

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER



EZEKIEL 34:12
JEREMIAH 32:39
REVELATION 10:7
MATTHEW 24:31

Vol. 56 March 2026 No. 3

"COMMIT
THY way
UNTO THE
LORD; TRUST
ALSO IN HIM;
and He SHALL
BRING IT TO
PASS."

PSALM 37:5

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

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

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN

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

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

- Jesus organized it (Matthew 16:18)
- It is built on a good foundation (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 3:11)
- Christ governs it (Ephesians 1:22-23; Isaiah 9:6)
- God admits the members (1 Corinthians 12:13-18)
- Sin puts you out of it (Romans 11:22; Exodus 32:33)
- Only the saved are members (John 15:2-6)
- Membership is offered to all (Revelation 22:17)
- There are final rewards (Revelation 20:12-15; 21:3-4; 22:14)
- The Bible name is the Church of God (Acts 20:28; Galatians 1:13; John 17:11)

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A DEEPER COMMITMENT

Although our time was brief, the winter camp meeting produced innumerable valuable lessons. If I could personally give a summary, I would use the first line from the song "Grow Closer," composed by Doris Akers, which reads, "There's a still, small voice saying to me, 'Closer, closer, grow closer to Me.'"

Each evening, Brother Earl R. Borders, pastor of the congregation in Summersville, West Virginia, delivered a series of soul-stirring messages entitled "Understanding the Gifts and Callings." What a privilege we were afforded by God, who used our brother in such a way to help us gain insight into these precious truths.

Brother Borders emphasized the Scripture text in 1 Corinthians 12:27-31: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent

way."

Many were drawn to an altar of prayer as the Holy Ghost searched each heart. God's Word was brought in great clarity, and no one could deny that God is calling His church—His saints—to deepen their commitment to His purpose.

The morning evangelists included Brother Reggie Stegmeier, Brother Abraham Burton, Brother Nathan Harding, and Brother Allen Polston. Through these faithful brethren, God stirred the church to examine our worship, homes, and influence. On the last morning, Brother Polston brought a motivating challenge through his message, "Keep Plowing in 2026."

Afternoon teaching services were taught by Brother Reggie Stegmeier on "The Three Categories of Biblical Law." Winter Bible School was also available for the children during the afternoons. Sister Tammy Green, Sister Karen Wilks, and numerous helpers guided the children in crafts, activities, games, and a story of forgiveness entitled "Whiter Than Snow."

Brother and Sister Strelecky invited various saints to come in and share their testimonies with the youth, addressing such topics as the danger of

[continued on page 11]



Another Gospel

Brother Roger L. Decker

Galatians 1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

Division is at an all-time high, and the Galatian letter sums up what is taking place in many congregations today. Some want their own way, and if they do not get it,

they leave the congregation with the attitude, "I will keep searching until I find a place that believes the way I do." It is the duty of the watchman on the wall to cry out when he sees the enemy approaching the camp.

Ezekiel 33:6-7 says: "But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me."

In Galatia, Judaizers (a faction of Jewish Christians who regarded the Levitical Law as still binding on all Christians) tried to bring in "another gospel," which troubled the work of God. They caused many to lose out and eventually fall from grace. Paul established the churches in Galatia, scattered throughout the

Roman province, on his first missionary journey.

Galatians 1:1-2 reads, "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia." The first thing the Apostle Paul had to do was to defend his authority as an Apostle. He stated he was called "by Jesus Christ, and God the Father," and not by man.

Dissension Among the Brethren

The Apostle Paul immediately put out a warning in his Epistle to the Galatians. Verse 6 of our text begins with the words: "I marvel" (or I am amazed) that you have removed yourself from Christ "unto another gospel." The words "I marvel" reveal the Apostle Paul was astonished at what was happening in Galatia. He found the congregation had moved away from how he had

set it up, and he was shocked at what he saw. The Greek word for *marvel* is "to wonder, or be amazed."

Let us look at the Word of God and see how the word *amazed* is used elsewhere in the Bible. Revelation 17:6 says, "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration [or he was amazed]." When John saw mystery Babylon, he "wondered," which comes from the same Greek word as marvel or to be amazed. John was caught up in amazement, and Babylon mystified him. Mystery Babylon so carried away John that he "wondered [or was amazed] with great admiration."

First John 3:13 says, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." Otherwise, do not wonder or be surprised if the world hates you. It is not you they hate, but what you represent or stand for that causes hatred to arise. Galatians 1:6 from the *American Standard Version* says, "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel."

The Apostle Paul and the Gospel were both under attack. Judaizers (Jews converted to Christianity) held on to the Law. They felt special gifts and promises belonged to the Jews only. They thought the Gentiles could become Christians, but only if they observed certain portions of the Law, such as circumcision. Judaizers hindered the work of God in Galatia by bringing back the things that had been put away. The brethren were moved by those who held out for the Law, which caused dissension among the people.

In Acts, Chapter 15, the brethren came together to consider these problems. They needed to settle whether certain portions of

the Law were to be kept in the Christian faith. Verses 5-10 state: "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

"And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"

The Apostle Paul's authority and calling were also under attack. In Acts, Chapter 1, Matthias was chosen by the disciples to become an Apostle in Judas' place, and the Galatians knew about Matthias. The Apostle Paul had to let the Galatians know he did not receive his calling from man but from Jesus Christ personally. No assembly or council of the Apostles commissioned him.

Acts 22:12-15 reads: "And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard."

A Change in Countenance

When the Apostle Paul visited Galatia the second time, something had happened to certain members of the congregation. Again, he defended his authority to preach the Gospel in Galatians 1:11-12, which says: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Many things were going on with the Galatian congregation that caused the Apostle Paul to pour out a strong rebuke against them. He was concerned about certain members of the congregation who were not advancing spiritually as they ought. He wrote a letter to awaken those who were deceived and going backward instead of forward.

We need to consider the condition in Galatia and see how it applies to us today. Some members were not as spiritual as they once had been. In Galatians 3:1-3, the Apostle Paul said: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect [or are you now advancing] by the flesh?"

The word *bewitched* means "charmed, or misled into disobedience." The Judaizers still wanted to live by the Law, which caused them to be fleshly and no longer under the control of the Spirit of God. They were affecting other Christians in the congregation. God began the work in the Spirit, but they were advancing it in the flesh, trying to restore the teachings of the Law by requiring people to adhere to it

and rejecting those who refused.

The flesh will drain every ounce of the Spirit of God from your experience with God. The flesh will cause you to sin. What slowed the spiritual progress of the Galatian church? Paul said they started in the Spirit, but then he called them "foolish." He asked, "Who [not what] hath bewitched you [or charmed you], that ye should not obey the truth?" Who were the individuals who switched you over from being spiritual to being fleshly?

The Book of Proverbs lists some sins God especially hates. Proverbs 6:19 says God hates "a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." The tongue has caused many problems in congregations. You can tell when individuals in a congregation are affected by what they have heard because their countenance falls, and the brightness of their experience loses its glow.

Genesis 4:6-7 reads: "And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Salvation brings a bright countenance. The Spirit of God makes a person's countenance shine, but if he gets involved with something they should not, their countenance will change. They become cranky and more difficult to get along with. They are not as friendly and no longer mix with the saints like they once did. They quit testifying. Their position has moved, and they are sad.

Luke 24:13-17 states: "And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had hap-

pened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?"

The two men walked to Emmaus, discussing the events that had taken place. Things did not happen exactly the way they thought they should. There was turmoil, and they were sad. First Corinthians 15:33 says, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." Wrong communications trouble the soul and the mind. They cause doubt and instability.

The Lying Prophet

First Kings 13:1-17 reads: "And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath

spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

"And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Entreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.

"And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel.

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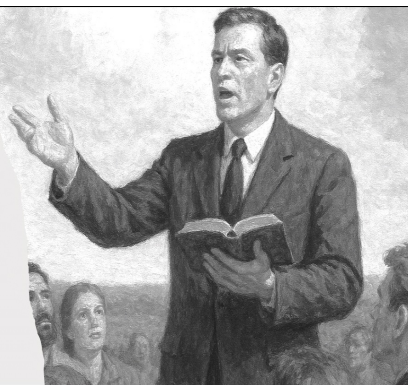
"Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father. And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah. And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon, And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am.

"Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest."

The man of God was firm in his convictions and seemed unmovable at first. He told King Jeroboam: "You will not move me. I am going to do exactly what God told me to do." However, the devil always has someone around who can be more convincing. There was an old prophet or preacher in Bethel. He went after the man of God and found him resting or sitting under an oak tree.

Verse 18 says: "He [the old prophet] said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art [I am a minister just like you]; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him." The lying prophet influenced the man of God, leading him to return with him.

Many are moved by those they see as GOOD PREACHERS who can move people.



Making Yourself a Transgressor

First Kings 13:19-22 states: "So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water. And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back [the truth came out because God moved and gave the old prophet the words to say]: And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers."

These Scriptures remind us of Balaam, whom the king of Moab hired to curse Israel. Instead of cursing Israel, he blessed them instead. God moved on Balaam, and the truth came out, just as it did with the lying prophet. A lion met the man of God along the way, killed him, but let the horse live. It is unnatural for a lion to leave a horse standing unharmed. The horse survived, but the lion killed the man of God because he listened to a man who said he was a prophet. Many people today are listening to those who claim to be minis-

ters of the Gospel. Paul said in the Galatian letter that the Galatians were moved by "another gospel."

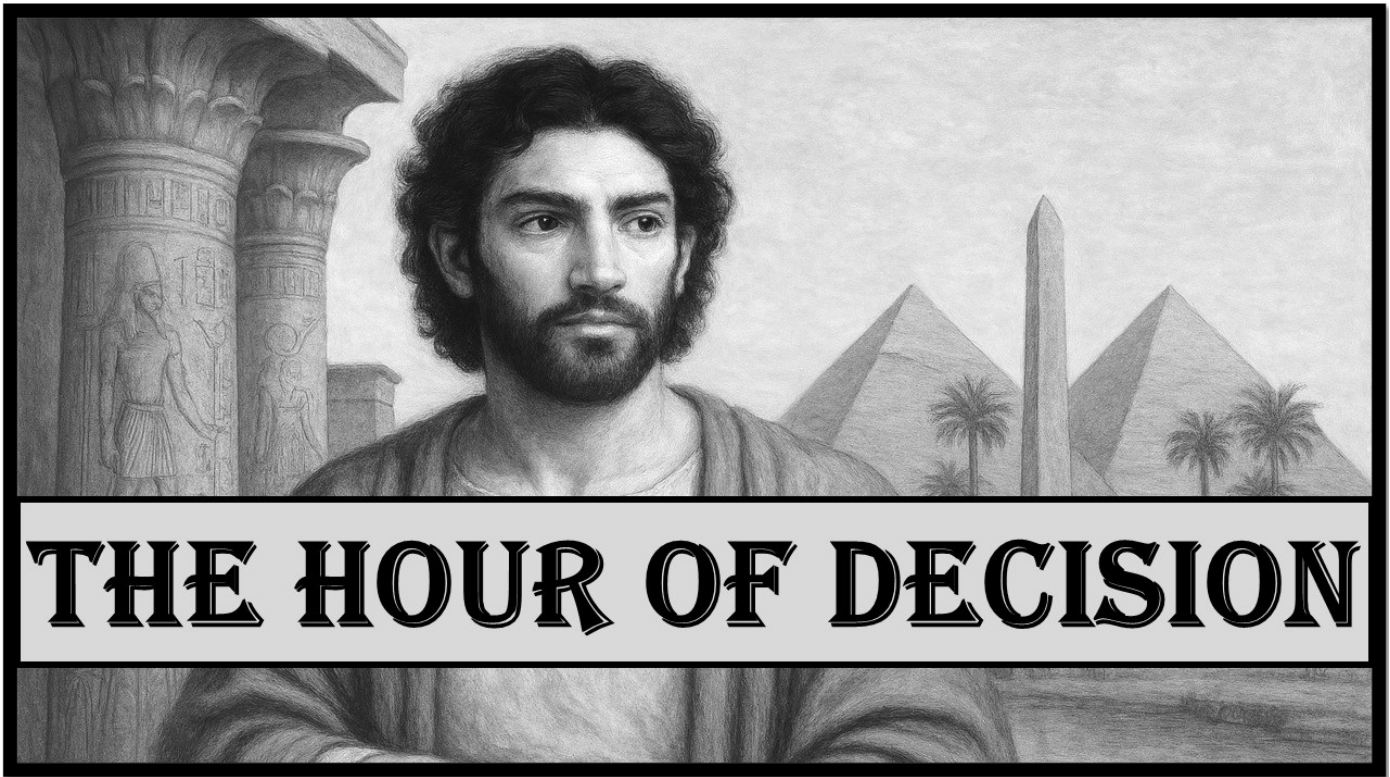
The truth brings God's people out of confusion. If I support a false doctrine that the Lord has brought light and understanding on, I would become a transgressor because I would be walking behind light. Galatians 2:18 says, "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor." Many are moved by those they see as good preachers who can move people. The Galatian people were troubled. Their countenances had fallen, and sadness had come upon them. They had allowed themselves to be influenced by people. Be careful of whom you listen to.

If you desire the office of a pastor, evangelist, or teacher, be submissive and an example to the flock. You must be a follower first before you can lead. I am giving a warning about how the devil works. Do not allow anyone in the congregation to bring you down. It makes no difference how close they are to you. The prophet had a higher rank, but he lied. He was so convincing that he moved the man of God away from his convictions. The only time the lying prophet spoke the truth was when God spoke through him.

If you are troubled about something, pray about it. You can move up in your experience and get back to where you once were with God's help. He will be right there to bring you back, and your countenance can shine once again. He can take the sadness away from your heart.

(Compact Disc TR-2986)

Brother Roger L. Decker is the pastor of the Church of God in Newark, OH.



Brother Richard Talbot

Exodus 2:1 And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.

2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

3 And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.

4 And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

In this message, I would like to consider Moses' hour of decision. Moses was in a season of choice; he needed to make a decision. It is important to know the times in which we are living, and certainly, there will be an hour of decision for every one of us. We must keep that thought ever before us. There will come very important times in our lives when we are going to face major decisions and

major crossroads.

First, we are going to have to decide once and for all whether we are going to be a Christian. Are we really going to sell out and go all the way with God, or are we going to go after the sinful world? There comes a time when we must settle it in our own hearts and minds.

In reading the account of Moses, we find he was born in a time when the Egyptian Pharaoh had decided all Hebrew male babies were to be killed. The children of Israel were outnumbering the Egyptians; this caused great fear to come upon Pharaoh. He believed the Egyptians would soon become overwhelmed and the slaves (the Hebrews) would become the captors. This led to why Moses was hidden in the little ark and placed by the bulrushes.

Consider Moses' parents. Moses was able to become the man he did because of his beginning. When it comes time to find a companion, it would be good to consider this. Moses' father (Am-

ram) took a wife of the same tribe (the tribe of Levi). She had the same kind of background and was raised with the same principles Amram had. This provided a good opportunity for Moses to have the best start in life.

It is essential for Christians to understand this principle when looking for a companion. Dear one, it is so important that you marry in the Lord! If you want a godly home, you must marry somebody who believes as you believe, someone who is really serious about the things of God.

That goes beyond just finding a companion who carries a Bible and attends the Church of God. You need to marry someone who is very serious in his or her service to God. That is essential! If you marry and bring children into the world, God is going to hold you responsible for how you raise those children.

There is only one way to do right, and that is to get started right. If you do not get started right, you are going to mess up

your entire life. It will bring heartache and trouble all the days of your life. You need to get it settled in your heart and mind to start right.

Starting right and raising your children right does not guarantee they will serve the Lord. Certainly, many Church of God parents have unsaved children, but when they have raised the children right, they have given the children a good beginning. Then, it is the children's responsibility, and God will hold them responsible for their upbringing.

A Lesson of Faith

In the account of Moses, we see a brave and courageous mother and father. Moses was hidden by faith (Hebrews 11:23), and when his mother could no longer hide him, she made an ark, "daubed it with slime and with pitch," and put the baby inside. Then she "laid it in the flags by the river's brink."

Consider the faith of Moses' mother. After setting Moses afloat in that ark, she no longer had any control over his future. Once she set him adrift, all she could do then was pray that somehow things would work out. Parents, it is much the same today. We bring our children into the world and do our best to teach them by word and example. We raise them in the truth and take them to church, but then those children must be set afloat.

Once they become adults and are set adrift, then we, as parents, have little to no control over their fate. Like Moses' mother, we must pray and leave them in God's hands. I trust these thoughts will give hope to parents whose children have gone astray from the Lord and hope to those children who have gone astray.

How important it is to live our lives in accordance with

God's plan! There is no better time to start than in our youth! Start with God and then build on that—day by day, step by step.

Exodus 2:5-9 reads: "And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?"

"And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it."

God was moving on the scene. Although the mother of Moses had reached the limit of her initial ability to take care of Moses, God provided a way. God turned the whole thing around and put Moses back into her control. There is a lesson of real faith in this passage. If we will trust God, even when we do not know how it is going to work out, God has a way of stepping into the most unbelievable, difficult situations, turning them around, and working them for our good!

Possibly, Moses' mother had given up hope. She probably thought she would never see her baby boy again. However, God moved, turned the situation around, and sent the baby right back home to be with his mother. Also, she received royal wages for raising her own child. She was paid out of Pharaoh's own money to nurse and raise her own child.

We can see that God, in His

divine providence and wisdom, has a way of turning the most terrible, difficult situations into a real blessing if we will learn the lesson of just trusting Him. When we let Him have His way, God will work some of these things out for us.

God Prepared Moses

In Exodus 2:10, we read, "And the child grew." It is believed Moses was between the ages of three and five years old when he was brought to Pharaoh's daughter. The rest of verse 10 says: "And he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water." Moses was adopted into the Pharaoh's family. Now remember, Pharaoh's intention was completely to wipe out the Hebrew male baby population. In doing so, he hoped to control the children of Israel for many years to come.

Yet, Moses was placed right in Pharaoh's own palace. God moved Moses into the enemy's camp where Moses could receive the best education and training. God was preparing Moses for a future occupation of leading the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage.

Now, leading Israel out of Egypt was quite an undertaking! It is thought that the number of Israelites coming out of Egypt was at least one million men. Counting women and children, it could have been as many as two million people! Can you imagine leading that many people, feeding them, and setting up camp, with all the sanitation problems?

God knew Moses needed to have a good education, and Egypt was one of the best-educated nations at that time. It was a very well-advanced and profitable nation. The Egyptian people had a high understanding of all these things. Thus, God sent Moses there for learning.

I am sure Moses did not understand all that learning. He was being trained in all the developments of government and how to establish things. God had a future in store for Moses, a future Moses could not see.

In this message, I want to get across the thought that God has a future in store for you, dear one, a future you might not see at all right now. You do not know what the rest of your life holds. It is impossible for us to know these things. Thus, it is essential that we have a solid beginning with God and that we sell out, saying, "Lord, I'm going with You all the way."

Hebrews 11:23-28 reads: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

"By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them."

Instilling Godly Principles

How did Moses know anything about the children of Israel? How did he know there was a "recompense of the reward," or a payoff, involved in serving God? Where did these thoughts come from? Remember, he was very young when Pharaoh's daughter

took him in to raise. His mother only had him for a few years, and then she had to turn him over to Pharaoh's daughter. But this was years and years later.

Moses was nearly forty years old, and he began to think, "These are my people out here." Where did those thoughts come from? Perhaps before that, those thoughts never bothered him. During all the years he lived as royalty in Pharaoh's palace, enjoying life to the fullest, we have no record of him ever being bothered that he was the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

However, Moses' mother had laid the groundwork during the early years of his life. She evi-



Moses' mother laid the groundwork during the early years of his life.

dently spent quite a bit of time teaching Moses what was right. I can imagine that as she nursed her little baby, she might have sung to him some of the old songs of the children of Israel. No doubt, she told him over and over about the Hebrew God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. She must have told him stories of how they came to know God and how the God of these men worked with them and did many miraculous things.

I can imagine Moses' mother tried to squeeze into his mind and heart every ounce of understanding and truth she could. Although that little baby probably did not fully understand what she was talking about, she must have kept teaching and teaching him. Somewhere in those short years, seeds were planted that Moses could never get away

from.

Parents, we need to understand more than ever, it is essential to realize the responsibility of teaching, training, guiding, and directing that little child. Begin the teaching process from the time he is born.

It is evident Moses was taught godly principles. We often hear it said, "The Bible does not say it word for word, but the *principle* is there." What does that mean? In the Bible, many things are not plainly spelled out, but the principle is there. The dictionary meaning of the word *principle* refers to the overriding right of a situation, not only what is personally an advantage to you, but what is really right in any situation. That is what becomes the principle. We must ask ourselves, What is right? It is not what is best for me, not what will suit me, but what is the right thing to do.

Moses was faced with a principle. He was raised by Pharaoh's daughter. For thirty-five years, all his upkeep was provided by Pharaoh and his adopted mother. He owed them a tremendous debt! In fact, Pharaoh's daughter might have been the only mother he really remembered.

Moses' schooling was the highest. Commentaries say he was trained in what we call today business administration, in government, how to set up governments and controls, sanitation problems, management, natural resources, and engineering. Egypt was well skilled in all these areas. They were one of the first nations ever to have plumbing and running sanitary controls. This was centuries and centuries ago.

It might have seemed as though Moses was being prepared to be a leader of the Egyptians, but God was making other plans. Historians tell us Pharaoh's daughter was an only child,

and she herself was barren. Moses was the most likely person to succeed Pharaoh on the throne. Moses, therefore, was very much in favor of being the next Pharaoh.

In Acts, Chapter 7, Stephen gave a bit of history, bringing into light some other things about Moses. Verses 22-23 read: "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel."

That is an astounding happening! For all those years, Moses had no connection with the children of Israel, had no business with them, as far as we have a record of. Perhaps he had never even considered them. Then, something began stirring in his heart. Stephen said, when Moses was forty years old, "It came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel." Where did those thoughts come from? God had to have something to work with that was already there. God had to have a seed planted somewhere to work as a springboard to lead into other things.

So we go back and thank Moses' mother, who instilled in him from his birth as an Israelite his responsibility to the God of Israel. Moses, thankfully, received two types of education. First, he received the education from his mother. She did not have much time, but she was successful. In the limited time she had, she instilled in Moses a principle of his responsibility to the God of Heaven.

Parents, there is nothing you can instill in your children that is more important than that. You have a tremendous responsibility to the God of Heaven. Every one of us will answer to Him whether we like the thought of it or not. We are all going to give a report to God someday.

The Crossroads of Life

Moses' second education was that of the secular world, training in the palace of Pharaoh. Moses had the highest education in the then-known world. He was among the most highly educated people in existence. He was skilled in all the knowledge that Pharaoh could give. All the wisdom of Egypt had been centered on Moses.

Moses' training with his mother was for only a few years of his early life, and the rest was as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Then, the time came when Moses had to make a decision. He was forty years old when something began stirring in his heart. A decision had to be made. I want you to see which training prevailed.

What was the outcome of thirty-five or so years of highly geared and pressurized secular education versus a few years from an infant to when he was weaned? Moses held the key. He alone had to make a decision. He alone was placed at the crossroads of life. He stood there without his mother and without Pharaoh's daughter. He had to make a choice.

Remember, the meaning of *principle* is doing what is really right—not what is best for you personally, but what is really right. This is what we must learn to follow.

Moses could not walk on both sides of the street, so to speak. (And we cannot walk on both sides of the street yet today.) If Moses had allowed himself to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, he would have alienated himself forever from the real principle that was prevailing, stirring, and working in his soul.

After God dealt with him, consider the thoughts that must have come to Moses. If I were in Moses' position, I would have felt I owed a debt to my adopted mother. After all, she rescued me

from the bulrushes, fed me, clothed me, and took care of me for thirty-five years. She was the only real mother I would have ever known.

I would have felt like I owed a debt to Pharaoh. "After all, look at what he did for me. He educated me. I have prospered in wealth, fame, and honor. I am in the position of being the next ruler." Moses could have looked at it this way: "Maybe God has placed me here to be the next Pharaoh. When I finally get that position, then I can help the children of Israel. I will be king, and I can do a lot of good for my brethren."

What is really right? You cannot play both sides of the coin. You cannot go back and forth, to the world and to God, to being saved and being in sin, being a Christian and being lost, doing what is right and doing what is wrong.

You must make a choice. I had an experience like this when I was fifteen-and-a-half years old. I came to a place where I knew in my own soul that it was a crossroads.

I was being pulled to the world, and I had to settle that. I was so tired of being up and down in my experience. I was so sick of myself, of the experience I had. It would have been very easy for me to have been swept right out into the world. There was one side of me that wanted that, but there was another side wanting the right way.

I remember one day in January 1963. I looked at myself in the mirror. I was so disgusted with myself, and this was my own testimony. I said to myself: "You are my own biggest problem. You are the reason I cannot live this experience." It was just like a lightbulb turned on, and I surrendered to God.

From that day to this, the decision has been settled. The world never had that strong pull on me

once I came to that crossroad and made the right decision. Yes, temptations have come, but I am talking about the major point in my life when I made the decision to go with God and let Him have His way.

Choosing the Right Way

The question is, What is really right? When it has all boiled down and all the other things are cut away, is God's way really the right way? If we are honest, from the depths of our hearts, we would say, "Yes, God's way really is the right way."

Dear one, if you know that, follow that principle. Build on that principle. Do not make an easy decision with no backbone. When you know what is really right to do—do it. Stand by it.

Hebrews 11:24 tells us, "Moses ... refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." When the question was put to him, he did not say: "Well, maybe," or "I'd rather not," or "Well, let's see." If somebody asks you to do something and you answer it in that way, they are going to put more pressure on you because they know you are not really sure. However, if somebody says to you, "Let's do this," and you say: "Absolutely not! I refuse to do that!" they will not bother you very much. They can tell you have your mind made up.

When Moses finally came to grips with the thing as it really was, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. We need to realize that in answering in this manner, Moses had to refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, lest he undervalue the honor of being a son of Abraham. He could not be a son of Abraham and be a son of Pharaoh's daughter at the same time.

You cannot be a son of God and a son of the devil (or of the world) at the same time. We have to come to grips with the prevail-

ing question. It is a decision we each must face. Are we going to follow what we know is absolutely right or are we going to follow what is easy?

Moses actually chose suffering over ease. He gave up living in the palace to eventually live in the desert. He gave up a life of fame and honor to become a shepherd. Would you do that? The principles of God's Word must prevail in all areas of your life. This is essential!

God needed an educated man to lead the children of Israel. That is one reason He placed Moses where He did and had Moses go through all of that so Moses had the necessary understanding of how to take care of the thousands of literal cares that came up with leading two million people out of Egypt.

At the same time, Moses proved his willingness to give it all up. The Apostle Paul wrote the same thing in Philippians 3:8, saying he counted "all [my gain] ... but dung, that I may win Christ." We must come to the same place in our lives where we count it all but loss.

When we live for God, we are going to suffer some things, but we must choose suffering rather than "the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25). God's way must be seen as far more valuable than anything sin can offer.

In his hour of decision, Moses "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter ... Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Hebrews 11:24, 26).

We all will come to the hour of decision. When you come to the crossroads, which way will you take?

[Camp Meeting Report cont. from pg. 2]

backsliding, being called to the mission field, and "with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:27). A message on contentment ended 2025 with these encouraging words, "No matter what the new year holds, we can be content."

As the new year is underway, assuredly God has much He desires to accomplish in the kingdom. The question is, will we make ourselves available? In 1925, Charles W. Naylor composed the song "Wholehearted Service." A strong message lies within these words, penned over one hundred years ago. As you consider these words, can you say, "Lord, I will put my whole heart in Your service"?

I've turned from the world and its follies.

*Forever forsaken all sin;
I've given myself unto Jesus
To ever and only serve Him.*

*I'll put my whole heart in His service,
And do all He asketh of me;
I mean to live holy and blameless—
A Christian indeed will I be.*

*I will not be languid or careless,
Or formal, or cold, or untrue;
But, striving with earnest endeavor,
The will of my Lord I will do.*

*Since Jesus gave all to redeem me,
Since only thro' mercy I live,
It now is my joy and my purpose
A wholehearted service to give.*

*O, help me, dear Lord, to be ready
The task that Thou givest to do,
Not shrinking from labor or duty,
Devoted and faithful and true.*

Sister Gerri Lynn Bremer

Brother Richard Talbot went to be with the Lord on December 10, 2021.

Sister Gerri Lynn Bremer attends the Church of God in Newark, OH.



This message stems from many stories and experiences from my own life, and I want to relate them to a spiritual flowerbed. So, to set the stage, I want to say how much I despise doing any flowerbed work. It all stems from a crisp, one-hundred-degree day in July on my tenth birthday, when my parents decided it would be a good day to weed and mulch the flowerbed. It was probably one of the worst birthdays I ever had. I have hated flowerbed work ever since.

Then, on an annual church work day, a group of us was out slinging mulch and pulling weeds when the thought came to me, "One flowerbed can get away from you, and it all stems from one weed turning into two, three, four, and more weeds." I thought this is a lot like your soul, so I am going to use "weeds" and "sin" interchangeably. These weeds or sins can pop up. It starts as one. It has been said that one white lie leads to another lie. So, when you think of it like that, you do not want your spiritual flowerbed to get out of control and away from you.

These are the thoughts the Lord laid on my heart. They have come to me over the last few years at random times. My goal is to make this message relatable and understandable. I have seven analogies for comparing a real-life flowerbed to your spiritual heart or spiritual flowerbed.

(1) Curb appeal. Picture your-

self pulling up to a really nice house. The first thing that may jump out at you is the landscaping and how nice the house looks on the outside. As Christians, if our spiritual flowerbeds are weeded and the flowers are blooming, everything looks really nice. We are taught to make the way attractive. When you have a good attitude, love, compassion, and the fruits of the Spirit working in your life, they will shine through you. That is a good way to make the way more attractive, which is comparable to your curb appeal.

(2) Watering your flowers. This thought came to me from an experience at our house. We upgraded our window boxes from fake flowers to real ones, and keeping them alive was quite a struggle. Many times, someone would say, "The flowers need to be watered," but it would get pushed off. The next thing you know, the flowers were not watered. We ended up finding that a sprinkler system worked best for us. So, every day at a certain time for a certain amount of time, the flowers get watered. It is similar to reading your Bible, praying, attending church, and going to youth services. Basically, anytime the church doors are open, you should be there. You are constantly watering your spiritual flowers by listening to messages, reading the Bible, and praying. It points back to the first analogy—it will make your flowers

shine and help you grow as a Christian.

(3) Weeding your flowerbed. It is necessary to reemphasize the importance of keeping those weeds of sin or little things that can become big things out of your flowerbed. If you have pulled weeds, you know you cannot just pull them from the stem and call it a day. You have to make sure you get down to the root. If you have a temptation like a weed, you cannot just pull it out without getting to the root of what is causing it. It is important that you get down in there and remove whatever is causing that temptation, so you do not have to deal with that problem anymore.

(4) Using your garden tools. When you are working in a flowerbed, you need tools to do a thorough job and make the work easier. When I was thinking about these tools, it occurred to me: we have a pastor, ministers, youth leaders, and spiritual pillars in the church. They are tools you can access when weeds or problems come up in your life. You can go to them for prayer, and they can counsel with you to help you get things cleared up and taken out of your life. You can learn from them by being in the services and hearing the messages they bring. You can take things from them that will help you get different weeds out of your life.

Proverbs 11:14 says, "Where

no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." I use a parallel Bible with the *King James Version* on one side and the *Amplified Bible* on the other. The *Amplified Bible* says, "Where there is no [wise, intelligent] guidance, the people fall [and go off course like a ship without a helm], But in the abundance of [wise and godly] counselors there is victory."

(5) Laying down a black tarp or liner to prevent weeds from growing. At our house, we laid down a black liner after weeding the flowerbed to keep the weeds from coming back. The flowerbed was looking good. One day, about a week after we laid the tarp, I was walking through our house when I looked out and saw a weed a foot tall in the flowerbed. I went out and reached down to grab the weed, and the whole thing pulled out easily. It turns out the weed had actually grown on top of that black tarp, so the root was not underground but on top of the tarp.

If you are living right and doing what you know to do for the Lord, the devil will still try to get you. He is after you and may cause something to grow in your life, but you can easily snatch it out just like I did with that one weed in our flowerbed. James 4:7 says: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." That does not mean the devil is done with you. The devil will always be after you, but the closer you are to God, the more durable your flowerbed will be.

Ephesians 6:10-18 reads: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wicked-

ness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

I compare the black liner to the armor of God. It can prevent weeds from getting down in your heart and staying there. It is important to stay on top of it, too. You cannot just say, "Oh, I am saved," and just go on your way. You will always need to measure up. If God shows you something you need to step up in, then it is very important you take that step up where God wants you to.

(6) Laying down mulch on your flowerbed. This point is more serious, and unfortunately, it is more true than many people want to admit. When different weeds, or sins, pop up in an individual's life, instead of wanting to get the weeds out and clean up their life, they just throw a fresh coat of mulch over them.

An elderly neighbor across the street asked me about doing his yard work one summer when I was in high school. So, I started working for him. One day I asked him, "What is the plan for today?"

He said, "I want you to weed this section of the flowerbed." It was completely overtaken with weeds. After a couple of hours, it looked like I had not put a dent in it. I walked over to him and said: "I am done for the day. I

cannot get this. We will have to figure this out the next time."

He said, "That is fine." So, the next week I went back to do the work, and there were a couple of bags of mulch there. I wondered what they were for, so I asked him, "What is the plan for today?"

He said, "Well, since we really cannot get those weeds out, we are just going to throw a fresh coat of mulch over them so you cannot see them." About a month later, the weeds were popping right back up to the top.

It reminds me of people who are not living right. They want to do what they want to do and put a fresh coat of mulch over it. It looks good on the outside, and nobody can see what is truly going on with them, but they know, and most importantly, God knows. James 2:10 says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." That emphasizes the point of pulling out the weed by the root. Some people like having the temptation; they want to pull it out sometimes, but the root is still down there, causing the problem.

The simplicity of the verse in Ecclesiastes 11:3 amazes me. It says, "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there shall it be."

While studying this Scripture text, I read a commentary by John Gill. He said: "When a man is cut off by death, as he was then, so he remains; if a gracious and good man, and has done good, he is like a tree that falls to the south, he enters into the Paradise of God, the joys of Heaven; and if not a good man, and has not done good, he is like a tree that falls to the north, he goes into a state of darkness, misery, and distress." If you have one sin, you are falling the wrong way.

So, it is something you should consider if you are just throwing on a fresh coat of mulch instead of really addressing the problem in your life.

(7) Calling in the experts. We lived in our house for a little over ten years, and there was one flowerbed we attempted to weed and mulch every year. Eventually, my parents called in the pros because it did not look good. It was getting a little worn out. The experts came in with a backhoe, tore out the whole flowerbed so there were no weeds to worry about, and put in a brand-new flowerbed.

It reminds me of someone who lets their spiritual flowerbed go. They let sin into their lives, and it has taken over. Eventually, they become sick of the way their flowerbed looks, so they call the Pro—Jesus. If you are sick of sin, let Jesus come in and completely redo your spiritual flowerbed for you. First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Jesus can completely clean out your life and heart and plant beautiful spiritual flowers again. As I said in the beginning, you can show love, compassion, and the other fruits of the Spirit that are important to being a good Christian.

Two well-known stories stuck out to me while I was meditating on this message. One is the story of the Prodigal Son found in Luke 15:11-27. "And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

"And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

"And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

"Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound." That is a good comparison to when our lives got out of hand and our Father (we are like the son and God is the Father) welcomed us back with loving arms outstretched.

Another example that came to mind was the story of King David in 2 Samuel 11:1-3. "And it came to pass, after the year was

expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

"And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" David ended up committing adultery with the woman, and then he plotted to have her husband killed so that he could be with her. In 2 Samuel 12:13, the Lord sent the Prophet Nathan to David. "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." David sincerely confessed his sin and was cleansed by the Lord.

If you come to Jesus with an honest heart, are truly sorry for the sin in your life, and know you are not living right, the Lord will accept you again. It will all come back together when you call on the Lord to come into your heart. He will clean out your spiritual flowerbed and make your life new. He will forgive you of your sins and give you a nice, fresh flowerbed and a nice, clean heart, but only if you are willing to give up and allow Him to have full control of your life.

You need to maintain your flowerbed. Even though you have done all these things to make your flowerbed nice, not everything will come up roses. You will still have things come up, and you will still need to maintain your salvation. You may have heard many messages about maintaining your salvation

and the things you must do to keep it. I want to leave you with something to think about. At our house, we have a rule: when you walk in the front door, look over, and see a weed in the flowerbed, you reach over and pluck it out.

If you let one weed go, then the second weed pops up, and you may think, "There is one already there, might as well wait until there are two." The next thing you know, you are weeding the flowerbed with a billion weeds in there. You can apply this to your spiritual flowerbed. When something pops up, rather

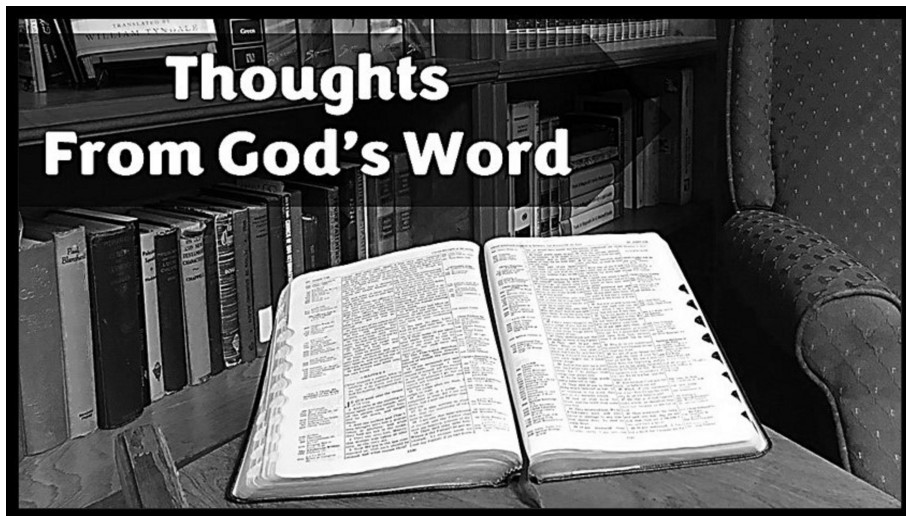
than neglect it and say, "Oh, I can get that weed when the second or third one pops up," take care of it now. If not, those weeds will become rooted in your flowerbed and lead to more weeds. It can lead to a deep root that will eventually be a battle to clear from your life. If you are unwilling to address the problem when it is small, the battle may get so rough that you may be tempted to give up.

I hope this message has been a challenge for you. It was for me as I studied for it. Take a look at yourself and at your spiritual

flowerbed. If there is something in there that should not be, or if your flowerbed has gotten completely out of control, the Lord is always willing to work through your problems with you. He can help you have a clean, nice, fresh flowerbed. For the saved ones, if something has popped up, it is important to get that taken care of before it gets out of control.

Brother Nolan McClain

Brother Nolan McClain attends the Church of God in Newark, OH.



And great was the fall of it.

Matthew 7:27

An old church building at the corner of a busy intersection in our town was recently demolished. Built over one hundred years ago, the edifice had many beautiful characteristics, including stained-glass windows and a bell weighing over eight hundred pounds. The large structure held an imposing presence and boasted a brawny exterior. However, inside was a deteriorating condi-

tion with the presence of asbestos. The cost of restoration was considered too great, and the building was destined for demolition.

For a short period (maybe a couple of weeks at the most), trackhoes, bulldozers, and other equipment laid waste to the structure. An empty green space now occupies the space that once held a grand chapel.

I cannot speak much about the original construction of the building, but I can assume it took years of planning and construc-

tion, as well as considerable effort to build. In what was, comparatively, a moment in time, the structure was removed, and no trace of its existence is evident.

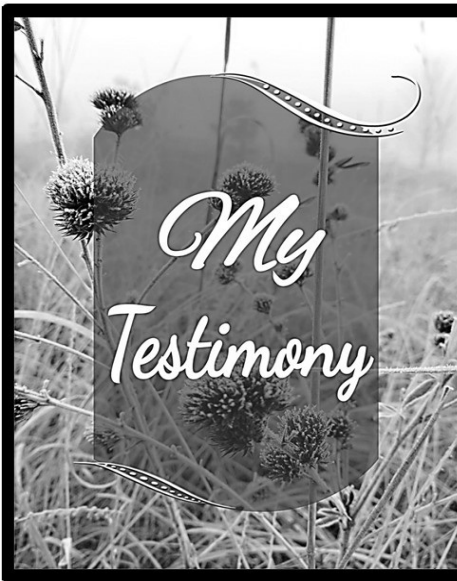
What a solemn illustration! How carefully we need to guard our hearts! The Bible warns, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).

A man or woman may strive their whole life to establish a reputable name. They may have earned the respect of their peers and be considered persons of utmost integrity. Yet in a moment's time, all that can change through the destructive work of sin.

Benjamin Franklin is quoted as saying, "It takes many good deeds to build a good reputation, and only one bad one to lose it." One evil work or ill-judged deed and the remains of one's character can lie in a ruinous heap.

Brother T. J. Foster

Brother T. J. Foster attends the Church of God in Newark, OH.



God Was Good to Me

Brother Bill Miller

I was born in 1930 during the Great Depression and the smallpox epidemic. My mother had smallpox while she carried me, and I was born with smallpox. Fortunately, I was so little that it never scarred me. A lot of people died of smallpox.

The Great Depression was really something. I do not know what people would do today if we would have another Depression as we did back then. We had a garden and were able to eat from the garden and do other things. We also raised chickens. The government, led by President Franklin Roosevelt, started the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during that time. They provided us with dinner through food stamps. They also had what were called commodities, items such as canned pork. Sometimes they would give you some beans, but that was about it.

During the Second World War, all our able-bodied men were called to fight for our country. Back then, meat was rationed, among other things, including gasoline. You just could not buy many things. There were shortages of coffee, which was often substituted with a synthetic version that was referred to as coffee, but it was nasty.

But God was so good to me. I went to Sunday school with my sister, who was much older than me.

She was more than twenty years older than me. I was born on June 17, and my sister's son was born June 26. He died, and she kind of took me under her wing and babied me a bit. I was the seventh of eight children; so my mother was glad to have the help.

As I grew older, I started walking to Sunday school with a bunch of boys whom we called bus brothers. While at church, I heard something that stirred me. I heard a couple of older sisters pray, and they prayed! I mean, the prayer bells of Heaven rang. It always inspired me, and I wanted to be like that.

In 1947, we had a revival meeting with Brother Barry from Bridgeport, Ohio. My two sisters, my mother, and I went to the services. Brother Alan Wilson, who was the pastor, came down and spoke with my sister, who was backslidden at the time, and she went to the altar. My other sister and my mother went to the altar. So, I stood there and said to myself, "Well, I'd better go," so I went. I was looking for some sort of feeling, but I had to learn that it was by faith. Thank God, He has been with me down through the years.

When I was a young person, Brother Homer Ritchie was the young people's leader. Sister Millie (Prior) Stegmeier's mother and dad were our Sunday school teachers.

We did not have fast-food restaurants back then, so we went down to Ritchie's Restaurant to meet there. I was interested in a little young lady. So, I called her and wanted to meet her. She gave me a story, and I thought she was just putting me off. I left thinking, "She will probably go to the restaurant." So, I went down to Ritchie's Restaurant.

While I was there, her sister came in. She was looking for her, too, because evidently, she had bought a new coat, and her sister had taken it and was wearing it. So we sat and talked. I walked her home. We walked for sixty-four years. We had a good marriage, and I am thankful for that. She has passed on. One of the biggest jobs I have ever had was being my wife's caretaker. She would have done the same thing for me.

So, God has been good to me. Colossians 3:23 states, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." That is what I want to remind you of. God saved me and gave me two wonderful boys. I am thankful for that.

We are all out on life's sea, and somebody has to guide your vessel. The Bible says, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). So, who is guiding you? One song says:

My bark has met tempestuous winds while sailing on life's sea. But I'll not fear the stormy gale with Christ to pilot me.

So let the wildest billows roll, the clouds the stars conceal. I know that I shall reach my goal when He is at the wheel.

For I had sinned against His love. But now the way is plain. His chart and course, my path makes clear since I've been born again.

So let the wildest billows roll, the clouds the stars conceal. I know that I shall reach my goal when He is at the wheel.

**Brother Bill Miller attends
the Church of God in Newark, OH.**

Hold Fast



Brother Alan Vossler

Hebrews 10:19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

If you read the beginning of Hebrews, Chapter 10, you will find the writer of Hebrews compared our New Testament experience with the Old Testament Law. The Hebrew writer dealt with the inferiority (and I use that word respectfully) of the old covenant, particularly the Old Testament sacrifices, because they could not do for mankind what the blood of Jesus Christ did. The salvation experience came through the blood of Jesus Christ after He died on the Cross. The Hebrew writer said "the law" was "a shadow of good things to come" (Hebrews 10:1).

Verse 4 says, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." Verse 8 tells us God had no "pleasure" in such things. They had to be implemented to teach us something. Galatians 3:24 says, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." I am thankful for "a new and living way." It is a blessed way we have

through our Savior, Jesus Christ, and God takes pleasure in it.

"A New and Living Way"

One satisfaction in living a Christian life is knowing it pleases God. It is a false concept that our lives are always missing the mark and never able to satisfy God. We can have an experience with Jesus Christ in which God takes pleasure. Thank God for this "new and living way."

Beware of Babylonian ways. It is ironic to me how people can read the same Bible I read yet come to such erroneous conclusions. Some believe in the restoring of a future kingdom in Jerusalem and of animal sacrifices. Animal sacrifices were not glorious; they were inferior. Isaiah 53:10 says, "It pleased the LORD to bruise him," speaking of Jesus Christ. Why would anyone desire to restore "a shadow of good things"? I do not want the shadow; I want Christ!

Babylonian ways are dangerous, sacrilegious, and blasphemous. Babylon propagates error as the truth. We have something much better. Thank God for Jesus Christ and the truth. I was an ignorant farm boy who raised cattle, ground grain, and lived a simple life. I have no higher education than graduation from high school. Thank God, He showed me the truth and brought me into the body of Christ, which is the Church of the Living God. If I can enter in, anybody can enter in. This is not "rocket science." If you exercise faith in what God has said and live it, you can be saved.

Hebrews 10:19 says, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." This Scripture is clearly an allusion to the high priestly office and activities associated with the Holy of Holies. As a simple farm boy, God made me into a priest, and you can be one too. The gate is not barred. All you need to do is accept what Jesus has done for you and repent of your sins. It really is that simple. Some want to make it harder than it is. You can say: "God, I am sorry I sinned against You. I am done with the sin business, and I want to live for You," and God will make a way for you. He will let you into the Holy of Holies (His presence).

The high priest went into the Holy of Holies once every year. There was a certain aspect of fear and trembling when the high priest went in. He had to make sure everything was done right. We can boldly, or with confidence, go before God because of what Jesus did for us. We can boldly bring all our petitions, needs, and requests to God. It is "a new and living way."

The Church of God must guard against dead religion. When the sect of the Pharisees was formed shortly after the return from the Babylonian captivity, they were not the same group

that Jesus dealt with. When they were formed, they were the greatest, most spiritual, sensible, and pious men in the country. However, they allowed themselves to degenerate into a self-centered sect that was way off course. We must be careful about falling into religious forms. By the time Jesus came, most of the Pharisees were apostates. The Anderson Movement, at one time, was poised to win the world. In our community, it was a powerhouse during my father's early years. Now it is gone. All that exists is a cemetery. It is truly sad.

Guarding Against Dead Religion

There are several characteristics of a dead, apostate religion. I want to give you three. (1) Doctrine without holy living, or faith without works. There is more to living for God than doctrine alone. We need to live holy. James 2:17 states, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Faith without works is dead. We must guard against faith becoming merely intellectual. Someone said, "The difference between Heaven and hell is eighteen inches—the distance between your head and your heart."

There is nothing wrong with education; education is a good thing. My father only had a third-grade education. He had obvious deficiencies because of his lack of education. He lacked a great vocabulary and struggled to sign his name. With only a grade-three education, some said he would not go very far, and some made fun of him. When it came to his ability, they stopped laughing. My dad was innovative. He was one of the first in the community to use commercial fertilizer and to own a tractor. He could make things go, and his life reflected that.

My dad always pushed for us to get an education. Education is not the problem. Putting the education into action is. A PhD without ability is useless. Whether it is secular or Christian, without the ability to put education into action, it is useless. God gives the ability.

(2) Pride is a characteristic of a dead religion. Luke 18:10-14 reads: "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 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 rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

The Pharisee had a list of things *he* did and who *he* was, but said nothing of what God did. It is not what I have done or what I can do. When God found me, my mind was so bogged down with alcohol I could barely form an intelligent sentence. I got on my face and begged God to give me back my mind. If anything intelligent comes out of my mouth, I know the source is God.

It is good to remember and look back to where we came from, how we got here, and Who brought us here. It is good to look back at what God has done. It keeps us from pride. You cannot look back on a sinful life without it humbling you. The Bible says God resists the proud (James 4:6). God opposes the proud. The proud man is at the center of *his* universe, and there is no room for God. If you raise a

child to be the center of their universe, you will leave no room for God in his life. That is extremely dangerous, and we need to guard against it.

(3) A dead religion cares nothing about the needs, concerns, and suffering of others. Nothing is merciless without mercy. Luke 10:30-36 states: "And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?"

"Faith Without Wavering"

We could all make excuses. We are good at justifying ourselves. Our text in Hebrews 10:23 says, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." I have seen things transpire in my Christian experience that were troubling and heart-rending. I have watched Church of God people scatter in every direction possible. It is sad and puzzling to me. When people

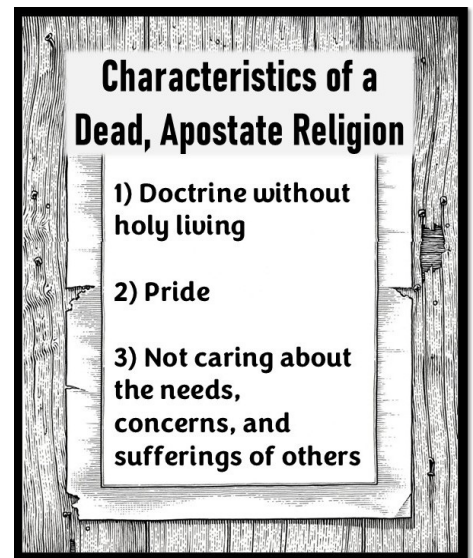
who used to worship together with us leave and worship somewhere else, one of us is wrong. We all say we love Jesus Christ and have the truth, but we cannot both be right.

It is troubling to me when people walk away from the truth, buying into false religion and substandard living. Babylon's teachings are inferior to the truths of God's Word. Sometimes, we fail to understand the value of what we have been entrusted with. If you fail to see the value of what you have been entrusted with, you will not guard it as you ought. We need to hold fast.

Hold fast in the Greek means "to hold down, to seize." It reminds me of trucks with roll tarps. Modern trucks that haul grain have electric roll-tarp systems designed to cover the crops quickly. When I was young, we used tarps with little eyelets on them to strap them down. I was raised on a prairie with thirty to forty-mile per hour winds. Some days, it took two of us to get a tarp on a truck because the wind would tear it off before we could fasten it to the other side. Holding down the tarp is the image I have in my mind when reading this Scripture. We need to hold on to the truth, or it will take off. The winds of doctrine, time, and society will blow it out of sight and out of mind.

We need to hold fast, Church of God, to our profession. The word *profession* means "acknowledgment of our faith without wavering." I will use myself as an example. I was delivered from drinking alcohol. I have no intention of going back. Our Scripture text says, "He is faithful that promised." When we make up our minds to serve God, He will supply us with the strength to follow through.

Saturday nights were dance nights in the community where I grew up. One sister came to the



Church of God and got saved on a Sunday morning. When the next Saturday night came, she went to the dance. She had not had enough time to mature spiritually and had little understanding of the truth. God's people were praying for her. When she went to the dance, God opened her eyes to see the spirits that were there. She saw demons all around the whole building. She got up and left, and that was the last dance she attended. God will help us if we let Him.

Encouraging One Another

Hebrews 10:24 says, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." Considering one another is diametrically opposed to our culture. Our society has a false message that says, "Be true to your own self." God has called us to be concerned about others, particularly our brothers and sisters in Christ. Any agenda that comes forward and vaunts itself is not of God.

Our culture is geared to please self. It is not really hard to please self, is it? It comes naturally. In fact, we all have to fight against the desire to please self. God calls it a battle. Ephesians, Chapter 6, tells us we must fight to maintain our salvation. We

have to put forth effort. The Bible teaches us that a good soldier is unconcerned with the affairs of this life (2 Timothy 2:4). We have a good time with God's people when we come together, but serving God is a battle and not always a good time.

"Consider one another to provoke" *Provoke* means "to stir up purposely." Many things can be stirred up in the negative sense. Let us flip it over and stir things up for the positive. How can we stir things up in a positive sense? How can we find innovative ways to reach others?

Hebrews 10:25 tells us, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." It is believed that when this passage was written, public worship was exchanged for private worship because of persecution. A risk was involved in assembling together. The exact date of when Hebrews was written and the author are unknown. However, some believe it was written somewhere between A.D. 65 and 69. We know it was written before the fall of Jerusalem.

The Apostle Paul was executed about A.D. 68. The Jewish wars, or the revolt against Rome, started in A.D. 66. Jerusalem fell in A.D. 70 after a brutal siege led by Titus. The last of the Jewish rebels held out and were overthrown in A.D. 73. Some commentaries, including Adam Clarke, believe "the day approaching" was a reference to the conditions before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. So the Hebrew writer was referring to a situation that was coming and how God's people needed to be ready so they could save their lives. They had to be out of Jerusalem before A.D. 70 because not many made it out alive during the siege.

The instructions to the Christians were to exhort one another,

hold one another up, encourage one another, and be ready to get out. Their lives were in jeopardy and would have been lost if they had stayed in Jerusalem. Now is not the time to do away with prayer meetings, Sunday evening and Wednesday evening services. We face dangerous times, which is not a time to get relaxed and throw away things necessary for us to make it. We may not understand the situation because we only see the situation once it is behind us. God sees it when it is ahead of us. We need to be where God wants us to get the necessary help to make it through the danger that lies ahead.

The threat of Roman occupation and German aggression is past; so what is the danger ahead of us today? It is alarming when Marxists take over cities. Karl Marx was the father of modern-day communism. Has communism been favorable to Christianity? Someone may ask, "What does politics have to do with Christianity?" If the political arena persecutes Christians,

sooner or later, there will be a confrontation. What is the solution? Our job as Christians and the Church of God is to help people get saved. Political activism is not our primary goal. Our primary objection is to spread the Gospel so our country can be turned back to God.

We can get into a mode of thinking that if we see no threats, all will be smooth sailing and everything will be all right. I am not a doom and gloomer, but I do believe in facing reality. We face dangers from within and without. Church of God, it is time to hold fast to the faith delivered to the saints. It is time to edify and build up one another and to stand fast where God wants us to stand. We need power, direction, and love from God to spread the Gospel. I trust this message challenges you.

(Compact Disc TR-2949)

Brother Alan Vossler attends the Church of God in Newark, OH.

God's Provisions

***"Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee."
—1 Kings 19:7***

God knows what He designs us for (though we do not)—what services and trials. He will take care for us when we, for want of foresight, cannot care for ourselves. He does this so we will be furnished for services and trials with grace sufficient. He who appoints what the voyage shall be will supply the ship accordingly.

Benson Commentary

No matter what may be the test,
God will take care of you;
Lean, weary one, upon His breast,
God will take care of you.

All you may need He will provide,
God will take care of you;
Nothing you ask will be denied,
God will take care of you.

God will take care of you,
Through every day, o'er all the way;
He will take care of you,
God will take care of you.

Civilla Martin

LEARNING TO TRUST GOD



*Sister
Julia
Hobbs*

Psalm 91:2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

Psalm 37:3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

Trust is "a firm belief or confidence in someone or something." For example, if you needed a lawyer to draw up a will, you would have confidence in this lawyer to put in that will what you wanted. You trusted that when it was all done, it would be done according to what you wanted.

Another example of trusting in something is sitting in a chair without doubting whether it

would hold you. Trust is a good thing to develop. Although it is not wise to put too much trust in people. We need to learn to trust in God.

I would like to share something that helped me learn to trust in God, and trusting Him has really been a blessing. It happened when I was seven or eight years old. We bought a farm, and the people who lived there before us put all their trash down in the woods beside a big, nice tree. My dad said, "Someday we are going to clean up the woods and make it a nice place." Well, we never got around to it because there was always so much other work to do on a farm.

One day Mom, Dad, my aunt, and my uncle had to go to a meeting somewhere. Our aunt and uncle brought their kids, who were supposed to watch us.

The two oldest boys were fourteen or fifteen. They thought they were pretty well grown up. They decided to do Dad a favor by cleaning up the woods. So they got the matches, and we all went to the woods.

When the boys struck a match and lit the cardboard, dried wood, and everything else, it just went whoosh. Boy, we were scared! We all grabbed tin cans (the largest was about a gallon size), ran to the pond to get water, and poured it on this great big fire. Back and forth we ran to the pond, got water, and poured it on the great big fire. However, we got absolutely nowhere!

Finally, someone said, "We have got to pray." And we did. We were praying; we were bawling; we were crying; we were praying so loud even the cows ran. But we were so frightened! We thought for sure that the whole woods was going to burn up. I thought God would just blow it out (I was just a little kid), but He did not.

Then, it started to rain. We were drenched, soaking wet. We still could not quit praying. We just kept saying, "Oh, Lord, put the fire out," and it was already out. We did not even realize it. Soon after, Mom and Dad came home, and the boys confessed what they had done. They told Dad it had rained, and he looked around and said, "It did not rain; everything is dry."

So Dad said, "Let's go down to the woods." When everybody went back to the woods, Dad saw that everything was wet. Only the woods got wet. That was a miracle! That was God. I never forgot that. What an inspiration that was to all of us.

That night, when we had family prayer service, Dad said, "I believe you all have something you can thank God for tonight." Yes, we certainly did! But we had two things because under our breath we were thanking Him we

did not get the whipping we deserved. We surely should have had one.

So many times in my life, I have been able to call on God. He has always been there, and I am so grateful. I walked away from God at one time, but He never walked away from me. When I came back, He was right there. I am so thankful for that!

This life can be difficult. It seems like the economy is getting bad. Our country is becoming more sinful. The unrest and the bad things happening overseas are coming to America. In many places, there are racial problems. We often have economic problems. Our government has spent so much money, resulting in higher taxes.

Where are you going to go for help when life gets tough? You need God. You really need to learn to trust in God. Starting to trust Him right now is better than waiting until you really need Him. The more solid you are in your Christian experience, the more faith you will have that God will come through and get you out of hard situations.

I hate to think of the things today's youth might have to go through. My generation had a fairly easy life after the war, but before the war, it was tough. I lived through the Great Depression, and that was very tough! You may face things like that.

You may face poverty and even starvation. God sent that to the people of Israel when they disobeyed Him. He also let a smaller nation conquer them, making them the servants of that smaller nation. (No doubt, we do not know what it is like to be a servant like that.) Because of their disobedience, God sent that, but there were always a few who stayed true to God, and He always brought them back.

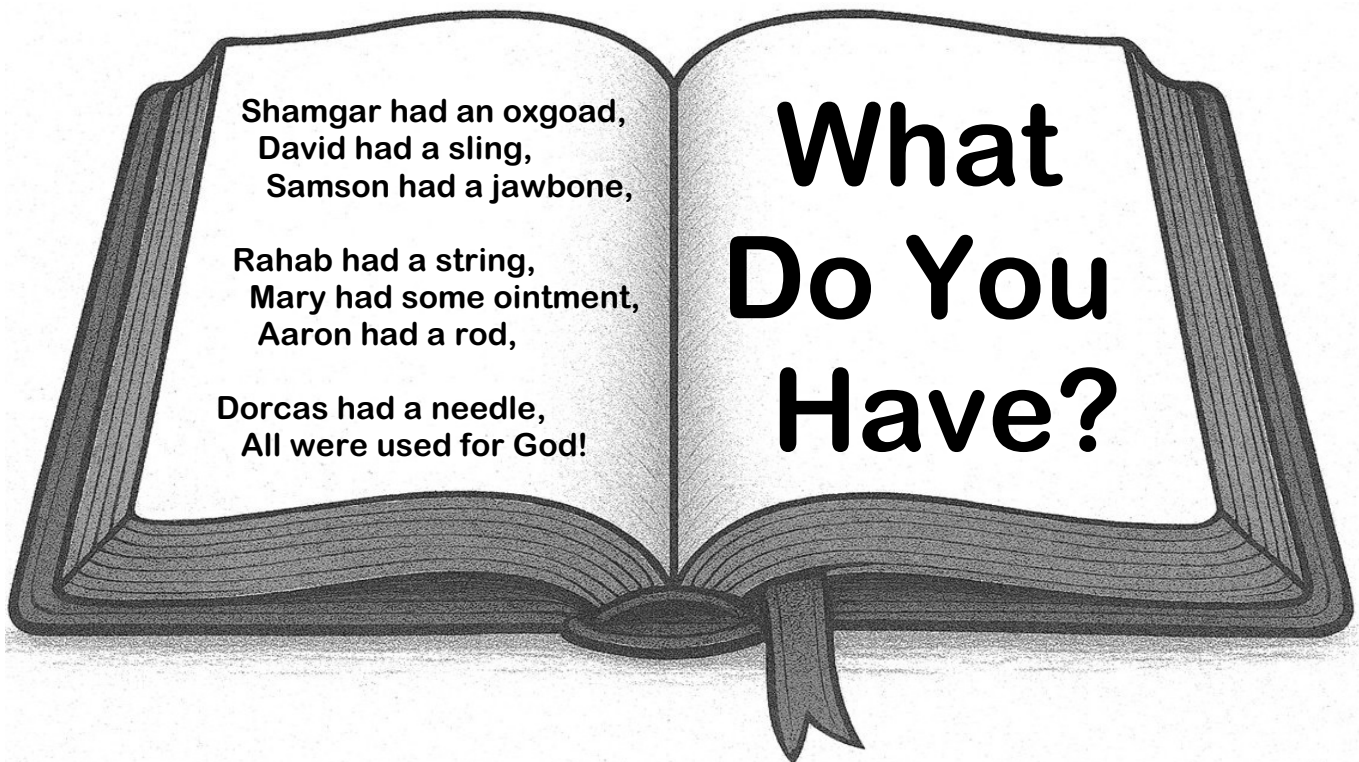
Dear one, when things get tough, stay true to God. Encourage one another. When the children of Israel came back from Babylon, there were over forty-two thousand captives who returned to Jerusalem. Although not all of them believed in God anymore, there were some God could depend on. There were Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zachariah, and many others.

When the people came back, they heard Ezra weeping, praying, and preaching. They gathered in the street; they cried and confessed. They had a service, you might say, all because he preached.

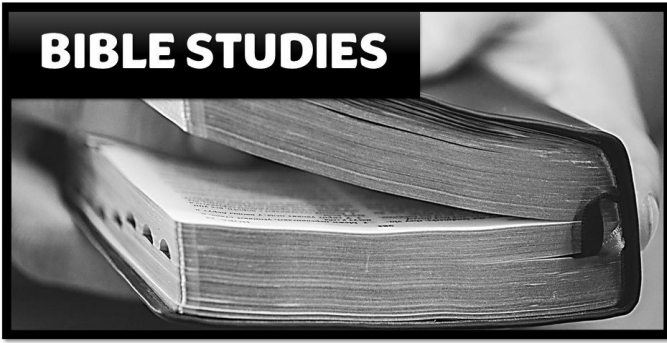
If tragedy strikes and things go bad for you, hold on to God. That is so important! Only He knows what the future holds. Encourage one another now. We need each other. Attend the worship services, bring your Bible, take notes when your pastor is preaching, and encourage others to take notes. The stronger you become spiritually, the more He will do for you. He will never let you down.

God has really helped me in so many things. He helped me move to Newark, Ohio. I came to the camp meeting in June, came back in August, and moved here in November. I thank God! He has been so good to me, and I know He will be good to you. Just do what He wants you to do, and you can make it.

Sister Julia Hobbs went to be with the Lord on August 1, 2019.



BIBLE STUDIES



FEET WASHING: AN ORDINANCE OF GOD'S HOUSE

Scriptures: John 13:1-17

In this passage, Jesus and the twelve disciples were preparing for the Feast of the Passover. Verse 2 says "supper being ended," but a better translation reads "supper being prepared or ready." When they sat down to begin the ancient Passover, Jesus rose, took a towel and a basin of water, and washed the disciples' feet.

In Luke 22:15, Jesus said, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." Here, at this last supper, was the fulfilling of the old and the introduction of the ordinances of the New Testament. This was the last Passover recognized by God—the one He had looked forward to for hundreds of years. This was where the old type would become reality and something new set forth.

This was the sequence of events that night: (1) the Passover was abolished, (2) the ordinance of feet washing was instituted, and (3) the first Lord's Supper was observed. Christ fulfilled the old and brought forth the new.

The Jewish Custom

One of the oldest theories concerning Jesus' act of washing the disciples' feet is that it was just a Jewish custom and has nothing to do with Christians today. Although there was a custom of washing dirty feet, Jesus said, "Ye are clean." They were physically clean. Also, the Jewish custom called for each to wash his own feet. If one was rich, his servants washed his feet.

According to tradition, during certain seasons, men wore sandals and loose garments and walked through the dust. It was the custom that, before entering someone's home, a man washed his own feet in a pan of water provided for that purpose. If one entered a wealthy man's home, a servant washed his feet.

John, Chapter 13, is not describing men washing their own feet nor a servant washing men's feet, but

a Master washing His servants' feet. If this was a custom, why did Peter (a staunch Jew) ask Jesus what He was doing? If it was a custom, why did Jesus say, "What I do thou knowest not now" (verse 7)? The answer to these questions is, it was NOT a Jewish custom.

A Separation From Common Practices

All three ordinances of God's house—water baptism, feet washing, and the Lord's Supper—have been instituted from elements of common practice, but when Christ spoke the word, they became more than merely common practices. They became ordinances of God's house. For example, it was common in Jesus' day (and it still is) for people who are hungry to eat supper at the table where bread and drink are served. However, when Christ put the cup and the bread in His hand and said, "This is my body ... [and] my blood: this do ye ... in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:24-25), it took on a religious connotation. When Christ separated the ordinances from the common practices, they were highly elevated to a spiritual plane.

Christ took the water and the towel and washed His disciples' feet. Then, He said to them, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14). Now, their feet had already been washed because the custom required them to be clean. Jesus said in verse 10, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all." Jesus' actions had nothing to do with washing sand and dirt off their feet. It was the institution of a new ordinance.

Also, notice that Jesus did not wash a stranger's feet, only the feet of His disciples. The custom of washing dirty feet is practiced by Christians and sinners alike, but the ordinance of feet washing is only to be observed by the saints.

Feet Washing Is a Commandment

Almost everyone will admit feet washing is in the Bible, and some will even admit they think it ought to be practiced. However, when Peter told Jesus, "Thou shalt never wash my feet," Jesus said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (John 13:8). Jesus Christ instituted, practiced, and commanded feet washing; hence, it is constituted as an ordinance of the church, and no man dare take it out.

One argument against feet washing is that John was the only Scripture writer to mention it, and he only mentioned it once. To this I ask, how many times must something be commanded before it is binding on the Christian? The command "Ye must

be born again" (John 3:7) is only found once. Something does not need to be commanded six or twelve times for it to be true. However, feet washing is mentioned more than once in the Bible.

Did the early church practice feet washing? If so, where did they get the command? The command is found in Matthew 28:19-20. After Christ rose from the dead, He met with His eleven disciples in a mountain of Galilee and said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." There is the link that brings the command in John 13:14 to you and me.

In 1 Timothy 5:10, Paul dealt with caring for the widows of the church, listing several requirements. One condition was "if she have washed the saints' feet." Paul made it plain that a widow was not worthy of support by the church unless she had done this. This was the standard held by the early church regarding this ordinance.

The Love of God Constrains Us

Even though the Word of God plainly commands feet washing, it rests entirely on love. Jesus said, "If ye love me, [you will] keep my commandments" (John 14:15). The love of God shed abroad in our hearts prompts us to wash one another's feet. Paul spoke profoundly when he wrote, "The love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Corinthians 5:14). When the love of Christ is constraining us, we will do just what Jesus said — keep His commandments.

Since observing this ordinance is entirely contingent on love, we need to have a feet-washing spirit to wash feet and be happy over it. I have known people who were afraid they would lose their salvation if they did not wash feet. So, they came with the attitude: "I guess I have to do it, if that is what the Bible says. Let us hurry and get it over with." There would be no good derived from keeping what Jesus asked us to do if we only did it under pressure. The blessing is only received when we obey through love and appreciation.

Jesus did not ask His disciples to wash His feet, and at the time, He did not ask them to wash one another's feet. He said, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter" (John 13:7). The disciples' attitudes before Calvary and the Day of Pentecost show they did not have a feet-washing spirit. They still had bickering and strife among them. One wanted to sit on the left hand and another on the right; they argued about which one was the greatest in the kingdom. Men like that could not wash feet; so Jesus did not require it.

The Holy Ghost fell on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, and then they understood! They cast aside the strife and division and became one body in Jesus Christ. Even as Christ alone could wash feet, feet washing is still only for the body of Christ (the church), men and women who have the same Spirit as He had. The mind of Christ enables us to understand what Christ did that night, why He did it, and what prompted Him to do it.

Love One Another as Christ Has Loved You

In John 13:34, Jesus said to His disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Now, if this new commandment was *not* feet washing, what was it? The commandment to love one another was from the beginning. That commandment was: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mark 12:30-31). Never before John, Chapter 13, had Jesus given a commandment for His disciples to *show* their love one to another in a specific way.

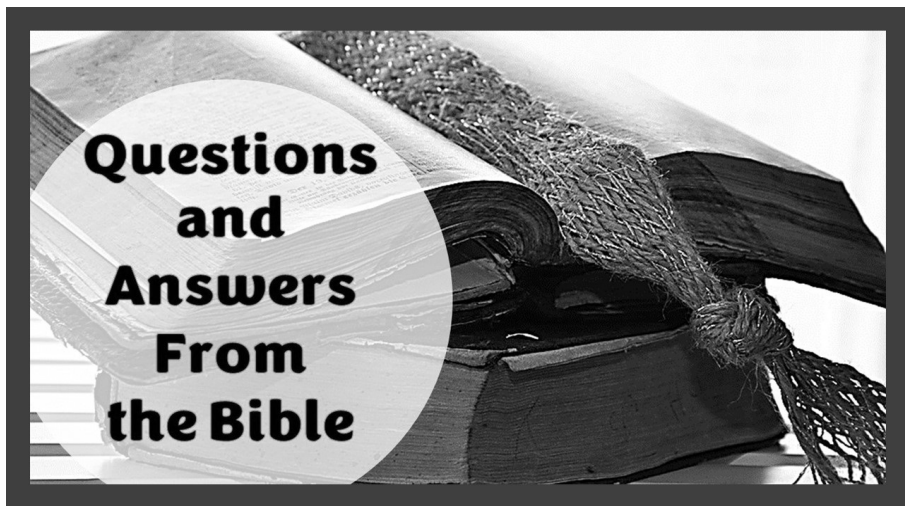
John 13:34 tells us the commandment is to "love one another; as I have loved you." Christ had not gone to the Cross at this point, so how did He *love* them? He loved them to the point of humbling Himself before them and washing their feet. He even washed Judas' feet, who would betray and sell Him in just a few hours. Love was not a new commandment, but this way of *showing* love between the disciples was new.

Jesus reached the heart of the lesson, saying: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13:14-15). There is a vast difference between *saying*, "Lord, Lord," and *letting* Him be your Lord. Too many just want to do good works, but Jesus set the example: "If you truly want to be My servants, wash one another's feet."

John 13:17 concludes, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Feet washing was given as a way for the family of God to show appreciation and love for one another. When we do it, just as Jesus said (with the same Spirit and attitude as the Master), it will be a blessing!

Brother E. A. Wilson

*Brother E. A. Wilson, the former pastor
of the Church of God at God's Acres,
went to be with the Lord on April 11, 1987.*



**Questions
and
Answers
From
the Bible**

PRIOR TO JESUS' DEATH, HOW WAS JOHN THE BAPTIZER ABLE TO PREACH REMISSION OF SINS?

Hebrews 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

We must first consider the context in which this verse is housed. Beginning in Hebrews 9:18, the sacred writer spoke of "the first testament," and he wrote, "Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood." Then, he continued to speak of the institution of the old covenant in the succeeding verses.

In verse 20, he penned, "Saying, This is the blood of the testament [quoting Exodus 24:8]." Verse 22 tells us, "Almost all things are by THE LAW purged with blood; [the semicolon indicates a continuation] and without shedding of blood is no remission." This is clearly talking about the position of "blood" under "the law."

Verse 22 alludes to the words of the Law recorded in Leviticus 17:11. Under the old covenant, there was the "shedding of blood." Hebrews 9:7 explains on that Day of Atonement, "Into the second [room of the Old Testament Tabernacle] went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood." This "blood"

came from "the sin offering" (Exodus 30:10), which required an animal's blood to be shed.

Contextually, Hebrews 9:22 is speaking of what occurred under "the law." It is not speaking of "the blood of Christ," spoken of earlier (Hebrews 9:14). Just as those under the old economy looked forward each year to the Day of Atonement, in like manner, those who embraced John's message looked forward in faith. They were instructed "that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus" (Acts 19:4).

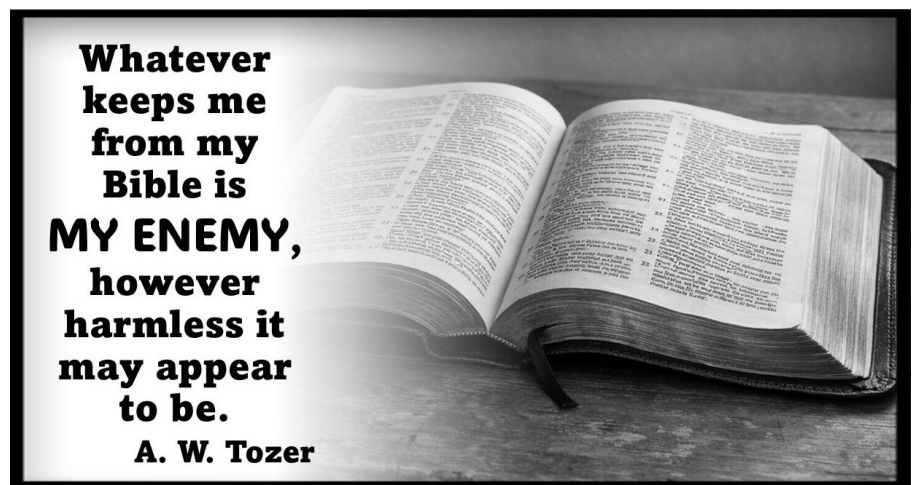
When they did that, they became "just men" (Hebrews 12:23). The adherents of John's message were justified by their faith. They

were looking forward to that new day of atonement. Their "remission" was based on the blood to be shed and offered as an atonement. The distinction was the superiority of "the blood of Christ" (Hebrews 9:14), the atonement He provided, and the redemptive plan He instituted by the shedding of that "blood." This is another element of transition from the old covenant to the new covenant. (See the Q&A section of the February 2026 issue for more detail concerning the transition time.) They looked forward to the redemptive work, and we look back to it.

When Christ shed His blood, it was first applied "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament" (Hebrews 9:15). That included those who were baptized under John's ministry. (The February 2026 issue provides more detail and insight concerning the work and position of John the Baptist, or Baptizer.) When they believed, there was justification, but the "remission" did not truly occur until Christ shed His blood on the Cross and the New Testament atonement plan was implemented.

Brother Earl R. Borders

Brother Earl R. Borders is the pastor of the Church of God in Summersville, WV.



**Whatever
keeps me
from my
Bible is
MY ENEMY,
however
harmless it
may appear
to be.**

A. W. Tozer

Upcoming Meetings

SIERRA VISTA, AZ
April 9-12

FELLOWSHIP MEETING: Palominas Chapel Church of God, 3500 E. Fry Blvd, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635
Location: La Purisima Retreat Center, 10301 S. Stone Ridge Road, Hereford, AZ 85615
Service times: Thursday 6 p.m.; Friday-Saturday 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m.
For more information, contact: Pastor Nathan Harding @ 520-305-9499

MT. PLEASANT, PA
April 18

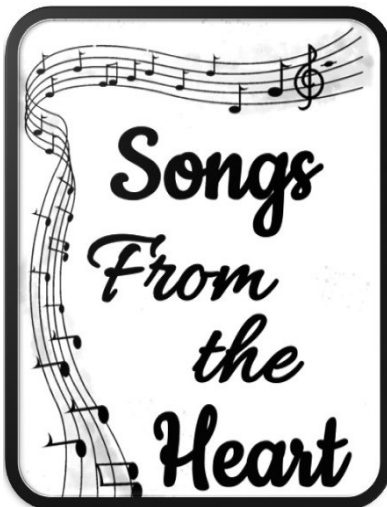
FELLOWSHIP MEETING: Church of God, 109 Salvation Lane, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666
Service time: 10:30 a.m. A meal will be served by the local congregation.
MOTELS: Holiday Inn Express, 724-547-2095 (This is on the same road as the church.
Please mention that you are there for the church meeting.)
Super 8 Motel in New Stanton, 724-925-8915 (on I-70W, 10 miles north of the church)

SUMMERSVILLE, WV
April 27-
May 3

REVIVAL AND FELLOWSHIP MEETING: The Church of God, 74 Armstrong Road, Summersville, WV 26651
Evening Evangelist: Brother Allen Polston, New Castle, IN
Service times: Monday-Thursday 7 p.m.; Friday 10:30 a.m. & 7 p.m.;
Saturday & Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Meals will be provided by the congregation following the services on Friday-Sunday.
For lodging or more information, contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders @ 304-872-4047

Lord, Take the First Place

by B. E. Warren 1925



*I yield to Thee, Savior, forsaking my all,
From sinful things now I will part;
To Thee I surrender, for mercy I call,
Come, take the first place in my heart.*

*Oh, take the first place in my heart,
Oh, take the first place in my heart;
I open the door, come in, I implore;
Lord, take the first place in my heart.*

*Oh, come, gentle Spirit, don't leave me,
I pray,
From Thee I will never depart;
I come to Thee now, for I cannot delay,
Lord, take the first place in my heart.*

*I cannot be lost, Lord, for Thee I will
live,
Forgiveness, O Savior, impart;
If I will confess, Thou wilt freely
forgive,
And take the first place in my heart.*

*The joybells of Heaven will ring in my
soul,
My Savior, Redeemer, Thou art;
To Thee I surrender, wilt Thou make me
whole?
Take now the first place in my heart.*


Of the writing of this hymn, Brother Warren said: "It was born in Charleston, West Virginia, one early morning hour while Mrs. Warren and I were on our knees in worship. We were struggling with some real problems, which drew us to deepen our consecrations. While Mrs. Warren was praying, she pleadingly said, 'Lord, take the first place in my heart.'

"Instantly, my mind leaped to the challenge: 'Lord, take the first place in MY heart.' A new world

of meaning flooded into those simple words. We were up from our knees but a short time, when the hymn was completed."

Being an evangelist at heart, it was inevitable that the words should suggest an invitation a repentant sinner might give to his Lord to take control of his life, and it is from this angle the hymn was written. However, this song is often sung by Christians to express self-dedication as in evangelistic appeals to the unsaved.

Winter 2025 Camp Meeting Recordings

Message #	Date	Message Title	Minister
TR-3508 TR-3509	12-28-25	Our Responsibility in Worship Understanding the Gifts and Callings (Part 1): The Coveting & Differing of Gifts and Offices	Bro. Reggie Stegmeier Bro. Earl R. Borders
TR-3510 TR-3511	12-29-25	The Home: Our Responsibility to One Another The Three Categories of Biblical Law: The Ceremonial Laws	Bro. Abraham Burton Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
TR-3512		Understanding the Gifts and Callings (Part 2): The Qualifications, Preparations & Operation of Gifts and Offices	Bro. Earl R. Borders
TR-3513 TR-3514	12-30-25	Have Salt in Yourself The Three Categories of Biblical Law: The Civil Laws	Bro. Nathan Harding Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
TR-3515		Understanding the Gifts and Callings (Part 3): The Qualifications, Preparations & Operation of Gifts and Offices	Bro. Earl R. Borders
TR-3516 TR-3517	12-31-25	Keep Plowing in 2026 The Three Categories of Biblical Law: The Moral Laws	Bro. Allen Polston Bro. Reggie Stegmeier
TR-3518		The Foes, the Future, and the Finale	Bro. Earl R. Borders
TM-514 TM-515 TM-516	2025	Winter Camp Meeting Songs #1 Winter Camp Meeting Songs #2 Winter Camp Meeting Songs #3	
	2025	Winter Camp Meeting Choirs Songs Winter Camp Meeting Songs or Messages in MP3 Format DVDs available for AM/PM services only	

All message and music recordings are available only on regular CDs or MP3 format. The suggested donation for CDs is \$3.00 each and for DVDs is \$5.00 each. (DVDs are unavailable for the afternoon teaching services.) The suggested donation for MP3s is \$10.00 each. Postage is \$3.00 for one CD or MP3 and \$0.35 for each additional one. Recordings may be ordered by writing The Gospel Trumpeter, CD Ministry, 675 N. Cedar St, Newark, Ohio 43055, or by calling the Print Shop at (740) 345-1312. Please make check or money order in U.S. funds, payable to The Gospel Trumpeter.

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Staff:

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

Contact Information:

Phone: 740-345-1312
Websites: GodsAcres.org & GospelTrumpeter.com
Email: subscribe@godsacres.us

Prayer:

Roger L. Decker, Pastor
83 Decrow Ave.
Newark, OH 43055
Email: pastor@godsacres.us
Phone: 740-344-2543

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