

# The Way of Truth

Vol. 77 “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” No. 2

## THE VALUE OF GOD'S HEDGE

Message  
begins on  
page 6.



**February**  
**2019**

Continued  
Correspondence  
on Unity  
Inside Front Cover

## Editorial

**T**HIS month, I want to continue sharing correspondence between Pastor Darrell Sanford and myself which drew us together in our vision of unity among Church of God people who have been separated for generations. We believe with all our hearts that this is the will of God. I have Bro. Sanford's permission in making this correspondence public.

**January 25, 2017—**

Hello Bro. Tyler,

Just a quick note and a link to Sunday's message, "God's Seal of Approval," if you should desire and have time to watch it. It is for the most part, somewhat a mixture of pastoral and evangelistic, I suppose. I find it difficult to categorize them sometimes as they are likely to go anywhere! ...

I continue to pray for you regularly that God will bless you in your affliction and grant the strength you need. How I would love to see the Lord heal you completely that it would not hinder you in His work.

I have written pages of notes over the past months containing my thoughts concerning our unity, but have recently began in earnest to write what I believe will be a usable expression of the situation and need of the church in that area. I hope to have something to send for your consideration within the next week, Lord willing.

... May God help us to keep our vision and continue in the task at hand. I know the enemy is stirred and hates the prospect of a truly united Church of God. We certainly need all the wisdom, strength, and perseverance the Lord will give us. May God bless and keep you.

—Bro. Sanford

**January 26, 2017—**

Dear Bro. Sanford,

Just finished listening to your Sunday morning sermon. Outstanding message. Again it was line upon line. It is a shame that we inherited the splintered condition of the visible Church of God which resulted from personality clashes and lack of commitment to endeavor to keep the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." You alluded to an important point in your message—the transformation of personal convictions and personal preferences into doctrinal issues of contention and justification for separation. I read in my morning devotional today (I Corinthians 1:10): "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." This is the will of God. However, we know that Romans 14 and other verses allow for personal convictions (not cardinal doctrines) to vary from brother to brother. I believe the Lord will help us see eye to eye on biblical doctrine if we have the same Spirit and labor together in that same Spirit, sharing experiences, developing greater confidence in each other, praying together, fellowshiping together, giving Christ the pre-eminence, building one another up rather than tearing one another down.

I personally believe the issue of facial hair falls into the realm of personal conviction. And we know that a legitimate personal conviction can morph into a doctrine of devils, simply by commanding it to be observed by all, and putting it on the plane of justification and sanctification. I Timothy 4:1-3, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." If a man doesn't want to marry—fine. But when he forbids marriage and makes it a doctrine of the church, it becomes a doctrine of devils. If a man doesn't want to eat meat—fine, he doesn't have to! But when he commands all to abstain from meat, it becomes a doctrine of devils. The Word says so!

I personally prefer to be clean shaven. But I cannot unchristianize someone who prefers some facial hair. I cannot preach against it because the Word does not condemn it and I am instructed to, "Preach the Word!" If I were to take my personal preference and appropriate it as a doctrine of the church for all men to observe, then it becomes false doctrine. Is that too hard?

It is really disheartening to think that while the world is drowning and souls are perishing, the church is squabbling over facial hair! It reminds me of forty years ago when this fellowship was squabbling over [a related issue]. I was coerced into lining up with its condemnation when I felt it was simply personal hygiene. I could tell you some stories.

I would be very happy to see your articles on the thought of unity and would consider publishing them in *The Way of Truth* magazine if you would desire. I know there is a negative stigma among some toward this work and I would never want your ministry to be adversely affected by anything. I understand. Thank you for your prayers.

In Christian love and respect,  
Bro. Tyler

**January 27, 2017—**

My Dear Bro. Tyler,

This is a draft of my statement/letter, "Is Christ Divided?" I have edited it through, but that is not to say it is complete, or cannot bear more scrutiny. I am submitting it to you for your consideration and opinion. It may be too long in present form to print in your paper, and I would withhold it [for a while]. Even with its length, it is not comprehensive. I'm sure there are many more thoughts to be made, and perhaps there are some I should withhold for the present. Some of my grammar and punctuation may be cringe worthy. I don't know the times I wish I had paid more attention in English class! May God

### ABOUT THE COVER

We need God's hand of protection as we journey through this life. In ourselves, we are no match for Satan's diabolical deceptions. Thank God for the hedge of protection He provides for those who love Him! Let us be faithful to God and never stray away!

# THE WAY OF TRUTH

(Registered Trademark)

Vol. 77 February 2019 No. 2

*Devoted to the gospel of our loving Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave freely His life-blood, to save us from our many sins, to sanctify our fallen nature and to bring into one body all true believers, by whose stripes we are healed.*

Published by the Church of God which assembles at 12819 Point Salem Road in Hagerstown, Maryland. Publishing office: 12811 Point Salem Road, Hagerstown, Maryland, U.S.A.

The Way of Truth is published without any given subscription price, and is supported by freewill offerings from our readers and funds supplied by the local congregation. It is sent out free to anyone who is interested enough to ask for it. We shall continue this policy as long as God sees fit to make it possible. FOREIGN READERS are requested to write us at least once a year if they wish to continue receiving the paper the following year. Address all correspondence to: The Way of Truth, P. O. Box 88, Hagerstown, Maryland 21741, U.S.A. Always when writing, give your name and address clearly, please.

—Gregory E. Tyler, Editor

Our telephone number is 301-739-2980

Our fax number is 301-739-7173

Our e-mail address is truth@fred.net

Visit our website at www.wayoftruth.org

that we might be able to meet and spend some time together then, which is great with me. Do you have the dates for that meeting?

—Bro. Sanford

**February 11, 2017—**

Dear Bro. Sanford,

Sorry for the delay in responding. Was on a short four day visit with my grandchildren. Did not even look at my e-mail!

Lord willing, revival starts in Deville, April 30 through May 3—then to Jonesville, May 4-7. I'll talk to you more about it later.

—Bro. Tyler

**February 11, 2017—**

Bro. Tyler,

You may already have this book, "Camp Meeting Sermons, 1913 Anderson Camp Meeting," but I thought I would send it just in case. I have not read every sermon, but two I have read are: "Divine Law," by D. O. Teasley, and "The True Standard," by H. M. Riggle. They are very similar in content and make some of the same points. As I read them I was amazed, for many of their thoughts were things I had been thinking and writing about. I am sending it from my iPad in iBooks, so I hope it opens in a format that is manageable for you.

—Bro. Sanford

(Editorial continued on page 17)

bless you. I look forward to hearing from you. Any criticism is welcome.

—Bro. Sanford

**January 28, 2017—**

Dear Bro. Sanford,

I just finished reading the original treatise, and what a thrill to realize how completely you share my vision. I couldn't believe how you expressed my identical views and burdens, concerns, and challenges. It is as if you picked my brain point by point. The only way for this to be is that it is the same precious Holy Spirit impressing our hearts! I especially appreciated your example of the clapping of hands. We have always discouraged what we consider "applause" in a divine worship service. But I can see how clapping could be an expression of joy. In fact, among us during preaching and testimonies, occasionally saints have clapped their hands for joy. As you pointed out we must bear with one another. There are "differences of administrations." As long as it is done "in Spirit and in truth" it is acceptable.

I am going to sit on your treatise until I hear from you about publication. May I have your permission to share it with a few of the ministers I work with?

Again, I feel this is a powerful document with which I agree 100%. Thank you for sharing. I am praying that God will undergird you and strengthen you in the task ahead. Brother, we are treading on holy ground!

—Bro. Tyler

**February 6, 2017—**

Hello Bro. Tyler,

You mentioned that you were going to be in Louisiana holding a revival in, I believe you said April; and

February 2019

## IN THIS ISSUE:

<b>Winning a Crown</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<i>Part VIII of the book by the late C. W. Naylor</i>	
<b>The Question Box</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<i>Our monthly feature</i>	
<b>Tribute to the late Alvin A. Craig</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<i>Appreciation from the Jamaican church</i>	
<b>The Value of God's Hedge</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<i>Full-length sermon by Terry Deville</i>	
<b>Less of Me and More of Thee</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<i>Article by Darrell Sanford</i>	
<b>The Poetry Page</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
<i>For those who like truth in rhyme</i>	
<b>Young People's Page</b>	<b>Page 13</b>
<i>Continuation of "The Heavenly Footman"</i>	
<b>Bible Lesson of the Month</b>	<b>Page 14</b>
<i>"Repentance"</i>	
<b>The Potter's Clay</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<i>Article by the late Hoyt Matthews</i>	
<b>The Children's Corner</b>	<b>Page 16</b>
<i>"A Good Fit," by Rebecca Bland</i>	
<b>What Is the Church?</b>	<b>Page 20</b>
<i>Radio message by Rupert Shippy</i>	

# WINNING A CROWN

By the late C. W. Naylor



## Part VIII

### THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

#### Babes in Christ

**W**E MUST not expect to come into the Christian life in a mature state. This is indicated by the figure of being born. We are at first immature in all our spiritual faculties. We comprehend the things in the kingdom of God with the comprehension of a child and not with that of an adult. Our knowledge at best is only fragmentary. Of experience we have nothing at all. Since we have no data from which to draw our conclusions, our views and conclusions will often be imperfect. We may hear others talk and see them act in a way that seems not to correspond to our views. Their more developed reason may make things appear differently to them from what they now appear to us, and things will later appear to us quite differently in many respects from what they do now.

Then, also, we know and understand little of God in the beginning. We must be patient. We must be willing to learn. We must be willing to be taught. We must be willing to grow and develop according to the laws of spiritual development. If we try to hurry things too much, we shall only do ourselves injury. All we need to do is just to live normally, to live and trust and serve God, letting Him take care of the growth, not taking thought about it nor worrying over it, but letting it be in His hands and concerning ourselves with the affairs of life that belong to us.

In the natural life the child is subject to many dangers to which an adult is not subject. The same is true in the spiritual life. One of these dangers is that we shall overestimate our strength, shall suppose we can resist temptation, and therefore we may become careless and go into the way of temptation and at last find ourselves entrapped. The Lord taught us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." The babe in Christ often has need to pray that prayer and to watch lest he does himself enter into temptation. By their unwisdom people often bring serious temptations upon themselves, temptations that too often they are unable to overcome. It is wise to keep on the safe side; to keep where we shall not be tempted above our strength. God will help us to overcome those temptations that cannot be avoided; He will see to it that we have grace to meet those if we will trust Him. But if we throw ourselves into a position to be tempted, then we may have too great a battle and instead of being victorious, be vanquished.

Another danger to which young converts are exposed is their liability to be overconfident and undertake things too great for them, things which only more mature Christians can accomplish. When such is the case and they fail in their undertaking, the result is often serious discouragement. Many battles have to be fought because they reach out too far. It is best to wait

on God and let Him direct our undertakings. It is best to be sufficiently modest not to push ourselves forward, especially beyond those who are older in experience in the Christian life. Young converts often have more zeal than wisdom, and this zeal often carries them into things that end sadly unless they are careful and unless they are willing to receive and heed advice and counsel. They are too often prone to estimate too highly their own judgments and wisdom, and therefore not to value as they should the wisdom and the guidance of older Christians. The best advice that can be given such an individual is to "make haste slowly."

Another danger is that of becoming exalted, or proud of one's own self, one's abilities, and one's accomplishments. What we do seems to be greater than what others do. We are so likely to place too high a value upon it. This is true especially of the inexperienced beginner. This pride of self is very destructive of spirituality. We cannot prosper if we give place to it, and sooner or later we shall find ourselves far away from God. The wise man said, "Before honour is humility" (Proverbs 15:33). We should therefore, as beginners, be willing to do the little things, and to fill a small place until we grow up to man's stature. Then and then only can we do a man's work.

Still another danger of the young convert is that of being deceived by false doctrines. His judgment is immature, but he often does not realize it, but feels himself capable of determining the truth or falsity of almost anything he hears, and that oftentimes with very little investigation. I have known scores of young converts who started out well, seemed spiritual, seemed to love God, but who, because of negligence in this regard, were led into false doctrines from which they never escaped or from which they escaped at last after much difficulty and with much loss to their spirituality. The Bible says, "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matthew 24:4), and this is wise advice to every beginner in the Christian race. Prove all things and hold fast only to that which you are assured is the truth and that which other spiritual Christians accept.

There is also much danger of being led into something that will destroy spirituality. Frivolous and foolish conversations, worldly amusements, too much of the society of worldly people, or anything of this sort, is likely to dull the spiritual sensibilities, and to draw the heart away from God. Satan has many traps for the young convert's feet, and he will do well to watch carefully his path and follow only those things which will tend to uplift and make him better. He must carefully cultivate the tender plants of God's planting in his soul lest they should die from inattention.

Another thing of which the babe in Christ must beware is placing too much confidence in those who may not be worthy of his confidence. There are many who have a form of godliness, even many who pose as teachers, whose private lives are not worthy. There are some who wear the garb of religion who would gladly lead him astray. There are others who are deceived themselves and would lead him into their error. Let him remember that he is but a babe; that he must watch his steps carefully; that he must keep close to God; that he must trust in Him for all things; and that only by

this means can he develop into a strong, useful, Christian man.

### **Why Some Have Better Experiences Than Others**

It is a fact commonly observed that some Christians have better experiences than others. This is true even from the beginning of their Christian life. The difference may be due to a number of things, but the most important cause for anyone's experiencing a lack of that abundance of grace all should have is no doubt found in the fact that he fails to yield himself to God as fully as he should.

This, of course, does not imply a refusal to yield fully, for that would be rebellion; and the soul could not be saved at all under such conditions. But in most instances it is undoubtedly due to the fact that the person does not comprehend the meaning and the necessity of complete surrender. He goes as far as he can see, and stops there, even though there are great fields of his nature that are as yet not fully yielded. Should rebellion spring from any of these, it would prove fatal to his soul life. When a question arises that involves this unyielded territory, he must immediately make a decision. He must either yield to God's will, or become a rebel. He cannot consciously refuse to conform himself to the will of God without grieving the Holy Spirit.

God yields Himself to us as we yield to Him and open the channel for grace. A full and complete yielding of ourselves opens wide this channel, and then grace flows into our hearts in abundance. It is in our power to close this channel and thereby hinder the flow of grace. Any reluctance on our part, therefore, to submit to the whole will of God obstructs the channel of grace, and results in a lack of spirituality in our lives. The Spirit works freely where there are no hindrances. Self-surrender is the hardest but most necessary thing. The more complete that surrender is, the more perfect is the working of God in the soul, and the more Christ-like we become.

It is not enough to surrender self to God; but surrender must be maintained. We must carefully guard ourselves lest we permit the channel of grace to become obstructed. It may become obstructed at any time and in a great variety of ways. Self is liable to assert itself; and since it is possible at any time for us to withdraw our submission to God, no matter how spiritual we may have been or how much God may have worked in us, we must therefore be on our guard. We are so constituted that we naturally like our own ways; and if we are not careful, we shall unconsciously choose our ways in preference to God's. But doing so cannot but react upon our spirituality.

Some are more spiritual than others because they exercise more diligence in their endeavor to conform themselves more perfectly to the will of God. Some grow very careless in this respect, and just drift along any way. They take it for granted that they are the Lord's. They seem little concerned about becoming more perfectly His, or about conforming themselves more perfectly to Him. They allow their attention to be taken up by the daily round of duties, by business affairs, by the ordinary things of life; and they give little thought

to their drawing nearer to God. They, therefore, make little progress in the divine life. Many people are now not as spiritual as they were when they first began the Christian life. They have professed for years; but today they bear less of the fruits of the Spirit than they bore years ago. They have less of earnestness and power, and experience fewer of the manifestations of God's grace. Their zeal and their love have grown cold. What is the trouble? Is not the grace of God able to cause them to abound in all these qualities? It is not God's fault if they are not prospering—it is their own, because they have let the channel of grace be filled up. Keep open this channel in your soul. Seek day by day to get closer to God and to conform yourself more perfectly to Him; then you may increase and develop, and be enriched in God. But the keynote of spirituality is ever and always self-surrender.

### **The Retention of Grace**

In order to retain natural life, we must conform to the laws of life. We cannot violate them without reaping the consequences. The principle here involved is as truly applicable to our spiritual life. There are certain laws we must obey, or spiritual death will ensue. Grace can be retained only by one's living a holy life. Sin is fatal to spiritual life; sin brings us under the condemnation of God's law and Spirit. "The wages of sin is death," both spiritual death and eternal death, death now and hereafter. Now, what is the true standard of the justified life? John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin" (I John 3:9). To be justified means to be accounted free from guilt, or innocent. Is one who commits sins free from guilt, or innocent? There are many people who point to the seventh chapter of Romans and say it represents the Christian life, or is the true standard of the justified life. Many say, "I do not expect to have a better experience than the apostle Paul had." The fact is, however, that what he relates in the seventh chapter of Romans is not a narration of his Christian experience. Let him tell in his own words what his experience was. "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe" (I Thessalonians 2:10). Shall we receive or reject his testimony?

The picture drawn in the seventh chapter of Romans is not the standard of the Christian life. Paul neither asserts nor suggests that he is speaking of a Christian's experience. Throughout the New Testament we find, both in precept and example, something very different from this. I called your attention to Paul's life and to his testimony of his Christian living. Let us now hear the voice of inspiration: "That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:10-12). Again: "That he would grant unto us, that we ... might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (Luke 1:74, 75). Now, God is not an idealist; He does not hold up before us a standard impossible to be reached and then expect us to aim at it only to miss. He does not demand us to try, when He knows we should fall short continually. He does not

require too much of us; nor does He place the standard of right living higher than He will help us to live up to, if we trust Him and use the grace He offers us.

We should avoid the idealism that represents the Christian life as a constant, onward-and-upward progress, accompanied with a cloudless sky and most blissful emotions. Such idealism is incapable of being translated into life. The Bible is essentially practical. It raises no such standard. Life in no condition is always cloudless, nor are the emotions always joyous. Life is made up of sunshine and clouds, of joys and sorrows. There will be tears and sighs as well as joys and smiles. There will be temptations and trials as well as victories and exultations.

We should, however, avoid the extreme of presenting life as being a series of dark and sinful days or as being composed mostly of short-comings. It is not such. The normal life of a regenerated person is one in which God reigns, and in which grace to live above sin abounds. This life will not be without its temptations, its perplexities, its cares, and its disappointments. Its pathway will sometimes be rugged and thorny. But God will ever uphold us and give us grace to be obedient to Him if we trust Him. No man is compelled to sin. If he sins, it is because he chooses to do so. And when he sins, the relation of his soul to God is changed. He is brought under condemnation. His conscience accuses him; he knows that he has done wrong, and he knows what he has done. His peace and joy are gone. A cloud is between him and God. It is true that if he will repent God will be merciful and will restore him; but God does not expect him to disobey over and over again. He expects us to live right; and we can do so if we will. Those who plead for sin dishonor both themselves and God. The language of the regenerate heart is, "I delight to do thy will, O God." Can we even conceive of one's holding such an attitude toward God and His law, and then breaking that law continually? If we will be God's, we must live above sin; and this we can do by His grace. †

## OUT OF BOX 88

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

How blessed I am to have found our Lord! Thanks to a loving and caring Mother, who years ago, introduced me to *The Way of Truth*. I have been able to continue with it to learn more and more about our loving and precious Savior.

May God continue to bless the great work that you accomplish through your publication. God bless.

—S. M., Indiana

Dear Way of Truth,

Thank you for sending me the good news I received this past 2018. I appreciate each one of God's workers. You serve God and others so well.

I enclose an offering to help spread the good news of how Jesus saves. I am thankful for so many blessings. ... May each of you have more joy and health to do God's work in this new year.

—J. J., Tennessee †



*Editor's Note: These questions and answers in this issue are taken from previous issues of The Way of Truth.*

**QUESTION:** According to the Bible, if a saint backslides and later seeks forgiveness, he can be forgiven. What about Hebrews 10:26, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins"?

**ANSWER:** We know the Bible does not contradict itself, so Hebrews 10:26 is not saying a backslider cannot be reclaimed; but it is saying if a person has truly accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, and then "wilfully" turns away from Christ, who is the only Savior there is, then there is no other sacrifice for sin. Animal sacrifices saved no one! Good works will not save; only Jesus saves. So if you turn away from Him, there is no other way you can be saved.

**QUESTION:** Why did the people need Judas to take them to Jesus? Did they not know Jesus?

**ANSWER:** They were seeking to take Jesus, but were afraid to do it in the open as many thought He was a great prophet. Judas offered to help them do it in a more secret way. Once they had "arrested" Him, they were able to give Him a mock trial, accuse Him of blasphemy, and then stirred up the people against Him.

It would seem that the guards from the temple who went with Judas did not know who He was, as Judas told them to take the one he kissed.

**QUESTION:** What was God's ordained purpose for man?

**ANSWER:** God's original purpose was, and still is, for man to love, serve and obey Him. This is the WHOLE duty of man. God desired to have those He could bestow His love upon, those He could fellowship with, those that would love Him in return. We are to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind.

**QUESTION:** Revelation 22:12 says "every man" shall be rewarded according to his works. Why does Matthew 20:16 say the last shall be first and the first last?

**ANSWER:** Matthew 20:16 does not speak of our eternal reward. Adam Clarke says on this verse, "The Gentiles, who have been long without the true God, shall now enjoy all the privileges of the new covenant; and the Jews, who have enjoyed these from the beginning, shall now be dispossessed of them; for, because they have rejected the Lord, he also hath rejected them."

**QUESTION:** What are demons and how did they come into existence?

**ANSWER:** I will quote from *Vines Expository Dictionary*: “A demon, signified, among pagan Greeks, an inferior deity, whether good or bad. In the N.T., it denotes an evil spirit. It is used in Matthew 8:31, mistranslated *devils*.”

“Demons are the spiritual agents acting in all idolatry. The idol itself is nothing, but every idol has a demon associated with it who induces idolatry, with its worship and sacrifices, I Corinthians 10:20, 21; Revelation 9:20; ... They disseminate errors among men, and seek to seduce believers, I Timothy 4:1.”

As to where they came from, since the Bible is silent on that, so I will be.

**QUESTION:** It is said that Lot was not righteous or saved; that it was the prayer of Abraham that saved him from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Is this true?

**ANSWER:** It doesn't appear that Lot was a very spiritual person! Nevertheless, the apostle Peter refers to him as “just.” See II Peter 2:7. I cannot say that it was Abraham's prayer that saved him. Abraham prayed for God to spare the city if enough righteous people could be found in it, which, even when he came down to the number of ten, ten could not be found, but it does not say that he prayed directly for Lot.

**QUESTION:** Is there a stage one will reach in his Christian experience that he or she will not have weakness any longer?

**ANSWER:** I do not think so! Of course, we must work on our weaknesses, but to say we will come to the place in this time world where we have none—I don't think so.

Russell R. Byrum, in his book, *Holy Spirit Baptism and the Second Cleansing*, says, “Briefly, it may be said that sanctification does not make us infallible, does not make absolutely perfect in all respects, does not save from the possibility of sinning, and does not destroy the human nature.”

D. O. Teasley, in his book, *The Double Cure or Redemption Twofold*, wrote, “Perfection attainable in this life relates to the moral nature of man. ... Holiness is begun in the justified state and perfected in entire sanctification. Christian perfection, then, is a qualitative idea, and is applied to the moral quality of a Christian's experience. When we speak of Christian perfection, therefore, we mean no such perfection as would make us either physically perfect or mentally infallible.”

**QUESTION:** The Bible tells us God, by Christ, created all things. How do you explain Isaiah 45:7 that says He created “evil”?

**ANSWER:** God indeed created all things by Christ, but we are not to understand the word *evil* in Isaiah 45:7 as meaning moral evil. The Bible teaches us that God is love, God is holy, God is light, and in Him is no

darkness at all. Further, the Scriptures tell us that God cannot be tempted with evil, *neither tempteth He any man* with evil. No moral evil can proceed from a holy God! So we must understand the word *evil* in this verse as meaning earthquakes, storms, etc. Adam Clarke speaks of it meaning wars.

**QUESTION:** Will you explain Proverbs 18:24?

**ANSWER:** The first part of the verse simply states that if a man wants to have friends, he must show himself friendly. The latter part of the verse is taken to mean Jesus Christ is the “Friend” that sticks closer than a brother. A friend may lay down his life for a friend, but Jesus gave His life for us while we were yet sinners. †

**IN MEMORY OF A VALIANT SOLDIER IN THE ARMY OF THE LORD—**

**BRO. ALVIN A. CRAIG**

**Submitted by:**

**Sis. Joyce Lamey and Sis. Enid Jones (Jamaica)**

To those who knew and shared fellowship with Bro. Alvin Craig can all agree that he was a hero in the gospel, a God-sent minister, and one who loved God without reservation.

The sweet fellowship between Bro. Alvin and the Jamaican brethren began after the standards of the Anderson Movement Church of God fell. He and others were obedient to the Lord's command and came out from among them. Bro. Felix Evans and others stepped out in the early fifties, and the Lord would have it to be that a faithful brother named Bro. Dellavanty took *The Way of Truth* Paper to Catadupa. Bro. Evans, who was the first pastor for the congregation in Catadupa, wrote Bro. Earl Marquiss which created a bond between them.

Bro. Earl Marquiss and Bro. Alvin Craig then visited Jamaica, but they were not allowed entry then. However, they later returned in the year 1959 to attend the convention in Catadupa. At that time, there was no mission house at the church; therefore, they resorted to staying at Bro. Felix Evans' house. This meant that they had to walk one and a half miles three times to attend each service daily, but that did not hinder them from coming, a sure sign of faithfulness. (Bro. Alvin and Bro. Evans shared a close relationship until the death Bro. Evans.) He continuously attended the annual conventions at Catadupa and Cornwall Mountain. His last trip to Jamaica was when he attended the convention at Catadupa in February 2016. He truly loved coming to Jamaica.

Bro. Alvin also made many trips to various places on our island: revival services at Salem, St. Ann; Jacks River, St. Mary; Grants Mountain, and Axe-and-Adze. He supported Jamaica in every way he found possible. In addition, he was the guest speaker at the dedication of the Church of God in Medina, Manchester, where Bro. David Shaw is pastor. As a true evangelist, Bro. Alvin became instrumental in the radio ministry of the church in Jamaica. Not only was he the main speaker, but he also provided monetary support, for which we are extremely grateful. He lived his life to the fullest, selflessly dedicating his time, talents, and resources to the propagation of the truth of God's Word. Bro. Alvin has gone on to receive the crown of life laid up for him in glory. †

# THE VALUE OF GOD'S HEDGE

2018 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Terry Deville



**P**RAISE THE Lord! What a rich convention! The Lord has given me a message for everyone of you. It's a message for the saved, the unsaved, professors, and backsliders. It's an overview of what God does and has for His people; but also, it's an overview if you don't have God, and what the state is if you don't have what God has provided for His people. I have scriptures to go to, but I believe you're with me this morning. I surely covet your prayers.

We'll start with a text in the book of Job, chapter 1. We'll read from verse 6 through 12: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord [Listen who came with them.], and Satan came also among [not with] them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth [meaning, hateth] evil? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord." Our title is: "The Value of God's Hedge."

I have two definitions, one from *Webster's Dictionary* that sort of goes along with the one in Hebrew. A *hedge* is, "a barrier; a means of protection or defense." I looked into the Hebrew, which it's written in, and the word *hedge* is translated into the English as, "to enclose or protect; to encircle, to entwine; to shut in for protection or restraint." Those are precious definitions. We're talking about what God's hedge does.

This is one of the most blessed promises and statements that God has made. God has a hedge for each one of His people. We want to think of it as a hedge around us, just as He said it was around Job. He even set a hedge about his house and his goods. This hedge, of course, is for our protection against Satan and all his demons, and all his workers who aid him in his work to destroy, to kill, steal, and to devour every one of you here—man, woman, child. The devil hates God and the people of God. Even those he has captive, he hates them. He is a friend to no one because he is totally depraved. It is impossible for any good to come from Satan. He is our adversary. Think of that! He is so active, especially today. He is active in so many ways with temptations and discouragements. Have you faced the devil? Have you faced the devil this week? He is

actively working, attacking with temptations and discouragements.

What about those fiery darts that come our way? Many times those are fiery darts of accusations; and if the shield of faith is not lifted up, those fiery darts can hit the most important parts about the spiritual man: the heart and mind. Have you ever been told by the devil, "Some kind of Christian you are"? If you haven't, thank the Lord. I have been told that by him. If you listen to him, he'll beat you down, beat you down, beat you down over a mistake, or a perceived mistake, or a perceived wrong. Many times, Dear Ones, it is a lie from the devil that was no wrong to it. It's an accusation. Every accusation comes with a feeling that it's the truth. The devil will beat you down to the floor.

I learned the hard way during my first year as a child of God. I faced that giant, accusation. That's a real dangerous giant. I would tell the Lord, "Lord, I'm sorry. I won't do that any more." A lot of times, it was just a mistake, a slight mistake, but I didn't want to displease God. I was new in the Christian race. Even in trying to pray, I couldn't pray under the spirit of an accusation. The only way you can get rid of an accusation is to confront it with the shield of faith. Tell the devil that he's a liar, and God loves me, and He is real. So many times, I didn't know what I did that was wrong. "Lord, if you'll show me, I'll correct it." That's the devil accusing us. God's going to make it clear if He wants you to correct something you've done. But oh, you wonder and try to correct what you've done, and all the time those were accusations trying to drag you into a spirit of dismay and bewilderment. You can't be what you need to be under that spirit, but you have to use the weapon, the shield of faith. You have to realize it's the spirit of the devil bringing those accusations. Let me tell you, the devil is tricky.

## LEARN TO TRUST GOD

Dear Ones, we have to learn to trust God. We have to believe and trust that God is going to hold us up and strengthen us. He will help us to become an overcomer, no matter what we face. We serve a mighty God! We should give praises to Him; not only here in worship, but every day that we live. We have to face the devil with boldness and confidence. Come boldly to the throne of grace with confidence. When the shield of faith the devil sees, he's going to flee. Maybe he won't flee so quickly, but the Bible says, "Resist the devil." You see, once we recognize him, we can fight him and defeat him. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). I think the reason the Lord wants me to get people to recognize the devil is because he is real. We know he is, but we need to see him more and more as he really is. He's going about as a roaring lion, and he's



seeking, this very morning, whom he may devour. Right now!

When God asked the devil, “Whence cometh thou?” his answer was chilling. He said, “From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.” What’s he doing? Seeking whom he may devour. But if we stay in God’s hedge, His barrier, His walls, His protection, Satan cannot touch us without God’s permission; and even then, God puts a limit on Satan. “Yes, you can take Job’s property, but don’t touch him.” That didn’t turn Job away from God. God said, “You can touch him, but you can’t take his life.” Job proved that he had a loyalty and a love for God that is still a testimony to us today. Job said, “Though he slay me, I’m going to trust the Lord, and I know that my Redeemer liveth. He knoweth the way that I take, and when I’m tried, I’ll come forth as gold.” Those words shut the devil up. No matter how evil this spirit is, God has encircled a mighty hedge around us. Doesn’t that make it worth serving the Lord? He puts a hedge around everyone.

### THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

In the world today, most people don’t even believe that there’s a devil, and all the while you can see his works and effects everywhere. People need God’s hedge around them for protection against the evil of the world, especially in a time as this when this bottomless pit is completely open.

Turn with me to Revelation, chapter 8. I have done some tremendous study on this, and the Lord has given me some understanding and a vision on this. I’m not one to boast, but sometimes you just have to state it. God forbid that I would ever boast, except in the cross. I only want to bring the truth to you on this. “After the seventh seal was opened, seven angels were given trumpets, and they prepared themselves to blow the trumpets.” What a trumpet is given for, and when it’s blown, it is to give people understanding, knowledge, wisdom, and warning. When I get up and blow the trumpet of the gospel, that’s what it’s for. Well, these seven trumpet angels have given us, in symbolic terms, a knowledge of what had happened, what is happening now, and what is going to happen.

I won’t have time to go into all of this, but I would like to pick up with the fifth trumpet. This fifth trumpet gives us knowledge of things that has already happened. The third and fourth trumpet gives us understanding why these things came about. What were the results of the fall of the early morning church? It is sad, but the early morning church fell, and there are consequences every time a reformation falls.

We’ll go to the tenth verse of Revelation, chapter 8: “And the third angel sounded [giving us knowledge], and there fell a great star from heaven [came from God], burning as it were a lamp [like a meteor; it only lasted for a few years.], and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.” Then it became Wormwood, which is compromise, but I’m not going to get into all of the results. Verse 13: “And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth [We’re talking about our earth.] by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”

Revelation 9:1, “And the fifth angel sounded [giving knowledge; keep that in mind. It’s to give us understanding.], and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.” I had an understanding from the Spirit of what that was, but you always like to get confirmation. Well, I’ve found it. Bro. F. G. Smith taught the same thing that I’m about to tell you.

F. G. Smith said this about the bottomless pit: “Just as heaven is symbolic as the exalted place where God and His angels and His people dwell in ...” This is not talking about God’s throne. This is talking about the exalted place. We’re in heavenly places. Paul said, “We sit together in heavenly places.” That’s where we are this morning. Since there was an abode for the people of God, His angels, etc., there had to be an abode for the enemy. That abode for Satan and all his demons is called the bottomless pit. Just to prove this, turn over to verse 11 of Revelation 9: “And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon [from the Hebrew word, *destruction*], but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon [Satan].” So, we have a bottomless pit with a king over it—Satan.

Here’s my heart’s desire: I want all of you to make it to heaven, but we have some things to do to make it. We need to know the enemy and his tactics; we need to know the times we are living in and know what to expect. Dear Ones, that fifth angel gives us knowledge, and because that star fell, he was given the key to open the bottomless pit. Listen to this now: “And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.”

Think spiritually: How many see the Son of truth today, the true vision, or the true image of the Son of God? They hear about Christ and preach about Christ, but Dear Ones, it has been all darkened from the smoke that came out of the bottomless pit. They’re not having a clear vision. You have to be in the hedge to have a clear vision. “... and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit,” means that it covered the whole earth. Listen what came out of the smoke: “And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth” (Revelation 9:3a). Do you know what locusts did in biblical times? They devoured everything that came their way. There might have been millions or billions of swarms of locusts which devoured every living thing.

What does this mean to us? Let me read the description of what these locusts have: “Unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power” (Revelation 9:3b). These locusts came from where? The bottomless pit. They’ve been released in the air. Do you ever wonder why our world is like it is today? Spirits are working on people as never before. Even demonic spirits have people doing things they never would have dreamed of doing. Can you imagine what has happened in the last few years? On in this chapter (Revelation 9), it first talks about what these spirits would do to the morals of mankind. Later on, it talks about the release of all the false spirits from false religion. “Out

of the Euphrates River that flows through Babylon.” I don’t have time to go into all of this. Those false spirits have been released. Do you all see with me? Just open your eyes.

### **PROTECTED BY THE HEDGE**

Now, I have good news for us who are in the hedge. Revelation 9:4, “And it was commanded [by God] that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.” In other words, Dear Ones, if you’re not in the hedge, you’re going to face a swarm of locusts, of demons, that you really can’t detect. They will try to influence you into the deepest parts of sin that a person can go. If you’re keeping up with the news, you’re seeing it. This is a scary time, but here I see God gave a command. That command becomes God’s hedge around us. God commanded, “You can hurt anything else, but not those who have the seal of God on their foreheads.” We are protected, no matter how evil the world gets.

Dear Ones, we have a hedge around us. No wonder the Lord said, “Fear not, thou art my children and are mine. I will be with you. I will strengthen and help you. Be not dismayed.” This is because we have the hedge around us. I don’t know about you, but that motivates me to stay in the hedge. I know it was bad when I was out in the world. I got saved in 1978, and the world was bad then. What’s going on in the last 40 plus years is unbelievable! It is the consequences of the bottomless pit.

At one time, the early morning church cast the old dragon (Paganism) into the pit, and he was chained; not with a literal chain, but he was defeated. “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony” (Revelation 12:11). The old dragon was cast into the bottomless pit, but in Revelation 20, it says that after a thousand years of darkness, he would be released for a short season. We’re in that time. That’s where we are. Just because people don’t have an idol placed on their wall doesn’t mean they don’t have one. Buddhists do. They practice idol worship. It doesn’t make any sense at all, but that dragon has been loosed for a little season. We know that Satan and his demons cannot touch us without God’s permission.

### **STAY AWAY FROM THE FORBIDDEN**

A good word that defines *hedge* from the Hebrew is, “restraint.” God gave Adam and Eve one commandment. You all know it by heart: “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Here’s a point I hope I can get across to you: The commandment didn’t say don’t go and look at the tree; the commandment in word for word didn’t say, get close to the tree, or consider the tree, but the commandment implied *stay away from it!* Do you understand? That was forbidden fruit.

Saints, stay away from forbidden fruit! Are you all with me? I don’t have time to name all the forbidden fruit, but I know you know the principle I’m talking about. Although the Word of God doesn’t bring it out,

or say it word for word, it implies *stay away from it*. Don’t give the fruit any place. Don’t look at it; don’t consider it! Why? Because the devil is so powerful, he can shade it to where it looks as if it’s something desirable. It’s forbidden fruit. Just because you don’t have a commandment that says something word for word, look at what it teaches or implies. We ministers do our best to instruct you. “Bro. Terry, I don’t understand why I can’t do this.” You could open yourself up to going outside the hedge. Do you agree, Ministers?

Adam and Eve opened themselves up, too. In reality, do you know what they did? They went outside the hedge. Listen, we’re going to be tempted and tried enough. Peter said, “If need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations,” but there are some temptations we bring on ourselves. When you get outside the hedge, and open yourself to some kind of false spirit in religion, it begins to sound pretty good. Dear Ones, you better be satisfied in the hedge. I know I’m not looking for anything different; but if you get outside the hedge and start to consider things that God forbids, you’re opening yourself up to the slyness and schemes of the devil. He actually had Adam and Eve to look at it in a different light. The fruit looked beautiful. They desired to taste it and have wisdom like the gods. That was a turning point in our world. They partook of the fruit, and the words to describe the consequences, I don’t have them. It’s beyond comprehension. Sin came into the word right there.

Aren’t you glad that God sent His only begotten Son so we could be delivered from sin and put into His family, His vineyard, and into His hedge? Stay in the hedge! Don’t wander off, Dear Ones. It’s good to seek the counsel of your pastor. He’s here to help you.

### **THE HEDGE AROUND GOD’S VINEYARD**

This is very important: God has a hedge for an individual, but He also has a hedge for a congregation. We see a hedge here in Isaiah for God’s individual congregation, which is termed His vineyard. Isaiah 5:1, 2: “Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine [Every Church of God congregation is planted with the choicest vine. To do what? To bring forth good fruit], and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.”

God Himself fenced His vineyard. He put a hedge around it. He gathered out the stones and made it His individual congregation by planting the choicest vine. God expected to receive a harvest of good fruit, not wild grapes; but when He went to taste the grapes, they were sour. Some of them were bitter. He was expecting sweet grapes. He wanted to see a vineyard full of the fruits of the Spirit: righteousness, godliness, holiness. Those are what God wanted to see in His vineyard, but He found wild, sour grapes. Isaiah 5:4, “What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it [Don’t blame God. He’s done everything He could.]? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?”

Listen to this. Verses 5 and 6 of Isaiah 5: “And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof [Can you imagine a congregation that was hedged by God at one time, and He had to take away the hedge? It’s happened. I’ve seen it.], and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.”

### **WILD GRAPES**

What are wild grapes? Fruits of the corrupt, depraved nature; actions that come from the root of bitterness. Are you all listening to me this morning? The devil is a master in planting a root of bitterness in your heart. “A brother and sister didn’t treat me right. They didn’t say the right thing,” and on and on and on you go. Maybe a brother and a sister might have made a mistake and hurt your feelings, but this is a vineyard God wants to see good grapes. Satan is always trying to put bitterness in there. Don’t tell me he’s not; I know he is! He’s tried before to put bitterness in my heart against the brethren, and even against ministers. He’s a real devil, but I’ve found a way to defeat him. When I realized what was going on, I said to God, “I don’t want to feel this way. I hate feeling this way.”

You can tell God that you hate bitterness. “Take away these feelings and give me a heart of love for that brother or sister or minister. Give me a heart of love,” and you’ll be amazed at the change. “I don’t want to be around bitterness. I have love. I can’t wait to see and hug my brothers and sisters.” That’s God’s work. If you’ll be honest with God, and tell him what’s going on in your heart, God’s able to change it. Let His love abound and reign supreme in our hearts.

A few months ago, I was riding in my truck, and a thought started coming to my mind about what a boy did to me in school. It agitated me. You have to remember that I was a little bit on the wild side and didn’t take anything from anybody. I’m glad I’m not like that any more. But that thought came to me about what he did to me, and I’m 70 years old now. I’m talking about when I was 17 or 18. It was bothering me. I didn’t recognize the devil at first. You know, you don’t recognize him sometimes. Finally, I said, “But wait! What is going on here?” I didn’t like the way I was feeling. Do you know what I said? “Forgive him, Lord.” Even though the feeling was saying something else, I still said, “Forgive him, Lord.” After awhile, the old bad feeling went away. Saints, we have the power and the knowledge and the wisdom to overcome the adversary, but we have to go by the Word.

### **A FORM OF GODLINESS**

Let me get back to this: *roots of bitterness, grapes that come from a form of godliness or just a profession.* They look somewhat like grapes, but when you taste them, they’re sour. Let me say this: these grapes are so far from pleasing God. I believe you can see here that it’s provoking. Let me tell you something, don’t push God too far now. He can be provoked. He said, “I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge. You won’t listen to me. I bore with

you.” His divine justice demands that He pronounce His judgment. Do you understand?

A pastor is a watchman over the flock. Overseers see more than you do. God knows who can be a watchman or an overseer. I’m going to say this, and I hope I don’t hurt people’s feelings. That’s the furthest thing from my mind, but I’m a watchman. *There is a spirit of contemporary type singing that’s straight out of sectarian that’s trying to come into the church.* I said that in all love. Did I hurt your feelings? If I did, I didn’t mean to. The thing is, the Spirit of God doesn’t bless contemporary type singing. Did you hear those two girls sing “How Great Thou Art” the other night? Oh, God came down! There wasn’t anything contemporary about that. Are you all understanding me?

Sectarian songs that are contemporary make people feel so good that they’ll jump and run and praise God. When I hear those contemporary songs, I don’t feel the Spirit of God in them. So what are we talking about? Are they good grapes? Is it a sweet taste to God if it’s not in the Spirit? Everyone has their own responsibility to live in the Spirit and to worship in the Spirit. I tell my saints at home all the time, and I’m glad they listen to me: don’t sing a song because you like it, or because the tune is pretty, or because you can show us how good you can sing. We preachers have to preach straight like that in love. Sing a song because God wants you to sing it, but acknowledge God.

Bro. Ronnie Alwell is our song leader at home. He takes it to heart. He arrives at church 10-15 minutes early to go over those congregational songs. You talk about rejoicing! Listen, we have the Spirit of God available. Let’s take advantage of it. We want the Spirit of God in everything we do. I don’t think I’m being fanatical, Dear Ones, because it is the Spirit that blesses. We want a song to help someone, but it must be sung in the Spirit. The song will not only help someone, but it will help everybody.

### **REPAIRING ANY BREACHES**

Again, I’m an overseer to help the Church of God. Do you know what I want? I want God to be pleased with every little congregation so they can bring forth good fruit; and when He comes down to feast on the fruit, He’ll say, “That’s sweet; that’s well-pleasing to my taste.” Dear Ones, the more of the Spirit of God that we have with us, the more power we will have with us. The more power that we have with us, the more God will be able to work in our midst. I’m ready to work with God for a great reformation if He’s ready and willing, but until then, we’re going to keep learning and doing our best to stay in the hedge. Inside the hedge of God is the only place of protection.

There were seven churches of Asia. Five of them had allowed a breach in the wall. Some things had come in. Do you agree? God is longsuffering. He sent messages to the pastors, but in effect, He said, “You men go down there. Get those things out and repair the breach.” Do you know we have to repair the breach sometimes? We’re in a fight. The devil is very conniving. Little foxes can get in. We need to get them out. Don’t pet them. Throw them out; and wherever they broke down the fence to get in, repair it. I don’t want to be a church that is spued out of the mouth of God. The rea-

son there was a breach in those five churches was because they weren't fully following the pattern of the wall.

When the wall is broken down, or there's a breach in the wall, let us be like those in Isaiah 58:12, "And thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." In other words, when there's a breach and you see it, have a mind that you want to be one who repairs it, Dear Ones. We don't want the devil in. When there's a breach, let us all have the mind to repair it. "I want to work with my pastor and repair it and get out what has come in." If you don't, Jesus said, "I will come and take the candlestick." We can, but we need people who want to repair the breach.

In Isaiah 30, it tells us "to be one that God can use in binding up the breach of His people, and who healeth the stroke of the wounded." Psalm 60:2, "Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh."

### CONCLUSION

I will close with this: Nehemiah had a burden. The Lord gave Nehemiah all that he needed to restore the walls around Jerusalem. The people Nehemiah had with him had a mind to work. They had a purpose to repair. The walls were torn down. Don't you want to rebuild the walls? I'm sick and tired of us being separated. I want the true people of God to be the way Jesus prayed that we should be. I want it! I want it! I want it! May the Lord bless you. †

#### 2018 HAGERSTOWN CONVENTION CD'S

CD's are available of these wonderful services. These may be purchased for \$3.00 each. Any orders of 10 or more, \$2.50 each. The complete set of 15 preaching services, plus 5 musical CD's is only \$50.00.

Please indicate how many you would like by placing the number in the blanks. Send check or money order to: The Way of Truth, CD Ministry, P. O. Box 88, Hagerstown, MD 21740-0088. (Credit cards are now accepted.)

- \_\_\_ CD #929 Living Godly in this Present World—G. E. Tyler
- \_\_\_ CD #930 Living Godly in this Present World—Franklyn Bascoe
- \_\_\_ CD #931 What Advantage Do God's People Have?—Harley McClung
- \_\_\_ CD #932 Living Godly in this Present World—Raymond Martin
- \_\_\_ CD #933 Living for God as a Christian—Rupert Shippy
- \_\_\_ CD #934 The Great Exchange—Terry Deville
- \_\_\_ CD #935 We Be Brethren—Howard Moncrief
- \_\_\_ CD #936 A Sanctified Spirit—Mick Akers
- \_\_\_ CD #937 Denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts—D. Shenberger
- \_\_\_ CD #938 The Price Is Paid—David Shaw
- \_\_\_ CD #939 Learning to Live Godly—Doug Koerner
- \_\_\_ CD #940 How the People of God Live—Gary Alwell
- \_\_\_ CD #941 The Potter's House—Duane Jeffries
- \_\_\_ CD #942 The Value of God's Hedge—Terry Deville
- \_\_\_ CD #943 Getting a Glimpse of Heaven and Hell—Harley McClung
- \_\_\_ CD #286 Singing #1
- \_\_\_ CD #287 Singing #2
- \_\_\_ CD #288 Singing #3
- \_\_\_ CD #289 Singing #4
- \_\_\_ CD #290 Singing #5

# LESS OF ME AND MORE OF THEE



By Bro. Darrell Sanford

**W**HO, among God's people, wants to see the Lord's hand moving in a greater way? We all do, of course, and we constantly seek and question what we need to do in order to see it. We desire to see a great awakening with people's hearts being stirred toward salvation; we want to see the sick healed and the power and presence of God manifested in a greater way; we want to see division vanquished from among the faithful, and love and unity fully realized and experienced.

I don't believe it is necessarily a matter of working harder, or doing more, (at least, initially or primarily), or being more ascetic, in order to gain God's favor so He will do more for us. Rather, I tend to believe it is a matter of relationship, of being closer to God, opening our hearts and minds more to His presence and will, and yes, to a degree, purging out those things which take up space in our hearts, our minds, and our lives—things which occupy space that He should occupy. We think in terms of doing more to gain God's favor, but perhaps we should think in terms of doing less first, and allow Him to fill the void created by the emptying of ourselves. If we sow less to ourselves, we will reap less of ourselves, and open more space for God to fill us with Himself. I sometimes think that when we determine do more for God in an attempt to move God, we often end up working for work's sake. Some may tighten their standards so as to be even less worldly, or increase religious activity so as to show their consecration and earnestness to God. None of which are wrong, necessarily, if that is truly led of God. But, if we are not careful, our standards and our activities will become the focus of our experience. Our spiritual confidence will rest in the fact that we are stricter than others, or more active than others; or that we are "holding the line," where others have "let up." And, lest it appear that I am casting off on any group in particular, let me say that there are many who have held such a stance, even though they vary in the strictness of their standards from one another, or adamancy on certain doctrines. Are standards important? Yes, we hold godly standards. Are clear, sound positions on various doctrines vital? Yes, we endeavor to teach only the truth of God's Word. But, there is something more important than either, and that is the pure, devoted love of God in our hearts, without which, the most modest dress standard, or in depth knowledge of the Scriptures, is worthless.

While in my morning prayer recently, I cried unto the Lord, "Lord, I earnestly need you today in all I do!" Then I seemed to hear in reply, "And I earnestly need you to be as earnest as you want me to be." It caused me to think; we all want to have 100% of God's atten-

tion, but do we give Him 100% of ours? When we need Him, we want Him to show up—we want Him here “right now.” But, when that moment comes that we earnestly call out for His aid, are we as one making a long distance call, or are we as one speaking to a companion who has been, all the while, walking by our side? It is about relationship. Yes, we need and depend upon God! But, He needs and depends upon us, as well.

I said earlier that I don’t believe we move God by working harder or doing more, at least, initially and primarily, and here I will expound. I believe we will move God by, first, being close to God, being intimate with God, by truly being FULL of the love and Spirit of Christ. Most would probably say, “But, I do that now; I love God with everything, now!” And, while I understand, and tend to agree with that sentiment, it is also clear that we can surely be doing all we know, but yet not be doing all there is to do. Could it be that there is a measure of love, devotion, and closeness from us—from you, from me—to our Lord which needs to be filled? But, how could we (speaking broadly in a general sense concerning the church), be in such a state as this? How could our personal devotion and love to Christ be so lacking as to hinder us from receiving all the power and grace needed to fully manifest the presence of God in this world, and finish the work He commissioned us to do? I myself have seen glorious revivals, camp meetings, and services in my 39 years of salvation. I have rejoiced, worshiped, and felt the presence of God among His people. I have lived faithfully, in victory, and holiness these many years. I’ve seen souls saved; I’ve been divinely healed of serious afflictions without the aid of man or medicine—afflictions which did not merely run their course or get better, but were touched by the hand of God. This is my testimony, and I’m sure many others can tell the same. God is good to His people, He still honors faith; God is still not willing that any should perish, He still honors His Word. All of that is true, will continue to be true, and I do not seek to diminish any of it. But, But, But, we all know that there are yet things amiss, things with which God is not pleased, things which we desperately need FROM Him that we may accomplish more FOR Him. I do not lay the blame at the feet of the saints. I do not intend these words to be a thrashing upon the backs of the people of God or their ministers. However, I do pray that it will stir up our pure minds—saints and ministers alike. I am glad to be able to say that many ministers with whom I have had contact, across the United States and around the world, are keen to this condition, and are zealous to see the Church of God united and going forth in all the splendor and glory which Christ ordained it should have. The doing may prove more difficult than the desire to do, but I believe we can, and must do our part to bring it to pass. We cannot do this alone or in the power of man, as says the scripture—

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:4, 5).

February 2019

*Abide*, meaning to “stay, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand”—in Me! in Christ! The answer is in Christ! The strength is in Christ! The love, peace, joy, grace, humility, and fullness is in Christ! Without Christ, we cannot bear the fruit we need to bear—the fruit of the Spirit—the fruit that will nourish and strengthen our congregations and our various meetings; the fruit that will manifest to other saints (whom we may not have previously known), that we are genuine; the fruit that will feed a wayward world, which is starving and dying for want of the true bread! Oh, may God our Father, and our precious Lord Jesus Christ see our want, our thirst to draw closer, our hunger for the divine presence in our lives! May we stay in Him, Church of God; may we dwell there, be present there, remain there, and love Him more abundantly and more deeply! This will produce the true, Holy Spirit-led works, which will please Him!

A parable came to my mind the other day of a cup which was filled with water. (I somewhat alluded to the thought earlier.) If you want to pour something else into the cup, then you must first empty some of the contents out in order to make room. What is in our cup? We want to pour more of Christ in our cup. We know we have many things in it which are proper and needful: jobs, spouses, children, recreation, political interests, other interests, and perhaps many more legitimate things. Many of these we cannot pour out; when we work our job, we do it unto the Lord. When we tend our marriage as godly husbands and wives, we do so in obedience to the Lord. Even recreation, and political concerns which affect us, (and in which we in the United States and other countries have an opportunity to participate), as well as other things have their place in our lives. But how much of a place? Let us not allow anything to push God out of the cup; rather, let us seek opportunity to get more of Him in.

The church at Ephesus, in Revelation 2, had a great reputation. They did many works; they suffered, they labored, they toiled, they endured, and even called out the false prophets. But, Christ had somewhat against them, for though they did not grow weary in all their work, toil, and suffering, they had left their first love. They left it; they didn’t lose it, they left it. Where did they leave it? Did they lay it down somewhere in order that they might pick something else up, much as we may do if our hands are full and we need to pick up something else? They did not leave their activity, their toil, or their labor—they left their love. I believe they left their personal devotion and love to the Person of Christ—their intimacy with Him. I see it as that which you experienced when your eyes first opened upon the world of salvation; before you knew standards or doctrine, or church lingo, or anything else. When you knew only that warmth in your heart, that peace of mind, that cleanness in your soul, that love, the likeness of which, you had never before experienced in your life—that presence of God surrounding you. I don’t know about you, but I was in love that night. I slept like a baby and awoke the next morning with God on my mind! Nothing else mattered. I was saved, and I was determined to not allow anything to come between me and my Savior. First Love. May God help us to increase our measure. †

Page 11

## THE POETRY PAGE

### THE LOVE OF GOD

J. Grant Anderson

The wisdom of the world belongs to love,  
Its voice was heard in forming earth and sea;  
In every scented flower and cooing dove  
Is heard the chanting of elicit melody.  
On the darkest day of life we hear it singing  
In the mansion or the cot beside the hill,  
Like the lilies of the valley ever springing  
Forth, the weary, saddened heart with joy to fill.

O mighty element, thou love of God!  
Thou shalt exist when Time has gone to sleep.  
When earthly things on which our feet have trod  
Have passed, and hopes our hearts do keep  
Are realized, thou shalt endure,  
Bringing new joys, destroying every pain,  
Like as the great tides of the ocean  
Ebb and return unto the shore again.

The love of God is great and wide and free;  
Eternally its nature is the same.  
All things which seem so wrapped in mystery  
Are unfolded in the naming of its name.  
Cloud after cloud may hide it from the world,  
The smoke of battle oft its beauty mar,  
But at last triumphant it will rise,  
To shine beyond the last dim distant star.

### LOOK UP

E. Craft Cobern

Look up, not down; thou canst not see  
One step into the dim unknown.  
Look up into thy Savior's face,  
That thou forget thine own.  
Look up! he knows each thorn and stone:  
He pressed the weary way alone.

Look up, not down, O loved of God!  
His angels watch about thee keep;  
Lest thou shalt bruise thy stumbling feet,  
They watch and never sleep:  
How tenderly God guardeth thee,  
To give thee angel ministry!

Look up, not down, that thou shalt see  
To aid some fallen, fainting one;  
Look up into thy brother's face,  
That thou forget thine own;  
And in thy deed of selfless love  
Thou shalt thy Savior's leading prove.

## GOD IS LOVE

John Bowring

God is love; his mercy brightens  
All the path in which we rove;  
Bliss he wakes, and woe he lightens:  
God is wisdom, God is love.

Chance and change are busy ever;  
Man decays, and ages move;  
But his mercy waneth never:  
God is wisdom, God is love.

Even the hour that darkest seemeth  
Will his changeless goodness prove;  
From the gloom his brightness streameth:  
God is wisdom, God is love.

He with earthly cares entwined  
Hope and comfort from above;  
Everywhere his glory shineth:  
God is wisdom, God is love.

## DILIGENCE

Emma I. Coston

If you've ever made a garden,  
With a love to see things grow,  
You will own that every morning  
It was hoe, hoe, hoe.

Were you ever in a vineyard  
Where the grapes were ripe and thick?  
When you went to fill your basket  
You must pick, pick, pick.

If you've ever made a garment,  
Here's a fact you also know:  
You were not then counting stitches;  
It was sew, sew, sew.

Did you ever learn a lesson  
Just by taking time to cry?  
Or was this your resolution,  
"I will try, try, try"?

Did you ever meet temptation  
Like a lion in the way,  
When you knew your only refuge  
Was to pray, pray, pray?

Jesus is the way to heaven,  
And if you get there, you must  
Trust in his almighty power—  
Ever trust, trust, trust. †



Dear Young People,

“He leadeth me: O blessed thought!”; “And how sweetly Jesus whispers: Take the cross, thou need’st not fear, For I’ve tried the way before thee, And the glory lingers near”—Those are quotes from two beloved hymns. We can see from these

lines and numerous times in the Bible that God does not shove us into hard situations in life to be left alone. He does not shove at all, but guides us along. He knows what lies ahead and He knows the way through. We must learn to follow and trust. These are not always easy lessons to learn. Be patient with yourself. Know that God is merciful and patient. Keep true.

We are continuing with our reading of *The Heavenly Footman* by John Bunyan. May the Lord help us to grow in understanding.

With great love,  
Sis. Crystal Gossard

---

### The Fourth Direction

**B**EWARE of by-paths; take heed thou dost not run into those lanes which lead out of the way. There are crooked paths, paths in which men go astray, paths that lead to death and damnation, but take heed of all those. Some of them are dangerous because of practice, some because of opinion, but mind them not; mind the path before thee, look right before thee, turn neither to the right hand nor to the left, but let thine eyes look right on, even right before thee: “Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.” Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: “Remove thy foot far from evil.” This counsel being not so seriously taken as given, is the reason of that starting from opinion to opinion, reeling this way and that way, out of this lane into that lane, and so missing the way to the kingdom. Though the way to heaven be but one, yet there are many crooked lanes and by-paths shoot down upon it, as I may say. And again, notwithstanding the kingdom of heaven be the biggest city, yet usually those by-paths are most beaten, most travelers go those ways; and therefore the way to heaven is hard to be found, and as hard to be kept in, by reason of these. Yet, nevertheless, it is in this case as it was with the harlot of Jericho; she had one scarlet thread tied in her window, by which her house was known. So it is here, the scarlet streams of Christ’s blood run throughout the way to the kingdom of heaven; therefore mind that, see if thou do find the besprinkling of the blood of Christ in the way, and if thou do, be of good cheer, thou art in the right way; but have a care thou beguile not thyself with a fancy, for then thou mayest light into any lane or way; but that thou mayest not be mistaken, consider, though it seem never so pleasant, yet if thou do not find that in the very middle of the road there is written with the heart-blood of Christ that he came into the world to save sinners, and that we are justified, though we are ungodly; shun that way; for this it is which the apostle meaneth when he saith, “We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through

the veil, that is to say, his flesh.” How easy a matter is it in this our day for the devil to be too cunning for poor souls by calling his bypaths the way to the kingdom! If such an opinion or fancy be but cried up by one or more, this inscription being set upon it by the devil, “This is the way of God,” how speedily, greedily, and by heaps do poor simple souls throw away themselves upon it; especially if it be daubed over with a few external acts of morality, if so good! But this is because men do not know painted by-paths from the plain way to the kingdom of heaven. They have not yet learned the true Christ, and what his righteousness is, neither have they a sense of their own insufficiency; but are bold, proud, presumptuous, self-conceited. And therefore,

### The Fifth Direction

Do not thou be too much in looking too high in thy journey heavenwards. You know men that run a race do not use to stare and gaze this way and that, neither do they cast up their eyes too high, lest haply, through their too much gazing with their eyes after other things, they in the meantime stumble and catch a fall. The very same case is this: if thou gaze and stare after every opinion and way that comes into the world, also if thou be prying overmuch into God’s secret decrees, or let thy heart too much entertain questions about some nice, foolish curiosities, thou mayest stumble and fall, as many hundreds in England have done, both in ranting and quakery, to their own eternal overthrow, without the marvelous operation of God’s grace be suddenly stretched forth to bring them back again. Take heed, therefore, follow not that proud, lofty spirit that, devil-like, cannot be content with his own station. David was of excellent spirit where he saith, “Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.” Do thou SO RUN.

### The Sixth Direction

Take heed that you have not an ear open to everyone that calleth after you as you are in your journey. Men that run, you know, if any do call after them, saying, I would speak with you, or go not too fast, and you shall have my company with you, if they run for some great matter, they use to say, Alas! I cannot stay, I am in haste, pray talk not to me now; neither can I stay for you, I am running for a wager: if I win I am made, if I lose I am undone, and therefore hinder me not. Thus wise are men when they run for corruptible things, and thus should thou do, and thou hast more cause to do so than they, forasmuch as they run but for things that last not, but thou for an incorruptible glory. I give thee notice of this betimes, knowing that thou shalt have enough call after thee, even the devil, sin, this world, vain company, pleasures, profits, esteem among men, ease, pomp, pride, together with an innumerable company of such companions; one crying, Stay for me; the other saying, Do not leave me behind; a third saying, And take me along with you. What, will you go, saith the devil, without your sins, pleasures, and profits? Are you so hasty? Can you not stay and take these along with you? Will you leave your friends and companions behind you? Can you not do as your neighbors do—carry

the world, sin, lust, pleasure, profit, esteem among men along with you? Have a care thou do not let thine ear now be open to the tempting, enticing, alluring, and soul-entangling flatteries of such sink-souls as these are. "My son," saith Solomon, "if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." You know what it cost the young man which Solomon speaks of in the 7<sup>th</sup> of Proverbs, that was enticed by a harlot, "With much fair speech she won him, and caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him, till he went after her as an ox to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks"; even so far "till the dart struck through his liver, and knew not that it was for his life. Hearken unto me now therefore," saith he, "O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain [that is, kept out of heaven] by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Soul, take this counsel and say, Satan, sin, lust, pleasure, profit, pride, friends, companions, and everything else, let me alone, stand off, come not nigh me, for I am running for heaven, for my soul, for God, for Christ, from hell and everlasting damnation: if I win, I win all, and if I lose, I lose all; let me alone, for I will not hear. SO RUN. †

## BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

### JUSTIFICATION REPENTANCE

**Scriptures:** Matthew 3:1, 2; Acts 8:4-8; Luke 13:3; II Corinthians 7:10.

Matthew 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was great joy in that city.

Luke 13:3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

II Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

**Memory Verse:** For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.—II Corinthians 7:10.

**Aim:** To give the true meaning of repentance.

## INTRODUCTION

**F**OR THE Bible doctrine of repentance there have been instituted modern methods of gaining favor with God, which, of course, are not trustworthy. Favor with God now, as in days that are gone, can be obtained only by genuine sorrow for committed sin and sincere turning away from it. It is not God's plan, as some would teach, that we sin more or less every day, and ask forgiveness each night. The Christian life is one of victory, and Paul declares that we are more than conquerors through Christ who loved us. There is only one thing we might say that victory can be gained over, and that is sin. If sin humbles anyone, he has lost the victory and again finds himself held in the prison of sin, from which only Jesus can deliver. Do not allow modern teachers to dim the clear understanding of the doctrine of repentance. Seek God with all your heart that His understanding on this great subject shall be yours.

## MEDITATIONS

**JOHN PREACHES REPENTANCE—Matthew 3:1—Came John—**John, the forerunner of the Lord Jesus, preached with great power and authority the doctrine of repentance. His audience was partly composed of men who should have been devoted worshippers of God, but who turned out to be hypocrites, having only a form of godliness. **Verse 2—Repent ye—**The Jews were looking forward with great anticipation to the coming of the kingdom of God, but little did they realize that entrance into this great kingdom was gained by a genuine turning away from sin and that the kingdom was spiritual and not material. Backed by the power of the eternal Spirit of God, the message of John was indeed powerful, and he convinced many that the kingdom of God was at hand that very moment and that men should repent to gain entrance. Jesus followed John after he was killed with the same message of repentance, and the true servant of the Lord today is preaching repentance as they did.

**A FAITHFUL MINISTRY—Acts 8:4—Preaching the word—**Persecution failed to dim the ardor of the church; it only increased it. Oh, that we had a ministry of the same devotion today! Our commission, as was theirs, is to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. How are people going to hear unless they have a preacher, and how are they going to know the truth unless the minister preaches the truth?

**WE MUST PREACH CHRIST—Acts 8:5—Philip went—**The kingdom of God was first in the life of Philip, and he did not hesitate to leave home and all the normal affairs of life in order to preach Christ; and no one can preach Christ in sincerity without preaching repentance. Christ still calls men and women to forsake all to be His disciples. No man can be successful in the Christian race until he has forsaken all.

**SIGNS FOLLOWING—Acts 8:6—Seeing the miracles—**Philip was filled with the Holy Ghost, and the messages that he preached were messages from heaven. Since Philip was fully submitted to the will of God, the Spirit was able to do and say what He pleased. If God were to have His way today, there would still be



signs and wonders following the preaching of the Word of the living God. There is no substitute for the deep searching power of a Spirit-born message. The world is in great need of the signs and wonders that follow Holy Ghost preaching. Millions are sick and helpless.

**PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALING—Acts 8:7—Were healed**—He who is possessed by an unclean spirit is certainly very sick in his soul and has great need of the healing touch from Jesus. The spiritually ignorant though highly trained in science, rush such people off to mental hospitals, where often no help can be given. Although medical men can do some good to the ailing physical body, there is a wonderful blessing in being touched by the gracious, compassionate and all-efficient Physician, the Lord Jesus Christ. Healing and salvation brought great joy to the city of Samaria. They will do the same for the people of our day!

**JESUS SPEAKS—Luke 13:3—All need to repent**—Jesus told one and all they must repent. No one is so morally good that he does not need to repent.

**REPENTANCE BRINGS JOY—II Corinthians 7:10—Worketh repentance**—When a man is awakened to the fact that he has broken and disregarded the Word of God, which was given for a lamp and light to our moral feet with the purpose of bringing happiness and peace, there is certain to be some sorrow, often accompanied with tears and great emotion. This godly sorrow will cause a man to express regret that he has so far strayed from the truth of God's Word, and he will express to God his desire to be forgiven. Of course, God never turns a penitent heart away, and His gracious touch brings great joy in place of the tears of repentance. Be sure, repentance is the only means that God has provided to restore a soul to His favor; so do not be deceived by modern methods that men have to offer to all who will listen to them.

### CONCLUSION

We are asked by Jesus, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" We learn from these marvelous words that there is no material thing or combination of things that can in any way equal the value of one eternity-bound soul. This should bring great fear upon our souls because millions today are living carelessly, headed for destruction; and there is a constant danger, unless we stay close to God and daily seek His divine presence and favor that we may not be deceived, for there are many false prophets gone out in the land. Repentance is absolutely necessary before peace with God can be found, but that does not end our great quest. If we are to keep peace with God, we then must every day press on to new goals and higher heights. Christianity is a new life and must be lived day by day under the kind and blessed guidance of the gracious Spirit of the living God.

### FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What are some of the substitutes that man has made for the doctrine of true repentance?

2. What did John come preaching in the wilderness?

3. Do you remember what John told the formal Pharisees who came to him to be baptized?

4. Name some of the fruits of repentance.

5. What happened when the persecution arose that scattered the disciples of Christ? †

---

---

## THE POTTER'S CLAY

By the late H. R. Matthews

*"But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter, we are all the work of thy hand."—Isaiah 64:8.*

**O**NE OF the early methods of shaping the clay into different fashions was by use of the human hand only and not by the potter's wheel. This is the thought presented by the above verse taken from Isaiah 64:8. In this instance, God is the Potter, we are the clay. The clay does not cry out to the potter, "Stop! What doest thou? I do not wish to be fashioned in this manner!" Neither should the Christian cry out in such a way, nor will a Christian who wishes with all his heart to please the Potter would cry out in such a way. If the clay becomes unfit to be fashioned as it pleases the potter, the clay would be discarded. So it would be with the one who is unwilling to be fashioned as it pleases the Potter. He would become as the branch that beareth not fruit. Jesus said that he would be taken away.

In referring to the Potter's clay, we are not speaking of this human body, such as Adam's body which God formed from the dust of the earth. It matters little what fashion or color into which this house of clay may be formed, for it shall return to the dust of the earth from whence it was taken. Typically, it is the inner man which is that lump of clay that must be fashioned according to God's eternal plan. When God created Adam in His own image, it was not the house of clay that took on the image of God; it was the inner man, the soul. When Adam disobeyed the one command that God had given him, that image was lost, and Adam became separated from God. Because of Adam's transgression, all mankind were sold under sin. When man is reclaimed and again possesses the divine image, the divine Potter begins to fashion that lump of clay (the inner man) so that it reflects the glorious image of the Potter.

But even after the lump of clay is fashioned into the vessel designed by the potter, the vessel is not yet ready for the master's use. To use the vessel at this point, it would again become just a lump of clay. The vessel must now be cast into the kiln or the heated furnace. The potter monitors carefully the temperature of the heated furnace, for he knows precisely the temperature that will produce a vessel that would be best fitted for the potter's use.

How beautifully this illustrates how the Master takes this lump of clay (the inner man) and fashions it into a vessel fitted for the Master's use. But it must pass through the heated furnace, for without this it can never become that vessel fitted for the use of the Master.

The apostle Peter declared, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you” (I Peter 4:12).

This fiery trial is the process of being fashioned into a vessel fitted for the Master’s use. It may seem at times that the heated furnace is beyond what we can bear, but remember this: “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able” (I Corinthians 10:13). If we shun the heated furnace, we can never bear the Master’s image.

Let us look now into a few areas in which the fashioning of the lump of clay (the inner man) and the refining fire may occur.

1. Are you praying for an increase in faith? If so, the fiery trial is sure to come. I Peter 1:6, 7, confirms the above statement: “Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

2. God’s Word challenges certain ones in the body of Christ to covet earnestly the best gifts. If you are accepting this challenge, you will be inducted into the Potter’s seminary of fiery trials. There you will be fashioned into the vessel that will bear the gift, and there too, you must pass through the heated furnace. This is necessary to prepare you for the work that lies ahead.

Reading from the book of Matthew, chapter 14, verse 14: “And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.” We see from this that one of the qualifying virtues for receiving the gifts of healing is compassion. This compassion will cause a deep sympathy to flow from the heart of the gifted one to the one who lies on the bed of suffering. This will enable the prayer of faith to be prayed more effectively.

H. M. Riggle, a minister in the early years of the Church of God Reformation Movement, had a serious seven-year illness which came to an end in a very miraculous way. Since there were miraculous results to his own prayers during that time, he was quite puzzled as to why God permitted him to be ill so long. After he was miraculously healed, he was able to understand. Here are his own words: “It may be a question in some minds why I was not healed, why I suffered so long. It was also a great problem with me until it was all over, then I clearly understood. I learned four things.” [I will just mention one in this writing.]: “First, I learned the lesson of sympathy and compassion for others. I reached the place where I craved sympathy from everybody. A kind look was soothing, a kind word highly appreciated. Since then I can enter the sick room with feeling and compassion, and pray more effectively for those needing help.”

3. There are a number of heaven-born virtues that must be sought for and achieved that we might be fashioned after the divine image of the Potter. We read in James 1:2-4, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire,

wanting nothing.” This would place patience at nearly the same level of importance as faith. Still another virtue must be considered along with faith and patience and placed at the top of the list. This virtue is love. Since one will not work without the other, they must all be fashioned together with the clay in the hands of the Potter that they become an integral part of the finished vessel.

Since patience is a necessary virtue to the success of love and faith, let us begin to pray for an increase in patience. For us to be able to exercise greater patience, Father will enroll us in an exercise program. This exercise program may take place right in the home. Energetic children can be a test to the patience of parents. Parents may become impatient with one another. Lack of patience will lead one to be unkind and unloving with family members, and this, of course, will not produce a loving relationship with our heavenly Father.

We may question: Why would not the inner man (this lump of clay), having been fashioned by the Potter’s hands, not possess these heavenly virtues? Let us answer this question with additional questions. Why must the silver pass through the refiner’s fire? Why must the fashioned clay pass through the heated furnace? †

## THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



### A GOOD FIT

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

“Grandma, do you know where my socks are?”

Grandma turned from the sink where she was washing dishes. “No, honey,” she said. “I guess they’re still wherever you put them when you took them off.”

I frowned, trying to think where that might have been. I had been at Grandma’s house all afternoon, and I had done lots of running and playing, both inside and outside.

“Here,” said Grandma, drying her hands. “I’ll help you search for them.” Together we walked from room to room, lifting up cushions and kneeling on the floor to look under furniture. At last Grandma spotted the socks. They were lying in a dark corner next to the door that led to the attic.

“I remember now!” I said to her. “I got my socks dirty from walking in the attic, and so I took them off.”

Grandma smiled. “Give them to me,” she said. “We’ll wash them out and hang them on the rack in the bathroom to dry. By the time you go home this evening, they’ll be clean and ready to put on again.”

After Grandma had hung my clean, wet socks on the rack, she returned to her work at the kitchen sink. “You can wipe the dishes as I wash them,” she said, handing me a dish towel.

I dragged Grandma's high stool over to the sink and climbed up on it. "Grandma," I said, "will you tell me a story while we do the dishes?" Grandma knew lots of stories, and they always seemed to make our work go much faster.

"I was just thinking as we looked for your socks," said Grandma with a smile, "about a time your grandpa lost something very important."

"What did Grandpa lose?" I asked. I had only a dim memory of Grandpa. He had died a few years earlier when I was only four.

"Well," said Grandma, "it was his teeth."

"His teeth!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," said Grandma. "He lost his teeth." She turned to me and smiled. "Your grandpa had false teeth, just like I do."

I knew Grandma had false teeth. She'd had them for as long as I had known her. When I spent the night at Grandma's house, I watched her remove her teeth at bedtime, scrub them with a special toothbrush, and then lay them on the nightstand next to her bed.

"One night," Grandma began, "your grandpa laid his teeth on the little table next to the bed in that old ramshackle house where we lived. When he woke up in the morning, he reached for his teeth, but they were gone!

"Where in the world can my teeth be?" he said to me. 'I know I laid them right here before I went to sleep last night.'

"I don't know," I replied. "They surely did not grow legs and walk away."

"But those teeth had walked away!" Grandma said, turning to me with a little laugh.

"How?" I asked in surprise.

"Well," said Grandma, continuing her story. "We didn't find out for a long time. Grandpa had to buy another set of teeth. We never thought we'd see his old ones again. And then one day we went to fix a baseboard that had come loose in the hallway that led to the outside door. What do you think we found behind the board?"

"I don't know," I answered. "Please tell me!"

"Why, we found your grandpa's teeth!" said Grandma, laughing.

"How did they get there?" I asked in surprise.

"Well," said Grandma, "the teeth were in a rat's nest! As near as we could figure, that old rat had gone scurrying through the house while we slept and had spied your grandpa's teeth. Now, the old rat had no use for those teeth. Surely he should have seen that they would not fit him, but he must have thought he could use them for something, and so he dragged them down off the table and all the way to his nest. It must have taken him awhile."

Grandma shook her head. "All that work," she said, "for something that was of no use to him at all. And poor Grandpa had to go buy another set of teeth."

"That's the funniest story you have ever told me," I said to Grandma. "Can you tell me another one?"

"Maybe later," said Grandma. "Now that the dishes are finished, you can sit down with a nice book and read some stories to yourself."

February 2019

Many times after that day, I thought about the rat that had taken Grandpa's teeth. I pictured the furry animal dragging the teeth down from the table and across the floor to his nest. I pictured the teeth lying in that nest, day after day, useless to anyone—even the rat—because they were not a good fit for him.

There is a lesson for us in this story. We don't need to have something just because someone else has it. Both children and adults are sometimes tempted to be envious of what others have. The Bible tells us that God will supply all of our needs. But it does not say that God will give us everything we want. God knows what is a "good fit" for us, and if we stay close to Him, He will help us to be content with what He has provided for us.

Our wise saying for this month comes from Proverbs 11:23—*The desire of the righteous is only good: but the expectation of the wicked is wrath.* The word *desire* means, "a strong feeling of wanting to have something." The rat had a strong feeling of wanting to have Grandpa's teeth, even though they were not a good fit for a rat.

We must ask God to help us have a strong feeling that makes us want to please Him. We must ask Him to help us desire only what is good for us, and then our lives will be full of peace and contentment, no matter what we do or do not possess.

### Activity

Identify which Christian in Bible times made this statement: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

### Answer to Last Month's Activity

James 1:5, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." †

---

---

## EDITORIAL

(continued from page 1)

February 14, 2017—

Beloved Brother,

Thank you so much! I read these sermons some years ago. Reading them again has been enlightening and inspirational. Such profound truth! I am made to wonder—why can't the present day Church of God apply these principles? Why can't we rise above the derision and strife? What is holding us back? Has Satan dug his claws in so deep that he cannot be conquered? I refuse to believe it!

Three fellow ministers read your article and all said it was truth, but two questioned just how it could work because of the accusations of the past and differences we may have in understanding and application of scriptural texts. One young minister shares my excitement of the possibility of walls of separation being destroyed, but another older minister said I was going to have my expectations dashed because many of the ministers among other fellowships frankly have no intention of ever fellowshiping or working with us. The third says he is hopeful but skeptical.

I am of the mind to get out of the way and let God work! Surely it is God's will that all His children be

Page 17

one! If all concerned could muster the courage to arise above the din and confusion of groupism, and put into practice the principles of these two sermons from 1913, what could our almighty Christ do! I was especially impressed with these two paragraphs—

“Many grave errors have been committed through a lack of understanding the difference between absolute precepts and relative principles. On the one hand through an overzealous desire to add numbers to the church and make the way to heaven easy, some have attempted to accommodate the demands of absolute precepts to the desires of men in such a way as to admit men to the church without their forsaking sin or performing their Christian duties. On the other hand, through an unwise zeal to bring men to the demands of God and keep the church pure, some have made mere relative principles absolute and binding upon all men alike. In this latter class we are likely to be included. We have dealt out unmixed with mercy the just censure due those compromising churches who let down the absolute standard of righteousness and permit men to be deceived into thinking that they are going to heaven in their sins; but we are sure to cause endless trouble and incurable dissensions among ourselves if we attempt to set up a relative principle as an absolute precept and demand all to see it and to practice it alike under all circumstances and conditions.”

“We, as a people, have been irrevocably committed to the heaven-born doctrine of unity. Whether we have hitherto fully understood it or not, unity of the spirit is the basis of all unity. Labor hard as we will to get men’s heads together, unity in the church can never be accomplished until men’s hearts are cemented together in the love of God. It is not enough, however, that we be one in spirit only. We must proceed from the unity of the spirit as a first principle, to the unity of the faith. Though the head and the heart may have, in a degree, a part in each, yet, in a sense, the unity of the spirit pertains to the heart, and the unity of doctrine to the head. The unity of the spirit is accomplished instantaneously upon the regeneration of the soul, but the unity of faith is a progressive work, the accomplishment of which may require considerable time. Since the unity of faith is, in one sense at least, a mental process, we shall have to find some common ground from which to start, some standard of judgment acknowledged by all, if we are to reach a common conclusion. What is this common ground of Christian faith? What but the revealed and written Word of God is the standard of judgment to which we can all unanimously consent? The minute we leave revealed truth and begin to speculate in human theories or to make human laws, we are as certain to be divided as it is manifestly the divine purpose for us to be united. Let us therefore preach the Word, the whole Word, and nothing but the Word.”

—Bro. Tyler

**February 15, 2017—**

Bro. Tyler,

So glad to receive your e-mail. I look forward to your communications.

I perfectly understand the thinking of all three brethren. The doubts of the one brother and the skept-

ticism of the other are certainly valid. I expect that many I know will not only resist this, but fight against it and persecute me and any others who embrace it. (I hope I am proven wrong.) But I believe some of them, hopefully, many if not all, will eventually come to it. It cannot be forced—it must be seen—but I, will with all my being, persevere to lift up His word of truth and the call for true unity. This will not likely be done overnight and it may well be a longer and harder fought battle than we can imagine, but I believe it will ultimately succeed. I hope to see it with my eyes, and a part of me believes I will, but if not, I still believe it will come.

In prayer this morning I thought, “Lord you know our limitations and you know our part; there are things we can and must do, but there are things we cannot do and you must work where our ability ends.” However, I believe the Lord will do His part—He will do what we cannot do. He is certainly not the holdup, man is the holdup. I intend, by the grace of God, to do my part, and I believe brother, you will do yours, and I also believe others will rise to the call and do theirs, both ministers and saints. This is not merely a ministerial work, though we must fulfill our calling in it, but it is a work of the whole body. I believe the saints will gain the vision, even as they have in times past. God was already working with the saints when the sixth seal message came forth, which is why it was so readily accepted. The ministers began to preach what God was already revealing to the people of God and when they heard the certain sound of the trumpet, they rallied! The time was right and the people were in place to receive it.

God bless those brethren. I understand their skepticism—it is founded in reality. But, I am optimistic, and I don’t believe overly optimistic, not a fanciful optimism, but a realistic optimism grounded in faith, grounded in confidence and hope in God. My cry is, “Deliver us, Lord, from this pit of division and make us one again!” Will He deny such a cry? I don’t think so! ...

I have a mind to go public with this burden—whatever the results. I have considered either using our church website or putting up a new one dedicated to that purpose, as well as publishing in your paper if we are able.

Thank you for sending the service—we are one in Christ! I hear the love and urgency for souls in your message—that is the most important thing—the winning, and then nurturing, of precious souls, and I believe that this push for unity is for that very cause: “that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me!” We cannot do the full extent of the work that God gave us to do if we are a fractured body—it is not possible! God help us to have an urgency for souls’ sakes! I will continue to keep you in our prayers, my brother.

Sincerely in Christ’s love and grace,

Bro. Sanford

**February 25, 2017—**

Hello Bro. Tyler,

I pray you are doing well today. I just wanted to drop you a line concerning my present situation. I ask

you to keep this information confidential [for the time being]. Unfortunately, the meeting ended in a state of disagreement concerning the issue of facial hair. ... But it is what it is. I don't even have words to describe how I have felt over the past couple of days—there is a hurt in my heart unlike anything I have ever known. My consolation is that I have searched my heart and I know my motives have not been self-seeking, but only desiring to follow the Lord. I don't believe I could have pleased the Lord through any other course.

As for what's next, I will consider and seek the Lord. I still want to publish my article, but I do not want to be perceived as sowing discord, which I feel some will accuse me of, for they already have. I am going to edit, "Is Christ Divided?" yet again, and seek to make it clearer and more succinct and readable. When I make it public I want it to be right and have the best opportunity of having a good and positive effect.

I appreciate your fellowship and friendship; it means much to me, especially at this hour. Please keep us in your prayers and we will do the same for you, my brother.

—Bro. Sanford

**February 26, 2017—**

My dear Bro. Sanford,

Sorry for the delay in responding. Just arrived home to find your e-mail. I am so, so sorry for the report. My heart goes out to you! It is unbelievable! Is this the Church of God which Jesus purchased with His own blood? It is enough to make one pull out his hair in frustration! Where is the vision? I want to be careful what I say—but I am not interested in trying to force anyone into fellowship with me. Either we have the same Spirit, and we long for love, law, and true unity, or we don't. That's the starting point. But it seems to be like pounding a square peg into a round hole—it won't work. If you and I are frustrated, just think about God! I remember preaching a sermon in camp meeting 1987 entitled, "Frustrating the Grace of God," based on Galatians 2:21, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." As far as I can see, that is exactly what many are unwittingly doing. I am not saying they are intentionally doing it, but God and His grace is still being frustrated!

I am not sure what to say at this point. I truly believe God gave you the vision and burden that you have—He gave the same to me years ago. I support you 100%. I am not trying to cause discord. I am not trying to pull you away from anybody. But I do want to encourage you.

If you feel your ministry is in jeopardy and you need to submit and cut off any correspondence with me, I will understand. But I will ever cherish the knowledge that there is a kindred spirit in Mississippi and dream about "what could have been."

Somehow I believe you will stand your ground and be true to the vision He gave you.

As the chorus says:

"I know the Lord will make a way for me.

If I live a holy life, Shun the wrong and do the right,

February 2019

I know thee Lord will make a way for me."  
... I hope to hear from you soon!

—Bro. Tyler

**February 27, 2017**

My Dear Brother,

Thanks for your reply. ... As for my ministry, my ministry is to do the will of the Lord who called me. With all the hurt and uncertainty, I still believe what God has shown me and don't know how I can pursue any other course. Of great concern to me right now, however, is the welfare of my congregation—I do not want them hurt and that is my great burden.

Thank you so much again for your fellowship and friendship. Surely the Lord has good things in store.

With much love and appreciation,  
Bro. Sanford

**February 28, 2017—**

Good to hear from you. Just so you know, the message, "Love, Law, and Lasting Unity" has been reverberating in my mind and heart ever since I heard it. How someone could find fault with that message is beyond me. Just want you to know that my soul was blessed and is still being blessed by your words.

Yes, I know your congregation's welfare is your prime concern. May the dear Lord guide you. Just know that my feeble voice from Maryland is supporting you before the throne of grace.

—Bro. Tyler

**March 4, 2017—**

Hello Brother,

... Your friendship and fellowship are a great encouragement to me. ...

I am amazed that you were able to preach such a message as "Frustrating the Grace of God" in a camp meeting and publish such an article as "The Diotrephes Syndrome" and have them accepted by your ministers. It is a testament to the godly spirit in your "fellowship." ...

I shared your message, "Frustrating the Grace of God," with some of my saints who are privy to the goings on, and they were much encouraged by it. I redacted any names and places for privacy sake, but they are saying, "We need him to hold us a revival!" to which I say, hopefully someday; and truly I do. I don't remember if I told you that they know you as Theophilus or Theo—they all want to meet Theo!

Please keep us in your prayers, my brother, and we will do the same.

—Bro. Sanford

**March 4, 2017—**

Dear Bro. Sanford,

Thank you for your e-mail. I understand completely your desire for complete confidentiality [at present]. Rest assured my lips are sealed. I would never betray your trust. I did share your article "Is Christ Divided?" with three ministers (with your permission) who have a general knowledge of our rapport but no specifics. But I do appreciate your being specific on what is confidential and what is not.

I am humbled that you have found the message on “Frustrating the Grace of God,” and the article on Diotrephes worthy of merit. As far as I know, not one of my brethren found fault with either, but rather fully supported the principles set forth. We do have a united ministry of humble servants of God. There are a few issues we don’t see exactly alike, but the love and respect we have for each other overrides any tendency to fault-find or embarrass one another. It simply is not the way of brethren.

I think about Abraham and Lot. Their families and herdsmen were squabbling over land and possessions and were on the outs with each other. But Abraham said unto Lot, “Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren” (Genesis 13:8).—Yes, I once preached a message on that thought :).

We are family! We are brethren! God help us! It is like this is but a voice in the wilderness. Is anybody listening?

I found comfort in the fact that you shared our thoughts with some in your congregation and they found the thoughts encouraging. Maybe somebody is listening.

Yours in Him,  
Bro. Theo

*Lord willing, we will conclude sharing this correspondence in next month’s editorial.* †

---

---

## WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

**Radio Message by Bro. Rupert Shippy**

(with excerpts taken from the book, *The Church of God*, by the late D. S. Warner)

**W**E ARE so thankful for the blessings of the Lord and the privilege of bringing to you the truth of the Word of God. I want to speak to you on the topic, “What Is the Church?”

The words *church* and *churches* occur in the New Testament 112 times, always translated from *ekklesia*, which would have been more correctly rendered “congregation,” which, with the Bible qualifications, would have read, “the congregation of God,” “the congregation of the firstborn,” etc., denoting its divine Founder and Owner. And, “the congregation that was at Antioch,” “the congregation of God which is at Corinth,” “the congregations of Asia,” “the congregations of Galatia,” etc., denoting the different geographical locations of the congregations of God. But whether we use the word *church*, as in common use, or *congregation*, the more correct appellation, we should only attach such meaning to it as agrees with the Word of God. To use a Bible word out of its biblical meaning is perverting the Bible.

What then is the Bible definition of the Church? Answer: “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:22, 23). “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the

preeminence” (Colossians 1:18). “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church” (Colossians 1:24).

The Church is the body of Christ. And its being the body of Christ, necessarily includes all His members. Therefore, to call an earthly building “the Church” is ridiculous, and to call an organized division the church is subverting the truth. No sect contains all the body of Christ, therefore, no sect is the Church of God. Then as honest men, who expect to be judged by the Word of God, let us never call anything “the Church” but the body of Christ; that is, all the saved, either universally, or in any given locality. We are the body of Christ. Who belongs to the church? Those who are saved, sanctified, and called-out, and those who are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people.

We are told that Abraham “looked for a city which hath foundations.” So then, a question is asked: Who is the Founder of the Church? According to Hebrews 11:10, “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” And the apostle Paul says to the converted Hebrews, “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Hebrews 12:22-24).

That city—“whose builder and maker is God”—we have come unto in the gospel dispensation, and it is “the church of the firstborn.” Christ, who was “God ... manifest in the flesh,” is the founder [Thank God for that!], builder, and maker of the church. “For this man [Christ Jesus] was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God” (Hebrews 3:3, 4). “Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). Again, we see here that the Church of God did not originate from man. She was purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ. “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church ... holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:25-27). Jesus said, “Upon this rock [Christ] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

When was the Church built? The last text cited above speaks of her building as then in the future. Now, read I Corinthians 3:9: “Ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.” Ephesians 2:20-22: “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” I Peter 2:5, “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a

spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

We are told, Friends, that the *church* is defined as “his body.” Ephesians 1:23, “Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” The church proper did not exist until the fullness of Christ came, which was on the day of Pentecost. Then it was fully set up, and “fitly joined together and compacted.” That being the time of the founding of the Church of God, it follows that every religious body that has since come into existence is not the Church of God, but a daughter of confusion, born out of due season. This includes Romanism and all the Protestant sects. We have so much confusion in the world today. So many are thinking and believing that they are God’s church, and they believe in so many different things. They are doing many things that are contrary to the Word of God.

Who is the Foundation of the Church built upon? “Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste” (Isaiah 28:16). “For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God?” (Psalm 18:31). “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (I Corinthians 3:11).

We cannot try to lay any other foundation than that which is laid. If we try, we will be climbing up some other way. We are told if we try to climb up some other way, we are called thieves and robbers. If we try to lay some other foundation, we will preach and practice sin-you-must and do-as-you-like. We cannot do as we like and still be Church of God members.

We are to unite God’s church. The way to unite God’s church is found in the book of Ephesians 2:20, 21: “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.” Holiness is the theme. The foundation in which God’s church is built upon is holiness, righteousness, purity, and unity.

According to Ephesians 2:20, the apostles were foundation-stones. If we were held to apply the “rock” in Matthew 16:18 to Peter, there is nothing in such an application of the text that conflicts with the scriptures. The apostles all being foundations, of course, Peter was one of them. He was not that foundation, but he spoke the truth: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Because Peter told the truth, Jesus told him that upon what he said He will build His church. The church is built upon the truth and nothing but the truth. Jesus does not single Peter out here because he had any preeminence over the rest, but because he was conversing with Him, and his name, *Cephas* (a stone), called out the assertion. For evidence that all twelve were foundations, see Revelation 21:14. Christ is the all-underlying foundation. The apostles, being first chosen and inspired to give us the New Testament, were foundation stones occupying a connecting position between Christ the Rock, and the rest of the building. Again, Christ is the Rock. The church stands firm on the promises of God. Only one structure can stand on one foundation. Christ built His church on Himself. All later built organizations are without Christ as their founda-

tion, and must perish. Christ’s church will stand forever and ever.

Who is the Head of the Church? “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him [Christ] to be the head over all things to the church” (Ephesians 1:22). “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:15, 16). “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing” (Ephesians 5:23, 24). “Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God” (Colossians 2:18, 19).

The head of an institution is its lawmaker. “For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us” (Isaiah 33:22). According to James 4:12, “There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.” Since Christ is the Lawgiver and the Husband of the church, He has every right to tell us what to do and how to live. We want to follow His footsteps.

All organisms that make their own laws, creeds, disciplines, and systems of co-operation, do not hold the Head—Christ. Their law-making synods and general conferences ignore the divine Lawgiver, usurp the place of Christ, and sit in the stead of God, and are not Christ’s church, which is subject to Him.

Christ is the Door of the Church. “Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. ... I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture” (John 10:7, 9).

In these scriptures we see clearly that Christ is the door of the church, and salvation the mode of induction, and that it is a door that stands open continually, and no man can shut.

Christ is not the door of any sect, therefore no sect is the Church of God. The experience of salvation does not constitute a person a member of any sect on earth; therefore they are not the Church of God. All sects have doors—a manner of admitting members—that are open and shut by men, hence are unlike the Church of God, which no man can open and shut.

The church has standards and good behavior. Here what Paul says in Romans 12:1, 2: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” †

**Church of God (Universal), Inc.**  
**The Way of Truth**  
**P. O. Box 88**  
**Hagerstown, MD 21741-0088 U.S.A.**

**Non-Profit Organization**  
**U. S. POSTAGE PAID**  
**Mercersburg, PA**  
**Permit No. 15**

## **RADIO LOG**

### **The Way of Truth Broadcast**

**Alvin A. Craig, Radio Minister**

(Aired on Sundays unless otherwise noted.)

**Alabama**, Mobile, WIJD 1270, AM & 97.9 FM 6:00 A.M.  
5,000 Watts—Heard in part of AL, and MS

**Arkansas**, No. Little Rock, KMTL 760, 10:30 A.M.  
10,000 Watts—Heard in part of AR, MO, TN, MS and LA  
*Listen live—Go to [www.kmtl760am.com](http://www.kmtl760am.com)*

**Georgia**, Augusta, WFAM 1050, 8:00 P.M. Wednesday & 11:30 A.M. Sun.  
5,000 Watts—Heard in part of GA and SC

**Illinois**, Carmi, WROY 1460, 9:00 A.M.  
1,000 Watts—Heard in part of IL and IN

**Kentucky**, Prestonsburg, WDOC 1310, 7:30 A.M.  
5,000 Watts—Heard in part of KY, WV and VA

**Louisiana**, Ball, KWDF 840 & 99.7 FM, 9:00 A.M.  
10,000 Watts—Heard in part of TX, AR, MS and LA

**North Carolina**, Mooresville, WHIP 1350, 6:30 A.M. Sat.  
1,000 Watts—Heard in part of NC  
*Listen live—[tunein.com/radio/whip-1350-s29320/](http://tunein.com/radio/whip-1350-s29320/)*

**Oklahoma**, Marlow, KFXI-FM 92.1, 7:00 A.M.  
100,000 Watts—Heard in part of OK and TX  
*Listen live—Go to [www.kfxi.com](http://www.kfxi.com)*

**Pennsylvania**, Altoona, WFBG 1290, 9:00 A.M.  
5,000 Watts—Heard in part of PA and MD

**Pennsylvania**, Martinsburg, WJSM 1110, 11:03 A.M.  
1,000 Watts—Heard in part of PA *Listen live—Go to [www.wjsm.com](http://www.wjsm.com)*

**Pennsylvania**, Martinsburg, WJSM-FM 92.7, 11:03 A.M. & 7:30 P.M.  
1,460 Watts—Heard in part of PA *Listen live—Go to [www.wjsm.com](http://www.wjsm.com)*

**Tennessee**, Chattanooga, WLMR 1450, 3:00 P.M.  
1,000 Watts—Heard in part of TN, GA and AL

**Tennessee**, Chattanooga, WLMR-FM 103.3, 3:00 P.M.  
Heard in part of TN, GA and AL

**Virginia**, Narrows, WZFM-FM 101.3, 8:00 A.M.  
3,000 Watts—Heard in part of VA

**Virginia**, Blacksburg, WKEX 1430, 8:00 A.M.  
3,000 Watts—Heard in part of VA

**Virginia**, Christiansburg, WKEX-FM 105.9, 8:00 A.M.  
3,000 Watts—Heard in part of VA

**Virginia**, Lynchburg, WKPA 1390, 1:30 P.M. Fri., 5:30 P.M. Sat. & 6:00 A.M. Sun.  
4,700 Watts—Heard in part of VA

**Virginia**, Lynchburg, WKPA-FM 106.7, 1:30 P.M. Fri., 5:30 P.M. Sat. & 6:00 A.M. Sun.  
250 Watts—Heard in part of VA

**Virginia**, Roanoke, WKBA 1550, 1:30 P.M. Fri., 5:30 P.M. Sat. & 6:00 A.M. Sun.  
10,000 Watts—Heard in part of VA and WV  
*Listen live—Go to [www.wkbaradio.com](http://www.wkbaradio.com)*

**Virginia**, Smithfield, WKGM 940, 6:30 A.M.  
10,000 Watts—Heard in part of VA and NC

**West Virginia**, Summersville, WCWV 92.9, 8:30 A.M.  
50,000 Watts—Heard in part of VA and WV

#### **SHORTWAVE**

**WWCR**, Nashville, Tennessee 4.840 on SW band  
Sunday, 7:30 A.M. Eastern Time—12:30 G.M.T.  
*Listen live—Go to [www.wwcr.com](http://www.wwcr.com)*

**WINB**, Red Lion, Pennsylvania 9.320 on SW band  
Friday, 9:30 P.M. Eastern Time, Saturday, 9:30 P.M. Eastern Time—2:30 G.M.T.  
*Listen live—Go to [www.winb.com](http://www.winb.com)*



## **COMING MEETINGS**

### **2019 JAMAICA CONVENTION**

**Cornwall Mountain, Westmoreland**

**March 5-10, 2019, Lord willing**

**Sis. Ruth Cummings, Host Pastor**



### **2019 INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF GOD CONVENTION**

**12819 Point Salem Rd.**

**Hagerstown, Maryland U.S.A.**

**July 2-7, 2019, Lord willing**

**Bro. Gregory E. Tyler, Host Pastor**