living room and parade around in front of you in their half-nude state, you are enjoying them. Why else do people whine so when you try to take television away from them? Talk about thorns! It brings immorality right into the homes of the ministry. No wonder Paul said in Hebrews 6:1, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works."

Friend, if you do not move on into this second work of grace,¹ Jesus and Paul both said we will have to turn around and repent again from dead works. There is no standing grace in justification declared in the Word of God. We read in Romans 5:1-2: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." God's grace is able to keep us when we get thrown into tribulation, but when we begin making our own pitfalls, we are done for. I speak with all kindness, but let me tell you that the devil is working in every way that he can. He could not get true saints to go to the movies, so he is working to get the movies to them. He could not get the true saints to join the Catholic Church, so he has lured them into something that looks more innocent by

¹ See page **d** for more information concerning this doctrine.

enticing them to join the sectarian churches.

When we lay ourselves wide open to the devil's snares, we are ready for a hail storm just as sure as anything. Luke 8:14 tells us the people that have the seed sown among thorns bear fruit for a while, but they "bring no fruit to perfection." Hebrews 6:8 says, "That which beareth thorns and briars is . . . nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." The eighth chapter of Revelation deals with Pentecost and what Christ has done for us. The old temple, which was a type, had two rooms. There is a certain teaching afloat that when Christ died the veil of the temple was rent and the temple became one room and therefore there is only one work of grace.¹ Truly the veil of the temple was rent when Christ died, but the altar was not removed. In the old tabernacle with its two rooms, the outside (according to Revelation) was given over to the Gentiles. They came through by this altar where Christ died, an antitype of that old type, but I am not dealing with it now. There was the laver, the shew bread, and the candlestick—a symbol of light and food to keep us here. There was another altar, the incense altar that brought you into the Holy Place. The high priest went in there once a year, and if he was not a holy man, he fell dead. There were bells on his robe, and if the bells quit ringing, they knew that he was dead.

We come as sinners to Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain without spot or blemish or any such thing, to redeem us unto God. We come into this work of grace, but we cannot stop there. There is just a little bread and just a little light, enough to keep us a little while until we get further on. Here is where God wishes us to be, but we cannot get in there without going by another altar. When the sacrifice back in the old temple was slain and the blood ran, the priest would take some of the blood and carry it over to this altar, too, and pour it on the altar. This was a type of something.

Thank God that when Christ died He not only paid the sacrifice for our sin, but His blood was sprinkled on this altar too, and He opened up a new and living way into the very presence of God. But there must be a sacrifice put there. Christ was the sacrifice on the first altar, but who is to be the sacrifice on this second altar? You are. Paul said in Romans 12:1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

It is there that God deals with the carnal nature. He will not deal with it by spraying it, but He puts the fire on it. We read in Hebrews 6:8 that the end thereof was to be burned. That is the only way to handle thorns. If you want to put an end to the thorns of the flesh, let God put Holy Ghost fire on them. If you are saved and bearing fruit unto God, know that there is only one way to remain faithful. Come and put yourself on the altar.

Consecrate your life to God, and swear allegiance to His eternal truth. Jesus said in John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Consecrate to that which is known and unknown. Consecrate to the whole Book from beginning to end. When you are fully laid on the altar, God will send the holy fire and burn up everything that will destroy or hinder you from serving Him. After the vacuum of the Holy Spirit has emptied you, then He will fill you up with something that will give

power to you and enrich you and make you able to stand and bear fruit until Jesus comes again.

Chapter 13

SOME FELL ON GOOD GROUND

We have found that the seed is the Word of God, or the Word of the kingdom. Why should we deal with these simple parables? Because Christ chose that means to teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and we find that there are deep truths hidden within them. We find in the parables four kinds of soil that cover the four classes of humanity. We all fall into one of these four classes: wayside hearers, thorny ground, stony ground, or good-ground hearers. We have already covered the first three of these classes; we will now study the good ground.

Let us start at the first verse of Matthew, Chapter 13. It states, "The same day went Jesus out of the house." Jesus went back into the house before He preached the rest of the sermon. Today a great many people are going to be left outside because they will not come in by the door. That door is Christ, and for that reason they will not be able to find out what is going on in the house. Jesus came to bring us a knowledge of salvation, and everything He came to do for us will be made known. Many people theorize and surmise, but theory is only good until you get knowledge; then you can throw all theory away.

Let me illustrate. If your car breaks down on the way home and you get out to see what is the matter with it, you may shake a few wires and punch this and turn that. Then if your wife gets out and says, "Maybe it is this" or "Maybe it is that," do you tell her that she does not know a thing about it, that she is just theorizing? Yet, that is just what you have been doing yourself. If about that time a mechanic comes along, discovers the trouble, and fixes it, then you get in, drive off, and throw your own theories out of the window. The same thing is true about the Word of God. Jesus came to bring us a knowledge of truth, not just a theory. If we are only willing to wait, God will make it plain.

Matthew 13:1-9 says: "The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

We have found thus far that those who received the seed in the wayside experience went no deeper with God. Those who received it in the stony ground went no further in the Christian life and bore no fruit. Those that received it among thorns bore fruit for a while but because of the old, carnal nature that should have been crucified by a second work of grace, they also became unfruitful.¹

The Word tells us in verse 8, "But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold." I will refresh your minds with old truths. I am a firm believer in the fact that if the old truth brought the people out and kept them together, it will still do so today. True, God has a prophecy for today, but we do not want to forget the old foundations of truths that brought us out to this glorious way and set our feet on the solid Rock. We can gather a people together with just a head knowledge, but it takes the genuine message of truth to cause the love of God to be shed abroad and for all to be baptized into one body by one Spirit.

The same seed was sown on all kinds of ground. The same Word of God was sown in the stony places, in the thorny places, and in the good ground. Someone may say, "As long as we have good seed, we do not have to worry." We need good ground too. Satan works on individual lives. We not only need good seed, but we need good ground. The Church of God cannot be built on wayside, stony, or thorny soil. She cannot be built in a straw pile or in a thorn bush or among stones, but it takes good ground to produce the results we must have to produce the Church of God.

There is just one word that distinguishes good ground from all the rest: the word *fruitful*. Jesus mentioned a very familiar test in Matthew 7:20, which says, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Men hang things on the so-called Christmas tree, but whoever saw a fir tree bear balls and lights and icicles and stars and such? You can hang anything on a tree, but for that tree to bear fruit of its own is another thing. If I should go to an orchard in the winter, it would be very easy to deceive me as to what kind of fruit tree was there. You might tell me that a peach tree was a plum tree and get away with it; but when the peaches come on the tree in the summer, you can deceive me no longer. I will surely know the trees by their fruit. The false ministry of today is trying to preach to God's people. They are putting on sheep's clothing, but if you will look, you will see a wolf in sheep's clothing and a wolf's tracks under it. A wolf does not make sheep's tracks.

The heat of the truth poured out in the fourth-vial Gospel is revealing what is in people. God would have His Word preached under the power of the Holy Spirit; then it brings out what is in people. If you have the love of God shed abroad in your heart, the hearing of the Gospel warms the heart and inspires you to leave that place a better man or woman. Moreover, as the Gospel goes forth from day to day, the

¹See page **d** for more information concerning this doctrine.

divine love and fellowship among the people of God will grow more precious. If there is bitterness in the heart, the Gospel will reveal it. It will bring conviction to the hearers; it will bring out the hatred and bitterness. John said that there were many spirits out in the world and we are to try the spirits. How do we try them? By the preaching of the true Word of God, the spirits—both good and bad—are tried. God help us as never before to declare His eternal truth!

The wayside hearers wanted the truth. They took it and hid it in their hearts, but they failed to get an experience of salvation. People must get down to business with God if they are to have a true experience. God has ways of moving on people and changing them from wayside hearers to the good-ground hearers. I shall give you an illustration.

I preached the funeral of an elderly woman who had died of cancer. A large family had gathered in the funeral parlor. My heart was touched as I looked upon them for I was quite certain that most of them were ignorant of the things pertaining to eternal life. That day it seemed like practically all of the family were wayside hearers for they were not paying one bit of attention to the message. Again I was called to the same place and found that a young man of thirty-five years (a member of the same family) had suddenly dropped dead. This time they all sat still and listened. They could lay away an aged mother who was of the age to die and not think too much about it. At that time they were so surrounded by the things of the world, they could not forget them long enough to let me deal a little with their souls, but when God reached down and took a young athlete, who was seemingly in good health, they were shaken up and ready to hear the Word. God blessed in a wonderful way, and the seed was sown in hearts. God has a way of changing attitudes toward His Holy Word and causing people to hear and understand and decide for or against the Word somewhere along the pathway of life.

These hearers were not those in stony places either. The stones were quickly removed by obedience, making room for the Word. The thorns were plucked up by the roots. In Luke 8:15 we read, "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart [the first thing necessary is to be honest with ourselves and God], having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."

In the morning-time dispensation of the Gospel Day, Christ pictured to us the hundredfold Christian (the morning church, or the bride in her pristine glory) fully yielding her increase to God and to Christ. The Scripture says that some fell on good ground and brought forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold. Why does the Bible say some sixtyfold and some thirtyfold? Recently, a man expressed an opinion that because of the different situations of life, some people could bear no more than thirtyfold, and some could (maybe) bear sixtyfold, but he doubted if anybody was bearing a hundredfold anymore. Yet, the Bible tells us that they bore a hundredfold first, in spite of the fact that there are some who use this portion of Scripture to prove their theory of growing in grace, saying that we begin with thirty, then on to sixty, and finally develop to where we can bring forth one hundredfold.

When we get to the teaching of the evening light, we will see that the Church of God started out on a hundredfold basis. When they came down to thirty and sixtyfold, you could not even see the church. Moreover, the church has never run on less than a hundredfold basis. She was in her thirtyfold basis in Lutheranism, which is so aptly illustrated in the words of Christ in Mark 4:28: "First the blade [thirtyfold], then the ear [sixtyfold], after that the full corn in the ear [hundredfold]."

The church did not start out in cloudiness and later come into the full light, but she started out in the full light and bore a hundredfold. She later fell to sixtyfold and then to thirtyfold and then out of sight. God will not put the church out for the world to look upon in any less than a hundredfold stage. The sixty and thirtyfold set was when she was falling away from the truth and the light of the Gospel that had been given her. Luke 8:8 does not mention the thirty and the sixtyfold. Jesus simply said that the good ground brought forth a hundredfold, and it will do so yet today.

How many sins can you have in your heart and still be holy? Holiness is 100 percent. The morning church bore a hundredfold for God, and because of it, the church was plainly visible and had power. Let us go back to some types in the Word of God. Turn with me to Genesis, Chapter 26. Was Abraham a type of God? Was Isaac a type of Christ? Was Abraham's servant a type of the Holy Spirit whom he sent after Rebecca, a type of the bride of Christ? Let us do away with excuses for some will say, "I'll never get over sixtyfold." Be sure, my friend, that you have Scripture for that. What does the Bible say about it?

Chapter 14

THE HUNDREDFOLD TYPE

Genesis 26:1 tells us, "And there was a famine in the land . . . that was in the days of Abraham." There was a famine in Canaan. What was it for? The famine was God's way of running the Canaanites out. Isaac did not have to fight; God just starved them out. The Canaanites ran down to Egypt for food, and Isaac took the whole land. If Isaac had not listened to God (verse 2), he would have run down to Egypt too.

We need to know we are doing the will of God and stand firm. It might be that God is just trying to run off a few hypocrites through trouble to give us more liberty. In Genesis 26:12 you will see in the same year Isaac sowed the land and brought forth a hundredfold. After the Canaanites were all run out, Isaac sowed the land right during a famine and brought forth a hundredfold. What is that a type of? Old Israel would not listen to God. Although the prophets pled with Him and Jeremiah worked with Him, the people would not listen to God. God moved on Amos, and we read in Amos 8:11, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD." From Malachi until John the Baptist, there was darkness over the earth. There was a famine of hearing the Word of God. Why did the famine come? Man

brought it on himself. Why is there a famine on hearing the Word of God today? Man has brought it upon himself.

People need to learn this lesson: If you go up against God and begin to whine around a little, saying, "I do not want that preaching," God will give you what you want, and you will get plenty of it. You may ask, "Is there Bible for that?" Israel did not want the manna; they wanted to eat flesh. God gave them flesh until they were sick of it. People that wanted to modernize Christianity a few years ago are now so full of it they do not know what to do. If that happens to you, just remember that you asked for it.

The Word of God says in Genesis 26:12 that Isaac sowed the land right in the midst of the famine and brought forth a hundredfold. What was that a type of? There was a famine in the land of the Word of God when Christ came. Just as Isaac took his bride and sowed the land and brought forth a hundredfold right in the midst of the famine, so the morning church (Christ's bride), in her pristine glory, brought forth a hundredfold for God. It was not until the falling away began that the sixtyfold and thirtyfold came into view. Someone may say, "Brother Wilson, that is from the Old Testament. Give us something in the New Testament that will prove we have to bring forth a hundredfold."

Matthew 19:29 reads, "And every one [not everyone who is willing to forsake all but *every one*] that hath forsaken houses [that may be church houses], or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Everyone who has forsaken *all*, for Christ's name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold plus eternal life. These were the words of Jesus. If you cannot get a hundredfold out of your experience, you are still holding on to one of those idols He listed.

Husband, your wife might be hindering you. You may ask, "Am I supposed to leave her?" No, but put her in second place—put God first. Land, children, father, mother—those are the things that are keeping people from serving God in the right way. It goes right back to full consecration, putting everything on the altar for God. If you will put it there and leave it there, you can bear a hundredfold, for the Word of God says so.

During this thirty and sixtyfold age, the reason the people did not reap a hundredfold (it is the same reason they do not yet today) was because they were holding on to things God said, "Let loose of." This first parable parallels with the letter to Ephesus in Revelation, Chapter 2. Ephesus was a sowing age. We need to understand that when the letter was written to Ephesus—approximately A.D. 96—the work of apostasy, compromising, and leaving their first love had already begun. There was a time when Ephesus had a first love—she could not have left it if she did not have it. It might be interesting to know just how short lived the morning glory of the church really was. It might help you because people have said, "Why did the sixth-seal reformation go to pieces so soon?"

Did you know the morning church began to lose some of her glory within twenty-five years after Pentecost? The church was started in A.D. 33, and in A.D. 66 Jude

said, "For there are certain men crept in unawares" (verse 4). This was thirty years after it started. Back in A.D. 62 Paul wrote that the mystery of iniquity had already worked. (It was in 1880 that the glory of the evening light came back.) Within thirty years after the church was built, men had already let down the standard. Men cannot creep in unaware if we do not let the standard down. That is the only way for them to get in. If you add thirty years to 1880, it will bring you to the year 1910. It was in 1913 or 1915 that Brother Riggle and other sixth-seal brethren preached Jude's message all over again. They were crying out, "Certain men are creeping in already. We have to war against them." Even then they said, "If we do not lift up a standard and hold it, we will soon have cook stoves in the basement of the church." (I read this in a book of camp meeting sermons.)

The period we are dealing with is the early stage of the church, a time when she was sold out to God and brought forth a hundredfold. This was before the falling away ever started. Paul declared the day of the Lord would not come except there be a falling away first. The falling away came when the church went from bearing a hundredfold to sixty and then to thirty. Before it ever began Paul wrote to the churches and warned them of what was going to happen. He wrote to Ephesus two years after the church was started and said, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Ephesians 5:14). Whom was this addressed to? Not to the world. Not to sinners. It was to the Church of God at Ephesus. They had gone to sleep on the job. In the beginning she was a hundredfold, but what a pitiful condition she fell to. We will see that something happened from the state that she was in.

In Revelation 2:1 we read, "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars [the stars are the ministry; the candlestick is the church] in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." I am going to give a name to every one of these churches mentioned in Revelation. Ephesus was the sowing church.

The heading of every letter contains the condition that church was in. Christ presented Himself to the church in seven different ways. In Revelation 2:1 we see Christ holding the seven stars and walking in the midst of the church. (Later we will see Him with eyes of fire.) Christ presented Himself as needed. For example, to the sinner He presents Himself as a Savior; to the sick He presents Himself as a Healer; and to the weary He presents Himself as a Comforter, a Sustainer. He was the same Christ in every age, but He presented Himself in seven different ways. Why? There were seven different needs, and He came as that which was needed.

To the church at Ephesus Christ appeared as "he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the . . . candlesticks." Why would Christ present Himself to Ephesus that way? First of all, it was because the ministry had gotten out of hand. Secondly, He was no longer allowed to walk in their midst as He once did. *Walk in the midst* means "his complete government." He once had complete rule; He was Head of the church in every way. He walked in the midst, led them, and enriched them with power, but He was not allowed to do that anymore. If

you follow through these letters, you will see how Christ presented Himself to each of the congregations according to their need.

I repeat, the ministry had gotten out of hand, and because of this Christ was not walking in the midst of the church as He once did. We see it as He described the situation in verses 2-3. Verse 2 states, "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." There was good ground in the beginning. They had the Word. It had brought a change in them. They could not bear "them which are evil" anymore. They had been made into new creatures through Jesus Christ. They hated the things they once used to love and loved the things they once used to hate.

The next thing we know is they *understood* the Word. The fowls could not pick it up. Somebody may ask, "How do you know?" Verse 2 tells us that they "tried them which say they are apostles." How did they try them? When the fowls of the air tried to pick up the Word and take it away, Jesus told them they could not do it. They "tried them which say they are apostles . . . and hast found them liars." That is the way God wants the saints to be today. We are living in a day and age when some saints get scared to death if a Jehovah Witness or somebody who does not have an ounce of doctrine straight and cannot hook two Scriptures together to save them, comes to their door. Child of God, God wants to give you an understanding of the Word so that you can try false spirits and deceivers and prove them to be liars. When the church was in a hundredfold stage, she had enough power with God and understanding of His Word that she could try them which said they were apostles. (We still have a lot of them that say they are but are not.) She tried them and found them to be liars. So, the fowls could not pick up the seed.

In the third verse we read the words, "And *hast* borne [past tense]." What kept the tree from bearing? What causes people to become unfruitful? The thorns grow up and choke out the Word. "And hast borne" shows us a falling away. In other words, Christ was saying, "Thou hast been fruitful." We read in verse 3, "And hast borne, and hast patience, [There was a time when the thorns were all gone, because if there are any thorns in your life, you cannot have patience. You will get aggravated, agitated, and irritated.] and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted."

How do we know they bore a hundredfold? Again, Matthew 19:29 says, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake [that is the reason for it], shall receive an hundredfold." These people had labored for Christ's name's sake; therefore we know they bore a hundredfold. We can read of all the goodness that God showed forth and how they bore a hundredfold. I say to the church, "Let us labor for His name's sake." When we do what we do for His name's sake, or God's name, then we will bear a hundredfold.

God's name is a holy name. It is the only character name there is, and none can bear the name of God except they possess the character and nature of God. Read in

Luke and you will find none were called the sons of God from Adam down to Christ. Adam was called the son of God, but from there on down, man was called the son of man until Christ came, who was called the Son of God again. Thank God, John 1:12 says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." When we become the sons of God and have the nature of God, then we can bear the name of God and be the Church of God. I pray God will help us to see that there is something in that name. Later on, we will see that God does not write it on everyone.

Paul said Christ was the "firstborn among many brethren" in Romans 8:29. People like to quote John 3:16, which is a good Scripture, but something greater has happened. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, but Jesus is not His *only* begotten Son anymore. Paul said that He was the firstborn among *many* brethren. Peter said that He begot us with the Word of Truth. So, Christ is just one of many begotten sons now. We are all begotten of God. Thank God, when we are begotten of God and born of God, we can bear the name of God and be the sons of God. We are heirs, together with Christ, of everything that God has laid up in store for us. When we labor for His name's sake, we see what David had in mind in the twenty-third Psalm when he spoke about the goodness of God. He wrote in verse 1, "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." I believe it just that way.

People today want this and that and other things of the world. Friend, you need a Shepherd, because when you sell out and let Christ become your Shepherd, your wants will be cancelled. David told us of the many things we would not want: rest, food, and water. All teach a great message. Then in verse 3 David wrote, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." It means something to bear the name of God. If we will let the Lord be our Shepherd, He will keep us in the paths of righteousness where we will be one hundredfold saints.

Chapter 15

THE DECLINE OF THE EPHESIAN CHURCH (A.D. 33 - 270)

It means something to bear the name of God. Letting down on truth is a reproach to the name of God. We must walk in the paths of righteousness to bear the name of God. The early church worked and labored and bore for His name's sake. Christ spoke of this in Revelation, Chapter 2. However, after Christ told what they had done, He said, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee" (verse 4). It is sad to think about this! After all the commendable things He said about the Ephesian church, Christ said, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee." In too many cases, people may think you are all right, you may think you are all right, your wife or husband may think you are all right, the movement may think you are all right; but Christ is saying to you, "I have somewhat against thee." We cannot measure

ourselves by ourselves or anyone else. We must measure ourselves by God's eternal truth and that alone. We cannot follow people or groups of people.

What did Christ have against the Ephesian church? Verse 4 continues, "Thou hast left [not *lost* but *left*] thy first love." You are to be pitied if you have *lost* your first love. I feel sorry for you, and I will go with you and help you hunt it; but Christ said, "Thou hast *left* thy first love." You may ask, "What does that mean?" In essence, Christ was saying, "You do not love Me like you used to, and you do not love one another as you used to." When the saints do not love one another as they used to, it is because they do not love God as they used to. The outgrowth of our love for God is a fervent love for our brethren. There is no man (regardless of who he is) who can love God wholeheartedly without also loving God's creation. If we begin to feather the edges of our love, so to speak, for our fellow man, our love for God has been interrupted first. Christ did not say that they did not love Him, but that they left their *first love*. The same thing is happening today. People today love God, but they love pleasure more than they love God.

The church at Ephesus had left her first love. Christ came looking for a bride, not a servant, and that is what He is looking for today. He can get a lot of people to serve Him, but the thing that is required is love. I will show you that serving God alone will not work. Why do I mention that? There are too many of the people of God today that have let serving God become a duty. How do I know? I hear them testify, "Well, I was going to do such and such tonight, but I thought it was my duty to go to prayer meeting." They might as well have gone on and done such and such. "I think it is my duty." No! The Word of God says when you have done your duty, you are still an unprofitable servant. Church, if we are not careful, we are going to have a congregation full of unprofitable servants trying to show the world the Church of God.

This is a service of love. We serve God because we love Him. It is not just our duty to serve Him, but thank God, we love to serve Him. Suppose my wife would say, "Come on, let's go home," and I would say, "Well, I do not want to go home with you, but since it is my duty, I will go." What would you think of me as a husband? What if she wanted to kiss me good-bye before I left and I said, "Oh, I hate to do it, but it's my duty, so come here, I'll kiss you"? Sure, it is my duty, but there is a law that lifts the standard and makes us forget all about duty. If you are missing church, the reason is that you do not want to come. Be truthful about it. All liars will have their part in the lake of fire.

God sees the intent of the heart. People that love to serve God *are* serving Him and people that love to go to church *are* going. People that love the truth have the truth. That is one reason I am not compromising. I love the truth too much. That is one reason I am not running after other women. I love my wife too much; it is not just because a marriage law governs me. There is something deeper and richer and more complete than that. I want you to see it. If people have their first love where it ought to be, you can forget about paid choirs, paid song leaders, and paid everything else.

Paul received cruel treatment: he was stoned, beaten, and laid outside the gate.

Although he was left for dead, he got up a little strength and preached again. When he was questioned, "How can you do it, Paul?" his answer was, "I am not doing it for money; I am not doing it for fame; but the love of Christ constrains me." The love of Christ will constrain you and push you beyond your strength, beyond that which you are able to do. It will cause you to go 365 days a year. I declare unto you that this old-fashioned love of God in the hearts of the people was what sent the church out conquering and to conquer.

The white horse in Revelation, Chapter 6, is the symbol of the morning church going forth conquering and to conquer. The morning church was a conquering church before it went out, and it kept on conquering after it went out. Unless we are conquerors before we go out, we had better not go. If you do not live it at home, stay at home; do not go any farther than that. If you do not live it in the congregation where you are at, stay there until you get straightened out, do not try to go out and live it some place else.

The morning church went forth conquering. Again I say, they were conquering before they went out; the battle was won before they ever left. How did they conquer? In Romans, Chapter 8, Paul told us how they conquered. He asked if anything could separate us from the love of God, and then he mentioned some things one by one: principalities, powers, things present, and things to come. What can separate us from the love of God? Life! People get too busy living. Paul said we are more than conquerors. Why? Because the love of God has been shed abroad within our hearts. This is what sent the morning church forth conquering, whether you want to believe it or not. It was not their head knowledge. It was not their education at powerful institutions, because they did not have any church buildings. There was a love put within their hearts that caused them to preach it, and that is the way I feel. Let me tell you, that is the love that Ephesus left.

This sixty and thirtyfold business has always been a sad thing to come into the picture. God wants a hundredfold, and God requires a hundredfold. The Lutherans and the Wesleysans got along on a thirty and sixtyfold basis, and God worked with them when they had no greater light; but when full light came, He no longer accepted thirty and sixtyfold. He kissed old Babylon good-bye, and He said, "Come out of her, my people." What do people do when they come out of her? They come out of a thirty and sixtyfold state and come into a hundredfold state; they come back to Mount Zion, the evening light, just as it was in the morning light.

Again, Revelation 2:4 says, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Do not become confused while we are dealing with this first love. It is not a jellyfish love. They had the love of God shed abroad within their hearts. The first love—that propelling, restraining force—moved them on. The sixth verse tells us that there are some things God hates. This love of God has some hatred about it too. The Word of God gives us seven (a complete number) things that God hates. We are living in a day and age in which people are preaching that God is nothing but love. They will tell you that regardless of what you do, He is too loving to send you to hell. Friend, if you make your bed in hell, God has

nothing to do with it.

Again, however, there are some things God hates. What did Christ say? Revelation 2:6 states, ". . . that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." He did not hate the Nicolaitanes; He hated the *deeds* of the Nicolaitanes. There is another precaution to the church today. The fire of the Holy Ghost (in this trying and shaking time) enables us to hate the deeds of an individual while still loving him. Church, we have to be careful or we will be rejoicing in some things we should not be rejoicing in. Even though people are modernizing and apostatizing, I am not going to be happy because something bad happens to them. If a man is devil possessed and he has an accident, I would feel sorry for him, even though I want nothing to do with the spirit that has gotten hold of him; I would not pet the thing. Saint, we must have enough of the Spirit of God within us to be able to recognize the devilish spirits and systems that have gotten hold of women and men.

If the love of God would hold men for their deeds, Christ would have never had to come to earth for us. God had something against all men, but overlooking the deeds to an extent, He came to reach us, if we abide by His Word. Let us be godly men and women and try them that say they are apostles and use the Word to do it.

God loved the Nicolaitanes, but He hated their deeds. Let us look again at verse 6: "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." What was He talking about? If you will study the Nicolaitanes, you will find they were a loose sect of that day. They sheltered under the name of Christianity but had no possession of the Spirit of God, whatsoever. It was just forms and procedures that caused them to shelter under the name of Christianity. Christ spoke to the church at Ephesus and said, "You hate the Nicolaitanes." Why? They were professors; they professed something they did not have. Christ then said, "Which I also hate." In so many words, Christ was saying, "Ephesus, you are doing the same thing for which you are hating the Nicolaitanes." People will carry on about the Nicolaitanes (people that profess something they do not have) and think they are awful, but they are doing the same thing: they have left their first love.

God has shown to me that "groupism" is of the world. People have a problem with this or that group, but they are guilty of some of the same things themselves. God was saying to Ephesus, "You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. They are professing something they do not have. Ephesus, you are doing the same thing. You are professing to still be the church, yet you have left your first love." God hates it, whether the Church of God is doing it or the Methodist. Study the church at Ephesus. Were they not doing just as the Nicolaitanes? Were they not professing something without a possession, having left their first love?

We see the Ephesian church put in the same category as the Nicolaitanes. She loved Christ, but not as she once did. Let us go back to Jeremiah, Chapter 2. Verses 1-2 read: "Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals" That is what God remembered about the church. What did He want Jeremiah to tell Jerusalem? "Tell her I remember her in

the days of her youth, and I remember the love of her espousals." What are espousals? They are vows. One set of espousals are those vows we make when we become married to a companion. Here God was speaking to the church, saying, "I remember her youth, how she was in the days of her youth; I remember the love of her espousals." He remembers the love that prompted those vows. No person was ever truly saved without a love and appreciation of God leading him or her to the place of yielding all unto God. God said to the church that is what He remembers.

Let us continue reading Jeremiah 2:2: ". . . the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." This ties into the thought we are using. In essence, God said, "When you followed Me in the wilderness," or "I led you into the wilderness." He was talking about times past when people did not know their way. That was the time to take the church in the wilderness, a day when they did not know their way; they had to trust Christ to lead them. He was truly the Head. The church today knows her way around too well. God wants us to remember and is reminding the church of the love that prompted those espousals. Child of God, I dare you to go back in your experience. If you ever received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, if the love of God once moved upon your soul and melted you down and caused you to want to give all that you possessed or ever expected to possess, remember that. Have you left the love of God?

Chapter 16

THE PARABLE OF THE TARES

It has been true in all ages that when God began to work a good work, the devil came up with something. The devil is never going to stand still for an individual or a group of individuals to go all out for God without doing some kind of a work in the midst to hinder. He knows today that he cannot prevail against the church that Jesus built, but he is going to do his best to hinder it and slow it down in every way he can. By studying the Word of God, we know that no outside force can stop the church. I want that to be settled in your mind. Every outward force the devil used against the church, she subdued and overcame. The devil has brought the downfall upon many and has hindered the church in a greater way by working on the inside in some way. Someone may say, "I don't think any kind of an evil work can get into the church." What wrecked the church in the morning time? Jude tells us that men crept in unaware.

I know that none can get through the door of the church (Christ) and get saved in any other way, but I am now going to branch out. Thus far we have been speaking of individual lives. In the parables we are going to branch out and take in the whole world and that which called itself God's people in the morning time. We have already studied it a little bit. Men crept in unawares and did an inside work. This work brought ruination upon the people of God and opened up the way for the devil to

come forth with the powerful first beast, and it gave the dragon power to tear asunder.

Once I was in a camp meeting where a man preached on "What Is Sin?" I knew right away when he presented his subject, he could not be God's man because he would have known what sin was. He kept dealing on what sin was and left the people in a vacuum. He left nearly everyone to decide for themselves what sin was. He began with the reformation and told how they used to think it was a sin to wear a necktie. We have since found it is not. We once thought this thing and that thing was sin and found out it was not. Little by little he left room for everything; according to him, nothing was sin. At the end of the message, he said that the church is going to pieces. He said that Jesus built a church that the gates of hell cannot prevail against, and that is right. The gates of hell cannot prevail against it, but men can rise up in the midst of it, preaching perverse things, and tear her to shreds. Let us not be deceived. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the church, but we have to own to the fact that when the devil could not do anything from the outside, he did work to get people to let the standard down from the inside. It happened again in the evening time, whether you want to admit it or not, just as it did in the morning time.

We need, as never before, to get hold of something and see what God has in store for us. This is one of the hardest parables, as far as I am concerned, to make clear in the minds of men, because this parable has more preconceived ideas about it than any of the rest; but God is able to clarify. I do not gather a lot of Scripture to prove it. I trust the Spirit of God to give light here. If the Spirit of God does not convince you, you will never be convinced. Where there is an honest heart, the Spirit of God will convince him of the truth, even if he does not have a dozen other Scriptures to back it up.

Matthew 13:24-25 tells us: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept" Thank God, many people have come out of the holiness movements and taken their stand for truth. These holiness movements are fighting truth in every way. The devil will twist a Scripture around and hang a false, or erroneous, doctrine on it, especially that of the millennium. The cry is that there is a difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. You will run into it if you are preaching the kingdom straight. When you fight to where you get them pinned down, they begin to hunt for a little limb to hold onto. They say, "Jesus did set up a kingdom in the hearts of men, that is the Kingdom of God, but when He comes again He is going to set up a literal kingdom, that will be the Kingdom of Heaven." Tut! Tut! The Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are the same thing. Here Matthew called it the Kingdom of Heaven. In the same parable Luke called it the Kingdom of God. Let us not get off on some of these traps. Go back and read Daniel. He called it both the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God. In Daniel 2:44 we read, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom" So, the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are both the same kingdom.

Matthew 13:24-30 states: "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

I say again, every verse in these parables is significant of something. The first two verses of Chapter 13 say that Jesus went out of the house and brought the multitudes; but look at verse 36: "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house." If you ever learn anything about these parables from now on, you must get into the house. While He was sowing, He was out sowing to the multitude, but when He went to give us the truth of the matter, He sent the multitude away and went into the house and told His disciples to come in where He could tell them the truth about this thing. If you ever see the truth about the kingdom, you are going to have to get into the house. People that are sitting around on the doorstep and in the front yard are trying to tell us what is going on. This is where you get all your theories today. People out in the front yard are trying to theorize and tell you what is going on in the house. We read in verses 36-37: "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man." This is not anything that the disciples sowed; it is not anything the early apostles sowed; it is not anything we are sowing in this evening light. The Son of Man did this sowing. Let the parable stay where it belongs.

Someone may say, "Brother Wilson, this parable happens to be at the end of time." That is right. It is the end of time, but you need to be straight on when the end of time begins. The Son of Man is the One who did the sowing. *When* did He sow? Already we have said that He sowed when He literally walked up and down the shores of this old earth, preaching the Gospel. That is when He did the sowing, so that is the harvest we are dealing with in this parable; not something out at the Second Coming of Christ.

We read on in verses 37-38: "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world [at this part of the parable the field is the *world*, not the *church*]; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one." God wants the wheat to grow beside the tares. He wants a saint to live beside a sinner. He wants a saint to work beside a sinner. Why? That is the only way a sinner will ever get any help. However, when we narrow it down to the kingdom, or the church, here in this parable, we will show you that God does not want tares and wheat growing side by side. Remember, in the beginning of this parable, it reached out to the whole world, but before it is finished

He narrowed it back to the kingdom. "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels" (verses 38-39). The Word of God says that it is the end of the world. That is absolutely correct, but let us see when the end of the world is.

We must take time and read this Word slowly, or we will become confused. The first field is the world. The good seed and the wheat, as it is later spoken of, are the same thing. I trust you will begin to get a picture in your mind. If God still wants the wheat and the tares together, then the Church of God has no place in the religious world. First, we see the field, or the world. Next, we see the wheat coming up together as the kingdom, that seed which Jesus sowed, which the Scripture tells us is the Word of God or the Word of the kingdom. He sowed it, and it began to come up together. Then we see an enemy going right in among that wheat. He had the whole world in which to sow his seed, but where did he sow it? Right among the wheat.

Let us get the picture. The devil had the whole field (the world). Jesus had sowed the good seed and up came the wheat. We know it had already come up because the Scripture says, "His enemy . . . sowed tares among the wheat." Jesus was bringing forth a beautiful harvest with this Word of God. The devil had anywhere to sow the tares except where Christ had sowed the wheat, but he came and sowed the tares right in among the wheat. (That is where he wants to sow them yet today.)

This parable overlaps the other. Remember, we were dealing with individual lives up to a hundredfold. When one hundredfold came we were ready to burst out in the good ground and bring forth the church and here she came. When the devil saw this, he did not want it to yield a hundredfold, so he put some tares among the wheat. Hundredfold is when there are no tares in it. If a wheat field is reaping a hundredfold, there is not one tare, or weed, in the whole thing. Every bit of the ground is producing wheat. That is one hundredfold. That is the picture that Jesus gave us of the church, and the devil does not like it. This portion of the world, or the field, is where the wheat was coming up. It is a picture of the morning church in the world. The field is the world, but not of the world.

The devil is the same today. He wants the tares among the wheat; he does not want the harvest to be one hundredfold. When we see the wheat coming on, symbolizing men and women bearing one hundredfold to God, we know the devil will do something. He wants to kill the beauty of the harvest. He hates that one hundredfold business. He will let you bear thirtyfold and sixtyfold and go right along with you. He will let you quit the habits of life, make restitutions, play with God's eternal truth, but when you come to a place of full consecration, putting father, mother, houses, land, children, and everything on the altar and selling out for God, he gets mad. Why? You have cut him off completely. He wants to kill the beauty of the harvest today as much as he ever did.

SOWING THE TARES

Let us look at Matthew 13:25. We will clarify it shortly by the help of God. "But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." The Word of God has already told us that the tares are the children of the wicked one, the one that sowed them was the devil, and it happened while men slept. Before the church came into being, before A.D. 33 (that period of time when Christ, the Good Man, sowed the good seed), men slept and the devil did a work. Go back first to the time that the disciples (that material with which Christ was going to build a church) slept. The devil did a work while the church slept. I jump ahead just a little bit to help you to see this sleeping. It was while the morning church slept that the devil did his work, and it is while the church today sleeps that the devil does his work.

In Matthew, Chapter 25, we read the parable of the virgins, which covers the day and age in which we live. The parable leads right up to the coming of Christ, the Bridegroom. It has to be in that period of time. The kingdom will be like this just before the coming of Christ. It will be like ten virgins, five wise and five foolish, but all asleep. God has sent me out to wake them up. He has given me that message. Someone may say, "How do you know that is the end of time? How do you know that is where the parable belongs?" In Matthew, Chapter 24, Christ dealt with the signs of the end and the sign of His coming. Do not forget that Matthew wrote a whole book. There were no chapter breaks then. Man broke it up in chapters for reference form. Jesus was still talking about the same thing in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew as He was in the twenty-fourth chapter. He had told them about the Second Coming. Jesus said, "Watch therefore."

Jesus told them how He would come on the world as a thief at an unguarded time, at a time when they did not look for Him. In Matthew 24:44 He said, "For in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." In Chapter 25 Jesus said the kingdom will be like this. *When* will the kingdom be like this? Just previous to the Second Coming of Christ. What will it be like? Ten virgins—five wise and five foolish. God sent me out to wake the church up; and He told me that if I would wake up myself and stay awake, there would be nobody asleep around me. I could kick over things and make a lot of noise, but they are not supposed to be awakened until the midnight cry. Jesus gave us a picture of that parable to show us the pitiful plight of mankind and that the midnight cry is too late. The midnight cry is the Second Coming of Christ. God has awakened some ministers to cry out in this eleventh hour, to wake people up before the midnight cry comes. When the midnight cry goes out, the oil shops will be closed for time and eternity. Dear one, in the name of the Lord, wake up and get a lamp and some oil before Christ comes!

The devil cannot do anything with God's people if they are awake. The first thing he does is put God's people to sleep. Study through the Gospel Day and look at the

period of time before the dragon, beast, second beast, or eighth beast began to move. The first thing the devil did was put the church to sleep. If the church is awake, they are going to fire on him; they will bruise his head. It will make no difference if he has seven heads. As fast as he sticks one up, the church bruises it; he sticks out another, and the church bruises it. When he puts the church to sleep, he can get his head, his body, and his whole tail out without anybody hindering. When we see Roman Catholicism and Communism on the move, it is a dead giveaway that the church is asleep. (I am speaking of the church as a whole.) God has some people awakened, but it is a big job. When does a robber break into your house? He will not come in while you are awake and the lights are all on. He waits until you go to bed and turn the lights out. Roman Catholicism is coming right in the front door. They are not sneaking around, but they are coming in the front door and taking possession of everything. The ministry says, "I do not believe we should say anything about it." They are asleep. They are not awake to the true condition of things. They are on the stool of do-nothing; they are at ease in Zion and are resting there. Just as the disciples slept, the morning church slept. I want to hold the thought that the first thing the devil does is put God's people to sleep for he cannot come in and rob them while they are awake. I will prove that when he tries to rob us while we are awake, he gets caught in his own net. While men slept, he sowed tares among the wheat.

In every age, even in this evening time of light, the devil is getting a work done among us. "While men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat" (Matthew 13:25). The devil cannot work if we will stay awake and keep the light on. When the early Church of God let her light shine, she did not have to worry with the many things we have to worry and fret about today. Why? In too many places today, Babylon's merchants—unclean workers or workers of iniquity as Jesus called them—can feel at home and fill the pulpit right around what is called the Church of God. That is a clear sign that the light has been turned down, because men with evil deeds will not come around the light if it is shining in its brightness. Friend, I want you to see that it was when God's people were asleep and the light was not shining as it should have been that the devil did his work. I do not have time to go into the thought, but notice how that when Christ went to the grave (He who was their Light), they all went back to their old walks of life.

Jesus, speaking in Mark 4:21, asked this question: "Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed?" No, the candle is lit to be set on a candlestick. Just use a little common sense. You do not light a light when you go to bed, but you turn it out. "Why in the world did you go to bed when you just lit the candle?" That was what Jesus was saying. You may ask, "What are you talking about—going to bed?" Too many times people get an experience and get all lit up with God, and then they say, "Oh, it will be a while before Jesus comes again. I might just as well wait until He comes. What a long old wait! Ho-hum. Sometimes I get so tired of waiting for Him. It looks like He will never come." That is what He was talking about: people lighting a lamp and putting it under a bed. Church of God, if you have your lamp under the bed, it will burn the bed down.

"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel" (Matthew 5:15). The bushel that Jesus was dealing with was old Judaism race prejudice. They thought this light was just for the Jews. Jesus said, in essence, "If you take this light and put it under that bushel and keep it just for the Jews, it will go out." If you take a candle and put a bushel (the original Greek says a *measure*) over the light that God has given you, it will smother out the light.

People take this light and put it in a creed, dogma, or discipline; they just take a measure and put it over the light. What happens? Their light goes out. What was light given for? It was given to be set on a candlestick. What is the candlestick? Jesus said that the candlestick was the church. You set your light on a candlestick, and it will light the whole house. Whosoever will measure to it takes in all of God's people: every nation, every tongue, and every color. It will light the whole house. That is why God took the candle out of old Babylon. If you read Revelation, Chapter 18, you will find that the candle will not be seen there anymore. Babylon puts it under a bushel, and they put it out. God took it out of there and set her back on the candlestick to let her light the whole house and the whole world. The Baptists wants to put it under a bushel. They are only going to give their light to Baptists. The Methodists are going to put it under their bushel, and they are not going to light anyone but Methodists. However, God said, "You are not going to work this light with that business. I am going to bring that light back up to Mount Zion and set her on the candlestick; let her light the whole house. Whosoever will—all My people—let them come."

The Spirit says "Come" and the bride says "Come" and everybody that has tasted of it says "Come." God has one place for the candle, and that is on the candlestick. If you do not repent of this business and get back to your first love, what will He do? He will take the candlestick away. When the candlestick is removed, there is no place to put the candle. There is no light there. They are just a congregation of people who has rejected the message God has given them. They have left their first love and would not repent, so the candlestick was removed. God is taking His people out of these places of darkness and confusion where they walk as blind men. The beast they used to preach against, they now can walk arm in arm with and see nothing wrong in it. Many things they cried out and held a standard against, they have now quit crying out at and have let down the standard. They can deck themselves with the things of the world and feel right at home. Why? The candlestick has been removed, and there is no place to put the light. Church, God will give you light for just so long. If He sees you do not want light, He will remove it. People are the candlestick. We bear the light and carry it out to the world. We live our lives according to God's eternal truths. This light is not to be put under a bed or a bushel.

We read in Matthew 13:25, "While men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." That is just the way the old boy works. He will jump in, do his work, and get out of the picture. When Satan is doing his greatest mischief, he studies to conceal himself in the greatest way. You will see less of the

devil when he is doing the worst work. He ran in while they were asleep, sowed the tares, and left. Why? So it would look like any other good work; so it would look like the devil had nothing to do with it.

Jesus said these things would come upon us and would deceive the very elect, if possible. That is quite deceptive. The elect are not being deceived by Roman Catholicism. They are not being deceived by Protestantism. Modernism and apostasy are the most deceptive things the saints have ever had to come up against. Our hope is in the Spirit of God. The same people who know the first beast and second beast are wrong are failing to see that the eighth beast, with its workings and deceptive powers, is even more deceptive. Why? Because many times this beast has the right name for God's people. They still preach the Word of God, portions of it anyway, and they speak of the fact that they preach it all. This beast is the most deceptive thing the saints have ever had to come up against. I am not speaking against individuals; I am speaking of tools and systems, works the devil is using in the day and age in which we live. The devil came, sowed the seed, and then went his way.

The tares will spring up without any cultivation. The devil did not have to worry about coming back and cultivating. God help the church to get out of bed and throw the bushels away. You can get under a bushel just being movement wise. I speak as broadly as the Word of God will let me. I have actually run into people that have said, "I'll take what D. S. Warner said, no more and no less." If D. S. Warner were here today, he would rejoice in the light of the day. This evening light is a restoration of the morning light, plus a light that gets all the false "jams" of our day. We preach a greater message. The sixth-seal ministry preached a greater message than the morning church. Why? The morning church never had to fight the second beast. Even so, we are in a day and age when the devil has come and tossed in other ideas and systems to deceive, destroy, and rend the body of Christ. God's eternal Word covers it from beginning to end. I am glad for truth that will tell us what the devil is going to do before he does it. Who in the world could not overcome him? Saint, get your eyes on God's eternal Word, open up your heart to the leadership of His Spirit, and He will have you waiting on the devil before he ever comes. Satan is coming around and saying, "I'll get them this time," but when he gets out there, you can say, "I have been waiting for you, fellow. I know what you are going to do, you rascal." That is what God wants to do for His people, if we will open our hearts to Him, wake up, and lay hold of the goodness God has given us.

In the parable that speaks of Christ before He went away, what did He do? He delivered His goods unto them. We are not fighting the devil with different equipment than Christ. We are fighting with the same equipment. Our warfare is not carnal. Paul said in Ephesians, Chapter 6, to put on the whole armor of God. Many people say the battle of Armageddon is not until the Second Coming of Christ, so Paul must have been a fool. He had people putting on the armor way back in A.D. 66. I suppose the poor people sat all their life with their armor on, died, and never did get to fight. Friend, the battle of Armageddon has been going on since the Garden

of Eden. It is a fight of truth against error, righteousness against unrighteousness.

Paul said to put on the whole armor of God. I like to think of what prompted men to write what they wrote. Paul was just as human as you are. Often a minister, even while driving down the road, sees something, or something happens, and he likens that to the church and preaches it. Paul was the same way. He saw things, and they became metaphors for spiritual lessons. Where was he when he wrote to the church at Ephesus? He was sitting with stocks and chains on in an inner prison of a Roman jail with a Roman guard walking back and forth in front of him. He was not worrying about his condition; he was just like Jesus. He knew his head was going to come off, but he was worrying about the church back in Ephesus. He was afraid when he passed on they would falter in the way. He said, "O God, what can I write them that will encourage them to stand?" He watched the guard walking back and forth in his armor, and no doubt he said, "That guy is really covered. I could not get at him if I wanted. That's it! I'll write to Ephesus and tell them to put on the whole armor of God."

He saw the soldier's helmet and said, "Take the helmet of salvation." He looked at the soldier's loins and said, "Having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness. . . . taking the shield of faith . . . the sword of the Spirit . . . ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6:14, 16-17). God sent us down an armor. Paul took a few Christian words and described an armor that is devil proof. He said, "Put on the whole armour of God" (verse 11). Get your helmet and your breastplate on. Get your loins girded and put the shoes on your feet, then get the shield of faith. The sword of the Spirit is your defense. The shield of faith protects you. It was given to quench the fiery darts of the enemy. The whole armor does not win the battle, but it is there to protect you. It is a devil-proof armor. Put it on, then when the devil comes after you, you will see that he cannot touch you. After you know that the armor is devil proof, you can stand right in a nest of devils and still resist them. Then take the sword and go after him. He cannot hurt you, so put it on him. Church, get your sword and go after the devil. You are more than an overcomer through Christ.

That was not the first time that the thought of armor was used in the Bible. The Word of God says that Christ has delivered His goods unto us. Everything has been proven before we ever get it. People say, "I tried it and it would not work." Tut! Tut! You do not *try* this thing; it was all tried before it was ever given to us. The stone was tried for hundreds of years to make sure it would do the job. He tried them in every way: He watered them in the drought; He fed them in the famine; He kept clothing on them. I am serving the same God who can keep your clothes. He will keep them from wearing out, or He will get you new clothes.

This stone was tried and tested in every way. When it was proven to be infallible, not a failure in it, God moved on Isaiah and said, "I'm going to lay in Zion a tried stone." It has been tried in every way. Not only has the stone been tried and tested, but the armor has been tried and tested also. Isaiah, Chapter 59, will give you a picture of man's pitiful condition—the pride of their heart as a cart rope pulling their

sins behind then. Pride is the cart rope that pulls men's sins. If you will get rid of that old pride, then you can cut the rope and get loose from your sins. Isaiah told of man's pitiful plight and condition and said there was no man who could help them. There was not an intercessor (anybody) who could pray for us. It was then that Isaiah brought Christ into the picture. What did He put on? He put on the helmet of salvation and the breastplate of righteousness. He put on the same armor, went out and met the devil on his own ground, and defeated him. He said the armor is devil proof. He put it on the proving ground and then gave it to you and me. I pray that God will help you see that these things are tested and true.

Chapter 18

THE TIME OF HARVEST

In Matthew 13:28 we see the devil's work. The enemy comes in, sows the seed, and goes his way. What is he interested in? He would like to get a tare in among God's people. It kills the effect of the good seed. When the tares began to come up, the servants said to the good man in verse 27, "Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?" Verse 28 says, "He said unto them, An enemy hath done this." The devil will do the same thing today if he can. He would like to get an individual who will not do right and act right in the midst of God's people. Why? Right when things are going good, this individual wants to do the opposite, causing a stranger who is almost convinced to say, "You call that a good saint? Is that what you call Christianity?" Your answer should be, "No, an enemy hath done this." The devil is never satisfied.

Let us read verses 28-30: "He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

Verse 36 says that Jesus went into the house. Reading on in verses 37-40: "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."

The next thing we need to do is to clarify this Scripture. Verse 40 tells us that "so shall it be in the end of this world." First Corinthians and Hebrews let us see when the end of the world really is according to the Bible. We read in 1 Corinthians 10:10-11: "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 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." The words "the ends of the world are come" refer to A.D. 40 to 50, back during the morning time. Hebrews 9:24-26 makes it plainer: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, [This is speaking of Christ, our High Priest. He is not going in like the old priest did; He went into another place, to the very throne of God. But read of when He went.] which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

To the millennialist, the end of the world is the Second Coming of Christ. "The end of the world" is an expression throughout the Word of God that means "the last dispensation of time," or the Holy Ghost dispensation. If these are not enough Scriptures, I can give you others. Jesus said in Matthew 13:30 it would be "in the time of harvest." We have to get this time straightened out or the rest of the parables will not be right. I have already given you two Scriptures that say the end of the world was the Holy Ghost dispensation. When was the harvest? Someone may say, "That is out at the Second Coming of Christ." I will let Jesus speak to you. John 4:35 reads, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?" That was before A.D. 33, yet some people say it is still out in the future. It was not four months off, even then. Verse 35 continues, "Look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Jesus told His disciples, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:38). Laborers, or reapers, are what He said He was going to send out. When? Is Christ's Second Coming the time He is going to harvest the earth? No! Christ's Second Coming is not mentioned anywhere in these parables. Jesus said He would send His reapers (the Greek says *messengers*, or *ministers*).

"Look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." From where did that harvest come? The Son of Man is the One who sowed the seed that brought this harvest. What harvest are we dealing with? The harvest that began on the Day of Pentecost. People think Peter went out and produced three thousand saved souls when all he really did was *reap* three thousand souls. Jesus sowed the seed. To find where the harvest came from, read Isaiah 9:2-3. (With these parables I have been able to help more people to leave the holiness groups and to expose the millennial doctrine than with any other portion of the truth. When you begin to show people the parables and they begin to see what falsities they have been in, do you know what they do? Many times they go right back and question everything their preacher says. They have found him wrong on one part of it, and he might be wrong on another. Often the minister gets mad and says, "You are a church tramp. Get out of here; we do not want you!" That is why I like to tell the truth on Babylon's merchants. Truth causes people to start putting the truth on her preachers and questioning them. They do not like it. They want you to take it just as the Catholics: "Take it just because I said it and don't question it." God's people do not do that. They question what

ministers say by the Word.)

Isaiah 9:2, dealing with the coming of Christ, tells us, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." We are all dwelling in the valley of the shadow of death.

Chapter 19

THE HARVESTERS

Many people think that David took a walk in the valley of the shadow of death when he said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death" (Psalm 23:4). We all walk in it. The very minute we are born the shadow of death is over us, and it is there until we die. We are all in the valley of the shadow of death. That is where this light came: right down in the valley of the shadow of death. Those born to die physically are the kind of people this light came on. Somebody may say, "That is spiritual death." No, they were already dead. They were not in the valley of the shadow of death. They were already dead (spiritually) when Christ came.

We read in Isaiah 9:3, "Thou hast multiplied the nation, [Here we begin to see the church. To multiply the nations you must have two nations. This thing we are preaching about takes in all of them.] and not increased the joy: they joy before thee [How do we joy in this experience we have with Christ?] according to the joy in harvest." This lesson is before us. What causes the farmer to go out and ride an old tractor around for days and days, for hours and hours a day? While he is bouncing around over the ground, he is thinking about the joy of the harvest. That is what keeps him on the tractor. Isaiah said when Christ comes, we would rejoice in Him as in the joy of harvest, as people that divide the spoil after the battle. We reap a harvest that we never sowed. That is where grace comes in. There was not one fit for Christ, all were lost and undone. Yet, thank God, we may reap a harvest that we never sowed.

The rejoicing God's people have is in the dividing of the spoil of the battle. Go back and study about Abraham. When he won the battle, the joy was in sitting down and dividing what had been captured. Church, we have won a battle we never fought. No one could have fought his way out of sin. Jesus bought the way out. He just allows the saints to divide the spoil. He came down here, whipped the devil, won the victory over sin and the grave, and then said, "There it is; take it." We are to sit down, divide the spoil, and realize all that is ours through Jesus Christ. We did not earn it, He just gave it to us. He walked up and down the shores of this old earth and sowed His precious seed. He stayed right there and kept the tares out of it. How did He do it? By laying down God's eternal Word and keeping the light going forth. Then when He was ready to leave, He said unto the disciples, in so many words, "Look out there. I have sowed the wheat; it is all white unto harvest. Pray for the Father to

send you out." When were they sent out? Jesus told His disciples before He left that this Gospel must be preached in all the world; but they had to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high.

You cannot go out there and pull up the tares with your hands, so to speak. Do you understand the difference between pulling it up and reaping it? Stay at Jerusalem until God gives you a sickle. Why did He not let the servants go when they wanted to? They said, "Let us go out and pull up the tares." He said "No" to the servants. "I cannot let you go out because if you do, you will pull up wheat with the tares." Who were the servants? Another parable teaches us the servants of the householder were the Jewish nation. Why would Jesus not let them go? Because they had their lamp under a bushel. As far as they were concerned, all the Gentiles were tares. God and Christ knew that good seed had been sown in the hearts of Gentiles and they were ready to be harvested. If Jesus had let the Jews go before Pentecost, they would have pulled up every Gentile and thrown him out for a tare. The Son of Man will send the reapers out. He sent them out on the Day of Pentecost.

Peter still had a bushel partially covering his light. He would have liked to have pulled up a bunch of Gentiles (tares in his mind) and thrown them out. God had to take him on the roof to teach him a lesson. In essence, Peter said, "I perceive a new truth. God has poured His Spirit out on the Gentiles just as He has on the Jews." Christ could not let the Jews go before Pentecost, because they did not have Holy Ghost discernment. They could not tell the tares from the wheat.

The next reason Jesus could not let them go until the harvest was because when the tares and the wheat are growing, no man can tell them apart. However, when the harvest comes, the wheat is white and the tares are another color. On the Day of Pentecost, God washed them and made them white through the blood of the Lamb and the Holy Ghost. They walked with Christ in white. Then the tares were visible. When the Holy Ghost came and put the church in their white robes, that same Peter, who previously had no discernment, could pick out the tares every time. A good example of this was Ananias and Sapphira—they were a couple of tares the devil had sown in the wheat. Peter said, "Who persuaded you to lie to the Holy Ghost?" He plucked them up and put them out. God does not want tares among the wheat. Others were Demas and Simon, but Paul picked them up and turned them over to the devil.

The church went through a dark age, but if you look at the Revelation, you will see that a marvelous time came again. God does not want the tares among the wheat. They grow that way in the world but not in the church. Let us read Matthew 13:40, which says, "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world." The Son of Man, speaking here, did not say a thing about His coming, but He said in verse 41 that He will send forth His angels (the Greek says *his messengers*). He sent "his angels" forth on the Day of Pentecost, and they have been going forth ever since. Some may say, "I thought that the Second Coming of Christ is when He is going to send His angels." Why send angels then? The literal angels do not know much about this redemption. The Scripture says they desire to look into it. We sing an old Church of God hymn that says, "Holy, Holy, Holy, the

angels will have to fold their wings because they do not know what we are singing about." Literal angels are not going to come from Heaven and pull up the tares.

Many Church of God congregations have come to the place where they say, "I do not see where it makes any difference whether there is a millennium or not. I just do not mention it." People who say that are not God's reapers. It makes all the difference in the world whether there is a millennium or not. That teaching kills the vital truths of the kingdom from beginning to end. Somebody may ask, "Brother Wilson, in the beginning it was the whole world. How are you going to narrow it down?" I am going to narrow it down just as Jesus did. Read the Scripture slowly. The field was the world in the beginning of this parable. Verse 41 reads, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, [In another place He said 'his reapers.' The Greek says, 'his messengers.'] and they shall gather [now we are narrowing it down] out of his kingdom" The tares and the wheat will grow in the world together but not in the Kingdom of God. We are narrowing it down now from the world to the kingdom.

Let us look at it again: "They shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire" (verses 41-42). Some may say, "Brother Wilson, that is bound to be the end of time." No, the Word of God teaches a definite difference between the *lake* of fire and the *furnace* of fire. Do not forget about this fire that John said Jesus brought. Matthew 3:11 tells us, "He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Then reading in Luke 24:49, we find, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." On the Day of Pentecost the kingdom came with power. When it came with power, God required a hundredfold. He required it individually and collectively. It may be argued, "I cannot see it that way. I believe you should just leave people to themselves." Jesus said, "Teach them to observe." He addressed the letters in Revelation to the pastors of the church, the ones that were responsible for the church. He wrote to the pastor of the church in Thyatira, "Because thou sufferest [allow] that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess . . ." (Revelation 2:20). Who is that a type of? A ministry calling themselves to the ministry, using it as a vocation. The true ministry, or angels, are to reap the wheat and bring it into the barn and to burn the tares with God's holy fire, the truth.

Chapter 20

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED (A.D. 530 - 1530)

In the previous chapters we have been dealing with the first and second parables and the first and second letters. I want to mention enough of them to show that they cover the same period of time as the parables do. We dealt with the binding of the

tares and the wheat and that the harvest time, a time that many are looking to occur at the end of time, actually began in A.D. 33 on the Day of Pentecost. I want to refresh your mind again. There is one clause in those Scriptures that will help you. The Word of God tells us in that parable that the Son of Man did this sowing. That harvest had to be the first harvest His reapers gathered on the Day of Pentecost. The harvest we reap today is the same Word of God, but *men* are sowing it now. Luther, Wesley, and others sowed it right up to the day in which we live. This harvest we dealt with was a harvest the Son of Man sowed Himself when He walked the shores of Galilee.

As we came on up through the Gospel Day, we found by the Word of God that while men slept the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat. The early church began to move into apostasy, and spiritual darkness moved upon the earth because the Word of God was being choked out. We are now studying the church during the Dark Ages, the 1260 years when the kingdom, or the church, was hidden from the eyes of man and covered up under the earth, as the Word of God teaches us in the Revelation. God took the true church and hid her away in the wilderness and those who were true to God had to worship in caves and in hiding. The kingdom was, as the Word of God describes as a metaphor, hid under the earth.

The third parable is found in Matthew 13:31-32, which reads: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

Here we are back again to the next period of time that the kingdom covered, back again to the thought of an individual experience. The kingdom is an individual experience, as well as a collective one. Some would like to say that the kingdom is an individual experience in the hearts of men and the church is a collective phase of the kingdom. I will go along with you on that, but I would like to say this as a word of warning: We must be careful in drawing too rigid a line between the kingdom and the church, or we will clip our power. Someone could take the Word of God and whip us all to pieces. There is a difference. However, when we begin to make it too great a difference, we get into trouble. The same Word of God says that at the Second Coming of Christ, He is going to deliver up the kingdom. Other Scriptures say He is going to present the church unto Himself. Both will be the same action, happening at the same time. It will not be two different services; it will all be the same service. I want to repeat, we are moving into the thought of an individual experience. During the Dark Ages Jesus showed us that the kingdom still reigned. This parable is nothing more than showing us the reign of the kingdom, what it had to undergo, and how it thrived through each period of time. Even though it could not come out openly and reign on the earth, the kingdom still prevailed.

Millennialists say that sixty-nine of Daniel's weeks are fulfilled, but God stopped His clock. That is what they are preaching. They say that God stopped His clock, because they do not know how to handle the entire seventy weeks in the Book

of Daniel. If we will take them as they are, they will bring us right up to the establishment of the Kingdom of God. The sixty-nine weeks bring us up to Christ and His baptism. God said Christ would preach this Word, establish it, and preach the covenant for one week. Time symbols give us a day for one year. Thus, one week would be seven years. From A.D. 26 to 33 was seven years. Those were the seven years when John the Baptist and Christ preached this Gospel. It was in A.D. 33 that the kingdom came with power and Daniel's final week was fully accomplished. I pray that God will help you to see by His Word and through these parables that even though the kingdom was not always visible, it was working all the time. In a consecutive way these parables take the kingdom from the day Christ set it up clear through to the end of time. The old paganistic power and the papal power prevailed against some, but the kingdom never ceased. Even though it was covered up with earthly organizations, or as the Word of God says, "under the earth," it was still working and still growing. As we see in our lesson, it had to go through a stage, but in time came out just as visible as it was in the morning time.

We must not dissect these parables and take them apart to try and preach something. Jesus never quit until He had taught them all. He said the kingdom during this period of time was like a grain of mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds. What has been the seed all down through the lesson thus far? The Word of God. What is the first thing we learn about the parable that covers this age? The Word of God was the least of all seeds. In other words, there was very little or no Gospel preached during this period of time. The seed of the kingdom was the least of all seeds. There were paganistic ideas, idolatry, atheism, and papalism with all its doctrines and catechisms, but very little of the Word of God was preached. During this period of time, the Word (or the Word of the kingdom) was the least of all seeds. That is why there was such a harvest of confusion. It came out of the Dark Ages, a time when there was little or no Word of God preached. The only thing that will bring people out of confusion is to leave off preaching human ideas and theories and preach the straight Word of God. In times past (and maybe in many places yet today), the Word of God was the least of all seeds, even right around so-called Church of God camp meetings. That is why we do not see many bringing forth true children of God. If we are going to bring forth the Church of God, we have to preach the Word just as it is. It will bring forth; it will produce the people of God, but too often the seed of carnality is being sown. Because of that, all that is produced is a bunch of people following man. Preach the Word of God and the product will be a people that are following God. It makes no difference where He goes or where He leads them, they will follow.

Through this parable Christ desired to show us the kingdom during this period of time. He likened the Word unto a grain of mustard seed, which was the least of all seeds. Revelation, Chapter 20, tells us that "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (verse 5). Why? The Word of God is the seed of life, but there was little or no Gospel preached from 270 to 1530. There was no life-giving substance, so people laid dead in their trespasses and sins until God

raised up Luther and others. They again sowed this seed and many people began to be resurrected from their dead spiritual condition. Very few people heard the Word of God through the Dark Ages, especially during the thousand-year period. This is a positive message against the modern age in which we are living. People say, "We just cannot get an experience like we used to have." There were very few who heard the Word during this thousand-year period, yet everyone who laid hold of it gained just as rich an experience right in that darkness as people did in the morning time when there was a full light.

Concerning the mustard seed, Jesus told us even though it is the least of all seeds, when it is grown it is the greatest among all herbs. *Webster's Dictionary* says that a herb is "a plant with a soft, succulent, or juicy stem; after flowering it withers away." That was the condition of the kingdom during this period. Men and women found a real experience with God, and they blossomed out. But as soon as they blossomed out, the cool winds of papalism froze them and killed them; and they withered away. The mustard seed, the least among seeds, becomes the greatest among herbs when it is full-grown. It becomes a tree—something visible, something above the earth. The saints of God need this soft stem. Someone may ask, "What do you mean by 'a soft, succulent stem'?" Romanism tried to twist God's people, working every imaginable persecution trying to break them, but they could not. Why? The Bible says that they loved not their lives unto death. They were filled with the Holy Spirit, and nothing Rome could do in the way of persecution could break down that experience with God. Just as a soft, juicy stem can take twisting and turning, so the saints will take the twisting and turning and everything else. An old, dried stem will break the first time you try to bend it. Church of God, if you ever become a tree, something of a visible form that will be a blessing to others, you have to go through this stage of being a herb first. The church never shines out to a world unless they are a people that can take the twisting and the turning and everything else the devil puts on them. They would rather die than submit, yield, or let down in any way to the devil. It is then the kingdom begins to shine out in a visible form before mankind.

Much of the solidness of the church, or kingdom, rests on this condition that came through here. What holds you solid in a trying time? If somebody does not speak to you or talks about you and you get hurt, think about the people that had their heads cut off, yet did not give up. Look back at a people who were willing to suffer and die and take any persecution the devil put on them. It will bring a solidness into your experience. It will give you a boost when you need it. If they could suffer being burned, crucified, and torn asunder, it should drive any thoughts out of your mind about wearing your feelings on your sleeve, so to speak. Many people let their feelings get hurt too easily. The Word of God says to gird them up. Have charity shed abroad within your heart.

Jesus said this experience was the greatest among herbs, and it became a tree. It was the greatest among herbs because none but true Christianity would be willing to die so gallantly. Here is an experience that God put within the hearts of people that were not only willing to suffer, but willing to die for it that it might live. It was

the greatest among herbs. The church grew faster in this age than she has ever grown in any other age. During this one-thousand-year period, fifty-five million were converted. I have looked into this thing. People say, "My, weren't the Dark Ages terrible!" Yes, but God did His greatest work during those years. History tells us that fifty-five million souls laid down their lives, went on to Glory, and are now around the throne of God, in the presence of the Lamb. When the enemy is putting the pressure on God's people from every side, putting the squeeze on, so to speak, if they truly possess the Spirit of God, it is then that it really radiates out. When the devil is putting on the squeeze, if the real thing is there, the sweet aroma of the Spirit of God will go out, and men and women all around will know that God has definitely done something in the life of that individual. He has something that others, through man's word and man's religion, do not have. Child of God, never be afraid to stand the pressure. An artificial flower will not do it. It is when the enemy puts the pressure on that you show forth this wonderful Spirit of God. You must have that soft, succulent stem to ever overcome. Why must you be willing to be twisted, tried, and tested? If the devil can break you under temptation, you are never going to be a part of the church. You must have this soft, succulent stem. God will put you on the proving ground; He will let the devil twist you, try you, turn you upside down, and work everything he can to break you.

Too many people have become seasoned, saying, "The devil is never going to budge me." That will be all right if you are looking at it in the right way, but God is still going to have a tried and tested people right down to the end of time, a people who are twisted and tried in every way and still are pliable, a people who refuse to break under the trials. Then there are too many people that have said, "I am going to break if I do not get some help soon." They have already broke. Any experience that causes you to grit your teeth in the time of persecution and say, "If he takes me a bit farther, I am going to quit," is no good. This experience was given to make us more than overcomers through Christ who loves us. You cannot read of the martyrs saying, "If you take me much farther, I will give up!" The more the pressure was put on them, the more they praised God. God wants to do the same for us yet today.

Too many are living short of that which God has for them. We must have that soft, succulent stem if we ever become a tree. Let us read the parable again: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown [there is that individual experience], it is the greatest among herbs [the kingdom was in the herb stage during the Dark Ages, under the earth just as an herb is, covered up by earthly organizations and works of men], and becometh a tree [teaching us that she was going to come up above the earth in a visible form where men could see her and be a part of it], so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof" (Matthew 13:31-32). The kingdom did not begin here. It began with John and Christ. Through this parable Christ was showing us nothing more than the seed being sown in the hearts of men, but the kingdom had to labor under the earth like an herb. Although unseen, it was just as real and worked a great work until the Scripture says

that "it becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

Chapter 21

THE BIRDS LODGE IN THE BRANCHES

The birds of the air that come and lodge in the branches are the same birds that we have been dealing with. They have never changed. Someone may say, "Brother Wilson, I thought that was the blessings of the kingdom: how they shaded the birds. I have heard such beautiful things." Leave it in the light of truth where it belongs. Who are the birds of the air? They are still the same fowls that picked up the seed back in the beginning of Matthew, Chapter 13. What was He talking about when He said the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches?

Here the kingdom was in the herb stage, but Jesus said it was going to become a tree. On down toward the evening time of light, He said it would become a tree and the birds of the air, or the fowls, would come and lodge in the branches. Who are the birds? They are still the false preachers. He was giving us a prophecy of Protestantism, which was to follow. When the seed began to be planted by Martin Luther, the kingdom began to come out, breaking out above the earth and came out little by little. The birds of the air that lodge in the branches were nothing more than the false ministry. Someone may ask, "How do you know?" It is one thing to be a part of the tree and another to be lodging in the branches.

Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Those who are in the kingdom are actually a part of the tree. These old fellows (the birds) do not believe in a born-again experience; they are only lodging around in the branches. We have too many birds on the branches. God wants you to be a branch. False ministers come and lodge in the branches and say, "We are a branch off the church." If you are a branch off the church, you are a *withered* branch. Up through Protestantism people never did get to the root of the Gospel—the Bible foundations of the church. People just played around in the branches of the tree. Someone may ask, "How can you tell who is a part of the kingdom and who is not?" If you shake the tree, the birds will get scared and fly away. You are not going to shake any branches off; all you will do is scare out the birds. That is why I like to shake the tree every once in awhile.

We are in the last shaking time, a time when God is shaking the tree and the birds are fluttering. I have seen them come in and sit on a branch for two or three services. Then a shaking time came, and that was the last time I saw them. They never said, "Good-bye, Brother Wilson" or anything. Go back and view Matthew, Chapter 8, in the light of other Scriptures. Matthew 8:19 says, "And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." He wanted to be a disciple, but Christ, using symbolic language all through His expression, said in verse 20, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Many people were thinking Jesus was wanting

to go to bed and He had no place to lay His head. Jesus was teaching a lesson. Here was a scribe who said he would give up all to follow Him, but Jesus knew he was not going to give up all. Who are the foxes that have dens? Revelation 6:15-16 tells you who *they* are: when the sixth seal broke those old fellows ran for dens. Foxes stay in dens. Who are *they*? *They* are foxy fellows. Jesus called Herod a fox. Why? Because he said one thing and did something else. He said he wanted to come and worship the Child, when he really wanted to kill Him.

Jesus said, "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected" (Luke 13:32). When Jesus said, "The birds . . . have nests," whom was He talking about? The scribes, the Pharisees, and the false sects of that day said, just as the scribe did, "I will give up all. I will follow You whithersoever You go." Christ said, "The birds . . . have nests." Who are the birds? Those old birds have their nests; they have feathered them. It is just the same today. The foxy fellows have the dens where they go to hide in, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head. What was He talking about? Christ, the head of the church, cannot live on Sadduceeism and Phariseeism. He had to wait until He had a body to put His head on. Whether you want to take it or not, that is Bible. Christ just will not put His head on any body. Those scribes and Pharisees were coming short of the requirements of discipleship.

One said, "I will follow You whithersoever You go," but Jesus knew he would not. Another spoke up and said, "I will follow You, but let me bury my father first." A dozen more said, "I will follow You just as soon as I . . ." The other poor fellow did not say, "Please excuse me," but he said, "I cannot come. I have married a wife." So, it is today. People all over the world say that they are going to follow Jesus just as soon as "I . . ." Self is the fellow giving you the trouble. You are going to have to deny yourself if you are going to follow Christ. He will not put His head on that kind of body. The body of Christ is made up of men and women that have denied themselves, taken up their cross, and are following Christ and truth wherever He leads.

"The Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20). God help us to see that Jesus could not lay His head on this business. The tree, the visible form of the kingdom, began to come out and many lodged in the branches. Many false prophets lodged in the branches, but Christ never laid His head on it. Why? If He did, He would have had too many heads because there are too many bodies. Let us go to the letter in Revelation 2:12-13, which reads: "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; [Pergamos was the compromising church. Smyrna was the suffering church, or the church in the suffering time.] These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth."

What did Christ say to the church in this very dark age before the time of Protestantism? "These things saith he which hath the sharp sword"; that is nothing more than the Word of God. Much could be said about its two edges—both offensive

and defensive. There is an edge for the Law and an edge for the Gospel. The same sword will save you or kill you. When Paul preached the Gospel, he said the same message was a savior unto life to some and a savior unto death to others. In the Scripture we are now dealing with, it is sharp. No heart is so hard that this sword is unable to wound it. No knot is so closely tied that it is unable to cut it. Someone may say, "I am pretty well tied up down in Babylon." There is a sharp sword that will cut you loose. The Word of God says it is so sharp, it gets down between the soul and the spirit; that shows that they are two different things. I hear some say that the soul and the spirit are the same thing. The Word of God says there is a difference. The sword will come right down between the soul and the spirit. It is that sharp.

The Word of God is a sharp instrument. Jesus said, "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is." We need to see if this is the same period of prophecy and if this parable covers the same thing. Revelation, Chapter 13, talks about the first beast. John said the dragon gave him his seat and his authority (verse 2). This church (Pergamos), whether you want to admit it or not, is another definite proof these letters cover seven ages. John wrote these letters in A.D. 96, but here in Revelation, Chapter 13, was where the condition was going on that John wrote to Pergamos about. They were dwelling right where Satan's seat was. Where was that? Down in papalism where the dragon gave the first beast his seat and his authority.

Chapter 22

FOWLS ARE FALLEN MINISTERS

Why did the dragon give the beast his seat and his authority? The devil saw the beast system could work a greater deception than the dragon. Let us analyze a little. Jesus Christ—the lion of the tribe of Judah—came down, set up a church, and became the head of it. The morning church had so much power that when Paul and another Apostle came into town, the people ran to the magistrates and said, "Here come those men that are turning the world upside down. What are we going to do?" They turned cities upside down and right side up. There was a power demonstrated that shook the powers of darkness, and the old dragon was cast out of that heavenly, ecclesiastical position that he had held and was cast down to the earth. The truth told on the old devil was that these things he was working through were nothing more than earthly organizations. People try to take that Scripture and say the devil was in Heaven. The devil was never in Heaven. Greater than that, nobody in Heaven has ever been cast out. Anyone who gets to Heaven cannot be cast out.

The Word of God plainly tells us this old dragon, this paganistic power, had exalted itself up to a heavenly position. It had men thinking it was a religion ordained of God. When Jesus Christ (Michael and His angels) came, they told the truth of the

matter and cast him down to the earth and said it was just a devilish work of men. God is not in the thing. I will tell you some of the times when the dragon was cast down. Read Acts, Chapter 19, where Paul went down to Ephesus. The goddess Diana had been worshiped there, and Demetrius had become a millionaire making little silver gods and selling them. Paul went up and down the streets and preached that God is not a God who can be made with hands, but it is in Him we live and move and have our being. The Word of God says that Demetrius and others called the Sanhedrin together. (That is what tickles me about the ministerial assembly getting together and getting after people today. When that happens, you know you are putting fire on somebody.) All through the Word of God, whenever a man began to pour out the truth, the next thing you know, they were calling the Sanhedrin together.

Demetrius got his people together and said, "This Paul, who is preaching about the God of Heaven, is going to put us out of business." They assembled a delegation, and the Scripture says they went up and down the streets for two hours, crying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Paul stood on the street corner and preached, "God is not a God made with hands." Truth will win out, and truth did win out. We read in verse 19 that many new believers burned their books of curious arts. Through this, *the dragon was cast out*. Truth prevailed.

Again, I say the devil was never in Heaven and was never cast out. Anyone who has ever made it to Heaven was not cast out either. Why? A man cannot sin unless there is a power to tempt him. There is nothing in Heaven to tempt a man to sin. What in the world could cause an angel to sin against God and be thrown out of Heaven? There is nothing there to even tempt him. Someone may say, "What about Jude writing in verse 6 about fallen angels?" The Greek says "*fallen ministers*." It was ministers that had fallen from this truth. God put them in everlasting chains of darkness. What are the chains? They are not log chains. You will be chained in darkness when you turn down the light. If you still think one can get out of Heaven once he gets there, I am not going to argue with you. I will just bring Jesus to the witness stand, and He will take care of it.

Read Luke, Chapter 16, where Christ uncapped hell. The rich man was trying to call over to Abraham, and what did Abraham tell him? "There is a great gulf fixed. We that are here cannot go there, and you that are there cannot come here." If you ever get to Heaven, you will never have to worry about getting kicked out or falling out. You cannot get out once you get there. Praise God for His truth! I love this old truth. It will stand.

"I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith" (Revelation 2:13). When we deny the faith, that faith which Jude said to earnestly contend for, we had better take the name down because we are blaspheming the name of God.

COMPROMISE BRINGS CHAOS

Here is another point that lets us definitely know where this letter belongs: "Thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, [When did they hold it fast?] even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr" (Revelation 2:13). This letter was written right in the midst of martyrs. Who was Antipas? He was the pastor of the church at Pergamos. When Antipas was there, he held the standard where it belonged. In essence, Jesus said, "You did not deny My faith and My name in those days when Antipas was pastor, but now I have something against you. [Why?] You have a modern pastor." When was the day that they held onto the faith and the name wherein Antipas was a faithful martyr? He did not just get killed with a bunch; he was a *faithful* martyr. He stood true. I declare unto you that many congregations in this day have suffered havoc when a faithful brother has passed away. The very thing that I am going to read farther in this letter has happened all over. People can look back to a time when a faithful man stood on the wall and lifted the standard and did not deny the faith or the name. But now the people have gone after the doctrine of Balaam. "Thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth." The next verse, verse 14, gets pointed: "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication."

Why did Jesus say, "I have a few things against thee"? There were people right in the midst who had gone after the doctrine of Balaam. Balaam was a man of God. Balac was a king of the Moabites. The Moabites were afraid of Israel. Israel's enemies were always afraid of them when they were obedient to God. The Moabites were afraid of Israel and knew they could not handle them, so the devil, working through Balac, was going to find a way to clip Israel's power. He was going to bring her down from that place of being in God's presence, and cause her to be just an earthly nation. The Moabites could handle her then. Balac sent different gifts over to Balaam, and Balaam was all ready to backslide. He said, "I cannot curse Israel [but those are really nice gifts he has sent]." Every time they would visit him, the temptation got stronger, until Balaam was ready to curse Israel. Somebody may say, "If it was wrong, why did God say to go ahead?" When God sees you want to go, He will say, "Go ahead." God saw within Balaam's heart that he wanted to go. He kept saying, "I can't. I can't," and God said, "You can if you want to; go right ahead with them." A lot of people think it is all right to do something because God lets them. He will not stop you. This is a service of love. God saw Balaam wanted to go, and He let him go. No doubt you know the story. The angel stood before him, and the ass would not move. What is that a lesson of? When we go after something other than that which God has ordained and turn our minds to the gifts of sin and the things of

this world (this is a hard one) Isaiah said, "We become dumber than an ass." Read Isaiah 1:3, which says, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

The angel of the Lord was trying to stop him. The ass could see the angel, but Balaam could not. We are living in the same kind of day and age. God is sending His ministry out to stop a fallen ministry who is away from God, a ministry who is actually going to curse Israel. What am I getting at? When you yield yourself and go back to Babylon and Babylonian practices, you become a curse to the people of God. I do not care if you have come from Israel's camp and have been a man of God for fifty years. When Balaam chose to go down to the Moabites' camp and entertained a thought of working up some kind of a league between Israel and the Moabites, he was a curse to Israel. The gifts blinded him so that he could not see God's messenger when he was in the way. We are living in the very day and age when men of God have done the same thing. What are they going after? They are going after the gifts—the handle that they put on their name or a position and prestige. I know more than one who has given up truth for prestige. When you start going after that gift, it will get in your eyes, and you will never see if God has put a dozen angels in front of you to warn you. Jude, speaking of individuals in the day and age in which we live, said in verse 12, "These are spots in your feasts of charity." In verse 11 Jude said, "Woe unto them!" (Someone may say, "Who do you think you are, a woe angel?" Yes, when God wants me to be that way.)

"Woe unto them!" In other words, do not pat them on the back; do not be a partaker of their evil deeds; put the Word of God on them. "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain" (Jude 11). What did Cain do? Cain killed Abel because Abel's smoke went up and his did not. That is the attitude this modern, apostatizing ministry has today. They are out to get the true man of God. They will lie on him and try to kill his influence. They will do anything. When you get to the seat of the thing, all that is the matter with them is they are mad because his smoke is going up and theirs is not. They have gone the way of Cain. They have gone the way of Balaam, Jude said. Some say he was only talking about a fallen ministry in his day. However, it has repeated itself in the evening light.

What does it mean to have gone the way of Balaam? They have gone after gifts for selling out the people of God. Balaam went down with the princes of Moab, and when he got there, he was ready to curse Israel. But he could not curse them. Why? God said not to curse that which He said was blessed. In fact, He said you *cannot* in one sense of the word. Every time Balaam prepared to curse Israel, he started prophesying instead. (That tickles me every time I read it.) He said, "I am going to really put a curse on her now," but God would touch his tongue, and he began prophesying about the glories of Christ. He started prophesying the third time and even got up to the star that would appear over Israel to guide her to the sunshine. Balaam worked something that the Word of God calls a stumbling block. He did not curse Israel, not in the sense of just pronouncing a curse on her; God would not let him. He did something that was much worse. The Revelation tells us of people who

had those among them that "hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel" (Revelation 2:14). How did he do it? Let us get a type.

Numbers 25:1-3 reads: "And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel." Balaam did not put an outward curse on them. Instead he led Israel down close to the Moabites' camp. Go back and study the history of it. At first they were way off from it. God has always demanded a separate people, but the devil has always wanted to get the bloodline mixed. He likes half-breeds. Balaam led them down close to the camp of the Moabites. It was just a period of time after Israel got down there that the Scripture says they began to commit whoredom. They began to reach over into the camp of the Moabites and marry the Moabite daughters. It was not long until those daughters had the Israelites—who worshiped the true God—eating things sacrificed to idols and bowing down to an idol to worship.

Where does the stumbling block lay today? Many, many people trying to find the true church have stumbled over this thing. In Babylon they cause you to eat things sacrificed unto idols. They cause you to commit whoredom, or spiritual fornication. In times past the devil used idol worship, deception, and papalism, but when Christ came and built a powerful church, the devil said, "That church business really works. I am going to build a church." That is exactly what he did through papalism. He built a church and put a head over it—the man of sin, the Pope. That is the devil's church. He built it contrary to God's church to fight against the church. That is why the dragon gave the beast his seat and authority.

The devil realized false religion works better than dragon power. First, he had the dragon step down and let the beast take it. When the truth began to come out again, the devil saw the beast would not fool all people, so he came along with a multiplicity of religions. He saw the old carnal nature that desired this and that and the other. So, he came out with churches of your choice—one last stumbling block to keep people from finding the truth of the matter and from getting back to where God wants them to be.

Let us read the rest of the letter in Revelation 2:15-16: "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." We see that God gave old Jezebel (old mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots) a space to repent. He said, "Repent; or else I will come . . . and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." Jezebel never repented. God has a true ministry who is fighting her with the sword of His mouth. God is saying, "Go on and give Babylon the cup that is due her." God said, right here in prophecy, that He would fight her with the sword of His mouth. That is what He is doing yet today. This battle is not fought in a carnal way with carnal weapons, but the true people of God are fighting her with the Word of God.

The kingdom was under the earth for a time, but after a while she came forth in her visible form. Then what happened? Because we do not shake the tree often enough today, we have a lot of birds again. We are going through this last shaking time, and God is shaking the tree again. When He gets through, only those things that cannot be shaken, or the true branches, will be left. (This thing will never shake the true branches off the vine.) Watch a tree in the wind. All wind will do to a tree that is thriving with sap in every branch is to make it take a greater hold. We are in a shaking time. If the Word of God shakes you loose, you are not on the right foundation. This shaking will not even leave a bird's nest.

Chapter 24

HIDDEN LEAVEN (A.D. 1530 - 1730)

Long ago I quit trying to prove things by man or groups of men. I just preach the Word and trust the Holy Spirit to convince people that it is truth. I have found when He convinces them, they are convinced. My trust is in Him. I thank God for His wonderful goodness and give Him the glory and praise for everything He has done. I take a most humble position before Him, because I realize if He would withdraw Himself, I would be done. The enemy has too many saints in a stall. Little by little he has taken away their freedom. Just as God sent an earthquake and loosed Paul and Silas, through this seventh-seal Gospel He is sending an earthquake to loose God's people.

There are three earthquakes recorded in the Bible, and they came just at the right time. That is one thing about God—when He sets His clock or alarm, it always goes off at the right time. Man may forget about it, but He does not. Just at the time when the thing is needed is when the trumpet sounds and the alarm goes off and God's people are led into freedom and safety. No doubt many have become confused on the thought of an earthquake because of past thoughts about them. Men used to think an earthquake was something of a political nature. The Word of God would have us see that the earthquakes in the Revelation are nothing more than a time when the power of God shakes earthly things. Analyze it. When the earth is shaken, the only thing that can shake the earth (literally or spiritually) is God. Man cannot shake her. He might draw up an atom bomb, or a hydrogen bomb that will shake a certain square of it, but when it comes to shaking the whole earth, it takes God to shake it.

In the Bible there are three earthquakes, and they are nothing more than a time when the Spirit of God was turned loose or poured out afresh and shook the very earth. The first was recorded in the Book of Acts on the Day of Pentecost. The first earthquake occurred when the power of God was poured out; and the earth shook because of it. Every symbol is answered in the Bible. You go to the Philippian jail, and you will see a literal earthquake. That was no political upheaval, but the power

of God shook the thing. The Day of Pentecost was the first one. In Revelation, Chapter 11, the second earthquake was recorded after the two witnesses had laid dead in the streets for 350 years. God let the Spirit of life enter into them, and they went up to Mount Zion. The Scripture says an earthquake followed. The last earthquake is recorded in the last part of Revelation, Chapter 11, dealing with the very day and age in which we live, that time which Paul called the last shaking time. I repeat, God is shaking this thing. What for? To let people see whether the foundations they have are sure or not, whether they are built on truth, whether they are really ready to meet the judgment of God; or whether they are deceived. God does not and will not have people come up to the Judgment deceived unless they just want to be. If you desire a reprobate mind and desire it long enough, God will just let you have it, but you do not *have* to have it. God will not put it on people unless they desire it. Thank God for His wonderful truths that He has given us that fit the very day in which we live.

We have been dealing with the seven parables that bring us up through the Gospel Day, from the Day of Pentecost through to the end of time. They coincide with the seven letters and help to clarify one another. We are now up to the fourth parable, found in Matthew 13:33. We saw where the Kingdom of Heaven was likened unto a mustard seed, the least of all seeds. During the Dark Ages the Word of God was the least of all seeds, but when it is grown it becomes the greatest among herbs. Then we read a bit of prophecy showing that it was to break forth and come out in its visibility. Verse 32 says that "the birds of the air [would] come and lodge in the branches thereof." We proved by the Word of God that men and women that are born again become, not a bird in the tree, but a branch upon the tree. The false prophets are those that have no experience. They just sit around and listen. They lodge; they are not part of the family. God's children are not lodgers. They are part of the family, which is made up both in Heaven and in earth.

Again, God had ordained to shake the tree. When you shake a literal tree, the birds take off. You do not shake the branches off; you just shake the birds away. Now, we come on over into that age which would follow, bringing the kingdom through this age of Protestantism, where little by little it began to come out above the earth in a little more visible way. In Matthew 13:33 we read, "Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Turn and read the corresponding letter because it will help to clarify. Revelation 2:18-20 states: "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols."

That is only a portion of the letter. We will read the rest of it further on. Let us

analyze this. Jesus, in this period of time, likened the kingdom unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened. Now, if it were not for the letter, we would not know who the woman was or what the meal or leaven was. We would just have to guess at it. But when you take the letter with the parable, the letter tells you that the woman is Jezebel, and it goes on to tell what the leaven is and what the meal is. The letter shows what kind of a work took place in Protestantism.

In the Word of God, leaven is corruption. In times past these parables have not been taken by themselves, and because of it men would try to show that leavening was the work of Christ upon the hearts of men. But I take a square and a firm foundation and say that nowhere in the Word of God is leaven used for anything but corruption. Search the Book and see if you can find it anywhere. We can go back to the type. God had His people eating *unleavened* bread. Why? All the way through, leaven has been a type of corruption. In this parable the kingdom is likened unto something. Here is the condition of the kingdom through this age. Leaven, I repeat, is used in the Word of God as a symbol of corruption. The woman, the Word of God says, is Jezebel, a symbol of the false churches of Protestantism. The three measures of meal are portions of God's Word that Protestantism took up. They would never take it all. All they ever took was three measures mainly, and to that, three measures of meal are component parts of God's Word. Meal is part of the bread, but it is not bread. The meal is a component part of the bread, but it is not the whole bread. Babylon did take truth. Luther—justification! Wesley—sanctification! And on up through. They did take truth, but they put something with that meal which crowded out the Word of God. It was just as Jesus said: until the whole was leavened.

Now, whenever we hear of a woman taking three measures of meal and some yeast or leavening, we know she is going into the bread business, because three measures of meal are what a woman in Jesus' day used to bake bread. Right away when we read that, we know that somebody is going to bake some bread. Why are they going to bake some bread? Because they do not like the bread that God sends down from Heaven.

Chapter 25

THE TRUE BREAD

Jesus talked about this bread that came down from Heaven in John 6:51, when He said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever." That is the reason old Babylon is dead. She would not eat this bread that came down from Heaven. She was bound to bake her own bread. Revelation, Chapter 18, tells us that she has all kinds. It tells us that her merchants have waxed rich from her delicacies. She has cookies, sweet rolls, and doughnuts. Whatever you want, she has it to suit your taste. If she does not have what you like,

she will bake something to suit you. God has a people who wants the bread to come down from Heaven. This bread is the Holy Word of God with no leavening added to it and nothing taken away from it. It cannot be baked in men's or devil's ovens. It comes straight from Heaven every day.

Someone may say, "I have heard men preach that you have to have a little leaven in it to get it raised." No! This bread that comes down from Heaven is raised by the power of God. The Holy Ghost moving on it raises it and causes it to be food for our souls. We have a picture before us of that time the kingdom would go through in this age of Protestantism, showing forth as a woman taking three measures of meal and adding this leaven or corruption or this earthly work until the whole was leavened. God help us to see that this is a picture of false religion that will not eat God's bread.

Isaiah 4:1 gives us a prophecy that will help to clarify: "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Many people are trying to find out what *that day* is. While World War 2 was going on, many preachers said *that* was the day Isaiah was talking about. They hunted up statistics and showed that the men were being killed off so fast that there were seven women for every one man. (God pity the poor man that seven women were to take hold of.) God constructed a man and woman so that one woman is all that a man needs. Husband, I want to tell you from the Bible and from experience, if you will give your wife all the love and care that you owe unto her, you will be working mighty hard the rest of your life. You will not have any time for anything else. When you put forth all the effort and strength that you possess to love and care for that woman and look after her, you will not need to run anywhere else.

"And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." What was Isaiah talking about? *In that day* refers back to Isaiah's prophecy. Go back to the first and second chapter. He was talking about that same day all the way through. It did not change in the second chapter. Isaiah 2:2 states, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." That day is this Gospel Day. That is the day he was talking about. It was not in the days of the Second World War, but in this Gospel Day Isaiah was talking about seven women taking hold of one man.

Who is the *one man*? He is Christ. Who are the *seven women*? The seven false churches down through the seven ages of time. In every age when God had a true church, the devil had a false one. The false one wanted His name to take away their reproach. What were their attitudes toward Him? They did not want to eat His bread; they did not want to dress like He said (dress with the robes of righteousness); they just wanted the name to take away their reproach. Taking or professing the name of Christ will not take away your reproach. What is reproach? Sin in your heart and life. It takes the blood of Jesus Christ to take it away. We must eat this bread that comes down from Heaven, or we will still be dead. We can have a name that liveth and still

be dead. Our reproach will still be upon us unless we eat this bread and dress like He says to dress. The robes of righteousness are the way Christ wants us to dress.

If people will put on the robes of righteousness and get them on right, they will wear their clothes right. This old worldliness is a heart condition. Sure, we need instruction along the lines of dressing in modest apparel. We need to teach the Scriptures, and thank God, we do along the lines of adornment and the wedding ring. It tickles me about that wedding ring. The preachers used to say, "You have to let the women wear it. It is for their protection." Now the preachers have them (the big sissies) so the women will leave them alone. Someone may say, "You do not have any Bible against the wedding ring." First Peter 3:3 deals with nothing else. It is dealing with wives, not unmarried women. If we can get the people of God to put on the robes of righteousness and dress like saints, we will not have too much trouble along that line. If the saints will put on the robes of righteousness and act and dress like saints, the new people coming among them will fall right in. They will just catch the spirit of it. It is just like my little daughter in the home. She likes to dress like her mama. It will work that way. Someone may say, "Don't you believe in modest apparel?" Indeed, wholeheartedly! Modest apparel is high enough at the neck, long enough at the sleeves, and long enough at the bottom to cover you.

When a woman dresses immodestly, she is ashamed of herself. If she sees a brother looking, she tries to cover herself up with a handkerchief or something. If she would put on enough clothes, she would not have to do that. It is too bad, but in these last days we have to speak to the men too. That same old spirit has been working up through the Gospel Day and is still working today.

It is working right in the very Church of God movement and has caused the people to take the attitude, "We will dress like we want. We will eat our own bread. We will choose what we eat. We will take the part of the Word of God we want, and the part we do not want we will not take. But we are going to keep the name." It will never take away your reproach. The bride of Christ loves the Bridegroom. A bride who loves the Bridegroom is going to dress as the Bridegroom wants her to. Christ has gone away, but He is coming back after His bride. When you boil it down, all the Word of God is is a love letter. It tells us how to find Christ. After we find Him, it tells us how He wants His bride to dress, act, talk, and walk; it tells what He wants her attitude to be.

When I was overseas and wrote that I was going to be back in this country at a certain time, my father was not very well. He had heart trouble, but he decided to drive and meet me. My companion made herself ready to come along with him. She began to think of how I liked her hair fixed and what dress I liked to see her in. When I got there and stepped off the truck, she was dressed just the way I liked to see her. That is exactly the way the bride of Christ is. She is not worried about surroundings. She is looking for her Husband to come after her. She is going to be fixed up exactly as she knows it pleases Him. Whether it pleases herself or anybody else, she wants to please Him. Why? Because she loves Him.

A LITTLE LEAVEN

The same spirit that came up through the Gospel Day is still working today. It is this same spirit that causes people to take the attitude that they will do what they want, but still hold onto the name of Christ. Christ is the Living Bread. Unless we eat of that Bread, we will have no life in us. In Revelation 6:5-6 we see the black horse, symbolizing the apostasy that moved in on the morning church. On that horse is a man with balances in his hand saying, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." Perhaps you have heard it taught that this is Roman Catholicism issuing the Word at a starvation rate. Roman Catholicism has never had the Word. Let us go back and read the Book as it is. If Roman Catholicism ever had the Word, why would it be black? How can you give away something that you have never had? If you are going to say they once had the Word, you will have to own to the fact they tell the truth when they say they have had the Word from the beginning. The truth is they have never had it. That black horse is a symbol of the apostasy.

The morning church apostatized. Someone may ask, "How do you know?" The Book says it. Let us read Revelation 6:5-6 to help us understand the lesson: "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny." Remember that the four beasts are symbols of the church through all ages. Rome did not say, "A measure of wheat for a penny." That came out of the four beasts. The four beasts said, "A measure of wheat for a penny." It was an apostatizing ministry that turned from the Word and measured it out at a starvation rate. Verse 6 says that a voice came from the midst of the four beasts. That is the church, the people of God. Let us analyze a little.

Where do you think the beast or the woman who was in the wilderness in Revelation, Chapter 17, came from? This was partly made up of backslidden individuals. It was people that had rejected light. A modernizing, apostatizing ministry (as symbolized by the black horse) was saying, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." Again, Rome did not have the Word to give out. The Scripture says a voice came from the midst of the four beasts. That was bad enough back then, but I want to show you something now. Papalism did not hurt the Word and the Spirit. It "hurt not the oil and the wine" (verse 6). In this apostasy and during papalism, the Word and the Spirit were not hurt. They prophesied all through it; they fed the church in the wilderness all the way through. Do you think God had other food for the church in the wilderness? He fed them the same food: the bread that came down from Heaven, the good Word of God. Papalism did not hurt the Word and the Spirit. They turned it down; they rejected it, but you cannot hurt the Word of God by rejecting it. That does not change it. What hurts it? When they added to the Word and took away from the Word is when they hurt the

oil and the wine.

Revelation, Chapter 11, tells us the Word and the Spirit lived for 1260 years and prophesied every day. They had to be *alive* to preach. They were in sackcloth, but they lived and prophesied. It was the 350 years from 1530 to 1880 that they laid dead. What killed them? When they added leavening to it, they killed the Word. When you add to the Word of God, it is not God's Word anymore. That is what kills the Word and the power of it. Let God's Word be as it is, and it will produce just what He says it will. When you add to it or take away from it, it is liable to produce anything. This Word of God is God's will. Paul said in the Hebrew letter that a will is of no effect unless the testator is dead (Hebrews 9:16-17). What was he talking about? You can write all the wills you want to, but as long as you are still alive, they do not amount to anything. Why? You might change your mind. After you are dead, then it will stand.

Paul said Christ died and signed God's will with His own blood. That made it of effect. If we will let it be as it is, it will prosper in the purpose God sent it for. Isaiah said it would. That is where consecration comes in. My father died and left a will. When the judge read the will, we found that everything was left to our mother. Before the judge would probate it, every one of the children had to sign a waiver that we would leave it just as it was. After we had all signed the waiver, the judge said that the will would stand. It could not be broken. It would stand in any court. If I had risen up and said, "I do not want it that way, Judge. I want some things," the judge would have said, "Listen, son, that is *your* will. We are dealing with your dad's will." Let this Word of God stand just as it is. Its power is killed when you try to change, add to, and revise it. The devil is ever after the Word, but thank God for the good Word of God that has stood down through the ages. Men have risen up against it and fought it. This Word of God is like the blacksmith's anvil. Every blacksmith comes and lives sixty to eighty years and pounds on it. After that he is gone, but the anvil is still there, waiting for the next generation to come and pound it a little.

The Word of God has taken the worst and the most serious pounding of any other book that was ever given to us, but after all these multiplied hundreds of years and after all the pounding and the persuading power put on it, she still stands in her fullness today ready to deliver a people. I think of old Solitaire who got so stirred when people talked of a real experience with God. He said, "It took a few ignorant fishermen to establish Christianity and years to do it; I am going to show you how one Frenchman in one year can wipe it out of existence." He set his presses to work sending out false and erroneous doctrines against the Word. It was not very long until God called him in death. The Geneva Bible Institute bought his presses, and for years his presses were used to print Bibles. His storehouses were filled with Bibles.

Friend, you might as well give up fighting against this thing. It will be a rock for you to build on if you take it, but if you turn it down, it will turn around and grind you to powder. That is why God is after Babylon today. They have raised up against this Word. They will not take it to build on. So, God is turning with the Word and grinding them to powder. Papalism did not hurt it. Men and women who reject it do

not hurt it. The man or woman who is hurting the Word and both of the witnesses is he or she who changes it. The Revelation proves it to be true. Study to see whom the plagues are put on. Revelation, Chapter 18, deals with sect Babylon, not papalism. God said, "Come out of her, my people." God's people never were in Romanism. How do we know that? To be a child of God, you must be born again. Rome has always fought a born-again experience. God's people were in sect Babylon. Revelation, Chapter 18, deals with sect Babylon. Verse 4 says, "Come out of her, my people." On whom does God put the plagues on? Revelation 22:18 tells us, "If any man shall *add* [not *reject* the Word] unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

I want you to see something. Whenever Protestantism begins to go back and strike up an alliance with Rome or Catholicism, she turns to darkness. Whenever the Church of God turns to Protestantism and begins to strike up an alliance, she, too, is turned to darkness. The plagues are after the individual who will add to or take away, who will not accept it all as it is. Ministers have to be careful what they preach. Why? We are in a day and age when this sickness is being shot as a poison arrow out on the saints of God, putting "groupism" in their heads, trying to get them to add just a little bit and make one Scripture a little bit stronger, trying to get people to wear their hair a certain way and wear the same color dress, trying to be separate. Look out! Be sure you have Bible for what you preach, because if you do not, you are going to have the plagues after you. You dare not take the least bit away because if you do, it is liable to take your whole part out of the Holy City and your name out of the Book of Life. You preach God's eternal Word, and it will make a separate people. That is all that is needed. Thank God for His eternal truth and what it will do for us. All I am saying is we need to be sure we have the truth for what we are preaching.

The Word was given at a starvation rate. Here is the bad part. Remember the three measures in Revelation, Chapter 6? Here we find the Word being given at a starvation rate, but some old corruption was put in with it. That is worse. It was bad enough in the apostasy to go at a starvation rate on the Word, but to the three measures of meal was added some corruption, which brought death. Death and hell followed this business. We read in the Word of God where it came to pass. The Word of God tells how this business is the depths of Satan. To a certain extent, he scraped the bottom of the barrel when he pulled this deal. Why? It is just like taking a glass of milk and putting a few drops of poison in it. It will kill you just as much as if it were all poison. That is exactly what Satan did. He took truth and hid corruption in it. All people could see was truth, not realizing there was poison in it that was killing them as surely as if they had drunk pure poison. Satan hid a little leaven in there until the whole was leavened. It all ended up poisoned.

The deception of the second beast is terrific. We read over in Revelation 13:11-14: "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the

first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. [Here is a deception.] And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." I know there is a lot of false fire, but in the very beginning, Protestantism (that old false system of religion) cashed in on God's holy fire and made their image. Stop and think for a minute. The Methodist church could not build their organization today on the message they are now preaching. How did they do it? They cashed in on that Holy Ghost fire God dropped in their midst. When the fire was in the camp, the sick were healed and Holy Ghost baptism was preached and practiced. That old false system of religion came in, cashed in on the presence of the Holy Ghost, and built an organization in the midst of it. I say again, they could not build their organization on the messages they have today in their deadness and formality. They cashed in on the fire of God to build that thing. They deceived people by saying, "This is God's way." In the beginning God moved in their services and blessed the Word that they preached. Then they cashed in on the moving of the Holy Ghost to build up that false religion or that human organization.

I bring it down to the Church of God in this evening light. You cannot do what these evening-light brethren did as a whole with the message they are preaching today. It takes the real thing; it takes the Holy Ghost fire of God in our midst. I have seen men that were stiff and hardhearted. I have preached to them before. I have seen altar services when the saints were weeping and rejoicing, yet those men could sit and never be moved. One night I saw one of those same men running to an altar, screaming for God to have mercy on him. Why? You cannot resist the power of God that has backed up God's eternal truth when it is being poured out in its fullness. This truth was sent out to save the world, and it will do it if we preach it. It has never lost its power.

I say again, they cashed in on God's goodness, mercy, and power in the early days of Protestantism to build up that human organization. Now, God is being rejected. Where is the Holy Ghost fire? Where is the shouting in the camp? In some instances they even have the name "Church of God" over the door! Someone may ask, "Brother Wilson, where should I go to church?" Let the Holy Ghost lead you. His sheep hear His voice; a stranger's voice they will not hear. Ezekiel 34:11-13 reads: "For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; 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. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country." Any place God does not inhabit, you will not get any food. Places that are inhabited by God and His Holy Spirit are where His Word is allowed to live. Where His Spirit is moving, that is an inhabited place. God says this is where He is going to feed His people.

It is necessary that we be fed. In Matthew 13:33 Jesus said just a little leaven was put in those three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. Let us see how Jesus used leaven. In Mark 8:15 Jesus said, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod." In Luke 12:1 He said, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Does that sound like some blessing on the soul? See how Paul used it in 1 Corinthians 5:6. He said, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" That is just what Jesus said it would do. By putting just a little leaven in three measures caused the whole to be leavened.

What was that leaven (human work) that was added to the measures of meal (God's eternal truth)? James said that earthly wisdom is earthly, devilish, and sensual. That was the leaven which was added to the meal until the whole was leavened. Churches that came into being through this era (1530 to 1880) have become truly and wholly leavened. They are earthly organizations. They have human heads, human governments, and human creeds; everything about them is earthly. The Word of God has been fulfilled. In Galatians 5:7-9 Paul said: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

The leaven is what stopped God's people from walking on in the light, and the same thing (a little leaven) has done a work on God's people in the evening time. Paul said, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump" (1 Corinthians 5:7). He was speaking to the church, telling them to clean up and straighten up and purge out the old leaven. How do you get it out? A fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost will purge out the old leaven, and you will be a new lump.

Chapter 27

THE NEW LUMP

Although the kingdom is likened unto leaven, it is not leaven. I will show you what the kingdom underwent. When Jesus said that the kingdom is likened unto leaven, what was He talking about? It works just like leaven does, but it is not leaven. Leaven is corruption. While the devil was doing his work, while old Jezebel was inserting the leaven and building up this human work, the Spirit of God was working too. He was building together a people, a heavenly society, right here on earth. He was getting more and more truth to them. The Spirit of God was bringing their hearts closer and closer together, getting them ready for this great call in 1880. When He said, "Come out of her, my people," they were ready to come. God already had caused them to be sick, tired, and weary of it. When God gets a man ready to preach, He has also prepared a people to hear the message. God works on both ends. It will not always be the thousands that will hear, but if God definitely lays a message on your heart, there will be an honest soul somewhere who will be longing to hear.

God's people were sick of manmade religion, and God's people are sick of it today. They were sick of it and wanted to get out. All they needed after God stirred them was for God to get hold of some men, D. S. Warner and others. Why do you think He had more than one? God will not let ones preach until they are in unity. These men prayed down the fire from God; God had given them a revelation of this evening light. They could see eye to eye, and they went out together and preached it. Isaiah said the Lord would set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people. How was He going to do it? He said He would lift up an ensign (or a flag) for them to come to.

When I went overseas, we had radio and other communications, but for that time when they did not have radio communication, we took the flag with us, all rolled up in a tube. It was our standard that we were fighting under. Years ago, when a battle would take place and there was hand to hand combat, it would be a terrible massacre. When the smoke cleared away, there would be wounded soldiers all over. Before the smoke cleared, everyone, no doubt, thought he was the only one left. The man who had the flag would get up on the highest hill around and hoist the flag. When the flag went up, those soldiers would look at it and say, "There must be somebody else alive." The flag hoisted was a direct order to a soldier to assemble to the flag. They would come from everywhere. Out there lying dispersed, they thought they were the only one left, but when they began to gather in, they found they had a good sized army.

God said that in these last days He would set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of the outcasts of Israel. How is He going to do it? He is telling the flag bearers to find the highest hill (Mount Zion), get on it, and hoist the flag. God's people are coming back to the flag and are gathering together to fight this last and hottest battle of Armageddon. I visit and hear from dear old saints that are wounded and heartsick over conditions until the devil has them feeling they are the only ones left. How it cheers their soul to learn that they are not the last of God's people. That is just like it was back there in the eleventh chapter of Revelation. In 1880 the Word of God says that when God called the witnesses out, there were seven thousand slain right in the beginning of the harvest with the sickle. What is that a type of?

Go back to Elijah. He thought everyone had quit serving God. His attitude was, "I am the only one left, and they are going to kill me." God said, "No! I still have seven thousand that have never sat at Jezebel's table." Right now God still has seven thousand, an answer to that type, that have never sat at Jezebel's table, that would not put up with Babylonian captivity. The kingdom was *like* leaven. It, too, has a principle of silent growth. When the grace of God gets in man, that man gets the Holy Spirit. That silent thing working within will open up paths to where God's people can come and sit together in Christ Jesus. It will work silently, but the love of God and the Spirit of God working in our hearts will bring us together just as long as we keep it. Just as this old leaven leavened the whole thing and made it earthly, having this Spirit of God within us will fill us all in all and make us all one spiritual body.

We can read in Revelation 2:18, "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God . . ." Here we have the church in a parable. Back in the second parable, a perilous condition occurred when there were tares among the wheat. How did God take care of the situation? He said, "I am going to cast them in a furnace." He started up a furnace work. We proved by the Word of God (Isaiah, Chapter 33) that God's furnace is in Zion, not in the pits of hell.

Here in Revelation 2:18 John was writing to the church at Thyatira. Again, what had happened here? Starting out in Lutheranism, many truly lived by faith. They were sons of God. So, how did Christ present Himself in the letter? "These things saith the Son of God." This is the only letter He addressed that way. Men were actually becoming sons of God, but what else were they doing? They were turning around and joining a human work that would not stand the Word of God or stand the fire. Not only did He say, "These things saith the Son of God," but He said, "These things saith [He] . . . who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire." Someone is going to get burnt. His feet are as fine brass. What does that show? There is going to be a furnace work. Revelation 1:14-15, when John first saw Christ, tells us: "His eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace." God is going to start a fire, and He tells us anything that will not stand the fire is going to be consumed. You have done well when you become a son of God. You are on the right foundation, the only foundation. No man can lay any other. That is why Babylon is built on the bottomless pit. Only one foundation was laid and that was Jesus Christ. The minute He laid it, He put a building on it. You can only get one building on a foundation, so Babylon had to build on the bottomless pit.

It is one thing to get on the right foundation, but let every man take heed how he builds thereon. Why? If any man builds with gold, silver, and precious stones, it is good! They will stand the fire. Those are symbols of truths. If you build with wood, hay, or stubble, look out! It will not stand because every man's work is going to be tried by fire. First Corinthians 3:13-15 states: "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." If you are going to tell me that is the end of time, the time when Jesus comes again, I will not agree with you for a second. When was the day that man's works were to be tried with fire? It was this day of preliminary judgment from 1880 to approximately 1980. Would you tell me that you are serving a God who would let you build right on wrong up to the Judgment, and then try you and let you be lost? I am not serving that kind of a God. He gives us a preliminary judgment here, called the day of His wrath. It is a time when He is pouring out His wrath on Babylon, when He is shaking everything that can be shaken, and men and women that are not built right have a chance to lay hold on right and build right before He comes.

There are only two sides to take. If you say the fire that He is trying people's works with is not the fire of God's Word in this Gospel, or this day of His wrath that

began with the sixth-seal ministry, then you have to agree with the Catholics who say that there is a purgatory. You have to take it one way or the other. There is no middle ground. This day of God's wrath began in 1880, and this is the day when He is trying men's works. More than one man could testify that he has come out of Babylon, but the fire of God's Word has burnt up his works. People have come out of Babylon and they have been saved, but their works had to burn. They started working for God once again. I will give you another Scripture that will prove it. After God had a people gathered back on Mount Zion, He said in Revelation 14:13, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth . . . and their works do follow them." Why do their works follow? Any work you put on a solid foundation of truth in Mount Zion will follow you. Your works down in Babylon have to burn with Babylon. That is why it is needful for people to hurry out of there. That is Bible.

There is a reason for hurrying people out of Babylon. A Nazarene minister took a stand for truth sometime ago. Now another minister is ready to take his stand. (He has already made his move to get his name off the book and get out.) One of the saddest things today that wounds this brother's heart is to think he was a hard worker there and led many people to the Lord and caused them to join up with Babylon. Now he sees the wrong of the thing. He sees the erroneous doctrine that is going forth, and when he thinks of how he led people in there, got them fastened with it, and now he cannot talk to them to get them out, it breaks his heart. It will break yours, too, when you see the truth in the right way. The day will declare it. This is the day of God's wrath we are in, the day when He is pouring His wrath out on Babylon.

Revelation 2:18-20 reads: ". . . who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. [This is saying nothing more than their works outrun God's works. Read on to the closing of the letter. He said, 'I am going to judge you by your works.' So we see that man's works were raising up against God's works.] Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." Here again is a picture of false religion. First of all, we see a woman who *calls* herself a prophetess. What is that a type of? What kind of preachers does false religion have? Preachers that *call* themselves. God never called any man to go out and preach a gospel contrary to the Word of God. That would be foolishness. If God does not call you and send you, you will never have the message. I could tell a brother, "I want to send a message through you," and then whisper it into his ear. If someone else says, "I am going to take the message," I would say, "Go right ahead, but you will never deliver the message I sent." God has never become so hard up that He has to choose weak-kneed, jellyfish, worldly-minded, ungodly men to carry His message. He will never do it.

A woman who called herself a prophetess, forgetting all about the divine call, is cranking out false preachers. The divine call is being all forgotten. Paul said, "How

shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent" (Romans 10:14-15)? Young person, know that God is leading you. Do not go out and waste your life. Brother Runyon made a statement when he was preaching that I have never forgotten because it was right at the time when God was dealing with me concerning preaching. He said, "The best evidence that a man was *called* to preach was the fact that he *could* preach." I never forgot that. God was dealing with my heart. When my father was still alive, some elderly sisters in the congregation would ask me, "Brother Wilson, when are you going to preach?" I just laughed at them and said, "What makes you think I am going to preach?" But I knew God was dealing with me. I kept putting it off and putting it off.

My father was in a tent meeting twenty-two miles north, and in that meeting approximately thirty people came out of the Church of Christ into the light. We had a quartet, and we traveled, sang, and worked with him. He had asked me many times before to take the pulpit Sunday night at home, but I said, "No, I am going with you and sing." Finally, God turned me over His knee and took all the joy out of my soul. I went up to my bedroom and cried, and there is where I settled it. I said, "Lord, if this is You, I am going to do it; but this is going to be a test. If this is just humanity, if this is just people pressing me, if this is just Dad pressing me [every preacher wants his son to be a preacher], when I get up tonight, I want You to make me the worst flop I have ever been. Make me such a mess that I will never attempt it again." I meant it. I said, "If it is You, You work just as hard the other way and let me know."

They announced Sunday morning that I was going to preach Sunday night and not very many went to the tent meeting. They wanted to see what I would do. I got over there and saw such a crowd I could hardly get in the church building. I walked up and down in front of the church building crying to God, "What am I going to do?" The singing ended and I got up. I could not go to the pulpit stand; I was shaking too much. So, I stood over at the song leader's stand. Between crying and the thoughts God gave me, I spoke perhaps an hour. Before we could give an invitation, nineteen people came to an altar of prayer. God spoke to me and said, "Is that enough or do you want some more?" I believe He would have saved another altar full if I would have said it was not enough. These things are divine. God does not want us feeling our way around and wondering if we are in the place God wants us to be in. I can thank God it has been just as divine all the way along the line. He still works it out.

When my father died, I was out in the evangelistic work quite a bit. The older brethren in the congregation came to me and said, "Brother Emerson, you will have to take the church." I said, "I cannot do it." They said they would be behind me. I said, "I know you will be behind me, but what if I preach something you do not like? If you fellows leave me, I would not have any foundation; and unless God definitely shows me, I will never take it. I will preach here and work with you until God shows us someone." The next Sunday Brother Mitchell spoke. Our hearts were heavy. Dad had died suddenly. The next Sunday morning I had a message. God told me to open

the Bible to the first chapter of Joshua. I had read it and preached from it more than once before, but when I looked on it that time, it looked like it was italicized. Verse 1 reads, "Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister." I cannot tell you what happened to me, but the church saw it happening, and it happened to them too. You can talk about an installation service, brother, we had one. The Holy Ghost did the installing. God taught me a little lesson. He said, "When your dad lived, he was pastor. The congregation could not have two heads at once. That is why you did not feel a burden. Now he is gone. Just stand up and read this to these people." I stood up and read with tears in my eyes until I could not read. In essence, God said, "Just as I was with Moses, I will be with you if you will be careful to walk in My statutes and ordinances just like My people did when Moses was living." These things are divine from beginning to end. The whole burden of my heart is to get people back to a divine work. God still knows what He is doing. God will let you know when you are in the order of God.

The enemy has sowed something among the saints until they feel, "Well, you have to use so much wisdom." I still believe in a God who told the men hunting for Peter what the house number was and which side of the street he lived on and that he would be on the roof when they got there. It is the same God who told Philip to go down the road to Gaza. It was not long until Philip met an eunuch whom he needed to preach to. God will still lead us and work things out in a divine way.

Revelation 2:20 reads, "Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." Here is a picture of Protestantism. God said, "I gave her space to repent and she repented not." God is a just God. He gave all of these space to repent. He gave Roman Catholicism a good space to repent. When? When He took their own priests and caused them to turn and preach the Gospel to them. That was their space to repent as a false system. He gave Protestantism 350 years of sitting under this golden Gospel. She had space to repent, but Babylon will never repent. She is past her space. Coming right on down through the Gospel Day, we see He is giving us as the Church of God a space to repent. We will get it in the seventh parable. He is giving people a space to repent of lukewarmness. The Word of God teaches through the lesson of silence in heaven that if you pass it up, the door of mercy will be closed. Revelation 2:21-23 states: "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death." It has happened. That thing is as dead as it can be. Why is it dead? In so many words, God said, "If you do not repent, I will kill her children with death." Spiritual death has caused it. She is as dead and formal as she can be.

THE WAY OUT OF DARKNESS

We read in Revelation 17:1, "Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment [or truth] of the great whore [old mystery Babylon]." She brought forth harlot daughters. How did she bring them forth? The kings of the earth, or the heads of human organizations, committed fornication with her. How did they do that? The men that head these Protestant religions committed spiritual fornication with Rome, mother Babylon. When they set up their human work, took some human creeds and catechism, mixed it together with God's eternal truth, and set up a creed, that is where the baby was born. A little harlot daughter came forth. The Word of God says they took names of blasphemy. All illegitimate children take their mother's name. Why? Because there was no marriage. It was just a work of adultery, or fornication.

Revelation 2:23 says, "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." What was He talking about? Here was something humanly operated: men operating church doors and taking people in. God said, "I am going to do a work here where all men will know I am the One who searcheth the heart, and men cannot take people into the church and put them out because they cannot see their hearts." I want everyone to know He said, "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts." Jeremiah 17:9 tells us, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" You may say, "I know my heart. I am going to search my heart." You had better look out! That old heart is deceitful. Even a new heart will still try to cover you up and put all the blame on somebody else. The heart is deceitful. It is desperately wicked. Who can know it?

Christ said, "I search the heart. I try the reins." When you will not let God search your heart, it just is not searched. Throw your heart's door open and let God search it. He said, "I try the reins." What for? To give every man the fruit of his way (Jeremiah 17:10). May we throw our hearts open to God and let Him search us and then own us.

Revelation 2:24 reads, "But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, [Whom did He write it to? The angel of the church. The pastor of this church was a good man of God. He had not gotten into it yet. Jesus said, 'Unto you . . . and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine.' What doctrine? This doctrine of Jezebel. God had good people in there that would not bow to her. They would have no part of it. They would not join any church. So, He was speaking unto the pastor and the others that had not this doctrine.] and which have not known the depths of Satan . . ." Men today would have you think that it is higher culture, a greater liberty. The Word of God says that it is the depths of Satan. He has a special message for God's people down there. "But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you

none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come" (Revelation 2:24-25).

Do you think verse 25 was referring to the Second Coming? No. He was saying, "Hold fast to that truth you have until I come with greater truth." Somebody may say, "How do you know?" Because the next letter says to "strengthen the things which remain" (Revelation 3:2). He was going to come with sanctification, and it would strengthen that truth which they held onto. "But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end [the end of this Jezebel age], to him will I give power over the nations" (Revelation 2:25-26). Praise God!

What was the first thing He was going to give? Power. You receive power when the Holy Ghost comes. So, Christ was saying, "To him that overcometh this age [1530-1880], I will give power over all nations." That is one thing you are going to get. Next, He said in Revelation 2:27, "He shall rule them with a rod of iron." That is the Word of God. If you overcome this business, you can have the Word and the Spirit just as the morning church had. Again, verse 27 says, "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father." Again, the rod of iron is the Word of God that the church was supposed to take and reign. In Revelation 12:5 what was given to the man child? A rod of iron that he might rule all nations, but the man child was caught up to meet with God. Here in Chapter 2 is a picture of the church coming out of the wilderness. What did God give her? The same rod of iron the man child had from A.D. 33 to 270 when he fought the dragon. With the rod of iron the man child was to reign over all nations. What will the rod of iron do to Babylon? It will break her like a potter's vessel is broken to shivers. You might as well tell me the potter can make an old clay pot that cannot be broken with an iron rod as to tell me this Word, when used on Babylon, will not hurt her. When the Church of God has sworn alliance with old Babylon, you can know they have left the rod at home. About the first time you used the rod on Babylon, it would break her to pieces. It would be about like hitting a glass jar with an iron rod.

What else did Christ do? He said in verse 28, "I will give him the morning star." In other words, "You will have the same light the morning church had. You are going to get Christ, the Morning Star." The Word of God declares Him to be so. They were going to have Christ in His fullness, as the Head. When people come out and be the body, they will get the Head.

We see the church is on the way out of the wilderness. There were two questions that always bothered me when I started out in the ministry. I never could find a man who could answer it, and I could not find it in any of the books. Maybe you never questioned it, but I wanted to know how the church got out of the wilderness. I read in the sixth-seal ministry how she was taken into the wilderness, and the next thing I knew they showed her out on Mount Zion. No one ever showed me how she came out. So, I stayed before God's face, and He showed me. Isaiah, Chapter 35, tells how: "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of

holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it" (verse 8). Where will that highway be? Right where the desert begins to blossom like a rose (verse 1). When Christ comes into your heart and life, an highway will be there. "The unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those" (Isaiah 35:8). The redeemed will walk and come to Zion. How did the church get out of the wilderness? She got out by walking on the highway of holiness.

The minute Martin Luther began to preach on holiness, he began to lay the highway down. The Wesley brothers came and built it a little farther; they got it up to 1860. The saints were heading back to Zion. They did not all know it, but that is where the highway of holiness leads. The minute holiness was preached, a highway began to be laid out before the saints. Then in 1880, D. S. Warner and others laid the last few miles that led on into Zion. Verse 10 says the people of God came back to "Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Jesus warned us in Matthew, Chapter 24, about many false Christs and deceivers. What did He say? Verse 26 reads, "Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth." If Christ was in the desert, there would be no desert. When Christ is there, it blossoms like a rose. He also said, "Do not go in any of the secret chambers," because He would not be there either. Christ is wherever He can find a body to put His head on. The Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head until He could get a people baptized with the Holy Ghost of God into one body. He will put His head on that body.

The trouble today is too many are trying to preach a great, big, beautiful, strong Head and a poor, little, old, withered up body. People cannot see the Head. Jesus said you cannot. But they can see the body. Paul said the Word of God was given that we might grow up into a perfect man. God wants the body to be as glorious as the Head. Why? Man does not see the Head, but he sees the body. He sees what the Head is producing. He sees the Head is leading the body and the way it works. If you would go to a lot of places even around the Church of God, a sinner would think God has died and the church was holding His funeral. No! He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the God of the living too. Let us find this life; let us overcome.

In every one of the letters to the church in every age, Jesus ended by saying, "You must be an overcomer." We have to be overcomers, and we have a lot to overcome. The morning church had to overcome the dragon (33-530). The next group had to overcome the beast (530-1530). The next group had to overcome the second beast (1530-1880). Do you know what we must overcome? The eighth beast that is made up of seven. All of them have consolidated together to war against us. That is what you have to overcome today. It will take God's help to be overcomers. I ask as one who dearly loves your soul, Are you an overcomer? Have you overcome the old false spirit that still wants you to do it some other way than God's way? in some other time than God's time? Come and repent of your actions. Hold fast to that which you know is right and repent of everything that is not right. Get straightened out with God. Put yourself on the altar. Let God make you an overcomer.

THE PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE

Many people that have never been born again are trying to teach the kingdom, and because of this there is much confusion. Others have been born again, and then, because of joining up with false religious organizations, they have lost their vision of the kingdom and are looking for a literal reign of Christ on the earth. I stand on God's eternal Word when I say that that teaching is a lie from the pits of hell. Jesus will never touch the literal earth again.

Matthew 13:44 reads, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." The first through the seventh parables Christ spoke are consecutively outlined from A.D. 33 to the end of time; they bring the kingdom from Christ to the Judgment. There will be no confusion concerning this everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ, if we will let the truth alone. People can pick out a Scripture, take it over somewhere else, hook it onto another Scripture, and prove anything they want. That is why we have hundreds of conceptions, faiths, and beliefs today, and all are claiming to be preaching out of the same Bible. If we will leave the Word of God as it is, it will teach one thing. God only had one thing in mind for each Scripture in there. Somebody may say, "How will I ever get to know it?" It is very simple. The Bible is God's Book. To find out what it means, you need to get hold of the One who wrote it. Paul said in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 2, that we have the mind of Christ through the Spirit. God's eternal Spirit, whom He sent as a teacher, will let us know exactly what God meant. Whenever we get a greater revelation of truth, it will never cross up that which was truth before. That is how we can know it is truth.

Notice that the fifth, sixth, and seventh parables all begin with the word *again*: "*Again*, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure"; "*Again*, the kingdom of heaven it is like unto a merchant man"; "*Again*, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net." Whenever you say the word *again*, it means that it was like that once before. So, *again* the kingdom is likened to a treasure in the evening time. It was like that in the morning time, and it is like it *again* in the evening time. (That is why I like these parables. I get to preach twice on everything.)

Every one of those three parables said, "Again, the kingdom is like . . ." It was like that in the morning time, but it was lost sight of. It was covered up in the rubbish of confusion and earthly works. Now in the evening time it is again just like it was in the morning. Verse 44 reads, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." The kingdom has been likened to many small things through the Dark Ages. It was likened unto a grain of mustard seed, which we proved by the Word of God to be the least of all seeds. Now Jesus put its true value on it again. He showed us the great advantages that are offered to

all that are willing to come to its terms. Jesus said the kingdom is as a treasure hid in a field. There is a reason why everybody that talks about the kingdom does not see it. There are some conditions to meet if we are ever to lay hold of this precious experience. It is as a treasure *hid* in a field. Christ, or His kingdom, is the true treasure.

In the last parable we dealt with the false systems of religion. Christ taught through a parable that it was as a woman who took three measures of meal and hid leaven in it until the whole was leavened. Protestantism actually took the Word of God and hid in that Word earthly works and organizations (received from old Rome) until they corrupted the very Word of God. Yet while the woman was hiding leaven in the meal, God was hiding something also. While old Babylon was hiding leaven and corruption, God was hiding a treasure. While one was working a deception, the Other was bringing a people to a full light. All down through the 350 years of Protestantism, there was a treasure hid, and Christ likened it unto the kingdom.

Second Corinthians 4:7 tells us, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels [speaking of the experience of Christ coming into our hearts and lives through a born-again experience and taking the reins of our life]." Paul called it a treasure. Colossians 2:3 says, "In whom [or in Christ] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." When we lay hold of this treasure, it opens up the storehouse to all the treasures, to *all* the richness God has for mankind. Christ and His kingdom are greater because they open all other treasures, not only spiritually but physically. Matthew 6:33 reads, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." *All these things*—food, clothing, and a place to live—will be added unto you. Many lives are being wasted today because people are trying to add the other things without first seeking the kingdom. Until we seek the kingdom first, we do not really have anything. The young people want a good companion, nice clothes, a good home, and so on, but without putting the kingdom first, all you have is a bunch of zeros. If you seek the kingdom first, you can put a one in front of the zeros and have something. You will not only have it here, but you will have something through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

Jesus said this treasure was out in a field. What is the field? In the parable dealing with the morning time, Jesus said the field was the world. But now we are speaking on a little different line of the kingdom. We are speaking of the kingdom in an individual experience again. Look again at verse 44: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

We have a different field this time. We know the field is not the world now because when a man buys this treasure, he does not go and buy the world, he gives it up. I will prove to you by the Word of God that the field this treasure is found in is the Word of God. It is in the pages of God's eternal Word that this kingdom can be found. Whenever any man or woman truly finds the treasure of a born-again experience, it takes the Spirit of God to open up this Word. You will never find this treasure until you are born again of the Spirit of God. Jesus said, "You cannot see

it naturally." Nicodemus, in all his wisdom, thought Christ was just a teacher. Men with high intellectual power yet today think He is a teacher and a good example, but when Nicodemus said, "We know you are a teacher," Jesus said, "That is too dry. I am not a teacher. I am a Saviour. I am a Redeemer. You must be born again or you will never see the work I can do."

This kingdom can be found within the pages of God's eternal Word, or as Christ spoke of it, in a field. When one finds this treasure, he hides it and goes and buys the whole field. There is consecration. There is Bible sanctification, walking in the light, in the evening light. When an individual is seeking the kingdom, the Word of God is the field in which the treasure is hid. The parables clarify it. Jesus said the man would buy up the field to find the kingdom. Within that field God hid a treasure, a truth of the Kingdom of God that makes us all one people. I thank God I found it. The Word of God teaches us all the way through that this treasure is *hid*. This treasure, or the truth about the kingdom, is hid all the way through the Gospel ordinance. It is hid as the Word of God says. It is hid as the milk in the breast, the marrow in the bone, the manna in the dew, the water in the well, and the honey in the honeycomb. Those are all biblical expressions men of God used to show how this treasure is hid.

Let us look at one of these expressions: "It is hid as the water in the well." Let us deal with it typically. In the Garden of Eden where God created man, there was no well there. Take a quick jump to the twenty-second chapter of Revelation where a paradise is restored. There is no well there. There are rivers again, but in between the paradise that man lost and paradise restored, God has given us a well through which we get our water. This Word of God is the well through which we receive the water of life. There is much that is earthly around us, but if we will dig down through it, every one of us can get the water.

Chapter 30

THE TREASURE IN TYPE

Let us go back and get a type in Genesis 26:18: "And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them [with earth]." What is that a type of? Abraham was God's man—a type of God. Everywhere he went (except when he got away from God and went down in Egypt) he dug a well to take care of the physical Abraham and he built an altar to take care of the spiritual Abraham. Abraham knew that man was twofold. The Word of God says that after he moved away, the Philistines came through and stopped up the wells with earth. It is not the Philistines working today. Revelation, Chapter 18, says that Babylon's merchants were great men of the earth, and they have stopped up the wells the morning church drank from and received their power. It is our business in this evening time of light not only to dig new wells (get

new truth) but to unstop some of the old ones that have been hidden and have been stopped up with earth. We need to unstop these wells, lead people to them, and let people get hold of them. There is water in the well.

Sadly, many educators and theologians let their critics scratch around a little and say, "There is nothing here but dirt." So they throw the Scriptures away verse by verse. Not very long ago I dug up a lot of Scriptures the Revised Version threw away. I have been preaching on them, and there is water in them. The trouble is they did not go deep enough, and the second reason they did not find water is because they did not have anything to draw with. In John, Chapter 4, when Jesus met the woman at the well, He told her, "If you would have asked of Me, I would have given you a drink and you would never have thirsted again." She did not know what He was talking about. In essence, she said, "Are You greater than our fathers that gave us the well? That well is deep, and You have nothing to draw with." Jesus, in so many words, turned to her and said, "You do not see the well I am talking about. It is deeper than Jacob's well, and *you* have nothing to draw with."

You can have all the education you can cram in your head, but short of the Spirit of God, you cannot get a drop of water out of the well. You cannot get water out of this well with manmade pumps. It is drawn by the Spirit of God. I want us to see that when Jesus spoke of it being hid in a field, He was saying it is hid within the pages of God's eternal Word. You can read it over and over, but you will never draw out that treasure unless you have the Spirit of God. It is too deep. If you ever find this treasure, you will have to dig. I want you to see it just as Jesus wanted us to see it. Sometimes we read the Word too fast. It is as a treasure hid. Someone may say, "I stumbled onto a born-again experience." No, you did not. You were fooled. No one *stumbled* onto it. This thing is as a treasure that is hid. It is not laying on the surface. It is hid. You can walk over the top of it, stand on it for a week, and never know you are even near it. You have to get below the earth. You have to get down and dig if you ever lay hold of this experience God has in store for His people in this day and age. The reason many cannot enjoy the blissful experience they once had is because they will not put forth the effort it takes to get it. They become too lazy. They seldom open their Bible, and when they do open it, they try to read a chapter and a half. It would be just as well if they would read only two verses. People just relax, go down to the church, and let the preacher preach the Word. They are just like a bunch of birds in a nest. Go around a bird's nest where there are baby birds and just watch. Whether the preacher is preaching truth or not, people just take it. God's saints in the morning time searched the Scriptures when Paul preached to see if those things he preached were the truth or not. That is how they got their deep experiences.

Sometimes when God blesses my soul, then the saints get to shouting and say, "Brother Wilson, it is good!" I tell them, "If you want something better, go get a drink yourself. After God gives it to me and it blesses my soul, I have feasted on it and drank on it. Then when I bring it down, you are drinking out of my reservoir. If you want a good drink, go and drink from the fountain yourself." That is exactly what God wants you to do. I know through experience, some of the richness has been

taken off after the man of God has drunk from it. What am I getting at? The saints need to get back to old-time Bible reading and prayer. They need that individual connection with God where He walks with them and talks with them and tells them that He is their God and they are His people. When you do that, you will find the power. It is no wonder Christ likened it unto a treasure. It is above all treasures of this world!

In Acts 8:26 Philip was told to go down to Gaza and teach the Ethiopian who was in charge of all the queen's treasure. How do you think this Ethiopian ever heard about what was going on up at Jerusalem? If you will study history, you will find the Queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's wisdom and went up there to see. But she could not get it; she could just hear of it. Christ was Solomon's wisdom. She went back and told of the greatness of Solomon. The Word of God, along with history, would have us believe the queen spread abroad the greatness that was going on up in Jerusalem. Years later when Candace was queen, an Ethiopian traveled to Jerusalem, saying, "I have heard of great things up here." He was in charge of all the queen's treasury, but there was something within him looking for something better. You can have your hands on all the treasures of this world, but you will never be satisfied. They will not satisfy. It is a trick of the devil that keeps you going after them. It is like a picture I saw of a little boy sitting in a wagon with a dog hitched to it and a wiener hanging on a stick out in front of the dog. He was riding about, and the dog was going after the wiener. That is the way the devil works. He will put things in front of you, make you think you are going to get them, but you never catch up with them. Even if you did catch up with them, it would not bring an ounce of peace.

When the Ethiopian was ready to leave Jerusalem to go back home, God saw his heart was honest. God saw that he really wanted to worship God. It is too bad that some people went up to Jerusalem to spend a few days and went back without ever hearing about Jesus. Today, if we are not careful, people will come into our midst (right around that which calls itself the Church of God), go on their way back home, and never hear enough truth to get acquainted with God. God help us!

The Ethiopian left with a saddened heart, walking on down the road. He was completely out of Jerusalem, out in the desert. God moved on Philip and said, "Take off down there as hard as you can go." So Philip went down and joined himself to the Ethiopian. He was reading in Isaiah that "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter" (Acts 8:32). What did Philip say? In essence, he told him, "You are in the right field; you are soon going to find a treasure."

Chapter 31

THE BURIED TREASURE

When you read in God's eternal Word about Isaiah's prophecy and continue on through, you are in the right field. If you will dig a little, it will not be long until you

find a treasure. Too many today are trying to find it in a field of religious education, in the field of science, or in the field of theology. You will never find it there. You will find it in this field, THE WORD, or you will never find it. God help us to turn back to the old-fashioned truths of the Gospel and lift up the Christ of Calvary who will draw all men unto Him.

When the Ethiopian found the field, it was not long until he had the treasure. We have to go below the surface, and sometimes we need someone to help us. Philip began with that very Scripture and preached Christ to him. It was not long until the Ethiopian got an experience and was baptized. I want you to see we have to go below the surface to find this treasure. The richest mines are often found underground. Go to the south and to the west where the gold mines are. I have been there. That land is so barren and so rough you can hardly stand on it. It looks like it is wasted, but God knew what He was doing. Often under the most barren land is found the richest gold mine. Right in the very Word of God where it looks like there is nothing, if you keep digging under those things you think most barren, you will find the richest treasure. In other words, Jesus said to search the Scriptures. If a lot of people would search the Scriptures, they would find out they never received anything, though they thought they had.

Christ said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye *think* ye have eternal life" (John 5:39), but you do not have eternal life by the Scriptures. The Scriptures just lead you to Christ who gives you eternal life. You are going to have to put forth greater effort than ever to find this rich experience you can rejoice in. Proverbs 2:1-5 reads: "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God." Whosoever will may have the knowledge of God. You can have the understanding of God if you will seek for it like hidden treasures.

If you were going to go out and literally dig up a hidden treasure, you would not go empty handed. You would take something with you to dig with. The kingdom is the best known and the least known thing in the world. Jesus gave us these parables to teach us the mysteries of the kingdom. He said to His disciples, "It is given unto you." We found in Matthew 13:1 that Jesus went out of the house, and then in verse 3 He began to teach the four different kinds of ground. However, when He got into the essence of the truth of the parables, He went back into the house. That is where the teaching took place. You have to get into the house to ever understand the teaching of this Bible. I say again, the kingdom is the best known and the least known thing in the world. Those that have it wonder why others cannot see it, and those that do not have it wonder why those that have it are so happy about it. No wonder Jesus said that their ears are deaf, their eyes are blind, and their understanding is darkened.

Some good old brother or sister is singing a glorious song of Zion and all at once the Spirit of God touches their soul. Glory to God! Yet, the sinner sitting right beside

them does not see or hear anything. Jesus said in Matthew 11:25-26: "O Father . . . thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Thus we gather from God's eternal Word that if we ever find this experience, if we ever find this treasure (speaking of a born-again experience), first we must be treasure hunting.

The next thing we have to find is the right field. Can't you see how foolish, how much money is wasted when science and other groups of individuals try to dig into this thing to find anything that would prove God's Word true? They will never find it. I read an article where they thought they had come up with the answer for the Red Sea crossing. They are hundreds and thousands of years behind. They will never catch up. They have not got that figured out yet. We are way over in Canaan, Christ has died, we are all saved and sanctified, our bodies are healed, and they are hung up at the Red Sea.

Not only must we be treasure hunting, but we have to have some tools. We have proved the field is the Word of God. What kind of tools do you need? Repentance will help you by turning you in the right direction. When you are out in the world, you are going farther away from the treasure every day. The first thing that is necessary is to repent and turn around. Somebody may say, "How do you know what this treasure is?" I am a field man. I am not a field man for an organization, but I am a field man for God. I know because I found it. Anybody who can find the treasure can tell you where they found it. We could build up a man and hang a handle on his name like D.D. and L.L.D., but it is like the curl on the pig's tail. It looks nice, but it does not make any more pork.

A sister told me one time about the installation of a pastor. She did not know why they used the name of "doctor." After it was over, she asked one of the pastors, "What do you mean by this 'doctor' business?" He said, "Well, he is a doctor of divinity." Doctor of divinity! I never knew divinity was sick and needed a doctor. They have the right name. They are doctoring up divinity and taking the divine work clear out of it.

Repentance and old-time humility will get you down to where you can dig. They will break the surface, faith will do the excavating, the Spirit of God will take the veil off of your eyes, and you will be born again. You will see the kingdom, which without being born again, no man can see. I praise God that right here in this world of sorrow, poverty, sickness, failure, and being in debt, there is to be found a kingdom of righteousness and peace in the Holy Ghost.

Jesus went on a little farther and said when the man had found this treasure, he hid it. What was he hiding? People that really have this experience are taking care of it. For example, you can tell when people have any money. If I see a man going along with his back pocket half tore out and his wallet hanging out, I say, "That man does not have anything." When people really have something that means anything to them, they take care of it. You can tell when people have a rich experience by their very actions. They are taking care of it. They are guarding it with their life. They are careful where they go, what they say, with whom they have companionship with. Why? They do not want to lose it.

When one finds it, he hides it and guards it with his very life. It is the most precious thing to him. Salvation is the most precious thing that ever touched the soul of man; it is a heavenly gift. You can talk about people with their millions. If you go over to France and pay \$2,500 for something, you will take it and put it in a safety deposit box down at the bank and maybe only look at it once every six months. I am preaching about something that came from Heaven. People think it is nice to own something that came from France or from way off somewhere where man has hardly been. They like to say, "This is a wonderful thing. It came from way over there." Well, I am talking about a gift that came from Heaven. People that really get it, hide it and guard it with their lives. God gave us a place to hide it, a place to put it for safe keeping.

Chapter 32

SELLING ALL TO BUY

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field" (Matthew 13:44). Right here is a second work of grace.¹ When man finds this treasure experience, a born-again experience, what does he do? He goes right on into the second work. How does he get it? He sells all that he has and buys the field. Old-time and complete consecration to God's eternal Word will give you the whole Word of God. The wise man said in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." I want you to see the devil has deceived men. He makes them feel they are selling out a little here and selling out a little there. When you sell any part of the truth, you sell it all. You cannot tear it apart. If you sell out the least bit to the devil, you lose it all.

I would like to put a little emphasis on the reason why this fellow consecrated. He found this treasure through a born-again experience. He saw the kingdom. It was his. Paul said we have it right here in earthen vessels. He got joy. The kingdom is righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost. He found joy, and the Scripture says for joy he went and sold all that he had and bought the whole field. Why did he do it? For no personal reason. We need to get people to be sanctified, not to get rid of their carnal nature. It will do that, but *for joy* do it. There is joy to be found in a born-again experience, but there is more joy if the vine is purged. Your joy can be full. So he found joy in a born-again experience, and he consecrated himself for more joy. When you get people to do it for joy, you will not have to go pull them down. Somebody said, "Why do we have so much trouble getting people into a second work of grace?" They did not get the first one. There are two definite works of grace,

¹See page **d** for more information concerning this doctrine.

and one will lead you right into the other.¹ The very peace put within you in the first work will develop you right into the second. It will just be a very short matter of time. Why? You are rejoicing in that which you found.

If I give you something good and you are rejoicing in it and are happy with it, then I come along and say, "You can get a thousand times that much if you just do this," if you are really enjoying what you had the first time, you will jump at the second. He "selleth all that he hath." Complete consecration will let us have the full truth. In Matthew, Chapter 19, we read of the rich young ruler who came to Christ. What did he say? "All these things have I kept from my youth up" (verse 20), but Jesus said, "If thou wilt be perfect . . ." Do not be afraid to use the word *perfect*. Hebrews 6:1 says, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection."

Back in the early part of the parables, they brought forth no fruit to perfection. It was because the thorns were still in the way. Jesus said, "If thou wilt be perfect . . ." God is no respecter of persons. If the rich young ruler could be perfected by doing that, then you and I can. So Jesus said, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor . . . and come and follow me" (verse 21). It takes a selling out. This individual had found a treasure in the field and just like any wise businessman, he said, "I found a treasure in that field. I am going to buy that whole field. There might be some other rich mines in there." So he bought the whole thing.

Here is another mystery of the kingdom: you have the whole field, and I can have it all also. How do you figure that? There is nothing else in the world like that. If you bought it *all*, there would not be any left for anyone else. Yet, everyone can have it all. Whoever heard of such a thing! If a man could do that in literal life, he would get arrested. We see how much greater heavenly things are. Christ sells the same thing over and over. You get all of Christ, and I get all of Him. This field of truth is the only field the kingdom will grow in.

Revelation, Chapter 3, tells why we must buy it all. I want to deal a little with the Pentecost in the Revelation. Verse 1 says, "These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars." Sardis covers the age from 1730 to 1880, the time when God was ready to give them a second work of grace.¹ Luther came preaching justification by faith.

There is only one Holy Spirit, but He works in seven different ways through the ages. Not only does Christ have the Holy Spirit for you, but He has the seven stars, which are the ministry that will tell you how to get the Holy Spirit. Just like the star that led the wise men to Christ, God has a ministry that tells people how to get the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He has the Spirit and He has the ministry to tell you how to get it. That was the way He addressed Himself to Sardis. Reading on in verse 1 we find that Christ said, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."

¹See page **d** for more information concerning this doctrine.

In Revelation 2:23 He told the people in this age if they did not repent, if they did not quit teaching that old Jezebel doctrine, then He was going to kill their children with death. Here they were still holding onto a name, but they were dead. What happens to people when they do not walk in the light? They become just like a lot of people are today: going around and saying, "We are the church," but they are dead as doornails. In this Sardian age, Methodism was the highest organized group on the face of the globe. If organization and education and intellectual power would have saved the world, the Methodists would have done it long ago. Sardis was a highly-organized church. I want you to see that you can be perfectly organized and be perfectly dead. Go back to Ezekiel, Chapter 37, and read where God took Ezekiel down in the valley of dry bones. He prophesied the Word to them and every bone came together and the flesh and the muscles came on and covered them. They were perfectly organized, but they were as dead as they were before even though they were brought together. What did they need? They needed the breath of God to blow upon them.

I have preached to you from the depth of my heart on the need of the Holy Ghost, and I am preaching it here again. We can hook every Scripture in the Bible together. There are people that had the Holy Ghost once, that are still rattling over an old truth God showed them years ago, but now they are as dead as could be. Paul said in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, that you could have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and still not have the love of God. God help us not to be deceived. The Word of God says to try the spirit. There are too many being deceived. Just because a man can get up and rattle off something God showed him a long time ago does not make him a Christian today. He may have backslid, married a dozen women, and be living in adultery now. We must *try* the spirit. How are we going to try it? First John 4:2 says, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God," not every person but every spirit. There are a lot of *people* who will testify CHRIST came in the flesh, but John said that every *spirit* must testify of it. There is a difference.

Too many in the religious world today and some that would call themselves saints have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. They had a name to live but no principal of life. There was deadness in their souls, deadness in their services, deadness in their preaching, deadness in their singing, and deadness in their praying. Thank God, all the people were not dead in the church at Sardis. There were two groups of people, which shows believers and nonbelievers yoked together. There were others that had a name they lived, and Christ told them to overcome that thing. Jesus told them to be careful, to hold fast to the truth they had, and to strengthen it with the new light He gave them. Then they could walk with Him in white (Revelation 3:4) right on this earth, in sanctification. These letters and parables tie together.

We read in Revelation 3:4, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments." What does that teach us? There are very few that can stay in justification very long without defiling their garments. There is no standing grace in justification. You had better take the sign of the Word. Someone may say,

"I am saved. I am justified. I did not know there was any carnal nature there." You had better believe the Word when God tells you it is there. You had better come, confess, and consecrate to God. Let Him purge you from that old nature.¹

Here is where so many get confused. They say they need sanctification because they have been acting wrong. No, the minute you act wrong, you need to repent and get saved. God has a plan that will lead a man into sanctification before the old carnality acts up if you believe Him and let Him lead you. If you do not want to take the sign of His Word, you will get another sign one of these days. God will let you know it is there, but you will have spoiled your justification. Overcomers are to be clothed in white. He would not blot their name out of the Word of Life. Christ said He would confess their name before the Father.

Matthew 10:32 says, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." We cannot confess Christ before men with carnality in the heart. Jesus did not have carnality. When the disciples said the prince of this world cometh, Jesus said, "Let him come. He has nothing in me." As long as carnality is there, the devil has still got something in you, and he will use it for your downfall. Once you get carnality out, you can put the devil completely on the outside. He can rattle on the windows and kick on the doors, but he cannot get inside if you will let Jesus be the Doorkeeper.

Did you know Pentecost is in the Revelation? A lot of people would have us feel Pentecost was not in it. Did you think when God gave us a revelation of Jesus Christ and His reign from beginning to end that Pentecost would not be in there somewhere? That is what produced it all.

Chapter 33

SANCTIFICATION IN TYPE

I will read a few Scriptures in Revelation, Chapter 8, and bring this old type up to the antitype through the Revelation and show what God can do for us today. Verse 1 deals with the silence in heaven, and verses 2-5 say: "And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake."

This is Pentecost. Now we have some symbols to define. Again, verse 2 says,

¹See page **d** for more information concerning this doctrine.

"I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets." This is a symbol of the ministry clear through the Gospel Day. The trumpets are a sounding out of the Word of God. In Ezekiel God said, "Son of man, I have made you a watchman on the wall." He told them to sound the trumpet and warn the people when the enemy came. If the people would not listen, their blood would be required at their hands, but if the watchman failed to warn them when the enemy came, their blood would be required at the watchman's hands. (That is why I am going to faithfully warn men.)

God help us to see we must faithfully warn men and women in every situation of life, or we will come up with blood on our skirts. Paul made that very clear in 1 Corinthians 14:8 when he said, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" Why do we not see the saints rising up in this battle of Armageddon and fighting as they ought? It is because there is too much uncertain preaching going on in the pulpits. Preachers are scared to death. They think a war is coming. They are afraid a depression is coming, and their salary will be cut off. Before they read what the Word of God says, they begin preaching what they believe Jesus meant by this and that. You will never hear me preach, "I believe thus and so," because what I believe does not amount to a bit more than what you believe. Paul said we are to speak the things we know. If you preach what you believe to a bunch of people, they will not have enough faith to pray a church mouse out of the building. Then they see a poor, old brother who is guilty of sin, and they say, "Well, maybe he did not mean that." We need to put the Word of God out in no uncertain terms. It will be a foundation for men and women to build skyward experiences to God on.

Next we have a censer and a golden altar. To get the answer to these symbols, we have to go back to the temple where they were used. To get understanding of exactly what happened on Pentecost, let us read Exodus 30:1-6: "And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee."

The mercy seat was in the second room. The Holy of Holies was the mercy seat, the very Ark of the Covenant, a symbol of the presence of God in the second room. This little incense altar was to be put right before the golden altar. What was to happen there? ". . . before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee." There is where God meets with people. "And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning" (verse 7). There were many rituals these men went through in the Old Testament that had no meaning to them whatsoever. They

brought no blessing to them, but they are types of reality you and I now enjoy through Jesus Christ in this Holy Ghost dispensation. What good did it do for Aaron to take fire and incense and burn them on that altar every morning and night? It was a type of something.

Incense is a type of prayer. In Psalm 141:2 David said, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense." Revelation 5:8 reads, "The four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." Fire and praise go together. They had harps and vials.

Again, Exodus 30:7-8 tells us: "And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, [There is a type of prayer. When should you pray? Every morning when you dress the lamp and every evening and then greater than that, keep on praying.] he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense [men ought always to pray]." He was to get fire off the brazen altar. Where did the fire that he got off the brazen altar come from? Leviticus 16:12 reads, "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD [the priest was to take a censer full of fire from the brazen altar and put incense with it and put it on the golden altar], and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail."

Leviticus, Chapter 9, tells us where that fire came from. The priest just did not go and get fire from off that altar. It had to come from somewhere. Leviticus 9:23-24 states: "And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: [The sacrifices were put on the altar. God did not want any man to strike a fire. This is no human work.] and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the LORD." Where did the fire come from? It came from God. Man never lit the first fire in the tabernacle of the temple. God lit it by a supernatural work, and He told man never to let it go out. That fire is a type of the Holy Ghost all the way through that John said Jesus would baptize with. It came by God. He puts it within, and it is up to you and me to keep it burning. How do you keep it burning? Just put in a little incense.

The fire came from God, and the priest carried it to the golden altar. This fire was started by God, and it must never go out. Leviticus 6:13 says, "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." These are all types of the reality we have in Jesus Christ. Here in our lesson in Revelation we have Christ as our High Priest. In the Old Testament the high priest went in to burn the incense, and he let the very smoke of it cover him as he went into the holy place before God. Now Christ is our High Priest, Paul said. He just went in once, and when He went in, He rent the vail. Not only did He go in, but He opened up a new and living way for all the rest to go in. We come by this altar where He offered Himself as a Lamb without spot and blemish. We come by the labor, the washing of regeneration. We have a new and living way through the blood of Christ to go right on into the Holy of Holies.

Let us look a little farther. Revelation 8:3 reads, "And another angel came and stood at the altar [there were the seven angels—the ministry—standing, and another angel came and stood at the altar], having a golden censer; [That angel was Christ. More than once in the Revelation Christ is spoken of as an Angel when He was still operating in the thought of a messenger, bringing His good news of redemption to mankind.] and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers [What about much incense? He is still praying.] of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." Now, let us see if that does not bring us right over to what happened before and at Pentecost. This angel, our High Priest, did not go before the mercy seat. The Scripture says He went before the very throne of God. Find out who works there, and you will know who the angel was. In John 14:16-17 Christ said: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." We will see that He offered His prayer with all the prayers of the saints.

When did He offer it with all the prayers of the saints? In Acts 1:14, when Christ got them down to Pentecost, He had to go out after His resurrection and round them up again. Why? They were without a Comforter. "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Between that place of being in them and with them, they went back to their old paths. Peter said, "We will go back fishing." Whenever you see a minister today who once stood for this truth and has been on fire for God and then goes back to radio announcing, insurance selling, or any of the other old walks of life, you know he has lost his Comforter. God rounded them up. He got them down to Jerusalem and in verse 13 we read that they were in an upper room. Verse 14 says, "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." There was the Angel praying. Where? Up before the throne of God. Our High Priest was before God praying for Him to send another Comforter. The saints on the earth at Jerusalem in an upper room were praying, so He offered it with all the prayers of the saints.

We will go back and get the last of the type. In Luke, Chapter 1, we see some of the last work of the old high priest before Christ came. Zacharias was a high priest. In verse 10 we read when the priest was ready to go in and put incense on the golden altar with the fire he took off the brazen altar, the congregation stood outside praying. Verses 8-10 state: "And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense." There is the picture just a little while before Christ came. Here was Zacharias still preaching to them and taking incense and going in before the Lord, while the congregation stood outside praying. It was just about time to be an antitype.

Come over to Pentecost again just before our High Priest went before the very throne of God to pray that His people might have a Comforter. A congregation was at Jerusalem praying, and they continued in prayer. Christ was different from all the

other priests. When this priest had taken the incense and the censer of fire and went in and offered it on that altar, he turned around and came back out and the congregation dispersed and went on home, sad-hearted. But look what our Priest did. He offered up His prayer with all the prayers of the saints and went before the very throne of God. After He had offered up the incense, He turned around and took the censer that contained the incense and picked up fire off the altar and cast it into the earth. There is the Day of Pentecost. Glory be to God! He took one step that no priest in any age could take. When the old priests offered the incense, they went back out, but when our High Priest offered the incense, He scooped up a censer full of fire and cast it into the earth, and Pentecost came into being.

This thrills my soul! Acts 2:1 says, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come . . ." The Day of Pentecost fully came this day. Others were just types of this Pentecost. This was the Pentecost God had in mind when He gave the first tabernacle in the Word. God did not have anything for man through this—only examples, types, and shadows. What He had in mind was the Holy Ghost coming back into the hearts of men. So we read that "when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Praying together will bring us together. I firmly believe (if you will let me use my imagination) that there was aught which needed to be worked out between those people when they prayed in the upper room. Someone may say, "What makes you think so?" They were as human as you and me. They were human enough to turn back to their nets and disbelieve Christ when He told them He would meet them in Galilee. He said, "I will meet you in three days out there on a mountain." Did they believe it? They were going back to their nets saying, "I thought surely He would redeem Israel." He had to get out of the grave, go out and round them up, and get them on a mountain. He sat them down and talked to them and said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). This Gospel must be preached. That was a symbol of the complete ministry gathered around there. This Gospel needed to be preached to all the world, but Jesus said, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). They were all together in one place, and there came a sound from Heaven. There is the fire that the High Priest took in His censer and cast into the earth.

We have this treasure in earthen vessels. Jesus prayed, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done *in* earth, [Not '*on* earth.' Millennialists try to twist this verse to prove a literal reign here.] as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). The people of God are doing the will of God even as the angels are doing it in Heaven. That is why in the Hebrew letter Paul called the heavenly Jerusalem an innumerable company of angels. Why? God's people are doing the will of God just as the angels are. Acts 2:2 says, "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." Let us go to Revelation 8:5. It reads, "And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth [when that hit the earth, when the Spirit hit the souls of men, something happened]: and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earth-

quake." Let us go back to Acts. "There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind And . . . cloven tongues like as of fire" fell on them. Where did it come from? It came from the censor before the throne of God.

Chapter 34

RESULT OF THE INFILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In Revelation, Chapter 8, after the voices we read that there were thunderings. What is *thundering* a symbol of in Revelation? It represents the thundering out of the prophecies of the past. God takes literal things to teach us spiritual things. Even as He did in the days of Christ, He uses natural things to teach spiritual things. You can see the literal lightning and maybe hear the thundering three or four minutes later. Even so, the prophets got lightning.

On the Day of Pentecost after the Holy Ghost came, the first thing that happened was they all got to their feet and began praising God. It put light within them and the upstairs room. They began to praise God, the Scripture says, and the upper room became too small. They went out in the street and began to witness. You may say, "They were emotional fellows." No, they were not. They had been a bunch of dead, old, dried up Jews. If these were emotional people, if they were people that were known to shout, others would not have gotten too excited. But here came these old, dead, dried fellows shouting and rejoicing. Various fellow men came around and said, "What has happened to you fellows? Have you been hitting the wine? You might be followers of Jesus, but you have been in the wine because you would not act like that if you were not drunk." There was a great demonstration there. "There were voices, and thunderings" (Revelation 8:5).

Then Peter stood up, and he felt like preaching. That is the kind of man I like to hear. If there is anything I hate to hear, it is somebody who has to be coaxed to preach. I never expect to get much out of him. I want somebody to preach who feels like preaching. When the Spirit of God touches my soul, I would rather preach the Gospel than to do anything on the face of the globe. The Spirit of God is still working today as He was on the Day of Pentecost. He is still calling the ministry, still filling ones with His Spirit, and still sending them out to preach the Word of God. Peter stood up, and the Revelation says that there were thunderings. What is that? He stood up and thundered out the light that Joel had. You can read in Acts 2:16, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." He did not have to preach a message on the church. All he said was, "Go back and see what Joel talked about." Verse 17 reads, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: [Then what will happen?] and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." Young women will preach. You may say, "But I do not believe in women preachers!" Then you do not believe in the Holy Ghost because Joel said when the Holy Ghost comes, the young women will prophesy.

Also, the young men will "see visions [not televisions], and your old men shall dream dreams." What will they dream about? They will dream about the same thing the young men are seeing a vision of.

I have seen it happen. I can show you more than one illustration when the Spirit of God moved on a young man and gave him a call. His father or maybe his grandmother was seeing the same thing. Neither one of them talked to the other, but they both came to me. The young man told me of the vision he saw of his work, and his father told me that he was dreaming of his son. I said, "Keep on looking" and "Keep on dreaming." One Sunday morning the son was praying at one end of the altar, and the father was praying at the other end. Then I pulled the two together and said, "He was dreaming about the same thing you saw." The father could hardly give the son up to the work, and the son was having a hard time consecrating. If the man of God will thunder out the light of the past, God will give us new light.

Peter stood there and preached the light of the prophets, beginning with prophesy and coming down through. It was not very long until God gave him new light. God will do the same thing for you and me. I humbly submit this message to you. We will never find the light God has for the church in this day if we do not thunder out the light He has given us thus far. If we will thunder out the light that made us the church, God will give us light to lead us on. The reason many cannot see seventh-seal light is because they lost their vision of the sixth-seal light. Peter stood and said, "This is that." If he would come back and look at the so-called Church of God today, all fixed up like Jezebel, he may say, "What is this?"

Chapter 35

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Christ is still sitting at the right hand of the Father, as our great High Priest. He has never tired from His efforts. If the people of God will let their prayers ascend, it will move God on His throne. God did not intend to just pour out His Spirit on all flesh on the Day of Pentecost, but from then on He has poured His Spirit out on all flesh that will give Him a place where He can pour out His Spirit. Thank God for His goodness!

The first thing the devil did was to work on the preachers and cause them to feed the people chaff and wood and stubble. This made God's sheep so weak that they were continually fighting the battle within themselves, trying to overcome the devil (let alone take the world for Christ). God's ministers need to turn back to God's eternal Word and feed God's sheep. After all that is what He called them for—to feed the sheep, to feed the Church of God that He purchased with His own blood. Then God's sheep will be fat and flourishing, and they will produce.

In Song of Solomon 4:1-2 Christ told of the beauty of the church, saying: "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy

locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them." There is the church. How do they look? Like a bunch of sheep that have just come up from the washing. Every one of them brings forth twins. Healthy sheep will have twins and triplets, but a bunch of old sheep running around on a hillside and eating stubble will be doing well if they can bring forth a live lamb.

The reason a lot of congregations are not bringing forth new babes is because God knows the mother is not strong enough. She would die in the attempt. God wants His men to feed the church. In so many words, Jesus told Peter in John, Chapter 21, "If you love Me, Peter, feed My lambs. If you love Me, Peter, feed My sheep. If you love Me, Peter, feed My sheep." Why did He say "feed My sheep" twice? If you do not feed the sheep, you will not have lambs to feed. I declare unto you that many congregations of the Church of God need some new babes. That will heal a lot of their conditions. As children grow up together it seems like they let a lot of little things get between them and they get certain attitudes. When God blesses their home with a little babe, they forget their attitudes and go to loving that babe. In the Church of God it is necessary to have babes born every little bit. That is what helps us to keep our love and concern. It will cause the other children to forget about themselves and start helping that babe to make it. While they are helping that babe, God will be strengthening them. God has ordained that if we will follow His plan, there will be children born into the kingdom periodically. It will do something for us in the body of Christ. We will be edified by it.

In Matthew 13:45-46 we read the sixth parable: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." The fifth parable likened the kingdom to a treasure hid in the field. We proved by the Word of God that the field is the Word of God and within that Word is the kingdom. We must be born again of the Spirit of God to find it within the Word. Jesus told Nicodemus, "You cannot see it unless you are born of the Spirit of God." That individual, after he had found that treasure, found the kingdom. He sold all that he had—nothing more than consecration to God's eternal Word. He sold out and bought the whole field, or the truth.

Let us take it one step farther. You may say, "I thought Christ was the pearl of great price," but this man already had Christ and was sanctified. Then he found a pearl of great price. Let us see what the Word of God says about it. A real experience with God spoils us for the things of this world. When we really love God and find this treasure, we will be through with the things of the world. We will be, as Peter said, as newborn babes, desiring the sincere milk of the Word (1 Peter 2:2). We will come and consecrate to its completeness. When we consecrate, God will give it to us in its completeness. We will not know it all, we will be ever learning, but it will be all ours. The very Spirit of God in our hearts will begin to lead us through this precious Word, hunting for more gems and rich things.

How will a man be who has consecrated to God's Word? He will be as "a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls." He will be seeking through the Word for other truths. Pearls are symbols of truths within God's Word. The Word of God answers the symbol. When Jesus said in Matthew 7:6, "Neither cast ye your pearls before swine," what did He mean? He meant that when you see an individual who has an attitude and raises up against the Word, you are just wasting your time pouring out the truths on him. Jesus used pearls as a symbol of truths within God's eternal Word. He said not to cast your pearls before swine, "lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." When I see people today trample this precious truth under their feet and turn around and knife someone in the back, I know what they are.

This individual had sold out to God. Church, it was true in our experience. We began seeking through God's eternal Word to find these truths, and everyone we found was a little richer. As long as the Spirit of God is within us, we will keep digging up truths from His Word. That will stir up an anxiety within us to go after something better. He likened it unto a merchant man dealing with pearls, or dealing in truths. The child of God is going through the Word, hunting richer things and a better pearl.

In the opening of this sixth-seal age, we have a picture of the kingdom. Men and women had been justified by the message preached by Luther and sanctified by the Wesleyan age. Now what were they doing? They were going around in the many religious shops, hunting a greater truth than they had before. God had His people in a state of unrest before He sent out the great message on coming back to Mount Zion. People today, before they ever find the truth, get in a state of unrest. As the Word of God in prophecy spoke in Ezekiel 34:6, they "wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill," seeking their resting place, but not finding it. Even so, we see a kingdom before 1880 made up of men and women that were hunting pearls of truth. They had consecrated to God's will. They wanted all the truth, and they went around in the many religious shops. Anywhere they heard of someone preaching more truth than what they had, they went over and bought it. Here and there, wherever they could hear somebody who was dealing out more truth than they had, they went and took hold of it. Jesus likened it to pearl merchants. God help us to see! Many are easily satisfied, but this individual whom Jesus pictured was a merchant man, one who really went into the pearl business.

I want you to see something: if you do not get this experience, you will never find the pearl of great price. This individual was already dealing in pearls and truths before he ever found the pearl of great price. That is just another preconceived idea. Christ did not come at a price. God sent Him and brought Him. Something else was bought with a price. It was the pearl of great price. This individual was already a merchant man dealing in pearls of truth before he ever found the pearl of great price. He had to have Christ, he had to have a born-again experience, or he could not have known anything about the truth.

MYSTERY BABYLON

Someone may say, "I did not know Babylon had any truths." Yes, the Word of God says she did. Revelation 18:12, dealing with sect Babylon, tells us, "The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls . . ." Gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls are all symbols of truth. Babylon dealt in truths, but to those precious truths, verse 13 lets us know she added cinnamon and many literal things. What did she do? She took the truth of God's eternal Word and the souls of men and put them right on the same level as material things. Sure, Babylon had truths, and many of God's people are running around in the various shops of Babylon seeking for some greater truth than they have yet today. God's people are always willing to give up something they have in order to get something better. That is why I never worry about God's people not coming to truth. Thank God, we have something better than Babylon ever had or ever will have. That is why I like to preach it. God's people are wise in spiritual things.

When God's people see someone has something better than they have, they are ready to trade. One brother who had been raised in the Church of Christ had never had any real experience, and even down at death's door, he was still hanging onto his profession. I tried to reach him with the truth, but he said, "Well, it has not done much for me, but I do not think I ought to switch horses in the middle of the stream." I would trade anywhere—in the middle of the stream or anywhere else—if the horse I had died. Any horse is better than a dead one. The Spirit of God within you will make you want the best there is. It will make you want everything that God has for His people.

Revelation, Chapter 17, tells us of mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots, that which John called the great whore. The Scripture says she was decked with gold and silver and precious stones and pearls. I have already preached that Rome did not have the truth. She did not have the truth, but she decked herself with truth to deceive people. There is a vast difference between being clothed in the Word of God and decked with a few Scriptures. She was clothed in scarlet and purple. That was her foundation. It was the devil's work from the very beginning. She decked her robes with a few bits of truths here and there to deceive men. Even John marveled at her for a little bit. The Apostle John, with all his wisdom and his spirit, was stirred when he saw that woman. He said, "I wondered with admiration," but God spoke to him and said, "John, do not be deceived. I will tell you the truth about her."

Too many times the people of God have been in the same shape John was in. Babylon has spoken some things and decked herself with certain Scriptures until many of God's people have begun to admire her and the work she is doing. God has an angel who will tell you the truth about her.

I want you to see that you cannot leave Chapter 17 back in the morning time. The sixth-seal ministry put it back there. Now, they were true to their message,

possessed the Spirit of God, and did a great work before our eyes, but they put that beast back in the morning time, and you cannot do it. The Scripture says that mystery Babylon was a mother. She was not a mother in the morning time. She was not a mother until she brought forth her daughters. So, the time setting for this chapter has to be in the evening time.

Old Rome was symbolized in other ways in the morning time, but the message of the eighth beast is for the day and age in which we live. It is not made up of this, that, and the other, but the Word of God says that eighth beast is made up of the seven. What does that mean? Every false religion throughout the seven ages are uniting and coming together in this generation to fight against the people of God. Sure, Babylon was decked with truths. There would be no deception if she were not. If she would do nothing but go about in her purple and scarlet robe or give away her true foundation, nobody would be deceived. But she deceives by the very thing she decks herself with. She uses those truths to glitter before the eyes even as a lewd woman puts on the jewelry to catch a man's attention. Even so the old false system sticks out a few truths here and there to catch honest hearts and catch the glaze of their eyes, and then bring them in. It is not very long after Babylon catches your attention until she has you drinking out of her cup. Once you drink out of her cup, you are done. That is why I spare no time in crying out to the Church of God. Worldly wisdom has a ministry that should be God's ministry, yet they feel that they can go down and meet Babylon on her ground. There is no man who can meet her in the power of manhood and intellectual power and resist. She will give you a sip of her cup, and the next thing you know you will make an alliance with her.

Jeremiah said that Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's hand. What was he talking about? God used Babylon; God worked through her when she preached the truth and stood by God's Word. But she emptied that cup of truth and filled it with the filthiness of her fornication. She is more interested today in getting people to join her organizations than she is in getting them married to Christ. "She saith in her heart, I sit a queen" (Revelation 18:7). The truth of God's Word tells us that this is not reigning. She is just deceiving people and making them think she has the power to reign, but Babylon is nothing but an earthly and devilish organization backed by the powers of hell. There is no God in her. Isaiah 47:1 states, "Come down, and sit in the dust . . . there is no throne." Babylon does not believe in living overcoming lives; only overcomers get to sit on a throne. The Word of God says so. "Come down!" What made Babylon begin to fall? God's eternal truth will bring her down to where she belongs. She has exalted herself long enough. If we go meeting her as a man, we are done. That thing is deceptive. It will get the wisest man who ever lived. Thank God, we are not meeting her as a man. We are meeting her just like David met Goliath. Goliath came in his own name, but David came in the name of the God of Israel who lives forever and ever. The thing that David built his faith and confidence on, which enabled him to kill Goliath barehanded, was that he had already killed a bear and a lion. You are going to have to get victory over the bear and the lion, or you will never fight Goliath. If you get victory over the beast and his image, then you

will be ready to go into the valley and take Goliath on for a round. I feel just exactly like David. What made David think he could kill Goliath? Because he already killed a bear and a lion. If we have past victories to look back on, it will give us the courage we need to go ahead for God. He stands ready to do something for us if we will meet His conditions.

Chapter 37

ONE FOUNDATION

First Corinthians 3:11 says, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." There is no foundation short of being born again, but that is not all that is necessary. After you get on the right foundation, God's Word says to let every man take heed how he builds thereon. That is where the trouble starts. There are a lot of people who have the right foundation, but they were not careful enough as to what they built into their lives. We are going to be tried. Jesus said there are just two kinds of builders. You are building either on the earth or on the rock. There is only one foundation, and the ones that build on the rock are those that "heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them" (Matthew 7:24). The hearers and doers of God's Word are building on the rock, and then they are ready for the test.

God does the first testing. How does He test it? The rains descend on it. What is the rain a symbol of? Isaiah, Chapter 55, says God's Word comes down just like the rain comes down. God tests you, but He does not test you until you get your house finished. After the rain descends, what else happens? The winds blow. After you get on the solid rock and get your house finished, any wind of doctrine can blow, but it cannot blow you down if you are on the rock. What else happens? Then the devil is mad; and he comes in like a flood. The floods come. Isaiah 59:19 says the enemy comes in like a flood. What is he after? He is testing to see if he can take the house off of the foundation.

This flood of lukewarmness and modernism that the devil has come in with has washed more than one house off its foundation. People are still trying to talk about the beauties of the house, but it is lopsided. It does not set square and stand out for truth as it once did. I am still preaching on the Spirit of God. Isaiah 59:19 tells us, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." You may say, "I have been in the Church of God for fifty years, and I have a solid experience." You still need to hold to an up-to-date experience with God. The devil can come in like a flood and wash you off your foundation, house and all. Thank God, there is only one foundation—Jesus Christ. There is no other foundation that can be laid. That is why these things are bottomless pit works; they have no foundation. Babylon would not take this foundation of Christ. When people will not take this, there is nothing left for them but the sand. Let the devil build all the institutions he wants, he cannot build them on the rock. They

will not stand. The Pharisee Gamaliel knew this back when men wanted to kill off all of God's people. He said, "What is the use of that?" You can read in Acts 5:38-39 where he said: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this . . . be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." In other words, "You might just as well give it up."

Let every man take heed how he builds thereon. It is not enough to get the foundation, to be born again, and to get on the rock. You have to take heed every day how you build thereon. Let us read 1 Corinthians 3:11 again. People would misteach this Scripture, but it is very simple if you will read it: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." There is only one foundation. Some talk about people building on gold and precious stones. No, there is only one foundation—Christ. After you get Him, then when you begin building, you build in gold and silver and precious stones on this foundation, Christ Jesus. They will stand the fire. If you build hay, wood, or stubble, it will not stand. During this day of God's wrath, men's houses are being tried by the fire of God's eternal Word.

Chapter 38

CHURCH DOCTRINES

Babylon had many goodly pearls, but she quit dealing with them. She busied herself dealing with something else. Luther had a good pearl—justification by faith. That is a pearl of a truth. That is the only one that Luther could get hold of as far as we know, but he kept it. It allowed him to stand, right in a nest of devils, for God's Word. The Presbyterians used to have a pearl—equality of ministerial brethren. That is Bible. (The Church of God needs to get back and learn something of what the Presbyterians used to know.) Baptists teach baptism by immersion; the Quakers teach Holy Ghost leadership; the Methodists had a number of teachings: repentance, justification, sanctification, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and holiness. Of course, they do not teach them anymore. They are not Methodists anymore. I do not know what they are, but they do not preach what the Methodists once stood for. They have become another group of people. They are using the Methodist building, but they have taken the altars out. They do not believe a man can live holy anymore.

The Church of God believes and practices all the cardinal teachings of God's eternal Word from one end to the other. There are people that are using the Church of God facilities and cashing in on some of the old saints' goodness, but they are not the Church of God. We can take a truth that is as rich as can be, give it the wrong setting, and spoil the whole thing. What am I talking about? If you enjoyed rings when you were out in the world, you could take a pearl that was worth fifty thousand dollars and put it in a ten-cent ring and spoil the whole thing. Even so, these organizations took truths, but they put them in the wrong setting. When men and women once see the truth of the matter, the truths that old Rome tried to dazzle

people with and decked her garments with would never dazzle the eyes of a true child of God. Why? They have the wrong setting. May God help us to see it as never before! Babylon is fallen. Why? She quit using gold, silver, and precious stones. She is now dealing in hay, wood, and stubble.

Good religion is not cheap, and cheap religion is not good. You get what you pay for. That is what Jesus was trying to teach us here in this lesson about a man seeking pearls. The first thing we learn is that there is one pearl. The next thing we learn is that it can be bought. What does the Bible say the pearl is? The pearl of great price is the church of the living God. Let us prove it by the Word of God. Acts 20:28 reads, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." That is the greatest price ever mentioned throughout the Word of God. I want to say again, Christ was given because of the Father's love. God so loved the world He gave His son, but Christ gave Himself for the church. Paul said so in Ephesians 5:25. The pearl of great price is the church of the living God, or the divine revelation of the door that no man can open or close.

In our last parable we had the Book of Life coming up against men's books. Today we have man-operated doors rising up against God's operated doors. The one pearl of great price was purchased by the greatest price that ever could be paid, the blood of Jesus Christ. Human organizations cost something. We realize that. They have even cost the blood of some men, but whose blood is to be reckoned up beside the blood of Jesus Christ? The Word of God says that when he had found this pearl, he sold all that he had and bought it. Revelation 21:21 tells us that there were twelve gates to the city for the twelve tribes of Israel, three in each direction. What were they for? They made it easy to get in the city. People could come from the north, south, east, and west. It made no difference, but every gate was one pearl.

Go over to the letter. The very pearl written right in the letter is when God deals with a door; He opens and shuts it and no man can open or close it. When man finds this, he sells out all that he has. When you find God's eternal truth, you will find out that a lot of truths you believed previously had the wrong setting. You may have tied them in with a millennium, as most people do, and so had false conceptions. When God shows you this one pearl of great price (it is no more than the divine door to the church, the unity of God's people, and how we can get in and how we get out), it causes you to sell out. You are ready to start learning all over. You have to sell out and start learning all over. Why do you want to sell out? You really do not need it. If it was really truth that Babylon had, the Church of God has it plus more. It used to be when you wanted meat you went to the meat market; if you wanted bread, you went to the bakery; if you wanted groceries, you went to the grocery store; and if you wanted fruit, you went to the fruit market. Now they have a supermarket where you can get it all. In times past, if you wanted to hear about baptism, you went to the Baptists; if you wanted to hear about the Holy Ghost fire, you went to the Methodists; if you wanted to wash feet, you went to the Brethren. But now God has a "supermarket." Just bring your basket and come on down. Anything they ever had

back there that was truth, we have plus more.

We read in Revelation 3:7-8: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, [Through the Wesleyan age, people were brought into a holy state through the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Yet, now we read that 'these things saith he that is holy, he that is true.' It is not just enough to be holy, you must also have the truth.] he that hath the key of David [Luke, Chapter 1, tells us that the key of David represents one who has authority, or is the head over the house of David, or the people of God], he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 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." That is what will put an open door before you.

Verse 9 says, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." If I were preaching on that, I would stop a while and say that this is certainly pointing to the very thought of feet washing. It causes us to come and worship before your feet, not to worship you, but worship God before your feet. It will bring us into that one bundle of love where we have love and concern one for another, and the Word of God says in 1 John 4:20, "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" God gave us a certain way to show our love to our brethren. Read John 13:34 where Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you." The commandment had always been that we love our neighbor as ourself, but He said, "A new commandment I give unto you." What was it? "That ye love one another; as I have loved you." How had He just loved them? He washed their feet. Let us read it again: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you." Jesus 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." He has given us a way to worship God through our brother.

Chapter 39

CHURCH MORALS

Revelation 3:10 tells us, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." We are in some of that, and our only hope is to keep the Word of God in patience. Stick by the truth and hold onto the Spirit of God, and He said He would keep us from it. He did not say He would keep you *in it*, but *from it*. There are a lot of things I am not being tempted with. I could begin right in the home. I do not have to be tempted with a television because I will not have one. Some people say, "I believe I can handle the television." I have too many other things

to battle. By not owning a television, I am not even tempted with the thing, because if I watched the news, I would be tempted to leave it on, especially if I were too tired to walk across the room. I would be tempted to leave it on and watch something else. I am kept from that temptation.

Some have come to me and wanted me to join the church federation, the ministerial assembly. A lot of brethren have joined it. Once they get down there, they are tested and tried and the heat is put on them. They pull them in every way, trying to get them to give a little ground. I am not even tempted along that line because I will not attend their meetings. I have found a place, thank God, where He is keeping me from the hour of temptation. I see people being tested and tried and put in the sweatbox along many different lines, but I am kept from them. I am not saying that I am not tempted. I am saying, I am being kept from the hour of temptation that was to come on the church to try them. Job said in Job 23:10, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." God has a place to keep you, if you do it His way. There are a lot of things people are being tempted with that we do not have to be tempted with. You do what you want, but I am going to take it the easiest way. I have all I can handle without unnecessary temptations. I will not haul a woman in my car unless my wife is with me. He keeps me from any temptation. I do not go in a home to pray for a sister unless somebody else is there. Someone may say, "Are you afraid to trust yourself?" No, but I am just as human as anyone else. I just do not allow myself to be tempted along lines I do not have to be.

I have had brethren say to me, "You mean if you saw a sister walking up the street and it was raining, you would not take her home?" No, she can drive my car and I will walk, but I am not going to drive her. You can do what you want. You may say, "There is nothing to worry about." There isn't? If you would have seen with me the devilish cases of adultery and ungodliness, even in the Church of God ministry, you would realize that it is something to worry about. It tears down the good name of God! Too many men are taking advantage of the thought that they are the ministry and everyone trusts them.

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Revelation 3:11-12). God is ready to make overcomers (men and women that get established in this truth and go to work for God) pillars in His temple. A pillar is a support. Instead of having a bunch of pillars supporting the church, too often the church is supporting the pillars. They say they have been in the church for thirty years, but it takes all the praying they can do for themselves. They say, "Pray for me, I am about to go." God is looking for a people who will get grounded and settled in the truth, on the truth, and then support the truth. You stand firm on the truth, and God will let the truth down on you. You are in there. "He shall go no more out" (verse 12). If you stay a firm support in the truth, you will go no more out.

HALF TRUTHS

God is looking for people that will get grounded and settled in the truth, and then support it. If you will stand firm on the truth, God will let the truth down on you. You are in God's church. You will be so busy serving God that you will not have time for the devilish snares. Even when you die, you will not go out. No, you are a part of the family, both in Heaven and in earth. We do not read in the obituaries of a saint that he *was* a member of the Church of God. No! We read that he *is* a member of the Church of God. Thank God! Death does not change our membership. Revelation 3:12 states, "And I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." We know that no one truly knows the Word of God but God, and when He comes into our hearts and lives, He unfolds it to us. I firmly believe that God knew false religion would defile the very name Church of God. God has written on His people a new name that no man knoweth. (If they knew it, they would defile it too.)

Let us get right into some essential things. These things lay heavy on my heart. We read in Hebrews 12:22-24, a very familiar Scripture: "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, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." The word *church* or *churches* appears 109 times in the New Testament. Church is translated from the word *ecclesia*, which is more correctly translated as *congregation*. A better translation from the word *ecclesia* is *congregation of God*. Thus, this Scripture would read, "Ye are come unto . . . the general assembly and congregation of the firstborn." You might, in modern speech, speak of a church all divided up, but you cannot have a congregation all divided up. To be a congregation, it has to be gathered together in one place. I realize we are treading on that which many would call a bad subject when we begin to mention the least difference between the kingdom and the church. In one sense they are the same, but in another sense, for men that have understanding from God's Word, it can be seen differently. May we not forget the old paths. May we not forget the three unclean spirits like frogs. They are doing their work.

What are they doing? They are leaving a Church of God ministry that once stood for a separate message and called people from Babylon. They have sowed seeds of universalism in the thought of religion until they are looking for some universal move of a lot of Babylonian churches to come together with the church and make up the bride of Christ. That is some of the seed from the three unclean spirits like frogs. They have done their work there. I quote a little portion from D. S. Warner's book entitled *What the Church Is and What It Is Not*: "It is true that the church began

under the labors of John the Baptist, Christ, and the Apostles before Pentecost. Many believed and entered the kingdom then and constituted material for the church." Look out! We cannot go back beyond Pentecost. The man or woman who is saved today, since the Spirit of God has come, is in a different category before God than those that were before Pentecost. Now, we want to deal with it in all fairness, but God has a message for us.

There are two questions we want to answer. Are all of the saved that are affiliated with different denominations, that are members of man-made churches, truly members of the Church of God? There is a great need to look into this. Then, if all the saved are truly members of the body of Christ, the church, why call them out? If all that are in denominations are true members of the Church of God, then the older brethren were all off the track, and these hundreds and thousands of people they have called out have been fooled and mistaken. A Church of God preacher once said, "Brother Wilson, you should not do that; just preach against sin." That is what I am doing. Old Babylon's sins have reached unto Heaven. The Word of God says she will never be healed. Why? Her sins have reached unto Heaven. There is no space for repentance now. Thus, when I preach against Babylon, I am still preaching against sin. If all those who are saved, regardless of the denomination they may be in, constitute the Church of God, we have no excuse for our existence. Then we are what the religious world says we are—a bunch of troublemakers. A half-truth is worse than no truth at all. I will give you an illustration.

Let us say there is a bottle of milk with just a drop of poison in it. Now, no one would drink pure poison, but a lot of people will drink a little drop of that milk, and it has enough poison in it to kill them. Do not forget about the woman with her measures of meal with leavening (corruption) hidden in it. Half-truth is worse than no truth at all. I knew a man who was a horse dealer in Granville. He pulled some of the worst deals any had ever seen. He told me one time that he just got a kick out of seeing how badly he could cheat people. He would take a horse that was lame in one foot, and he would take a rock and hit it hard on the other foot before he was ready to trade it off. The horse would not know which foot hurt the worst, and it would walk about the same on both of them. He had one horse all doped up, and a young man came to see it. The man said, "This is the way you are buying that horse, son. If you do not like it, you do not have to keep it." So the young man thought, "What do I have to lose?" He took it home, and in about two days all the medicine wore off, and the horse was fit for nothing. He could hardly get out of the barn. So the young man came leading the horse back to this man, and he said, "Mister, I brought this horse back."

"Well," he said, "don't bring him back to me."

"But you told me if I did not like him, I did not have to keep him."

The man replied, "You don't, but I don't want him either. Take him, sell him, trade him off—you don't have to keep him." He had been telling half-truths.

This falsity is truth with deception wrapped around it: "God will not send us all to hell. Just rest easy, we have nothing to worry about." The truth is He cannot keep

you from going there if you do not choose righteousness. False religion is telling half-truths. God has good people in these churches. I will agree with that. But let us tell the rest: He is calling them out. This teaching of universalism with respect to the church is leaving people in a fog of denominationalism, and they will never see the whole truth. The church proper did not exist until the fullness of Christ came. Ephesians 1:23 declares that the church is defined as His body. What is His body? "The fulness of him." That means just what it says. Let us read Ephesians 1:22-23: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

Chapter 41

THE CHURCH VERSUS BABYLON

Acts, Chapter 2, says they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Ephesians, Chapter 4, tells us the same thing. Verses 11-15 say: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints [not the defecting], for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, [When do you have a knowledge of the Son of God?] unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, [Here we are dealing with the comparison of newborn babes to men and women that have become mature Christians. What do children do?] tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things."

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13:11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, . . . but when I became a man, I put away childish things." The Church of God, the body of Christ, is made up of mature men and women. They are no more children, tossed about with every wind of doctrine. They have grown up into Him who is the Head. Paul said the church was made up of people that had grown up unto the fullness of Him. They were filled with the fullness of Him and had become as powerful and glorious as the Head is. "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:16).

Ezekiel wanted to know what was the matter with the bones laying out there in the valley and why they were in the shape they were in. Ezekiel 37:11 says, "We are cut off for our parts." A little prophesying or preaching brought the bones together, and when God got the bones together, He blew upon them the breath of life, or the Spirit of God, and it raised up an army for God. That is a type of the church in our day and age. We need some prophesying to bring people together. Paul said in

Ephesians 4:13, ". . . unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Ephesians 1:23 says it "is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

Nowhere is the church (*ecclesia* or the congregation of God) presented as dislocated or scattered in lost confusion. God's people were scattered, but the church never was. God's people wandered on the mountain, but the church never did. God did not say, "Come out of her, My *church*," but He said, "Come out of her, My people, that I might have the church." We could use many kinds of illustrations. This will be one that I am sure you will understand: We could visit the Ford Motor Company and see the various parts—wheels and fenders and every part that it takes to make a Ford. Yet, I would like to see you get in one part and drive it off. If you ever take a ride in that Ford, it will take a mechanic who knows what he is doing to put the pieces together. You can say, "There is a Ford part" just as some will say, "I am part of the church while down in Babylon." I believe if you are a child of God, you will take up your cross and willingly follow Christ out of Babylon.

The Word of God says the members of God's body were scattered in the various cages of Babylon. Jesus Christ, the Master Mechanic, is gathering them out. He is assembling them together, oiling them up with the Holy Ghost, and sending them on their way. To help lift some confusion from your mind, let me say this: It is one thing to be *born* in Zion and another thing to *come* to Zion. They are two different things.

Psalms 87:2-6 says: "The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. [Why? Because over the gates of Zion it says, 'Holiness unto the Lord,' and that is a standard all the dwelling places of Jacob could never reach.] Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah. I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: [If you ever get an experience with God, He is going to tell you about that harlot condition down in Babylon. Rahab was a harlot in Jericho when God sent His people to march around the city. Jericho was a type of Babylon. What did it take for the city to fall? Israel had to march around her seven days and seven times the seventh day and blow the trumpets. Babylon is not completely down yet. We have marched around her for seven days, and in this seventh-seal age we must go around seven times and preach the whole message. God will save every harlot out of there—if they will take faith, just as Rahab did, and believe the Word and come out of her. Rahab had to come out of Jericho, or she would have fallen with the city. God said, 'I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon.' I thank God that He still has some people that will make mention of these things. I am glad God still has some Rahabs down in Babylon that will hear the message from God and flee the city for their lives.] behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there. [When you are born in Ethiopia, you are an Ethiopian. When you are born in Philistia, you are a Philistine, but He said, 'This man was *born there*.' When you are born there, it makes you a citizen.]

"And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: [This takes in every nation. Your nationality has nothing to do with it. This is a spiritual birth. You may have been born at a sectarian altar. That might have been where you received your salvation—down in Babylon. But if when you were born there, you were truly

born, you were born in Zion.] and the highest himself shall establish her. The LORD shall count, [God is the Secretary. Here is a door that man cannot open and man cannot close.] when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there." It is one thing to be born in Zion. It is quite another thing after you mature in the things of God and begin to understand the Word of God to see that you were born in Zion. You realize that it is where you belong, and you pick up your belongings and come back to Zion.

The Hebrew letter was written to a people that had come to Zion. They were actually there, assembled together, under the sound of His voice. Lots of people have been born in Zion, but they do not know it. God has a message for them: "Come out of her, My people." I will illustrate it this way. My little son is an American citizen because he was born in America, but he is too young to know it yet. As soon as he gets big enough, I will get it across to him. People have been born in Zion all over the world. That old second beast, using the Word of God and working a deception, might reach out and grab the people and get them to join a church. They think because they found God there, that is where they belong. God will lead them and let them grow up to the place where they get an understanding of His eternal Word and see that when they were born again, they were born in Zion. He will show them that they did not belong down in Babylon and that they need to pick up their things and come to Zion where they belong.

Chapter 42

BACK TO ZION

Some have said that Israel is a type of the kingdom and Israel is a type of the church. I BEG TO DIFFER. Nowhere biblically is literal Israel a type of the church. Israel is a type of God's people—the kingdom of Israel. They were still Israel when they were down in Babylon. Jerusalem is a type of the church. It is a new Jerusalem. They were still in Israel when they were down there for seventy years in Babylon, but they were not in Jerusalem. They could not truly worship God. God called them out of there and let them go back to Jerusalem to build the temple. This evening-light church is a new Jerusalem. Why? It is God's people coming back from Babylon and rebuilding the temple just as it was in the morning time. There are a lot of old Sanballats and Tobiahs working yet today. If you are going to stand in this day, you have to get busy and work and be a supporter.

There is only one message for Tobiahs and Sanballats today. You will never run them off any other way. The first thing they did was to make fun of the walls. They said, "If a fox leaned against it, it would fall over." (I have seen a lot of foxes butting their brains out trying to knock it down, and they have not knocked it over yet.) Nehemiah did not argue with them. What did he tell them? "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down" (Nehemiah 6:3). Saint, if you cannot tell them that, the

next thing you know you will be coming down. When you get in tune with God and God gets to blessing your soul and blessing everything you put your hand to, you can tell them the truth and be a witness for God.

One time I had a man come out to church, and when he saw the tabernacle full and the altar filled, he was just thrilled. He said, "This is wonderful, wonderful, Brother Wilson! I want you to come out here and hook up with us, out at the U.B., and we will have a big meeting." They were dead and dried up; they could not get anyone to the altar. So when he saw God working, he wanted the same thing down there. He wanted to build up the U.B. I said that I was doing a great work, and I could not come down. Anytime the Church of God begins to look at the mass evangelism and some of Babylon's latest works to try to deceive people and thinks of it as a powerful work, thinking they are doing a greater work than the Church of God, they have lost their vision (if they ever had one).

Israel was Israel while she was in Babylon, but she had to come back to Jerusalem to build the temple. I say again, the church I am preaching about is the New Jerusalem. Someone may say, "Brother Wilson, what do you think about the Jews going back to Jerusalem?" People need to get a little more mature in the things of God and understand who a Jew is and what Jerusalem is. When the Word of God talks about the Jew going back to Jerusalem, it is not talking about the literal Jews going back to Palestine. Palestine is only about 50 miles wide and 150 miles long, an area smaller than the state of Maryland. There is not enough room for all the Jews. Poor, ignorant preachers say, "It is a sign of the coming of Christ. The Jews are going back to Palestine." They are not Jews anymore. Romans 2:28-29 says: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." That is the Jerusalem the Jews are going back to. They have been down in old Babylon, and now they are coming back to the New Jerusalem to help build the temple. Glory be to God!

We have the same picture of this gathering throughout the Revelation. Chapter 12 shows us the dragon; Chapter 13 tells of the two beasts that rose up against God's people; and in Chapter 14 you can see that evening-light group of 1880. The little group that started out in 1880 was not defiled with women. You do not read where they had to get victory over the beast and his image. They were never under it. The people that they reaped with the sickle had to get victory over the beast and his image. God used that little group of people and gave them the sickle. The Word of God says that the harvest was ripe. They poured out the first three vials under the note of the everlasting Gospel. The latter part of Chapter 14 tells us they reaped the earth. Verse 15 says, "The earth is ripe." Just as she was ripe then for the first three vials, she is ripe again for the second cup. She is ripe for another harvest, and we are going to find out that when we take this sickle—the Word of God—and thrust it through the heart of old Babylon, we are going to harvest many people right out of that which calls itself the Church of God. Verse 18 tells us they "gather the clusters of the

vine," and verse 19 says that they put them in "the great winepress of the wrath of God." What is the winepress? It is God's eternal Word. What does the Scripture say happened? It says that liquid flowed out—the blood or the wine. There is unity. You might have been a really big grape when God found you, but once God gets you liquidized, you cannot tell one grape from another.

Isaiah said they would flow in the truth. When God puts the squeeze on you, that which runs out the lower trough is what goes in Jerusalem. He opens it up and flips the hulls back; He cannot use that. Thank God, Revelation, Chapter 15, said John saw a beautiful thing after that. What did he see? A lot of people say that what John saw is all out in the millennium. They say, "The blood is going to run to the horses' bits." God was talking in a symbolic language. He wanted that winepress worked in the sixth-seal age. The blood that flowed out of the winepress reached back and brought out a people clear-cut for God. Revelation 15:2 tells us that after these things, John saw them standing on the sea of glass, mingled with fire, with victory over these horses and riders and everything else. Just as the bit controls the horse, this thing gets to the very controlling powers and turns you loose for God. Thank God for this pearl of great price! I have done my best to teach it by the Word of God.

The kingdom in this sixth-seal age was likened unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, who when he found the one pearl of great price, sold all that he had and bought that pearl. When people find the truth of the matter about the unity of God's people in the church, they are ready to sell out. In other words, they are ready to take hold of that and let all else be cast aside. We still have a message. The enemy has worked destruction through prophecy. He has worked in revelations and in the Gospel trying to take out that sickle—that message which calls us out and makes us a separate people. I pray to God that we will rise to our feet as never before. If you do not have the power to do it, come to God. He will furnish the power. He stands ready to give power today under a ministry that can scorch men with fire. He wants to give you that power to stand and rejoice.

Chapter 43

THE GOOD AND THE BAD

In Matthew, Chapter 13, Jesus gave seven parables consecutively and did not quit until He gave them all. These parables bring the kingdom through the Gospel Day from the day it came with power on the Day of Pentecost to the end of time. They coincide with the seven letters in the Revelation and clarify each other. We are now up to the last parable, the parable concerning how the kingdom would be in the day and age in which we live.

Matthew, Chapter 25, also gives us a picture of the kingdom and the shape it would be in in the day and age in which we live. In Matthew 24:44 Jesus told His

disciples, "Be ye also ready," cautioning them to be ready and to be careful. Jesus went on to tell us that the kingdom will be likened to ten virgins—five wise and five foolish—and all sleeping. That is the day and age in which we live. We have covered the thought that when the midnight cry comes, it is too late for anyone to get saved. The oil shops will be closed. But God is stirring a ministry to awaken people in the last moments of this eleventh hour so they can get their lamps filled and have them burning before the Bridegroom comes.

With the same thought in mind, notice that the fifth, sixth, and seventh parables deal with the kingdom now in the evening light, and every one of them starts with the word *again*. The kingdom was like that in the morning time. Now that we are here in the evening time, it is like that again. In the morning time we found that when men slept, an enemy came in and sowed tares amongst the wheat and caused the church to have that which the Revelation declares an apostasy, a falling away. The tares choked out the wheat and God took the wheat to Heaven to be with Him. The tares ruined things here. That is why there was darkness for the 1260 years.

Matthew 13:47-48 reads: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Jesus said this last period of the kingdom would be like a net cast into the sea and gathered of every kind. Verse 49 says, "So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just." The conditions of the day and age in which we are living in existed more than once before in the Gospel Day. The devil, working on the minds of men, made them feel that the good and the bad would have to live together and nothing could be done about it until the end of the world. The good and the bad will always be together until the Second Coming of Christ in the *world* but not in the *kingdom*. We are preaching about the kingdom. God wants the saints to live beside a sinner and work beside a sinner. Why? To convert him. God does not want us to be separated from the world in the thought of going out and reaching the lost, but there is not good and bad both in the kingdom.

We can see from God's Word that we are living in a day and age when because of some things happening, the very standard of the Gospel has been let down until there is a getting together of the good and bad again. But Jesus told us something about it in this parable that we want you to see. The sea is the same condition that Rome rose out of the first time—nothing more than the people. Jesus told His disciples to follow Him, and they would become fishers of men. The question we want to deal with is, Was it the intention of the Great Fisherman, Jesus Christ, to gather the good and the bad together in His kingdom? Does He expect them to be good and bad together in His kingdom until His Second Coming? The religious world would have us believe that is so. They are teaching on every side that the good and bad will be together until Christ comes again. Let me make a statement again: the Second Coming of Christ is not mentioned anywhere in these parables. We read where He said He would send forth His angels or ministry (the Greek says "his

messengers"), but nowhere is the Second Coming of Christ mentioned. Let us get that straight in our minds now.

Here we have a picture. Does it not seem that the Gospel of the kingdom is put to a wrong use when it is used for a dragnet? The Greek says in verse 47, "Again, the kingdom of the heavens resembles a Drag-net." Christ *draws* men but He never *drags* them. We have a picture before us of the day and age in which we are living, the last age of the kingdom when quantity is the goal of many instead of quality. Many are watering down this Gospel and trying to cut the corners, and Jesus said they would use it like a drag net. What was He speaking of? The mass evangelism today that is sweeping people off their feet and taking them by the thousands with no change of heart whatsoever. It is dragging the good and bad together. The Gospel has been put to a wrong use when it gives equal place to the good and the bad.

Luke taught us a lesson in Luke, Chapter 5. The disciples toiled all night, yet could not catch any fish. Nevertheless, Jesus told them to go on out and drop the net down on the other side of the ship. Peter did not think it would do any good, but he said in verse 5, "Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." The Scripture says they took up a net full of fishes, and there was not a bad one in the bunch. When we let the net down "at thy word," when we let it down according to truth, it does not gather good and bad together. The Word of God was given to gather a people out of the world for God's name, a holy people and a clean people. The Gospel is put to a wrong use when it gives equal place to the good and the bad. You may argue this thought for Luke 14:23 says, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them [the good and the bad] to come in, that my house may be filled." However, in the same account in Matthew, read the next two verses: "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment" (Matthew 22:11). Someone had done a heap of preaching. Yes, Jesus said to gather in the good and the bad, but when they got to the house of God, someone lifted up the standard because there was only one in a house full who did not have a wedding garment on. (I wish I could do that well.) God is not going to let you twist these Scriptures.

Someone did some preaching there when they went into the highways and hedges and gathered a whole house full of people, for when Jesus came there was only one in the company who was not ready. Church of God preacher, you had better get to work if you want to present that kind of a congregation to God. We had better get down on our knees before God and get hold of something more than men can give us or what we can pick up from any other avenue. We had better get the Holy Ghost of God ruling in our hearts and be submerged in it until we can have the mind of Christ. Yes, they gathered in good and bad, but there was only one who did not have a wedding garment on. What is the trouble today? Too many are messing with the nets. It is not being let down "at thy word."

It is dangerous to be more interested in men than in men's souls. It is happening today. There is an awful chance that the enemy of your soul can cause you to be more interested in men than you are in their souls. When you get to dealing with

souls, you realize that every one of them is worth more than this world. If you fail to warn them of the evil of their way, God will require their blood at your hands at the judgment bar. It should put a fear upon you to where you will be careful what you say. When you get to dealing with men, almost anything can happen. We see a lot of it happening today. You may ask, "How can it be changed?" What did Jesus say to do about it?

The Word of God tells us in Matthew 13:47-48: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Here we have the kingdom as a doctrine again. Jesus said the Law and the prophets were until John. Since then the kingdom is preached. The kingdom, or the Gospel of the kingdom, is as a net. When the Gospel is full, they draw the net to the shore and separate the good from the bad. Glory be to God! As long as the net is out in the sea under the water, the good and the bad can be together, but when you pull the net to shore, the bad ones will show up. Jesus said, "When it [the net] was full" What is the net? The Gospel. So, when the Gospel is full, it pulls them to shore. It exposes them.

They can sport together out there in the sea, but when a full Gospel comes along, it lifts up the net. I could never fish like a lot of preachers do. They just leave the net in there and drag it around. They say, "We have really got a load on." Yes, but they ought to pull it up. It might be full of seaweed and tin cans. I have been around a few places where you would have thought they were really making a catch, but all you have to do is lift the standard up high and you do not have much left. When it is full, Jesus said, it will draw them out. There has been a lukewarm condition going on over the land. There has been an allowing of the good and the bad to sport together. But, thank God, the opening of this last seal of truth is lifting up the standard, and it is separating the good from the bad.

Chapter 44

THE FURNACE OF FIRE

The end of the world began on the Day of Pentecost. That is the last dispensation. People may say, "Oh, I thought Jesus was going to send angels at His Second Coming and separate them." The angels would not know the tares from the wheat. They do not know anything about this salvation. The saints like to sing that angels are going to fold their wings when you sing about redemption because they do not know a thing about it. God's angels are God-sent ministers. They are picking this thing up. The old nets have been to sea long enough. It is getting to the place where cigarette smokers and everything else are on the board of trustees. The good and bad are sporting together, but God is pulling up the net, and the good are taking their place.

What kind of vessels is He putting them in? Sanctified and holy vessels, vessels meet for the Master's use, old-time Holy Ghost-filled vessels, vessels with the shout of God in their souls, willing to live and work for God and to die for this truth, if necessary, to let it go forth. Glory be to God, I love this truth!

Matthew 13:49-50 reads: "So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels [or His messengers] shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire." There is a difference between the *furnace of fire* and the *lake of fire*. What is the furnace of fire? The furnace of fire is God's eternal Word. How do we know? We read in Isaiah 31:9, ". . . saith the LORD, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem." His furnace is not in the lake of fire. His furnace is in Jerusalem, and He is casting people into the Word and burning them. What for? For the same reason He burned the tares. He is putting the heat on them so that they might wake up before the Second Coming of Christ, so that they may change their building according to that of God's Word before the final judgment comes.

We are living in a day of preliminary judgment, a time when God is giving you an extra chance to get straightened out and get right with Him before the end of time. So we see that this parable is taking place right now. Wherever a full Gospel is being preached, the good and the bad are being divided. How are they being divided? The Psalmist said a sinner could not stand in the congregation of the righteous. This old lukewarm Gospel has let sinners feel at home right amongst the saints. However, when the man of God is anointed with the Holy Ghost of God and preaches a full Gospel of this evening light, it puts the sinners in their place and the saints in their place. Everyone knows where they are. They are not confused anymore. It will still bring old-time Holy Ghost conviction on the sinner. He will not be able to sit there and raise his hand and profess he has something that he does not have because God will not allow it. It will put him in a furnace.

A brother who recently got saved can testify to this. He sat in many good services where souls were getting saved, and the saints were shouting and running in the aisles, yet it did not affect him. But when God put him in a furnace, he ran down the aisle, crying. He no more than got saved, and he went right to the telephone and called his daughter and his son-in-law. He told them to come, that things were going on. As soon as the son-in-law arrived, God put him under arrest. I met him out on the grounds, and he said, "Brother Wilson, you were shooting right at me this morning." I said, "No, I was not. The Holy Ghost was after you." This old business of the sinners feeling right at home around the saints is wrong. We want them to come—bring them by the truckloads. We want them to feel welcome, but we never want them to feel they are right when they are wrong. Holy Ghost preaching will still put people in a furnace. It will make the sweat break out, their hearts speed up, their circulation speed up, and they will get red all over.

There is still power in this Gospel if we can just get the rubbish all cleared away and lay hold of it in its fullness. There is still power in it! I do not have time for anything that is not a full Gospel. Anything else fails to do the work that needs to be

done in this day and age. I do not boast of these things, I boast in the Lord. It takes God to do these things. Yes, the good and the bad sport together in the sea, but when the Gospel is full, it brings them to shore. The minute it brings them to shore, it separates the good from the bad. The Gospel will not hurt you. I get so sick of people saying, "Brother Wilson, you keep preaching that way, and you will run all the people off." There are more people coming in all the time. It will not run anyone off. This old-time Gospel will just separate the good from the bad. It will make the good feel better and the bad feel worse. This old-time Gospel is just exactly what the saints are looking for. God's people never did want to be yoked up with something that is not like Christ. Why? It kills our fellowship.

Chapter 45

LOVE–GOD'S DIVINE INSTRUMENT

Jesus said, "What fellowship can light have with darkness?" I will tell you what kind: a human fellowship. You cannot have a divine fellowship by putting light and darkness together. Whenever Protestantism turns to Roman Catholicism and strikes up an alliance, she turns to darkness, and whenever the Church of God turns to Protestantism and strikes up an alliance, she is turning to darkness as fast as she can go. God called a people in 1880 to leave the courts of Babylon, and God expects us to get farther from her every day. We ought to be a hundred miles farther down the road than D. S. Warner was, but what is the trouble? Too many are hanging around the gates of Babylon. They have hardly got out of the city. They are still quibbling over some of the old basic truths God gave D. S. Warner in the first message he ever preached against Babylon.

Someone may say, "I do not think that will separate people." What do you think Jesus is going to use in the last final time, the final judgment, to separate the sheep from the goats? He is going to use His Word, and if God's man will preach it, it will separate people today. God stands ready to separate the chaff from the wheat as much as He ever did, but what does He use? The Scripture says that the fan is in His hand. What is in His hand? His ministry. God said in Jeremiah, Chapter 51, that He will send fanners down to Babylon, and they will fan her clean and get all His wheat. God stands ready today to burn up the chaff and to gather together the wheat into His barn as much as He ever did, but He needs a faithful ministry that will fan the two apart. Do not get too excited about it. God will get the job done. God has to work through human instrumentality. If God had His way, every person who names the name of God would be together in the sweetest fellowship the world has ever seen. He would melt our hearts together. There would be no differences of any kind, but we would have love and care one for another. We would see things eye to eye. It would make no difference who preached, everybody would preach the same thing according to the Word of God. That is what God wants. He needs a willing people;

He needs a people that will work with Him, that will walk in the light as He lays it on their pathway, that will not only believe the Word, but will be doers of the Word. That is what God is looking for.

There is a great need for the love of God, not a jellyfish love, but the kind of love Paul talked about in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13. It is needed! Why? The first thing the devil did was to get some of God's people to lose the Spirit of God and turn worldly but still keep the name. Then, he caused good people that still love God and want it God's way to hold them that are not doing it. Nothing but a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost will give you enough of the love of God to hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans and still love the Nicolaitans. That is what we have to have today if we ever win this battle. The thing that has won the battle clear down through was that which the devil cannot demonstrate, that which he cannot put on—LOVE. That is one tool the devil does not have. The love of God is the strongest thing that was ever put on this earth. It will make a way when there is no way. Our brother can differ with another brother on ideas and methods, and He can interpret the Scriptures a little differently, but even with differences of ideas and conceptions, the love of God will break through the barrier and flow from heart to heart and cause us to love one another as brethren.

Someone may say, "How could Jesus tear down the middle wall of partition?" I will tell you how He tore it down. He shed the love of God abroad within the Jews' hearts and the Gentiles' hearts, and it broke right through the wall and let them love one another. This love of God is the most powerful thing that ever was. Old Rome tried to crush it out. Protestantism tried to dissect it, but it came back together in spite of everything.

In Matthew, Chapter 4, Jesus gave us a lesson about dividing. He would gather a great multitude, then after they were gathered, He would take the good Word of God and weigh them. He did not weigh them very long before He would turn around and there would be no one left but His disciples. There are many things that draw people such as God healing bodies and fire in the camp of the saints. There is nothing that will advertise any better than the church getting on fire. Just let a few shouts go out, and everybody and their brother will go out to see what in the world is going on. Then something gets hold of them while they are there. It reaches out. Christ reached out. To get a picture of dividing the good from the bad (Jesus' way, not my way or some other man's way) let us read Matthew 4:23-24: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them." He is just the same today.

Matthew 5:1-3 states: "And seeing the multitudes, [Here Jesus put the net out, and He had a big multitude gathered in. But He did not believe in the good and the bad sporting together.] he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his

disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, [Here are the beatitudes that weigh us in or out. We are drawing them to the shore now, and we are going to sit down and separate the good and the bad. What scale are we going to use? The same one Jesus used. He just took the beatitudes and weighed them out.] Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." A lot of people jump on this Scripture and say that it is a blessed thing to be a poor man or woman. This has nothing to do with literal poverty. If that were so, if nobody but a poor man could get saved, then the kingdom would only belong to the poor people. The Word of God says that the Gospel is for the rich and the poor. The command is to go into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. What would be the use of that if nobody but the poor could get saved? This Scripture has nothing to do with literal poverty.

The first blessed thing that happens to an individual is when he realizes his spiritual condition is poor and he needs help. Over in Revelation we read that the Laodiceans said their spiritual condition was rich, but Christ said it was poor. It is a blessed thing to realize our condition before God. It is a blessed thing to realize our spiritual condition is poor and that we need help. Why? Because those that think they are rich in spiritual things do not think they need any help, thus they cannot get it. Jesus said, "They that be whole need not a physician." So it is a blessed thing to realize that your spiritual condition is not good. If you go on feeling it is good when it is not, the Word of God says in the letter to the Laodiceans (Revelation, Chapter 3) that it will put you in a wretched and miserable condition. It will leave you blind.

How is a man going to find out that his spiritual condition is not good? Somebody is going to have to preach the Word to him. Too many people are deceived. They have actually backslid and do not know it. I used to preach that a man could not backslide without knowing it until I got up to the light of this day. Then I began to understand the seventh-seal light. The Word of God says, "Thou sayest, I am rich . . . ; and knowest not that thou art . . . poor" (Revelation 3:17). There are people being deceived. This has been a terrible deception that has worked on the very people of God. Somebody said, "That is speaking of Babylon." No, that was addressed to the Laodicean church. It was one of the seven golden candlesticks, even though it was corrupt. What does that teach us? People might call themselves Church of God. It is not enough just to find a church. We have to understand the Scripture to know if it is a corrupt church or not. How are they going to find out their spiritual condition (poor) when they think they are rich and know not they are poor? Someone is going to have to preach the true riches to them. Paul counted those false riches in Chapter 3 of Philippians. He was born an Israelite, circumcised on the eighth day. He ran his family tree way back. He had thought he was really rich, but all it took was Stephen, who had true riches, standing right before him. When they were stoning the life out of Stephen, he was so sweet about it. He looked into Heaven and said, "I see the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Paul said, "That is richer than anything I have, old wretched man that I am. Who will deliver me from this pitiful condition?"

One thing that will wake up the people of God and cause them to see their wretched condition is to get the old-time glory in our midst that makes you laugh and cry and shout and praise God; that gives you a peace that the world cannot give and cannot take away; that gives you old-time satisfaction where you can raise your hand and sing, "I'd rather have Jesus than anything this world affords today."

Chapter 46

THE POOR IN SPIRIT

I have seen people being woken up all over the country. Years ago I was getting in a lull. God woke me up and told me if I would stay awake, no one could sleep around me. I have been going ever since. I have seen a lot of sleepers, but I have also seen them wake up. I have been in congregations and preached this message. I am talking about congregations of the Church of God, because this letter is not dealing with Protestantism. I have seen congregations of the Church of God that were so asleep and so dead that they made the pastor have the evening service at 4 p.m. because they had other things to do on Sunday night. If he preached more than thirty minutes, he lost his job, and they got a new man. I am telling you facts.

The first night I was in one of those congregations, I preached for two hours. By the middle of the week, people began to wake up. People began to come to the altar and get straightened out with God. Sisters came and shook my hand and said, "Brother Wilson, we never knew we were in such a pitiful condition. It came on us so slow and easy that we did not realize the condition we were in." We need to get this old-time truth out there and preach the true riches of God and awaken men and women. Let us get them a lamp and some oil before Jesus comes. There is one way that man's true condition can be shown up: preach the true riches of Christ. We need some more old-time Holy Ghost preaching about having victory over sin, the flesh, and the devil. In this day when the devil has bound people to where they are losing their liberty and their freedom and are becoming slaves to the devil, yet going right on with their profession, we need to cry out that Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, the whole business, and set a man free. Glory be to God! Let us put a devil-proof armor on people and a sword in their hands and send them out to fight the devil. It is a blessed thing when we realize our spiritual condition is poor. "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

There is a Scripture in Luke, Chapter 15, that many people teach wrong. Jesus taught there that He left the ninety and nine in the wilderness and went after the one. Because a man wrote a song, people say, "He left them in the fold." The Scripture does not say that. He left them in the *wilderness*. Jesus told you who they are. There is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance. Who were they? The ninety and nine were the old Jewish nation. Who was the one He went after? Jesus said, "I am come to the lost

sheep of the house of Israel." The ones that would admit they were lost and needed Christ were represented by the one lamb. He left those ninety and nine that felt they were self-justified and did not need Christ. He did not leave them in the fold. He left them in the wilderness of sin and confusion. If you rise up against Christ, as the Laodiceans did, and say, "I have need of nothing," He will leave you in the wilderness of sin and confusion also. You had better be honest when Christ shows you your state and do something about it. The Laodiceans said, "I am rich," but Christ said, "I say you are poor." It is a blessed state to see ourselves as we really are, to have all the deception dispelled. When we realize our condition as it truly is, we will be poor in spirit. When we see our poor, miserable, wretched condition as it really is, up beside that which Christ can do for us, we will admit our spiritual condition is poor and that we need help.

You can see someone poor in spirit in 1 Kings, Chapter 10—the Queen of Sheba. The Scripture says she traveled with a great train three thousand miles both ways. She rode a camel, and it took seventy-five days to go one way. It is no wonder Jesus said the Queen of Sheba would rise up and condemn this generation in the Judgment. She rode up there to get the wisdom of Solomon, and a greater than Solomon is here. Thank God, you do not have to ride a camel for seventy-five days or go three thousand miles. He is standing right outside your heart's door. The effort we put forth will condemn men and women today for rejecting Christ when He comes down to their house. The queen made the trip to see Solomon, and after she saw the house that he had built and the way he had set his servants and after she saw the wisdom God had given him, what did she say? The Scripture says there was no more spirit in her. She was poor in spirit. She came up there with a great train and all her camels, no doubt going to show him up, thinking she was about the greatest one who had ever walked on this earth. She had heard of someone greater and she was going up to see, but when she saw God's wisdom put up beside man's wisdom, there was no more spirit in her.

When we see what God can do for us, it will cause us to realize our own righteousness is as filthy rags. We are ragged and poor individuals. We will recognize our nakedness. Self-emptying convictions will take hold of us that must work before God can move upon us. We will realize we are void of everything pertaining to life and godliness, and into that emptiness He will come with His fullness. The reason more people cannot receive Christ in their hearts is because they have no room for Him. They want to hang onto all the things that their heart is filled with now and just give Him a little room in the attic someplace. Amen! I am still preaching to that which calls itself the Church of God. Too many people only want God when they need to be healed or when they need to raise \$50.00—when they get in a pinch. Christ is looking for a bride who loves Him through thick and thin, a bride who if He never does anything for her, still loves Him just because He is Him. So, it is a blessed thing to realize that our spiritual condition is poor.

We are going to look at the steps to salvation, and if you get hung up on any of them, just realize that you do not have any of it. These are the steps that it takes to

have a real experience with God. Too many say that it is as simple as falling off a log, that all you need to do is sign a card or blink your light, but that is not the way Jesus wants people to do it. It takes some effort on our part. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven [remember now, we are separating the good from the bad]. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:3-4). Blessed are *who* that mourn? Is it just anyone that mourns? No, there are people that get themselves in a shape where they will mourn, and God will laugh at them when they mourn (Proverbs 1:26). How did they get in that shape? They rejected His counsel. What did Jesus say to the Laodiceans? In essence, He said, "You say this, but I counsel you to buy gold tried in the fire, get your white raiment on, and anoint your eyes with eye salve." The Proverb writer said that when God spoke, you refused and rejected His counsel. What did He say? When your calamity comes and you begin to weep and mourn before God, God will laugh at you. So, this Scripture cannot be put on everybody that mourns.

Blessed are *who* that mourn? Blessed are they that realize their spiritual condition is not good and then begin to mourn over it. That is the next step to salvation. We have to first realize our spiritual condition is not good, and then we cannot take it so lightly. Whenever you see people take salvation so lightly, just watch them. There will be no fruit come forth. I have seen people with so much pride move to an altar of prayer. They think God is really getting something. There is going to have to be some "godly sorrow [that] worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). We are going to have to realize our spiritual condition is not good and if Christ does not help us, we are doomed for the pits of hell. Then we need to begin to mourn over the thing. Blessed are those that realize their spiritual condition is not good and mourn over it because they will be comforted.

This dragnet business is not of God. When He talked about a strait gate, we must strive to enter in. Too many people are misusing the Gospel today, using it as a sweeping thing that takes in all kinds. To get a salvation not to be repented of takes some unloading, some straightening out, some humbling down, and some godly sorrow. This so-called salvation of today, there are too many that are sorry they got it. Religion calls it "making decisions for Christ"—just have them raise their hand en masse. Yet, the minute they leave they are sorry they ever raised their hands because they still want a cigarette or a glass of beer. Godly sorrow worketh repentance. It is not repentance, but it works repentance. When you get godly sorrow working in your heart, the wheels of repentance will begin to turn. When the wheels of repentance begin to turn, it will cut your tongue loose and you will go confessing unto God. You will not hold back a thing. If you confess unto God, He will remove your sins from you as far as the east is from the west—never to be remembered again. It is a blessed thing to realize your spiritual condition is not good.

After you realize your spiritual condition is not good and you through godly sorrow begin to mourn over it, what is the next step? "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). Take a meek position before God. This is getting rid of all the "kingfishes." We have to have a meek position before God and

be willing to take it just the way God wants us to take it. Too many are laying down requirements to God: we are going to do this and we are going to do that. We have to take a meek position before God; we have to be willing to pay the price—whatever it is—and take it God's way, if we ever get it. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." The meek are those that quietly submit themselves to God and follow His direction; they comply with His instructions. When Christ spoke these words to that people back in Judaism, it was like putting cold water on them. Why? They were looking for a literal kingdom, for Christ to take a literal sword and go in and cut off a few heads. Peter proved that to be true. He did not even have a sword. He grabbed somebody else's and cut off a man's ear. They thought they were going to have an earthly reign, and Christ was going to come in literal glory with a sword and kill people. Jesus said, in so many words, "If you ever get in this kingdom, you have to be a meek fellow."

People are yet looking for a millennium, a time when Christ will come with earthly glory. Zechariah said in Zechariah 9:9, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: . . . lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." That is the way He comes. When Jesus was ready to enter into Jerusalem to be crowned King, He told the disciples where there was a mule tied that no man had ever sat upon. In the Old Testament, the king rode a mule, usually a white mule, and he rode that mule until it died. If Israel changed kings, the new king still rode the same mule. No one got on that mule but the king. When David was ready to turn his kingdom over to Solomon, how did he do it? He got the men together and told them to get his mule and let Solomon ride into town on it (1 Kings 1:33). When Solomon rode into town, the people said, "Solomon has been crowned king." How did they know? He was riding David's mule. No one rode that mule but the king.

When our King was ready to be crowned, He asked for a mule that no man had ever sat upon. Why? This kingdom was not handed down from someone else. The Kingdom of God had never been set up before. The disciples brought that mule colt down that no man had ever sat on and had not been bridled. Now anyone who has ever worked around mules and broken them knows that there was power there. You just do not get on a mule that has never been ridden and stay on. Then, if you throw coats and branches down in front of it (as the people did in Jesus' day), it is going to run clear out of the country. They threw a coat over this little old mule's back (that was the worst thing they could have done), and the Son of God got up on his back. The people threw branches down and screamed, "Hosanna." Yet, the Scripture says that mule walked straight into Jerusalem. Why? It recognized its Creator. Brother, sister, if you can recognize your Creator and be as smart as that mule, you also can walk straight into Jerusalem. The trouble is too many throw Him off. You need to come in a meek way. The same old spirit that was in Judaism, that wanted Peter to fight about whether or not there was a literal kingdom, has got into preachers today. They are going to have a millennium whether God's Word says so or not. Friend, if you are going to have it, you will have to have it down in hell because there is not going to be one on earth.

You cannot measure happiness by the acre. Happiness comes on spiritual wings. Those who would be meek are truly inheriting the earth. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." The meek are the only rightful occupants of this earth. God created this earth for meek and holy men. God is just letting the sinner live here by His mercy, but when we become meek individuals, we actually inherit it—it is ours. Not only do we inherit this earth, we inherit the next one.

Chapter 47

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

As we go through the beatitudes, realize that we have not got to receiving an experience of salvation yet. Matthew 5:6 states, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." After you realize your condition is not good and you mourn over it and take a meek position before God, then you have to let God see that you are hungering after a real experience and that you really want it. God has to see within your heart that you would rather have it than anything in the world. You did not know what it was, but you found out the hunger of your soul was for Jesus. When we begin to hunger and thirst after righteousness, we will be filled. God does not want any power-fed, or force-fed, people. He wants those that are hungry. They raise chickens seemingly overnight these days. Every so many minutes they open the chickens' mouths and shoot them full of feed, and that chicken just grows right up. God does not want that. He wants people that want Him. He wants people that hunger after Him and thirst after Him. I am a firm believer that everyone who has Jesus wants Him. If people truly wanted Jesus, they would be getting Him. They that hunger and thirst after righteousness *shall* be filled. That is a positive statement, but the fulfillment is yet out ahead in the beatitudes—"Shall be filled." Let us go a little farther.

What is the next step? Verse 7 tells us, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." What is the next thing we have to do before we get saved? Forgive everyone. This old-time salvation takes quite a little while. You are mourning over your poor spiritual condition, you have taken a meek position before God, you are hungering and telling God how badly you want this salvation, then what is the next step? Be merciful. You must forgive everyone, because if you do not forgive "men their trespasses, neither will your Father [in Heaven] forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:15). Jesus said when you come to the altar, bringing your gifts, remember your brother. If he has aught against you, it does not do any good to try to offer your gifts. Be reconciled to your brother, go show mercy, and then come back. You have to keep that spirit. Anyone who really gets this thing is going to keep it, because it is too big a job to get it. It is harder to get the second time than it was the first time. God help us! "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

What is the next step? "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God"

(verse 8). We are almost to where we can see God and talk to Him and get this thing worked out. People think they can just run up and knock on God's door and see Him anytime. No, you have to go by some certain offices. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." The original says, "They shall possess God." *God* is a Hebrew term; you can read it several places in the Scriptures. Psalm 16:10 says, "Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption [the original says, 'to possess corruption']." In John 3:3 Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God [the Hebrew says, 'he cannot possess the kingdom']." "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see [or possess] God." They will possess Him right in their hearts.

Next we read in Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." We finally get to a man born of God. He is a child of God now. How did he get it? He realized his spiritual condition was not good; he mourned over it; he took a meek position before God; he hungered and thirsted; and he showed mercy to everyone. He said, "Lord, I will forgive everyone. If I have wronged anyone, I will restore it fourfold." The next thing is to plead to God for heart purity—become a peacemaker. In other words, make your peace with God. The children of God are peacemakers. A lot of people call this group and that group "the children of God," but Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for *they* shall be called the children of God." If everyone was a peacemaker who declared to be, there would not be as much trouble as there is. Jesus told us to make peace. It says in Romans 12:18, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Endeavor to make peace as we go about. The very work of God upon our hearts will cause us to do it.

God is a God of peace. When we find peace and make peace, we are the children of God. Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thank God for it. The angel came to bear the good tidings of great joy that Christ was going to be born. After he preached the message, the heavenly choir struck up the invitational hymn and said, "Peace on earth, good will to men." When we get straightened out with God, we will get straightened out with our fellow men. It is just natural. That is the way the Spirit of God works. When people begin to get on the outs with their fellow men, they are on the outs with God, because one cannot be clear with God and be on the outs with his fellow men.

Matthew 5:9-13 states: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you [here is what will happen to you if you really get this experience], and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Ye are the salt of the earth: [I am still dealing with the Laodicean letter. Jesus said to gather the good in the vessels and cast the bad out. What gets cast out?] but if the salt have lost his savour . . . it is thenceforth

good for nothing, but to be cast out." We are not casting away the man who does not know God. No! To him Jesus is saying, "Come!" Who gets cast out? People that have been the salt of the earth and played around and lost it. I am preaching about the Laodiceans. That is who is fit to be cast out. They really squall when you take the Word of God and put them in their place, but that is what Jesus said to do. Jesus said they were "to be trodden under the foot of men" (verse 13). They are not fit for anything, even the dunghill.

A man who has once known God and turned from Him is a misfit on any corner. The world does not want him; Christ cannot use him. He is just what the Laodicean letter said: wretched and miserable. No one is any more miserable than someone who is caught up in this compromise and apostasy. They are too good to go out in the world and find any pleasure, yet they are not good enough to find pleasure in the things of God. They are just in between. It is a miserable, miserable state. They are the salt that has lost its savor—good for nothing but to be cast out.

When Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth," whom was He speaking to? The Church of God, or the people of God. Someone may say, "How do you know?" He said, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and then He said, "Ye are the light of the world." You will never be the light of the world until you are the salt of the earth. There is a difference. Why didn't Jesus say you are the light of the earth and the salt of the world? He said, "Ye are the salt of the earth" first and then "Ye are the light of the world." What was He talking about? He showed us in that letter that society was corrupting away. We salt things to keep them from corrupting. Right? Why do you think corruption is taking our world? There is not enough salt. There is too much salt that has lost its savour. It is no good. It will not help society. In many places that which should be the church has lost its salt. The corruption of the world is coming right into the church. I declare unto you, if you will be the salt, there will be no corruption because we can salt her down. We can stop them if the devil tries to bring in corruption.

"Ye are the salt of the earth." If you are the salt of the earth, it is easy to be the light of the world, because if you get a real experience that keeps you (salt will keep you), it will preserve you. This Holy Ghost salt that I am talking about will keep you sweet. When the reverses come against you on the job, it will look like corruption is taking everything around you. But it will not take you while you are salted down. It will not be long before people will come and ask you, "What is different about you?" Then is the time to be the light. Too many are trying to be the light when they have never been the salt. Show people you really have something. Then they will ask you about it.

Out in the west where the highways are open, someone may be driving along pretty good at ninety-five miles an hour. If you just slip on by them, they will wonder, "What in the world does he have under that hood?" The same thing is true in Christianity. You must be the salt of the earth. You do not have to talk as if you really have Christ in your heart. Just live it. It will be as hard for the devil to work sin around you as it was when Christ walked into the midst. I know what I am talking

about. I have walked in places and never said a word. I never had an attitude to throw cold water on what was going on, but they could not get any fun out of what they were doing. Why? I did not go to condemn them. Christ did not come to condemn the world, but He condemned it anyway by the Spirit He manifested. I do not want to condemn people when I preach, but the Word of God and the Spirit of God will condemn sin on any corner. It will never condone it. The Holy Ghost shining out through our lives will salt the thing down. If we will truly be this salt, we will see the days again when old-time conviction on men and women will cause them to quit smoking and swearing before they ever get saved. They have salt on them, and it began to salt the old corruption before they ever got saved.

Chapter 48

THE LAODICEAN CHURCH

Christ is screening the church today, and many are being spewed out. There were different things that stirred Christ when He wrote the letter. When He saw sin and corruption working, His eyes became as a flame of fire. He was ready to burn it up, but this condition today that the so-called people of God have gotten themselves into does not stir Christ. It makes Him sick! Why? Previously, people did not have full light. They did not know how to do better. But here in the evening light, the time when full light has returned, many are living such low lives. Today we have everything we need for understanding. God has given us the greatest message any man ever stood on the earth and preached. The morning church had nothing beside our message. We have a message that brings the church clear through the Gospel Day. We have a weapon against every falsity that the devil ever came up with. God is ready to fill us with His Spirit. So, when we go along and lock arms with the world, it makes Christ sick. A ministry that will split the Scriptures is worse than a bunch of crooked lawyers. When you have done wrong, they will hunt the law books through to try to find an alibi for you. When a minister searches the Scriptures through, looking for a loophole to let people have their worldliness and ungodliness and still be called the people of God, Christ said, "It makes Me sick."

I was attending a camp meeting when Christ awakened me on these things. There a man stood up and said, "Sin is still sin, but what is sin?" Wasn't that something for a Church of God preacher to be preaching? He left those people in a vacuum to go out and decide for themselves what sin was. I got sick. I do not mean I got sick spiritually, but I got sick physically. My stomach was upset, I had a little fever, and I said to my wife, "I have to go home." I was laying on my bed that night, and Jesus came to me and said, "Do not feel too bad, Son. It makes Me sick too. I would like to spew them out of My mouth." God has blessed us and has given us the greatest message that ever was. God has given us the Word and the Spirit to deliver mankind. Then if we fool around and play around and waste the time, what is the Judgment

going to be for us if we do not wake up from this condition? These things lay heavy on my heart. I am responsible for my life and those that hear me.

Friend, we are in a Laodicean age, a mixture of hot and cold. This lukewarm business comes from mixing cold and hot together again. All over the country there are some hot ones and some cold ones mixed together. Somebody may say, "What should I do?" If that place you are in is cold and dead, if man rule has taken it over and you cannot pray the thing out, run for your life. If there are more cold there than there are hot, you will be cold, too, in a little while. If you cannot heat it up, run for your life. Do not be deceived. Christ gave us counsel for this age.

Now I know some disagree with the seventh-seal light, but they would not if they would study it. It is not what it is branded to be. The church got into trouble all through the Gospel Day, but when the time came, Christ opened the seals and gave them light to get out. When God opened the seventh-seal, He showed His church how to get out of this lukewarm and dead condition. The people of God have been living on too low a level, and God is calling them to that height of a spiritual position that they need to come to. It will not put us on a bit higher plane than the early reformers had. No, we have lowered the thing from there as a whole. God is calling us to put her back there. Why? He is going to present Himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle. Amen!

We read in Revelation, Chapter 22, where the angel told John to seal not the book for the time is at hand. When the sixth seal was opened there was still a portion of the Word unopened. Some of it was sealed up, but when He broke this last one, which does nothing more than take us through this Gospel Day again a little more implicitly, it gives a greater understanding about this lukewarmness, how to war against it, and how to lead people out of it. He said the time is at hand. John was told to seal not the book, no part of it. It is all open now. The book is opened up completely. We are in preliminary judgment and ready for the final judgment.

Friend, do not be deceived. If lukewarmness has gotten hold of you, do not feel that it is all the pastor's fault. God charges the pastors for leading His people from the old paths, but He is also charging some that call themselves the Church of God. Yes, He is going to charge some pastors that have led His flock from the straight and narrow way. These people have lost their resting place; they are in an uneasy state; they are seeking for pleasures in the world again. You are to be pitied if a preacher has led you astray. But if God has given you light and showed you your true condition and you will not come back, you are not to be pitied any longer. Christ is the Good Shepherd. He is the Chief Shepherd over all the under shepherds, and He said, "My sheep hear my voice . . . and they follow me" (John 10:27). He did not say to re-consecrate. He said, "Repent." Repent from what? Repent from the sin of lukewarmness. Repent and take His counsel; get white raiment; get your eyes anointed, which is always a symbol of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Saul had his eyes anointed, and then he could see the scales that fell from them. We must get our eyes anointed so that we can see. Jesus said to put on white raiment and to "buy of me gold tried in the fire" (Revelation 3:18).

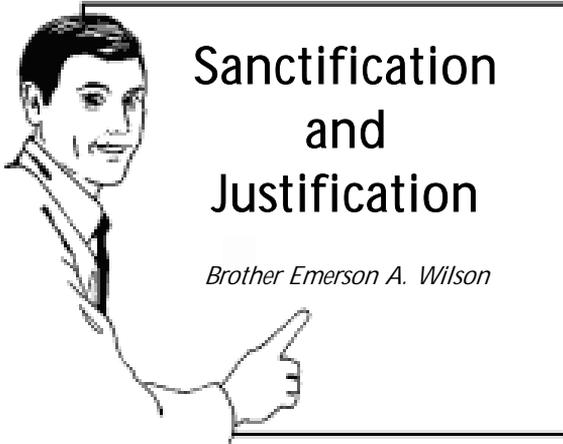
God has His church in the fire. When the goldsmith gets the gold in the fire, he never goes very far from it. Do you know how long he leaves it in there? The goldsmith just leaves the gold in the fire until he can see his face reflected in it. Then he knows it is pure. Even so, Christ is going to leave His church in the fire until He can see His own glorious image there. When He sees that, He will pull us out because we will be pure gold. All the dross will be gone.

When we are pure gold (as one brother said, "Pure gold is 24 carats"), we will fit the symbol in the Revelation, the four and twenty elders (24 carats). They symbolized the church. God wants to make us pure gold. May we be awakened! May we be aroused! If you are sick of this condition of good and bad sporting together, there is only one thing to do. Step away from the bad, and step to higher ground. All of the many beasts in the Revelation that the church met had heads, but there were two things the church had that none of the beasts had. God gave her two wings. The beasts can butt their heads and blow their horns, but they cannot fly. So, the only thing for the church to do is take wings and fly above this mess. Glory be to God!

Listen to the Spirit of God. Let God lift your burden and set you on fire. If you will let Jesus work you over and fix you up until you are His workmanship again, you will not have to go around wondering if the lukewarmness of others is going to affect you and cause you to lose that which you have. If you get enough of this fire, you can go set others on fire. Sure you can! We are expecting a great fire to break out over our country. That is what we are praying for. We do not want it in just one locality, we want it everywhere. We want the light everywhere. It is our only hope. Individual-wise and nation-wise, getting back to God is America's only hope. We do not need guided missiles. We need guided men and women. If we could get families to get out the family altar and pray a hole right straight through to Heaven, we would have an effect on this world. They will move if we will get hold of God, use the weapon of prayer that God has given us, and live as God would have us to live. You can talk about an iron curtain, but that is nothing beside a wall of fire. A wall of fire will melt down an iron curtain. God showed old Israel what He would do for a people that would serve Him and be obedient. What did He say? "I will fight your battles." Men gathered in by the hundreds and the thousands against old Israel, but all God had to do was just send an angel down to flutter his wings, so to speak, and it would knock out the whole operation.

I am serving a God who will do literal things and physical things for us, if we will put Him first in spiritual things. Matthew 6:33 tells us, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Our country is suffering as a nation because of her own doings. May we realize that and get back to God! There is no greater time to start than right now. Do not lay this book down and remain lukewarm. Get on fire. Stay in the furnace until God brings you out. Come and meet His conditions. Let Him lift you. Let Him put the fire of God in your soul. Get to the place that you can enjoy this thing instead of enduring it. Do you know why I am preaching the Gospel? I am preaching it because I want to. I am preaching the Gospel because I would rather preach than eat. I would

rather do it than anything in the world. That is exactly why I am doing it. Nothing can compare to the thrill the Holy Ghost puts in my soul. We have something that will save us if we lay hold of it. Glory be to God!



Sanctification and Justification

Brother Emerson A. Wilson

The Only Foundation

Paul wrote to the Corinthians about the contentions in that congregation. He was dealing with disharmony and trying to work it out before it broke into schisms and splits and rents (1 Corinthians 1:10). He told them in 1 Corinthians 2:2 that he was determined not to know anything among them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

He went on to say in 1 Corinthians

3:11, that no other foundation can any man lay than that which is already laid, Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the *only* foundation. There is no other. If you are building your life on anything but Christ, you are building on sand. If you are building your home on anything but Christ, you are building on sand. If you are building your congregation on anything but Christ, you are building on sand. There are not several foundations. There is only one.

The Corinthians were getting off that foundation. Some of them were building on Apollos. Some were building on Cephas (Peter). Some were building on Paul. That is why Paul said he would not know anything among them but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He wanted them to get back to the foundation.

Tried by Fire

It is not enough to have the foundation, but we have to watch what we build on it. Thank God for the message about Christ—His birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and His power as Lord sitting on the right hand of the Father—but be careful how you build on that foundation.

First Corinthians 3:12-15 reads: "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

Paul spoke of things that will stand fire: gold, silver, precious stones; and he talked about things that will not stand fire: wood, hay, stubble. Paul said, "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it." He did not mean the final Judgment Day, because God would not be a just God if He let us build all through our lives and never tried our houses, our characters, and our lives until the final judgment, and we would have to see our work destroyed.

Truth makes manifest. In other words, Paul said, "You fellows have been doing a lot of building down here, but some of you got clear off the foundation, and some of you are on the right foundation, but what you are building is not according to truth."

The fire that tries us is the same fire that saves us. In Jeremiah 23:29 God said, "Is not my word like as a fire?" The Word of God tries our theology, and it will test it to see whether it is gold, silver, or precious stones, which are symbols of truth. When it is hay, wood, or stubble, it will not stand up against the truth of God's Word.

Paul said that people's works would burn, but they would be saved. I know people that love Christ and have an experience with Him, but they spent their efforts in Babylon, and when they heard the truth, the truth tried their works. They came out of Babylon, but when they came out, they had to leave their works behind that were not according to truth.

We need to desire the truth of God's eternal Word. Let us get rid of the idea that anything is good enough. There is a lot of the spirit today that anything is good enough as long as you are sincere. Sooner or later, God puts the fire on what you have, and anything that will not stand the fire of God's eternal Word is not worth having in your life, because if it will not stand the fire of God's Word here, it will not stand it at the Judgment.

Worldly Wisdom Fails

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:18, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." In the twenty-fifth verse, he upset the wisdom of the worldly wise and let people know that you will never get the truth through human wisdom. That is why the wiser we get in this world, the less we see God in anything. You cannot know God by worldly wisdom. The Corinthians were carried away from the real essence of the message, and they sought human realms, just as men do today. They forgot Jesus teaching that a little child shall lead them. Paul set them straight, first of all, by letting them know that while men by the wisdom of this world could not even find God, God was saving men by the foolishness of preaching—just plain, simple teaching of Jesus' mission here and where He came from.

First Corinthians 1:25 reads, "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." The Greek says, "The folly of God." In other words, God has more sense playing around than man has working hard.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (1 Corinthians 1:26). Look at preachers that are really outstanding in the truth. It is just the same now as it was then. How many wise men after the flesh has God called? It is not that He will not call them, but their worldly wisdom puts up such a wall that they cannot hear His simple call.

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are

mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1: 27-31).

Paul went right on in the second chapter and set the wisdom of man beside a power of God all through the first six verses, and in verses 7-10 he wrote: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

The only way you will get truth is by revelation. It is a lot easier to follow man than Christ, because you can see the man. It is so much easier to go when you can see something with the natural eye than it is to go by faith. You have to spend some time praying, and maybe fasting, to get divine direction.

Truth is revealed. You cannot get it by human wisdom. Many are misled by trying to get it some other way. That was what Corinth was doing, and because of it they were in division. "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us" (Deuteronomy 29:29). If we will walk in the light, God will reveal to us what we need.

First Corinthians 1:5 says that you are enriched by Christ in everything, including knowledge. Jesus taught that without Him, you can do nothing (John 15:5). Paul wrote in Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Too many people in this Laodicean age are not willing to let their beliefs be tested by fire—God's Word. He is knocking on the door. He has something for them. Thank God for Brother Warner and for every other reformer, but God has more truth for us. We are on the way. We are traveling on. God has more truth for us, but too many Laodiceans are keeping the door shut, saying, "I have need of nothing. I do not want any more. I will not even consider it."

If you are sure that what you have is truth, you will not mind my taking the Word and testing it. If you have truth, you will still have truth when we are done, and you will not be doubting and wondering whether or not you are right.

Paul said the day would declare it, and we are in that day. There are a lot of things that people took for truth in the Dark Ages and in the cloudy conditions, but we are out in the day. We are where it is just as light as it was in the morning time, and the daylight declares lots of things. When the light is not really clear, you can put up with a lot of things and think they are all right. You can be raised around the church and just accept teachings that the church has been accepting for generations.

We read books to get understanding on a certain verse and never look into it anymore. Then God comes along through the Holy Spirit and says, "Study that." The first thing you know, what you thought was gold begins to crack and snap because it is stubble. You may feel, "Certainly, I am not wrong," and you search the Bible, trying to back up your belief, but you cannot do it. So you get a man's book.

One reason for contention and division at Corinth was a misconception of the message. They had been led away from the foundation and were following this man and that man. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:3 that they were carnal (fleshly) because they walked as men. They picked out a man and walked as he walked. People of our day stick to Wesley, Luther, or some other man and walk as he walked. (I am not speaking against any man.) I could write a book and name it "*What the Bible Teaches*," but it would not be what the Bible teaches—it would be what Emerson Wilson says the Bible teaches. There is only one Book to look in to know what the Bible teaches, and that is the Bible.

Contention comes because of a misconception of God's Word. When the Word of God makes manifest something that is not truth, we must get rid of it. And I will trade stubble for gold any day.

Sanctification

What a bone of contention sanctification is! The doctrine of sanctification is one subject that is very much misunderstood. The word *sanctification* is found five times in the whole Bible. The words *sanctify*, *sanctified*, and *sanctifieth* are found a hundred and forty-one times, four times more in the Old Testament than in the New Testament. But no matter what Hebrew or Greek words they are taken from, they have the same meaning: to set anything apart from sensual use to sacred use.

Various things were sanctified in the Old Testament, proving that sanctification can in no way be limited to dealing with the sins of man. In the Old Testament, days were sanctified. Are you going to say that days have carnality in them? Tabernacles were sanctified. Furniture, garments, and bread were sanctified. Heathen soldiers were sanctified, even though they were unbelievers and sinners. One time when Israel rose up against God, He took a group of heathen soldiers and sanctified them, the Scripture says, and used them for His purpose. They were heathens before He sanctified them, and they were heathens after He sanctified them.

Food was sanctified. Paul began 1 Timothy, Chapter 4, by telling what would happen in the last days because of people giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. First Timothy 4:3-5 reads: "Commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." Read Genesis 9:3. Moses commanded the people not to eat pork and certain other things, but that law was added four hundred years after God set a moral law in operation for man. Christ nailed the ceremonial law to the Cross and took us back to God's moral

law.

First Corinthians 7:14 states that unsaved companions are sanctified. Some of the Corinthians were married to unsaved companions, and through a misconception of truth, they thought if they brought forth children, the children would be unclean; but Paul let them know that if one parent was a Christian, the other parent would be sanctified through that so their children would not be unclean. In that situation, sanctification had nothing to do with a person getting an experience with God.

Exodus 13:1-2 reads: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine." Now, we begin to understand how God used sanctification. It sets something apart unto Him. It belongs to Him. All through the Scriptures, you will find that that which God sanctified was set apart or separated from every other purpose to a sacred purpose, no matter what it was. (God sanctified Jeremiah before he was ever formed in his mother's womb, according to Jeremiah 1:5.)

I have done some searching, and there is not a Scripture in the Bible concerning sanctification where the words *second*, *work*, or *grace* are found in the context. The word *sanctification* is used the same way in the New Testament as it is in the Old. Whether it is from the Hebrew or Greek, the words it is taken from mean "to pronounce clean or holy, to consecrate, to dedicate, to purify, to set apart from profane or secular use to sacred or holy use."

Where did sanctification have its beginning in the thought of a man or woman being sanctified? Ephesians 1:1-4 reads: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." New Testament sanctification was in the mind of God before the beginning of the world. He has chosen that every one of us who are in Christ be holy.

When does sanctification have its beginning in the experience of our hearts and lives? When He separates you from the life of sin and brings you to a life of holiness! When you come in old-time repentance, turn to God from a life of sin, pleading the shed blood of Jesus Christ through faith in His blood, your sins are remitted. The old heart is taken out of you, God puts a new heart in you, and then Christ through the Holy Spirit moves into that heart. When He moves into that heart, you are made holy.

Whenever truth begins to make manifest, people will grab for most anything to try to hold their position. They take Scriptures apart, dissect them, teach half of a sentence for one work and the other half for another work. The light is being made manifest. God has light for the church today. We are going back to teaching truths the way the Apostles taught them in the morning time. The mists of confusion are

still passing away. People who do not want to believe that someone who is born again receives the Holy Ghost and because the Bible says that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His (Romans 8:9), they begin to make a difference between the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God. However, Ephesians 4:4 states that there is *one* Spirit.

When your life is cleaned up through the blood of Jesus Christ and you become a new creature, or a new temple, you get a new heart in that temple. You are a new inner man. The old man (the man you used to be) died, and after he died, he resurrected a new man. You are raised up with Christ. When you become that new temple, God, the Holy Ghost, and Jesus move in.

That Day

Isaiah in his prophecy, from the second chapter on, talked about "that day." When Jesus came, He talked about "that day." "That day" came on the Day of Pentecost. You cannot rightly divide the Word of Truth in dealing with an experience in the heart of man and go before Pentecost. This is the day they all looked forward to. With all the great ways that God moved through the Old Testament, none could experience what you and I can experience in this Holy Ghost dispensation of time.

In John 14:20-21 Jesus told what would happen in that day: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Verses 22-23 state: "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

Peter's message on the Day of Pentecost let the people know that if they would repent and be baptized, they would receive the Holy Spirit. The Apostles had to tarry for the Holy Ghost, but nowhere in the Bible does it tell you to get one experience and tarry for a second one. "That day" has come, thank God! We are in that day.

Salvation Is in a Person

Salvation is an all-inclusive word used in the Scripture to denote deliverance from *every form of sin*, a changing from one creature to another, from one purpose of life to another. You do not have salvation till you are delivered from the guilt of sin and the power of sin.

"Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn [power] of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: [The message has never changed. Why would we want to change it? I am preaching the

same message that the prophets preached since the world began. What did they preach?] That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (Luke 1:67-75).

When salvation comes, holiness and righteousness come. If you have to wait and get a second work before holiness comes, then it could not be all the days of your life because from the time you repented until you received another work of grace, there will be some days in there when you were void of holiness and righteousness.

Salvation is not so much in an experience—it is in a *person*. I am preaching the same message the prophets preached from the beginning. What did they preach? They did not preach that salvation would be in an experience. They all talked about a man. A *man* shall be a hiding place. A *man* shall be your deliverance. A *man* shall be your salvation.

Through the cloudy day, out of the Dark Ages, when people did not see complete truth, they got experiences in ceremonies and in meeting conditions. Salvation is not in your heart till Jesus comes into your heart, and if salvation is not in your heart, you do not have it. Salvation is Jesus Christ. It is a person, not an experience or a work of grace. Read Revelation 3:20. God does not send a preacher around with a creed book, saying, "If you will believe this creed, I will save you." Jesus is standing at the door, saying, "If you will open your heart's door, I will come in to you." God help us to shake off the confusion. God help us to get free from the ceremonies and ideas that men taught for 350 years in a cloudy condition. We are in the DAY!

Luke 2:25-30 reads: "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost [that is the only way you are going to find truth], that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

Salvation is not meeting some condition. Jesus is God's salvation. Salvation is in a man, in a person. First Corinthians 1:30 reads, "But of him [God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." What is sanctification? Jesus. Sanctification is in a person, not an experience.

Jesus is our salvation. Salvation is an all-inclusive word. You cannot have Christ without having both salvation and sanctification. This is what caused confusion back then, and it is causing it yet today. We have gotten away from the

Person and have put emphasis on the ceremony, on meeting conditions. You are not saved by works of grace. You are saved by Jesus Christ. When you receive Him, He is your salvation and He is your sanctification. Sanctification is the result of receiving a Person.

Second Thessalonians 2:13 reads, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." In that Scripture Paul said that every one of you was saved through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

How are you saved through sanctification of the Spirit? When you come in old-time repentance and you plead Jesus Christ's shed blood, through faith in His blood, the sins of the past are remitted. Through the sanctification or the power of the Spirit, God through the Holy Ghost works a transformation. The old heart is taken out of you, and a new heart is put in you. You are a new man. You have been transformed. You have been saved through the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. You have been taken from one position and set over in another position—set apart unto God. First Peter 1:2 tells you that it is through the sprinkling of blood and obedience of the truth.

There are different portions of salvation, and the right way to take them apart would be to go back to the old tabernacle. One offering was brought for this, and another offering was brought for that, etc. Three main offerings were brought for different works, ceremonial cleansings, to get men cleansed up so God could use them, but when Jesus came, He did not have to make three trips. There did not have to be three Jesuses. There was one sacrifice for all; He gave Himself a ransom for mankind.

Holy as God Is Holy

Jesus said in the seventh chapter of John that He could not give the Holy Spirit yet because the Lord had not yet been glorified, but after the Lord was glorified, the Spirit was given. The Holy Ghost works a sanctifying power on every one who truly repents and sets him apart unto God, and that is where holiness begins, not ceremonial holiness, but real and true holiness.

The sanctification of the Spirit is that work of the Holy Spirit which makes a new creature of you. You are changed from one position to the other when He makes a new creature of you. Old things are passed away. You have no desire to serve the devil anymore. You have a desire to serve God. You received that desire in the initial work of salvation.

First Peter 1:15-16 reads: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [conduct]; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." When are we made holy? You were not redeemed with corruptible things, but by the precious blood of Christ. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit Being born again . . ." (verses 22-23). Sanctification is

of the Spirit. You can meet the conditions of the Gospel message, but it is the Spirit of God that makes the transformation. When did the Spirit work the transformation? When is the sanctification of the Spirit? Since sanctification is a setting apart of something or someone unto God, when you came in repentance, took faith in the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, and believed the truth, the Spirit worked His sanctification on you. He set you apart from the corrupt condition you lived in, the place of serving diver's lusts and the devil, and He made you a servant of God.

You are made holy just as God is holy because you have God's Spirit in you, or as Peter called it, God's nature. You are a partaker of God's nature. What kind of nature does God have? God is a Spirit! When you have His Spirit, you have His nature. When you are born again, you are holy; and when you are made holy, you are set apart unto God.

People take you back to the Old Testament, to where there were the holy place and the holiest place. But read the Hebrew letter. The writer told you that the old tabernacle was a type of the two covenants. Through the first covenant, the blood of bulls and goats, you could not get beyond the holy place, ceremonial holiness, with no change of heart. However, when Christ died on the Cross, He tore the veil down, and now we have boldness through the blood of Jesus to go right into the holiest place. Through the blood of Jesus Christ, you do not go past two altars and through two rooms. You go right into the holiest place.

Through sanctification of the Spirit, the Spirit of God put a new life within you. God moved in, and you became a partaker of God's divine nature. You are holy as God is holy.

Second Corinthians 7:1 states, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." The holiness God put within you is perfect; so how do you perfect it? You perfect holiness as you study God's Word and cleanse yourself from that which is contrary to God's holiness, bringing your life to that standard of holiness. You and I need to be perfected as we walk, and as we add virtues, put away that which the Word of God says to put away and come out from that which He says to come out from. God's holiness is perfect. The perfecting part is on us, cleansing ourselves. It is not an experience that you can get at the altar. It is not a cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ. It is not a cleansing by the Holy Spirit. You cleanse yourself as you take the promises of God's Word.

Luke 1:74-75 states that you would serve Him in holiness all the days of your life. Now, that is how long it is going to take to perfect it. You are in holiness when you start—when you are born again. Walk in the truth and add (sometimes you cannot add until you take away something), perfecting holiness all the days of your life. There will be some more growing, and there will be some more perfecting.

Sanctification Is . . .

Sanctification is instantaneous. You get it when you repent. Sanctification is an instantaneous experience that takes place when the Holy Ghost makes you a new creature, takes you from the position where you have served sensual things and makes you a servant of God, or sets you apart unto God.

Sanctification is progressive. It will last all the days of your life. It is progressive as you obey the truth. Jesus spoke of sanctifying "them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). You cannot separate the Word from Jesus. He was the Word, and He is the Word. Therefore, when you get sanctification through the truth, you get it through Jesus; and if you will obey the truth, it will make you like Jesus.

Sanctification is future and complete. First Thessalonians 5:23 reads, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Sanctification will not be complete until you get your new body. Flesh and blood cannot get into the kingdom. The inner man is in, and the outer man is out. God is going to give us new bodies. That is the redemption we wait for (Luke 21:28; Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:14). Part of our redemption has not taken place. We just have the down payment. The man on the inside is a new man, but the man on the outside is not a new man; however, he is going to be. God is going to change him when Jesus comes again, and he will end up perfect and complete.

Justification

The words *justify* or *justification* are used sixty-four times in the Bible, and not once in any Scripture is it stated that justification comes before sanctification. Justification is a judicial term, and it takes place in the courts of Heaven. Justification clears you in the courts of Heaven. Sanctification makes you clean for service down here, and you must be clean for service down here before you can be justified in the courts of Heaven.

First Corinthians 6:9-11 reads: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

You are washed at the altar. You are washed in the blood, figuratively speaking. The Holy Spirit sets you apart unto God in conversion by making a new creature out of you. Everything that was sinful is gone. There is no sin in you whatsoever. The blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed you from ALL sin. By sanctification of the Spirit, you are set apart, and the minute you are set apart you are not guilty of anything, and you are justified before God. Justification comes immediately after the washing

(through faith in Jesus' blood) and sanctification. God would not be a just God if He would justify you and clear you and you were still guilty, polluted, and unclean.

Sanctification comes first, and justification comes when we repent. In His parable of the Pharisee and the publican, Jesus said in Luke 18:13-14: "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified."

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man [Christ] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39).

Under the Law of Moses, one could not be justified from sin of any form, but through Christ those that believe on Him are justified from ALL things. Justification is the act of declaring a person holy after he IS holy. Justification does not *make* you holy. Justification lets you know you are clear—the blood of Jesus Christ cleans you; the sanctification of the Holy Spirit sets you apart; and God says you are not guilty. You are justified from everything that you could not be justified from by the Law of Moses. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, but you are cleared of it through the blood of Jesus Christ.

As I have already said, sanctification is a change of service from Satan to God. In Acts, Chapter 26, Paul was before Agrippa, telling him what God had called him for. He said in verse 18, "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

When you turn from sin, when the power of the Holy Spirit turns you from the power of Satan to the power of God, your sins are forgiven and you step right in and get your inheritance among the rest of the sanctified. What is the inheritance? The Kingdom of God is the inheritance, and no one can have it but sanctified people. Romans 8:16-17 states that we are children of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Acts 26:18 states that we get forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith.

Sanctification *makes* a sinner not guilty, and justification *declares* him not guilty.

The Mists Are Passing Away

No blessing of God is ever numbered in the Scriptures! I read in Ephesians, Chapter 1, that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings when we get in Christ.

When you get a thought in your mind, no matter what it is, you can go into God's Word and put some Scriptures together and prove it. We need to know that we have the right foundation for the thought before we even start. We need to get some things straight in the beginning, just as we started this message. There is only one foundation, and when you come in old-time repentance, you are made a new creature in Christ Jesus. There are foundation truths that we must lay hold of, and then go

from there.

I heard a man preach not long ago who had a chart with five hearts, and he used the five stones that David picked up to use against the giant to prove you do not have victory until you use all five stones. However, there is one thing wrong with his message—David only used one stone. The preacher had to use five stones to teach his theology. You can be carried away and just pick up Scriptures and teach anything you want.

People misunderstand 2 Corinthians 1:15, which reads, "And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit." Paul was not teaching a second blessing or a second work of grace. Every time Paul went, they got a benefit. They were benefitted by his presence by, his being there and teaching them. Paul did not teach such a thing as a second work of grace to the Corinthians. According to 1 Corinthians 1:2 and 6:9-11, they were already sanctified, every one of them. Therefore, why would he write to the same group in the second letter and say, "I know you cannot wait till I get there. I am going to give you a second blessing. You are going to be sanctified"?

I repeat, sanctification is not mentioned in any Scripture or context about it as second, work, or grace. Such things are of human manufacture, and they are based on the teachings of man. They lean heavy on Brother John Wesley. Did you ever read his writings? In his first writings, you will read just what I have preached, that an individual is sanctified when he is regenerated and has a new heart and has been set apart in holiness unto God. However, he did not teach that in later years.

Luther believed in justification by faith, but he did not understand Bible holiness. He believed one is justified by faith, but as far as living a pure, holy, clean life down here, he did not think a man could do it.

Wesley taught quite a while before he got the experience of salvation. He was trying to lead the Indians to Christ when he did not even have Christ himself. He was going on the belief that the just shall live by faith and if he sinned, God would forgive him, but he had no holiness of heart.

John Wesley got an experience with a change of heart, and the truth began to unfold to him of holiness down here. Now, what would a man do who thought he already had an experience? He would start teaching that the holiness he received was another experience later than the first one. His own writings stated that when he preached to the Church of England, he knew they all claimed to be Christians, but he knew they did not have holiness of heart, so he preached a deeper work. However, that deeper work that he preached was just an experience of salvation.

The morning Apostles taught it just exactly as I have brought it to you out of the Word of God. When you come in old-time repentance, inward and outward holiness begin. There is no hint in the Word of God that after you come in repentance, then the sanctification of the Spirit sets you apart unto God. There is no teaching found in the Bible that a person needs another work of grace. The Bible teaches birth and growth. Paul did not teach newborn babes that they needed to be sanctified. He taught that they needed to grow up. Peter did not teach newborn babes to desire the

sincere milk of the Word so they could get some understanding and be sanctified. He taught them to desire the Word so they might grow.

I repeat again, you are going to have to be pure and holy down here before you are justified in the courts of Heaven. Paul taught that you are washed, sanctified, and justified; and he also taught that Jesus Christ is made unto you salvation, sanctification, wisdom, power, and strength.

Through the sanctification of the Spirit, you receive the power. Do you have the experience within your heart? You may say you did not get salvation that way. However, did you ever stop to think that God granted experiences to men according to the light they had? Thank God for good men who blazed the truth in their period of time and were true to God. But just remember this: The Church of God reformation carried lots of things out of Babylon, and the mists of confusion are still clearing away. They are not all cleared away yet, but God is clearing them away. The day is making manifest. We are going back to the light of the morning as fast as we can go. I can hardly wait for the day when we can preach it just exactly as Paul and Peter did. Every day, I thank God for the way He is revealing the truth of His Word.

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