

The Way of Truth

Vol. 77 “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” No. 3

What Are You Willing to Deny for Christ's Sake?

See "Denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts"
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March
2019

Editorial

THIS IS part three of my effort to inspire a move toward the fulfillment of Christ's prayer in St. John 17 that His disciples be one, by showing through e-mail correspondence, of how the Lord brought two strangers together with a common burden for unity among God's people. Last month, our readers discovered that for reasons of anonymity, Bro. Darrell Sanford often referred to me as Theophilus. I, in turn, often referred to him as Silas. I have received many positive responses from the first two parts. Hopefully, this final look at our exchanges will also prove to be a blessing.

March 9, 2017—

Dear Bro. Sanford,

... Last Sunday, I spoke on the thought, "The Influence of the Holy Spirit in Our Daily Lives." I believe if we allow Him, the Spirit will guide us into all truth and will lead us together. I believe that the closer we get to God, the closer we will get to one another. I have used this example before: Suppose we were scattered in a room and Christ was in the middle. As each person takes a step toward Christ, something remarkable happens! We also get closer to one another. With each step we take toward Him, we will find ourselves closer to each one who is taking a step likewise. It is impossible to stray from each other as long as we are moving closer to our Lord.

May we ever draw closer to our Lord and to each other. I know sometimes you might feel almost overwhelmed, but be encouraged brother. "There is more with us than be with them!"

Your burden is my burden; Galatians 6:2, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." You are not alone.

—Bro. Theophilus

March 9, 2017—

Dear Bro. Theo, (LOL)

So good to hear from you. Thank you for the encouragement. I love the thought of all of us moving closer to each other as we move closer to Christ; that is so true—it can be no other way! By God's grace, I mean to keep moving in that holy direction.

... Thank you again for your fellowship and encouragement.

Yours in Christ,
Bro. Sanford

March 17, 2017—

My Dear Bro. Tyler,

I very much look forward to your correspondence. It always lifts my spirit and encourages my heart. I often feel so insufficient and ineffective for the tasks before me, whether as a pastor, or in this great endeavor we have embraced, but I know God is sufficient and effective in all we do, and that it is through Him and for His cause we do these things.

Truly, the enemy is warring against my mind because of the recent developments ..., but my consolation is that I know what God has shown me, and I cannot go back on that revelation, whatever the cost. I have been

somewhat torn lately as to whether I am moving too slow in fully proclaiming this burden. What am I waiting for? Did Jesus show me/us this great travesty of [the lack of] unity that we may sit upon it? ... I don't want the flame to fade and the urgency to wane. I do know that once I go fully public with this message, I will be defamed as never before, and though that has been done privately already, it hurts to know that will be put before the saints of all the congregations in such a manner. These saints are my friends and brethren, and I can only hope that they will know me for who I am and see the practicality and soundness of our message. Brother, I do not seek to cause trouble, but this is how I am depicted: a troublemaker. I certainly don't mean to whine, my dear Theophilus, but merely to share the war in my mind. Still, as I consider "troublemakers" of the past, such as Jeremiah, Elijah, John, Wycliffe, Huss, and others, I suppose we are in good company.

I am considering Ephesians 1 for my message Sunday, focusing on verse 10 for my title, "That He Might Gather Together in One." It stirs my soul to read the words of this chapter, "Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure ..." He has made known unto us the mystery of His will—Jesus Christ built a church for the glory of God and for the propagation of the gospel. He has made all His people privy to it, a part of it, He has given us a place in it, a duty to spread it to all the world, and what are we doing with it? Surely, He is weary of this Church of God professing one undivided, unified body, but not practicing the same. He purposed to have *one* church—all His people in *one* fellowship—and the stubbornness and strong will of MAN has stymied that!

Yes, God is getting service, He is getting our consecrated hearts, our daily lives lived in holiness, but until He has the church He built functioning as the church He built, He is not getting all He wants or deserves. Surely, many are not allowing Jesus Christ to be the Head of His church, and how long will He put up with that? He has been very patient. I hate to sound too harsh, but it seems there is a great deal of man-rule rather than Christ-rule going on. Brother, it is when I meditate on these things that I feel I am dragging my feet!

This is certainly the kind of thinking and speaking which has caused me to be branded as a striker against the ministry and a troublemaker. May God grant us equal amounts of wisdom and boldness to go forth!

My brother, as always I appreciate your fellowship and friendship, and I look forward to your next communication. May God bless and keep you; you are constantly in our prayers.

Your brother,
Silas

March 20, 2017—

My Dear Bro. Silas,

Your recent e-mail touched my heart. I was

ABOUT THE COVER

On our cover is Mount Baker in the North Cascades of Washington in the United States. Mount Baker has the second-most thermally active crater in the Cascade Range after Mount Saint Helens. At 10,781 feet, it is the third-highest mountain in Washington.

The beauty of God's creation is indescribable. Great is the Lord our God!

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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—Gregory E. Tyler, Editor

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March 16, 2017—

Dear Bro. Sanford,

I hope this note finds you encouraged and enjoying the blessings of the Lord. I was burdened this morning to just reach out and let you know you are in my daily prayers. I find myself checking my e-mail, hoping to find a note from my brother in Mississippi. It blesses me to read your thoughts on things in your present situation, and I am inspired by your resolve to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. I know it is not possible to communicate every day, but for some reason I just like hearing from you at least on a weekly basis.

I find sharing our thoughts on messages, on the present condition of the Church of God, on the possibilities through our God when the environment meets His approval—all are very edifying to me.

Attached is a message I preached in 2011 that I thought you would enjoy. I took the liberty of editing out any references to who I am or where this was preached. Also, I added a little bit that I thought should be included. I trust it will inspire you as your messages have inspired me. After all, “Love, Law, and Lasting Unity” is still inspiring me!

Yours in His service,
Bro. Tyler

(Editorial continued on page 19)

moved by the depth of soul I discerned underneath your words—the hurt, the disappointment, the passion. I sense you are experiencing both highs and lows of spirit: the excitement of a vision of Christ’s burden that we all be one as He and the Father are one; that we be one in them that the world may believe; the fervent hope that Satan’s efforts of dividing God’s people be exposed and driven into oblivion. There is a witness of the Spirit that you are on the right track. These thoughts are exhilarating! On the other hand, the rejection of brethren you love, the false accusations, the feeling you are all alone, the devil trying to plant seeds of doubt, “Yea, hath God said?” These thoughts tend to squeeze the very life from you. ... What a roller coaster of emotions we are on!

I don’t see any whining! You are simply opening your heart’s burdens to a brother who is on your side. We all need someone to confide in; someone who can share in what we are experiencing. I want to share ... in your burdens, in your triumphs, in your discouragements, in your passions. Hopefully, I can help lighten your load simply by being a good listener. I hope you know I care and always appreciate the confidence you have in me. May nothing on earth or hell withal ever rend us from each other! ...

I do not feel as though you are dragging your feet. We have to be wise in how we proceed. We can’t run ahead of the Spirit nor lag behind Him. Therefore, we need to let the Lord lead us. He is going to open some doors soon, I believe. Lean on His leadership, dear brother! ...

Your brother through His precious blood,
Theo

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PHILIPPINE CONVENTION

REPORT

BY BRO. RALPH CRAIG

THEME: "BE PERFECT AS YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN IS PERFECT"

ONCE AGAIN the Lord was present to bless the Philippine convention in December. As usual, the services ran for five days—December 26-30, 2018. As of this writing, there are 44 different congregations of the Church of God in the Philippines and many of them were represented in the convention services. There were four brethren from the United States who attended: Bro. Doug Shenberger, Bro. Brian Richards, and Bro. Ralph Craig from Hagerstown; also, Bro. Gary Alwell from Deville, Louisiana, was there for his first time. In total, there was close to 600 in attendance. There was a fund started at the end of the meeting for the expansion of the existing church building in Paniqui, with the desire to be able to accommodate more people more comfortably.

The services were conducted, as usual, starting with a six o'clock morning devotion before breakfast. After that, the young people and others took part in Bible activities until 10:00 A.M. Then there was a regular morning service, a 2:00 P.M. service, and a 7:00 P.M. evangelistic service each night.

The congregational singing is primarily done in the *Tagalog* language. Many of the special songs are rendered in English. Bro. Ralph sang a song in every morning and evening service. The preaching is mostly done in the *Tagalog* language, although many of the ministers endeavor to add some English phrases throughout the messages.

The pastor of the Paniqui congregation, Bro. Rey Fabian, gave the devotional message in the first morning prayer meeting. In the 10:00 A.M. service, we heard a message by Bro. Arnold Ordonio. Bro. Ed Coraraton brought the message for the 2:00 P.M. service. During the 7:00 P.M. service, Bro. Gary Alwell shared his testimony with the saints, which was very inspiring. Bro. Doug Shenberger was scheduled to preach the first night service, but he became ill upon his arrival in the Philippines and was not able to speak until the fourth night. Bro. Gary Alwell brought the message, "How Will You Finish Your Course?" It was a very challenging message, and many dear ones came to the altar seeking God's help at the end of the service.

On the second day of the convention, Thursday, Bro. Antonio Dumrique brought us a message on the theme in the 10:00 A.M. service. At the end of the service, we witnessed a backslider's return to the Lord, which brought much joy to many. In the 2:00 P.M. service, Bro. Greg Escullar brought a very good message entitled, "Salvation is Transformation, not Reformation." Bro. Brian Richards brought us a very good teaching message in the 7:00 P.M. service entitled, "Becoming Perfect." Again, there were many souls at the altar seeking for God's help.

In the Friday 10:00 A.M. service, Sis. Meldy Santiago brought a message entitled, "We Are Designed to Become Perfect." It was another very good message on the theme. She referenced the scripture that tells us "we cannot do anything to the truth, only for the truth." For the 2:00 P.M. service, we heard a message from Bro. Bernie Neri on, "The Perfect Qualities of a Christian Man." Bro. Bernie enjoys to make the congregation giggle at times, and this message was no exception, but I am sure that he brought out some very good and necessary truths in the message. For the 7:00 P.M. service, Bro. Brian, Bro. Ralph, and Bro. Gary sang a trio entitled, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." To bring the message, it was Bro. Gary Alwell, for his second time in the pulpit. This time he preached to us about the prodigal son in a message entitled, "God's Great Love." Bro. Gary had great freedom and liberty in presenting the Word of God to the congregation.

10:00 A.M. Saturday, Sis. Rose Marzan brought us a message on, "The Fullness of Spiritual Life." Once again many souls were at the altar seeking the Lord's help. Before the afternoon service, there was a Baptismal service held. There were 10 candidates who presented themselves to be baptized. We trust that the Lord will bless these dear ones and keep them true and faithful. Then in the afternoon service, we heard from Bro. Rudy Reyes. He spoke on the need of being "Perfect Through Sanctification." This was a very good instructional message. We thank the Lord for touching Bro. Doug and allowing him to be able to bring the message for us in the evening service. Not knowing what Bro. Gary Alwell had preached on the night before, Bro. Doug also preached on the story of the prodigal son. Those were two messages from the same text, but they were two very different messages in the thoughts that were presented and how they were presented. It is amazing how God can use His Word in so many different ways. It seemed as though Bro. Gary had planted the night before, then Bro. Doug watered, and God brought the increase. There were many souls at the altar seeking the Lord for salvation after the message.

For the Sunday morning service, Bro. Jet Batalla brought the message, "The Church of God, the Perfect Church." The message for the afternoon was presented by Bro. Rogelio Eupenia. For the final service in the evening, once again Bro. Doug Shenberger brought a very good evangelistic message, and souls again were seeking the Lord. In all, there were a total of 61 precious souls who came seeking salvation throughout the week. We trust and pray that every one of them found what they were seeking for, and that God will keep them close to Him.

We want to thank all of those faithful workers behind the scenes who did the cooking, the cleaning, and all those things necessary to make a successful meeting. May God richly bless each one for your labor of love!

Again, we give thanks to our heavenly Father for graciously blessing the Philippine convention, and we trust that His blessings will be upon the Church of God all around the world! †

Please pray for the Filipino brethren!

Denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts

2018 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Doug Shenberger



WE APPRECIATE the fine congregation that has gathered together this evening. I am sure it has been said several times already that there's a warm welcome for each and every one. We appreciate you taking the time and putting forth the effort to be here in our Hagerstown convention.

I don't expect that you'll need to spend a lot of time finding verses in your Bible. Even though these scriptures have been preached from a number of times this week, I'd like to draw your attention once again to Titus 2:11, 12, that our theme is taken from: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

If I would read verse 12 slightly different, I could read simply "Teaching us that, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." There are a lot of people who would prefer that verse to read that way. A lot of religions today either ignore that part of the verse that says *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts*, or they'd like to ignore it. Yes, the last part of that verse says "we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," but it is a lot easier for people to think about putting something on, adding something to, and trying to do better, than it is for them to think about the word *denying*. I have entitled my thoughts, "Denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts."

One of the definitions of the word *deny* is, "to restrain one's self from gratification of desires." Now, if we're going to think about denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we need to have some kind of an idea of what we're talking about. We need to understand what we are talking about when we are speaking of denying ourselves, or restraining ourselves from gratifying our desires. We want to know what is involved. "What do I have to deny?" It's not just "What do I get to do?"; but rather, "What do I have to deny myself?" That gets our attention in a little bit different way. It makes us think, because a lot of times as human beings, we don't really like the idea of restraining ourselves from gratifying a desire. There are a lot of examples, of course, of ungodliness and worldly lusts that could be mentioned, but I'd like to look at a few of them this evening to help to get a better idea of what we need to deny.

DENYING UNBELIEF

The first one I'd like to mention is *unbelief*. Now, you could define unbelief in a couple of ways. There are people who are actively unbelievers. There are Agnostics and Atheists. They are active in their unbelief. They almost take pride in it. "I don't believe God exists," they say. They are very active in their unbelief. Do you know that's a relatively small portion of humanity? Most people, in one way or another, believe that God exists. But there IS a God! They might not have a very explicit

belief. It might be a very general belief, or might not be well thought out, but it's instinctive in humanity to believe that there is a God. Most people believe there is a God. If you would ask them, they'll say, "Yes, I believe there is a God."

Most people have a general belief in God, but you'll find that they don't often believe in His Word. They have an idea about God. They believe that there's a power somewhere out there, and maybe or maybe not it's involved in life, and that it's generally good, but when they really get into trouble, maybe then they think they should call on God. That's about the extent of a lot of people's belief in God. But they don't know His Word. They haven't taken the time to read and to understand His Word. They don't know who God really is. Unbelief—it's everywhere; it's prevalent; it's the general condition of mankind. I'd like to tell you that it is wrong to believe in God that way. That is ungodly. To be created by almighty God, who created this world and placed in the human family a soul, and to not take the time, have an interest, or be willing to read His Word, learn about Him, understand Him, and to know Him is ungodly. That is ungodly and wrong. Unbelief in the almighty God is wrong. I don't think most people really realize that it is.

DENYING HUMANISM

Another thing that's ungodly is *humanism*. Do you know what humanism is? It's the elevation of man's thoughts, man's ideas and reasoning above God. It's thinking that this human mind (or maybe someone who has a higher IQ than mine) is able to understand things, is able to reason and figure out things, and is able to know better than God does. This reasoning is prevalent in a lot of different areas in life. One area that it is prevalent in is in religion. People are so certain that they can come up with the right way to heaven. In their minds, in their thinking, they don't have to study the Word of God and give weight to God's Word. But human reasoning can get us there. Human reasoning can create an understanding of how to live. "I can reason my way into what's right for me."

Humanism is also prevalent in a glorification of human intelligence: what we've created, what has been invented. All the technology and understanding that we have today glorifies human beings as to where they believe there's no need for God. "We're not dependent upon God." There's a lot of people who think that in the next 15-20 years that mankind is going to solve the keys of life, and they'll be able to have extension of life and live for extended periods of time. There are a lot of people who are working and trusting and believing in that. They don't need to depend upon God. The human being that God created in His image is being elevated above God. They believe there's no Creator, just some

random chance. A big bang created all of this. What a belief! The pride of man is ungodly. In reality, it's ungodliness. It's wrong to look at the family of man and elevate our standing. The Lord said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways." He has higher thoughts. He has a higher way and a higher understanding. God is God.

DENYING SELFISHNESS

Another thing that's ungodly is *selfishness*. "Me first! what feels good to me; what I want to do. Me, I'm the center of the universe." You know, that's normal in a one-year-old. God did not intend that for an adult. Selfishness—if it feels good, do it, whatever the desire. That's not godly. That's ungodliness. God is to be first. He is to be worshiped.

DENYING MATERIALISM

Another thing that's ungodly is *materialism*. I know of some people who worship the earth. The Bible tells us about those people. They worship the creature more than the Creator. But there are people who actually worship the earth: the stones, the trees, the animals which are the creation of God. They believe that's where the power is, and they can touch stones and feel the power of the earth. They worship the earth. There are a lot more people who worship their possessions, the things of this material world.

There was a very rich and wealthy man who once owned a lot of land. Someone asked him, "Is there anything else you want." He said, "All I ever wanted was the land next to mine." There was never enough. No matter how much he got, he just wanted the land next to his. There are a lot of people who are living their lives like that. There's no contentment. They want more. Do you know why? There's an emptiness in the human heart when a place that God has created for Himself is not filled by Him. That emptiness causes people to seek to fill their lives with other things to meet that need, to fill in that missing part. People focus their lives on their possessions and gaining more of the latest things. It's ungodly, because it is putting something else in the place that was designed for God.

DENYING REBELLION

Another thing that's ungodly is *rebellion*. Did you ever meet a rebel? I've seen some rebels in my lifetime. Rebellion! The Bible says, "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." It's fighting against authority. A lot of times, just because it's there. There's not a lot of reason to it. A lot of times it is not even for your own good. It's just rebellion against proper authority. "Don't tell me what to do." There's a spirit that causes people to have rebellion in their hearts. It's an evil spirit; it's ungodly. Rebellion against righteousness has caused many to go out into a life of sin and destruction, because once people start rebelling against the Spirit of God, they lay themselves open to many wrong influences and wrong paths. The devil is seeking to get people to rebel, for he knows that it puts them on a path that often leads to their destruction.

DENYING MAN'S APPROVAL OVER GOD'S

Another thing, in thinking about ungodliness and worldly lusts, is: *people are seeking man's approval*

above God's approval. This can become a controlling thing in people's lives. "What do people think of me? What is someone going to say?" You know, sometimes there are real consequences to that. It may be our friends; it may be someone close to us; it may be our family. Sometimes it's just the people at work. It can be many different people; but whenever what other people think of us becomes something that controls and determines our actions before God, it's ungodly. In this day and age, it comes down to "not enough people are going to like me on Facebook." There are people who don't really have a very good day if some people didn't like what they posted on Facebook. Popularity, favor, and the approval of man are powerful forces, and they affect people. These become more powerful in their lives than what the holy God wants them to do and His approval upon their lives. It's secondary to the approval and acceptance of man. That's ungodly.

DENYING EASE

One other thing that's ungodly is *ease*—"laziness, sensuality, and a giving of ourselves over to a lack of purpose." Now, there's a place for relaxation. There's a place for relaxation if it is done properly. So much today is based on continual stimulation of the senses. Pleasure, ease, and just something to fulfill human pleasures and desires. It's ungodly to live a life that's just focused on the flesh. That's not what God planned for mankind when He created such a wonderful creation that's so capable and able to think, to reason, to work, and to do. It creates a miserable life in the end because people end up in addictions of all types. All types of addictions in the world are around us today, because people are seeking to fulfill their desires and senses and not fulfilling a purpose. God created man to work. He planned for man to have work. He even made weeds to grow so man will have more work to do. Any of you have a garden?

Part of our text tonight says: "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, ..." I'm going to ask you a question. Can you do that? Can you deny, even the list of things I brought before you tonight of ungodliness? It's not possible for sinful man to do that. You might say, "There is something on that list that you mentioned that I don't do." That's very possible because some personalities are less prone to some weaknesses than others. There are some people who are naturally more diligent than others. There are some people who are naturally more giving and loving than others.

If you look across that list and think about the foundational nature of what I mentioned this evening, it is not possible to truly deny those ungodly things and worldly lusts in your own human strength. That's why most religions try to focus on adding on—on improvement, but not denying. If you just add some church attendance, if you just add some good works, if you do some self-help (a three-point program), that will make you better. You'll find more happiness. What would it do? It will just cover up what's underneath because the denying is not happening. It creates hypocrisy. People talk about religion and about the goodness of God. They talk about how wonderful things are and about how their congregation is growing. They talk about having

multiple services and doing all these works, but are they denying ungodliness? That's not the same thing, is it?

SALVATION IS FOR ALL MEN

Again, part of our text: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). That's one of the most wonderful things about the message of the gospel. The gospel is for everybody. You don't have to be born into a certain family or a certain bloodline; you don't have to have certain financial benefits; you don't have to live in a certain area. The gospel is for "all men"—the whole world. The grace of God (the unmerited favor of God) has brought salvation. Verse 12: "Teaching us [a lesson for the family of man; instruction for the family of man.] that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

Salvation involves repentance. Before anyone can come to God and be saved, he has to truly come to the place where he sees himself as ungodly. If you can't see yourself as ungodly tonight, then you are in a dangerous situation, because when the Spirit of God deals with the human heart and convicts the human soul, He helps you to see that you have a need and you are indeed ungodly. You have to come to the place where you see that need before you're ever willing to repent and seek forgiveness. The forgiveness of God was purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ. It's only through the grace of God that has brought salvation that you'll ever be able to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.

When a person comes and repents before God and He forgives him, He makes him a new creature in Christ. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). That person now has the opportunity to be filled with the Spirit of God. He will be empowered by God. That person is prepared and equipped to be able to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.

SEEING GOD AS HE IS

If we deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, what's left? Godliness. If we deny ungodliness and worldly lusts through the power and the grace of almighty God, and through the plan of salvation, godliness is left. We're going to have a belief in God; we're going to know God; we're going to experience the love of God; we're going to know Him for who He is; we're going to see Him in His majesty and in His power; we're going to believe in His Word. We're not going to read the Bible and decide, "Well, I don't need to worry about that part. That's kind of inconvenient and confusing. I'll just change that a little bit and make that better." No! We're going to believe in God's Word. We're going to believe that it's the inspired Word of God, and it's designed and intended and given for a purpose. That purpose is to help us to know God and how to love and serve Him. We're going to understand our place in relation to God. We're going to see God as He is—high and lifted up, holy, and dwelling in a holy place.

We're going to see ourselves as we are. We're not going to elevate our thinking and try to put it above God's thinking. We're not going to reason in our own

minds why it's OK to be ungodly. We're going to find that we have a servant's heart. It's not going to be "me first" any more, or what's best for me, what gets me the most, or what puts me in first place, because we're going to see other people and have a burden and a love for other people that God has. We're going to see that God loves people and He wants the best for them. Since God loves people that much, then we're to love people. We're to endeavor to help people, to witness, to lift up, and to be there in times of need.

We're going to have an eternal focus. Yes, we enjoy the blessings of this world. We enjoy the beauty of God's creation. We enjoy the material blessings that come our way, but we don't have to focus our lives on them. We don't have to make that the purpose of our lives. We don't have to hoard them up for ourselves.

The Bible says that the cattle on a thousand hills are God's. He's not poor. His hand is not shortened. He's not unable. Too many people live like, there's nothing there for tomorrow. They have to hoard up as much as they can for themselves. The Bible tells us what? The flowers don't worry. The birds are not worrying that God's not going to take care of them tomorrow. We need to live a life with an eternal focus, not focused on this time world.

We're going to live lives that have God's approval. When we really experience God's approval on our lives, in our hearts, on our families, and what we're doing in our lives, we realize how short-sighted it was to worry about what our neighbors thought, what our closest friend thought, or what anybody else thought about us. It wasn't even significant, compared to the experience of the approval of God. You know, man's approval is not consistent anyway. One person approves of you and the other disapproves of you. Something changed over the weekend, and no one told you, so now you're not approved by anybody. God's not that way. He's always the same. When we have God's approval on our lives, it makes everything different. It makes life beautiful. It's a beautiful way to live.

HAVING A PURPOSE

You'll also find the joy in having a purpose. Do you know a lot of people are living without a purpose? If you're living without a purpose, it can be exhausting. If you don't have a purpose that really energizes you, it causes you not to want to get out of bed in the morning. There are people who act like it's a drudgery. Life's just an endless drudgery. Day after day they just go to work, but when you really have a purpose in life, there's a difference. God gives a great purpose. You'll find that whenever you have a great purpose, it gives you energy; energy you didn't know you had because you have something that's exciting.

Let me give you an illustration: *Just say you would take a child and say, "It's time to practice on the piano." The child is not really excited to practice, so he starts to feel dreadfully sick. I mean he's feeling terrible. He's so weak he can hardly sit up straight, and you take that child and say to him, "Let's go outside and play some ball." You talk about miraculous recovery! He's not the least bit tired.* You know, we're a little bit like that sometimes. We can think we're pretty tired, and it's been a long week; but if we have a big enough purpose,

it gives us energy, some excitement, some reason to live and work. God gives us that.

We're having some excitement this week at convention. Blessings from God. Whenever we have this excitement, we're not going to be nearly as attracted to the type of entertainment that the world offers. The world is trapping a lot of people in entertainment today; just mindless entertainment. They get involved in some kind of a game and they go on and on. That's the kind of bondage that people get into today. The love of God will give them a real purpose, something worth living for, and something that when they lie down to sleep at night, they're happy about their lives.

CONCLUSION

Are you denying ungodliness and worldly lusts in your life? If the answer to that question is no, I would ask you, would you like to? Would you like to have the power to deny ungodliness? That's a serious question. You have to answer that. Do you want to live a godly life? Do you want to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts that are controlling you that you can't escape in your own strength? It's important that you realize this. You can't make up your mind, "I'm just going to try to do better." There's no multiple-point program that you can do that will put you on a path to where eventually, you won't be ungodly any more.

There's only one way to be able to have what it takes to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts out of your life. That's because the grace of God has brought the opportunity of salvation to mankind. The only thing that

really works and really makes a difference in life is to accept this great salvation. There is something you have to do. There's a part that you have to play. You have to decide whether or not you want to accept salvation.

If you've seen yourself, if the Spirit is dealing with your heart tonight, if you're thinking about things a little differently, you have to decide if you want to change. You can do it, but you have to want to. You have to be willing to take advantage of what's offered. It's your choice to make; not to make yourself better, but to listen to that still small voice from that loving God who has made a better way. If you want to be righteous, if you want to be godly, God's right here and ready to help make that happen. You have to just be willing and desire to deny ungodliness, repent and be forgiven and cleansed. Then, and only then, will you be able to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. †

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



I SHALL NOT BE MOVED

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

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"Where is Annie?" my mother asked.

"I don't know," I answered. "I have Darese, but I haven't seen Annie for the past few minutes." I looked down at two-year-old Darese, whose hand I held. Annie was four years old, and big enough to get around on her own, but little enough that someone needed to keep an eye on her at all times.

"Where is Annie?" my mother asked again, her voice rising in concern. "Somebody needs to find her right now!" It was Sunday evening, and the church service had ended just a short while before. In the flurry of finding coats, mittens, and hats, Annie had disappeared.

"I'll check the basement way," I called to my sister, Twila. "You go down the front steps, OK?" Twila nodded and headed for the front doors of the sanctuary.

Grabbing Darese's hand firmly and pulling her along with me, I struggled through the crowd of congregation members chatting in the aisle, my eyes darting quickly in every direction in a search of my missing sister. I reached the basement stairs, but there was still no sign of Annie. She was nowhere to be seen in the basement, either, and so I exited the basement into the parking lot, calling her name.

The parking lot was busy. Through the glare of headlights, I could see parents helping their children into family cars. I could see the smoke of exhaust as car engines started up.

Suddenly, I heard shouting and saw figures running toward the alley that ran alongside the parking lot.

What has happened? I wondered. Forgetting my mission for a moment, I picked up Darese and ran toward the alley to see what the shouting was all about. What I saw made me catch my breath in sudden dismay. Our family car had moved from its parking place. It had crossed the alley and had come to rest against a small, unattached garage.

I had just reached the car when my father appeared. Someone had alerted him, and he had sprinted to the scene of the accident. "What in this wide world could have moved our car?" I heard my dad ask himself as he ran for the driver's side door. He flung the door open to find my little sister, Annie, huddled in the driver's seat. Her eyes were wide and frightened. As soon as she saw my father, she held out her arms and began to cry.

My dad grabbed Annie up in his arms and hugged her tightly. "It's all right," he told her. "You're all right. Stop crying." He handed her over to my mother who was on the scene by now, and went to inspect the damage that had been done to the garage. The little building had been knocked off its foundation, and sat crookedly against a fence.

"Whew! This old car did more damage to that building than I would have thought possible!" my father said after he had talked to the owner and arranged to have repairs made to the garage.

My mother turned around and looked back at us. "From now on," she said, "the minute the church service is over, you older ones hang on to the younger ones. Don't let go of their hands for one minute!"

"Yes, ma'am," we answered soberly. It had become all too clear to us how fast an accident could occur. Little Annie had no idea what would happen when she tried to "drive" the car by taking it out of parking gear. The results could have been far more tragic than a garage knocked off its foundation.

We talked of little else on our way home that night. "That old garage must not have been very firmly fastened to its foundation," said my mother. "It's not like our car was moving at any great speed."

"I guess it was moving fast enough," said my dad, shaking his head. "And it's a big, heavy car."

I closed my eyes and pictured the whole event. I saw my little sister tug on the car door and open it. I saw her climb up into the driver's seat. I saw her grab the gear shift lever and pull it toward herself. I saw the car begin to move, and I saw it gather momentum as it drifted across the alley and downhill toward the garage that sat nearby. I saw the garage tremble under the impact of the car, and then I saw it shift on its foundation. I heard my little sister cry out in fear, and I saw her turn to look for someone to help her.

It was a long time before I could cross the church parking lot without looking at the garage my sister had hit with our car. I thought about foundations and how important it is that they be strong and immovable.

It is not only buildings that have foundations. Our lives have foundations, too. Just as a building must be secured to a strong foundation, so must our lives be

fastened to the truth of God's Word. It is the supreme foundation. All others will fail.

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 12:3, which says, *A man shall not be established by wickedness; but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.* Our lives must be rooted in God. Childhood is a wonderful time for putting down strong roots in Christ.

Many temptations will come against you, just as our big old car came rolling down across the alley and hit that little garage. But if you have a strong love for Jesus, and if you fasten your life to Him each day with prayer and Bible reading, you will be able to stand immovable against any trial or temptation that comes your way.

Activity

Try making an acrostic using the letters of the word IMMOVABLE. Create phrases that explain how we can remain immovable through the temptations and trials of life.

NOTE: The acrostic has been started for you below:

Imitate Christ
Maintain daily contact with Jesus
Make time for Bible reading
Obey God's Word
V
A
B
L
E

Answer to Last Month's Activity

The apostle Paul made this statement in Philippians 4:11—"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." †

TRUTH CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

As some of our readers know, the local congregation of the Church of God in Hagerstown provides a day school for our local community. It has been doing so for more than 65 years. In our society, there is a great need for Christian-based teaching instead of the secular curriculum of today. The teachers at our school are each born again which provides Christian examples to the students. As you can imagine, the cost of operating such an institution is tremendous. If any of our readers would be interested in helping to defray the expense of this educational outreach, you are invited to do so. Just earmark your check Truth Christian Academy. Every little bit helps.

Also, if you would like more information about our school or how to apply for your children to attend, write: Jackie Marquiss, Principal, TCA, 41 Bryan Circle, Hagerstown, MD 21740 or call (301) 733-0712.

A SERVICE SWEET

J. F. Carter

How sweet to trust in Jesus!
To know no trust beside;
To find in him a refuge,
Our weary souls to hide;
To lean on love unfeigned,
And in that love abide.

How sweet to follow Jesus!
To seek no other road;
So willingly and truly
To walk the path he trod;
'Tis hallowed by his footsteps,
And nighest unto God.

Oh, then, to learn of Jesus!
This is a privilege sweet;
To choose the better portion,
Like Mary at his feet;
With soul and body holy,
For his blessed use made meet.

How sweet to work for Jesus!
To spread abroad his fame;
To be for him a witness,
Bearing his cross and shame;
That to the lost and erring
His love we may proclaim.

IN THE HEART

Anonymous

If no kindly thought or word
We can give, some soul to bless;
If our hands, from hour to hour,
Do no deeds of gentleness;
If to lone and weary ones
We no comfort will impart,
Though 'tis summer in the sky,
Yet 'tis winter in the heart!

If we strive to lift the gloom
From a dark and burdened life;
If we seek to lull the storm
Of our fallen brother's strife;
If we bid all hate and scorn
From the spirit to depart,
Though 'tis winter in the sky,
Yet 'tis summer in the heart.

I NEED THEE, LORD

C. W. Naylor

I need Thee, Lord; I need Thy help today
To guide me onward in my pilgrim way.
My vision far too narrow is to see
The rugged path of duty leading up to Thee.

I need Thee, Lord; I need Thy strong right hand
To lead me upward to that brighter land.
Alone I feebly falter on my way;
I cannot do without Thee, Lord, e'en one short day.

I need Thee, Lord, to strengthen lest I fall;
The foes that gather round my way appall.
I need Thy boundless grace lest I should fail
And be far driven from the harbor by the gale.

I need Thee when the waking sun doth rise,
And till its last beams die in western skies;
Still in the darkness would I have Thee near
To hold my hand, to keep my soul, to calm each fear.

JESUS ALL SUFFICIENT

Anonymous

Lonely? No; not lonely
While Jesus standeth by;
His presence always cheers me;
I know that he is nigh.

Friendless? No; not friendless,
For Jesus is my friend;
I change, but he remaineth
True, faithful to the end.

Tired? No; not tired
While leaning on his breast;
My soul hath full enjoyment
Of his eternal rest.

Helpless? Yes; so helpless,
But I am leaning hard
Upon the arm of Jesus,
And he is keeping guard.

Waiting? Oh yes; waiting;
He bids me watch and wait;
I only wonder often
What makes my Lord so late.

Happy? Yes; so happy,
With joy too deep for words;
A precious, sure possession,
A joy that is my Lord's. †

WINNING A CROWN

By the late C. W. Naylor



Part IX Native Depravity

THERE ARE already so many treatises on this subject that it need be considered here only as it relates to the practical side of the Christian life in the regenerate state. The doctrine is held in some form by most theologians. The Augustinian and Calvinistic view, that man is guilty and is fit only for damnation because of having partaken of Adam's sin, and the more modified view held by most Arminians, do not concern us here. We wish now to consider depravity only as it relates to and affects the nature of man after he is born again.

That man's nature does contain depravity in some form is generally admitted. The Bible does not give us a scientific or philosophical treatment of the subject. Man's natural depravity is one of the many things that are assumed to be so much a fact of human consciousness as to need no proof. Since the Bible so treats the matter, and man is left to form his own conclusion on this, as well as many other points, it is not strange that there are many different ideas. Regarding the universality of the doctrine, I quote from Miley: "The doctrine of entire sanctification in regeneration was new with Zinzendorf and wholly unknown before him."—*Theology*, Vol. II, page 367. This can have no meaning except that the doctrine of the existence of depravity in those regenerated was previously universal, as it practically is today.

From the Scriptural standpoint, it is only necessary to show that believers are promised a sanctification subsequent to their becoming believers. Jesus prayed for the Twelve in these words: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth" (John 17:16, 17). Again, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified" (verse 19). For the Thessalonian Christians, Paul prayed thus: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly" (I Thessalonians 5:23).

There are two general theories as to the origin of depravity. The first is that it is generic, being a corruption of the nature transmitted through all the race from Adam. This is the most commonly accepted idea. The second, held by Mr. Finney and others, is that depravity is not transmissible but results from the order of development of the child. The physical develops before the mental, and the mental before the spiritual, so that the physical and mental habits form and become wholly selfish before the spiritual is developed enough for it to have a proper moral sense; and thus its nature is depraved. Which of these theories may be correct has no practical bearing on the fact of its existence, so does not demand more than passing attention here.

For my part, I am inclined to adopt a middle ground, that is, that depravity is transmissible and transmitted and that it may be increased by the individual's own

conduct, and also that it is invariable as a transmitted quality, being dependent upon the same laws as are the transmission of mental and physical qualities. That depravity is a constant in all, I am not prepared to accept, as observation certainly shows the opposite to be true.

One thing is certainly true of it. It is not an entity or tangible thing, such as a stump, by which it is sometimes illustrated. Nor is it a plant planted by Satan. He has no power to plant in man any such thing. The human will is free, and cannot be coerced by man or the devil, nor even by God himself. Depravity was not a new thing that entered Adam when he sinned. It was only a perversion or corruption of what he already was. It is not a sort of motor that Satan connects with our human nature and by which he operates us. It is not a thing that can be subtracted bodily from a person. It is a corruption that must be cleansed. It is an overdevelopment, or rather an abnormal development, of the natural faculties or propensities which in their normal state are pure and necessary. Self-esteem when corrupted becomes pride. The sense of justice becomes vindictiveness and reveals itself in wrath, malice, hatred, and revenge. Love of the beautiful becomes vanity. Amativeness becomes lust. Acquisitiveness becomes covetousness. This seems to me the only rational explanation that can be given to the subject.

The question is often asked: "If depravity is transmissible, how can the children of sanctified parents possess this depravity?" The fact that it is so should seem no stranger than the well-known fact that mental and physical diseases or malformations and abnormalities are transmitted through healthy links. It is undeniable that such diseases as scrofula, insanity, craving for liquor, and many like things are transmitted through parents who show no trace of such things, the diseases breaking out in descendants removed the second, third, or even fourth generation from grandparents who have been so afflicted or diseased. It is the life-current that is defiled. The sanctification of the parent is only as an accidental thing; that is, it is like the amputation of a limb or the removal of an eye in the physical. Parents who have suffered such mutilations do not transmit these to their children. We may not understand some of the laws of transmission; but our lack of comprehension does not prevent them from being true in human experience, neither does it disprove them. The transmission of depravity is only an example of the law of persistence of type—a law which, in natural things, is left unquestioned.

Reversion to Type

The animal and vegetable kingdoms are alike subject to man's control. He may produce new varieties and develop them to a high degree; but when once they are left to themselves, removed from man's care, they all revert to their former types. The different varieties of pigeons, of all colors and characters, would, if taken and placed by themselves, out of the reach of man, revert to the one type from which they were derived. This same law acts all through nature; and we ought not to be surprised on finding that the same law acts as truly in the moral sphere. It is not strange that

children revert to the type of their ancestors, no matter what was the condition of their parents.

People who have been sanctified may at any time become depraved by unlawfully indulging desires or by going into rebellion against God. In this manner Adam became depraved; and so may we. In our case, however, we cannot call the resulting depravity Adamic; it is the same as Adam's in essence; but we, not he, are responsible. Depravity is, as already stated, not something planted by Satan, but is a corruption, progressive in its nature and capable of being greatly increased by our sinful actions. It can also be minimized by careful cultivation; and by thus repressing it, men become more moral than they otherwise would. Independent of the grace of God, therefore, we can to a considerable extent limit and restrain this inward element. It is, however, capable of complete elimination by the Spirit of God.

State of Those Possessing Depravity

Among the practical effects of depravity in a regenerated person, is that he cannot love God perfectly. There is a frequent assertion of the self-life. It is so easy for him to think that his way is right and best. And in spite of his desire to please and serve God, there is, nevertheless, within him a something that causes him to want his own way, to want to gratify his own personal desires. There is a twofoldness about his desires. There is a something that desires to please God, and at the same time another something that desires to please himself. This latter is sometimes very strong, and may occasion him no little difficulty when he endeavors to submit himself to the will of God. Through grace he may overcome this and submit to God, but he cannot of himself destroy it. It is quite true that we can never become automatically unselfish; but it is also true that the strength of the self-life is depravity, and that, when this is destroyed, we can much more easily and more naturally be unselfish.

Temptation more forcefully takes hold of one when he is in the regenerate state than it does when he is in the wholly sanctified state, because under the former conditions it receives cooperation from depravity. A brother in telling of his personal experience spoke on this wise: "Temptations used to seem to get right up close to me and to take hold upon me. I used, oftentimes, to have a terrible battle with them; but now it seems that things are changed. Temptations do not get close to me as they did then. There seems to be a something that holds them off at a distance from me so that they do not have the power that they used to have; nor does it take the struggle to overcome them that it used to take."

This brother's experience has been duplicated by the experiences of the writer and thousands of others. There is something within the regenerated man that seems to answer to temptation; and he must resist, not only the temptation, but also that something within himself upon which the temptation takes hold. I refer, not simply to his natural propensities (for these natural propensities will persist in the sanctified state), but rather to the depraved state of these natural propensities. When we are in the regenerated state, our natural desires are more inclined to run in unlawful channels and are harder to restrain than they are when we are in the wholly sanctified state. The more grace we have,

the more our desires are restrained without apparent effort. Grace overwhelms many desires or tendencies in our natural being, making it the more possible for us to guide ourselves in the way of God with ease. The more grace we have, the more easily we can keep ourselves in perfect standing before God and the more perfectly conform to his will. The less of grace we have, the less of power we have to do this.

The warfare between grace and depravity in a regenerated person uses up spiritual strength, and consequently limits his activities in other directions. We cannot accomplish things for God as we might, if we have to use so much of our strength upon ourselves, and so, for this reason the obtaining of release from depravity enables us more fully to throw our energies into the life of salvation and the work of God; the greater grace that we possess when sanctified, increases our spiritual powers and makes us very much more able to accomplish work for God than we otherwise could be. We can thus glorify him in a greater degree. Regenerated people are to a degree conscious of this inner conflict; but they cannot be as conscious of the distinction between the two different states of grace as can the one who has entered the higher state. They must have the personal experience in order to know for themselves.

The Remedy

Two remedies for this depraved state have been proposed. One of them is a palliative and the other a specific. The first is the repression remedy; that is, depravity must be kept in subjection through life by the will. Those teaching this theory hold that there can be no elimination of this element, no cleansing from it, but that it is of such a nature that it will ever be with us through the journey of life and that we must continually watch and guard against its asserting itself, lest it should overthrow us and lead us astray from God. According to this theory, life is a continued and unending warfare against it. Their only hope of ending this warfare is in death; they expect to be sanctified at death and not to take this element with them into heaven. Such as these are ready to exclaim with the apostle Paul, "Oh, wretched man that I am!" but they are not able to join with him in the song of deliverance.

The other remedy, that of eradication, is taught by people who believe in a second work of divine grace. The teaching of these, however, frequently runs into an idealism that leaves nothing whatever to repress in our natures. According to this extreme position, we should become practically automatons. Advocates of such teaching like to picture sanctification as making us a sort of angelic beings; and they would have us live in an ecstatic state, high above the practical affairs of life. They can tell us just how glorious we should feel on all occasions; how rapturous it is to dwell in that condition. Their teaching is idealism pure and simple.

The true idea, it seems to me, cannot be expressed by the extreme teachings of either of these theories. As is usually the case, the middle ground between the two extremes is the most tenable. Our human nature is a creation of God, and as such, it is a necessary part of us; and God will never destroy it, in fact, he cannot destroy it without destroying us. Sanctification, there-

fore, is not the destruction of this nature, but is the purification of it. It corrects the abnormal spiritual condition and brings the natural into a condition in which it may regain a proper balance. Paul said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection" (I Corinthians 9:27). All the faculties and propensities of our nature are for our service and use. We are to master them. The will is to rule them and have them in subjection to itself and, as a result, to righteousness also. This subject will be discussed at length under the heading Our Natural Propensities. †

darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

We are called to be soldiers. Soldiers fight, whether on the home front or abroad, wherever the battle is raging. We are Christian soldiers marching as to war, looking to Jesus, the mighty Captain, who is leading in the fight. Thank God, we are not left to fight alone. We are called to be soldiers of the cross, to fight the fight of faith with all our might. As soldiers, we must be equipped for the battle. The weapons for this warfare come through the study of the Word.

No studying of the Bible leaves us open to the enemy. Satan fights relentlessly—no retreat, no time off. He is ever on the offensive. Christians must be on the defensive. Put on the whole armor of God. We need the armor for the fight. Thank God, He has provided one that cannot fail. It is given to protect us every step of the way.

Goliath, the Philistine champion, thought he was well-covered. He had on a coat made of mail-brass. He thought he was so well-protected that he could taunt David. He asked, "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?" David put a stone in his sling and the stone hit its mark. Goliath fell dead.

There are many giants facing Christian soldiers today. One unprotected spot is enough for us to be slain. There is an urgency for us to put on the whole armor and be fully equipped for the battle. We are living in an evil day. Evil is on every hand. We need to watch and pray, lest we be devoured. More prayer time is needed. We are told to "Pray without ceasing" (I Thessalonians 5:17).

We need the breastplate of truth and righteousness in times like these. Church of God, we need to be fully clothed. The feet need to be shod, ready to go and witness to a lost and dying world. Foot soldiers are needed to go with the gospel. Without the shield of faith, there is no protection.

We are called to be a light, a city set on a hill that cannot be hid. Our light must shine before men so that they can see our good works and be led to glorify our Father in heaven. God has provided the necessary equipment for the battle. "The helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." David said in Psalm 119:11, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Called for a purpose:

- some to be soul-winners
- some to be prayer warriors
- some to be encouragers
- some to sing
- some to preach or teach
- some to help someone carry a burden
- some to show love to a wandering soul

All have a purpose. Let none hear you idly saying, "There is nothing I can do," while the souls of men are dying and the Master calls for you.

Let us ask God to reveal our purpose and be quick to answer, "Here am I, O Lord, send me." †

CALLED FOR A PURPOSE

By Sis. Enid Jones, Jamaica

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."—Matthew 4:19.



DISCIPLE is a follower, a believer, or a servant. We often refer to the twelve disciples. These men were specifically called by Jesus to travel with Him and to help Him in His ministry, and so we can safely say they were called for a purpose.

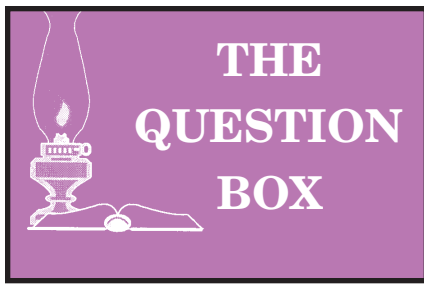
On one occasion, Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men." Imagine if those persons had never been out to sea, or were probably afraid of water, and had no knowledge of fishing, how confused they would have been. Thank God, they were fishermen, so the only question in their minds would have been, "How can we fish for men?"

Jesus used parables to reinforce His teachings. The disciples were called and sent to go and make disciples of all nations. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19).

Fishermen don't sit at home relaxing and waiting for the fish to come to them. They go out on the sea. Sometimes the sea is calm, sometimes rough and stormy. Fishing is their business so they go out to fish so as to supply their needs.

As fishers of men, we can't just sit before the fire, before the television in the living room, or on the veranda to catch fish. Souls are drowning in the sea of sin while we are relaxing, taking the day off, or taking the night off. We need to get busy and go to fulfill the purpose for which we are called.

Ephesians 6:10-18 says, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery



Editor's Note: These questions and answers in this issue are taken from *The Way of Truth Question and Answer Book*, 1946-2001.

QUESTION: Will Christ reign on the earth?

ANSWER: This is one of the foremost questions in the religious world today. But as always in every question, the Word of God sounds out a safe and sure answer. First, God is a Spirit and seeketh such to worship Him as shall worship Him in Spirit and in truth.—John 4:24. Also, Jesus says in plain forceful words that His kingdom is not of this world.—John 8:36. When Jesus says His kingdom is not of this world, why do men want to try to prove that it is? Then again, in Romans 14:17, “For the kingdom of God is **not** meat and drink; [material things] but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost [spiritual things].” Then again, I Corinthians 15:50, “... flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.”

If Paul was persuaded that the kingdom of God was not to be made up of men who live in the flesh, what would he do and say were he to come back to the earth today in the midst of all this teaching that the kingdom is to be made up of men and women living here in the flesh? Oh God, help poor deceived souls to get their eyes open to the plain truths of the holy and never-failing Word!

QUESTION: What did Paul mean when he said, “Forbid not to speak in tongues”?

ANSWER: This is found in I Corinthians 14:39. In this part of Paul's letter, he was dealing with a condition in the church that was not what it should be. Some were using the gift of languages in an improper manner (notice verses 23-32). This was causing confusion (which comes from Satan and not God). Paul in his effort to clear up the matter was not forbidding the proper use of this gift, but he was saying to use it in the proper place and manner.

Corinth was what we would call an international city, in that people from various countries passed through there on their way from Europe to Asia and vice versa. So various languages were spoken there, and the saints found this gift a benefit in trying to win souls to the Lord, but it was to be used properly, not for show. Let me add, there is no Scriptural support in this chapter, or in any other part of the Bible, for the false teaching that you must speak in “tongues” as an evidence that you have received the Holy Spirit. The gift of languages was only one of the gifts of the Spirit and is mentioned near the last in I Corinthians 12.

QUESTION: Some say that the kingdom of God is different from the kingdom of heaven. They say that the kingdom of heaven has already started and that the kingdom of God is yet to come. Is it true?

ANSWER: No, it is not true. This is just another effort to twist the Word of God to make room for a literal kingdom of a thousand years' duration, which the Word of God does not teach.

In the four gospels, you will find one writer quoting the Master using “kingdom of heaven,” while another will quote the same statement and use “kingdom of God,” which proves they are used interchangeably.

QUESTION: When is the time that one can obtain or experience the seal of the Spirit? In regeneration or in sanctification?

ANSWER: There are a number of verses in the Bible that use the word “sealed.” To put a seal on a document is to make it official. In John 6:27, Jesus speaks of Himself being sealed by God the Father. We understand this to mean He came to reveal the Father, to bear witness to the truth, and to give His life for the souls of lost humanity.

In Revelation 7:3, we read about God's servants being sealed. This was not making them the people of God, but rather marking or designating them as such. This was in contrast to the “mark of the beast.”

More directly to your question: In Ephesians 1:13, we read, “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.” Paul says here, it was after they had heard the word of truth, and it was after they believed, that they were sealed. So the sealing did not take place when they were saved—regenerated.

Paul, in II Corinthians 1:21, 22, puts the sealing after conversion: “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

In his book, *Revelation Explained*, F. G. Smith, commenting on Revelation 7:3, says, “The time this sealing of the people of God takes place is thus described: ‘After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.’—Ephesians 1:13. The winds of heaven were restrained until the work of *full salvation* could be firmly established in the earth.”

Smith's expression, *full salvation*, means, “saved and sanctified.” In other words, you are sealed when you are sanctified, filled with the Holy Spirit.

QUESTION: We know Satan is a spirit along with all his host. How can they be burned up in a literal fire, no matter how hot it is?

ANSWER: Satan is a spirit, but he shall not be “burned up.” Hell, or the “lake of fire,” is not filled with literal flames. Hell is an actual place, but it is not a literal place. Some people get the idea that you mean a thing is not real just because you say it is not literal. But spirits are real even though they are not literal, and hell is an actual place although it is not literal.

When the world, at the end of time comes to an end, all literal things shall cease to exist, but we shall not, hell will not, and heaven will not.

Jude tells us (verse 7) that Sodom and Gomorrah are suffering the vengeance of ETERNAL fire. Now, eternal fire is NOT literal fire. I might also add that Jude was not speaking of the buildings of those cities, which were destroyed by literal fire, for the buildings did not give themselves over to fornication; it was the people.

In Matthew 25, we have a picture of the judgment, of those placed on the right hand and those on the left. Those on the left went away into EVERLASTING punishment; those on the right hand "into life ETERNAL." †



Dear Young People,

It doesn't seem possible that another month has passed. The Lord has been faithful to us. When I feel low, it does me good to really ponder God's character: His absolute goodness and purity, His mercy, His love, His patience and longsuffering.

If you find yourself low, or discouraged, I would encourage you to spend some time dwelling on who God really is. It will take the focus off yourself and put it on the One who will bring you through. How great, mighty, and wonderful is our God? No tongue can tell.

We are continuing with our reading of *The Heavenly Footman* by John Bunyan. May the Lord bless each one of you.

By His grace,
Sis. Crystal Gossard

The Seventh Direction

IN THE next place, be not daunted though thou meetest with ever so many discouragements in thy journey thither. That man that is resolved for heaven, if Satan cannot win him by flatteries, he will endeavor to weaken him by discouragements, saying, 'Thou art a sinner,' 'thou hast broken God's law,' 'thou art not elected,' 'thou comest too late,' 'the day of grace is past,' 'God doth not care for thee,' 'thy heart is naught,' 'thou art lazy,' with a hundred other discouraging suggestions. And thus it was with David, where he saith, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." As if he should say, "The devil did so rage, and my heart was so base, that had I judged according to my own sense and feeling, I had been absolutely distracted; but I trusted to Christ in the promise, and looked that God would be as good as his promise, in having mercy upon me, an unworthy sinner; and this is that which encouraged me, and kept me from fainting." And thus must thou do when Satan, or the law, or thy own conscience, do go about to dishearten thee, either by the greatness of thy sins, the wickedness of thy heart, the tediousness of the way, the

loss of outward enjoyments, the hatred that thou wilt procure from the world or the like; then thou must encourage thyself with the freeness of the promises, the tender-heartedness of Christ, the merits of his blood, the freeness of his invitations to come in, the greatness of the sin of others that have been pardoned, and that the same God, through the same Christ, holdeth forth the same grace as free as ever. If these be not thy meditations, thou wilt draw very heavily in the way to heaven, if thou do not give up all for lost, and so knock off from following any farther; therefore, I say, take heart in thy journey, and say to them that seek thy destruction, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: for when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me" (Micah 7:8). SO RUN.

The Eighth Direction

Take heed of being offended at the cross that thou must go by, before thou come to heaven. You must understand (as I have already touched), that there is no man that goeth to heaven but he must go by the cross. The cross is the standing way-mark, by which all they that go to glory must pass by. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." If thou art in thy way to the kingdom, my life for thine thou wilt come at the cross shortly—the Lord grant thou dost not shrink at it, so as to turn thee back again. "If any man will come after me," saith Christ, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." The Cross! it stands, and hath stood, from the beginning, as a way-mark to the kingdom of heaven. You know if one ask you the way to such and such a place, you, for the better direction, do not only say, 'this is the way,' but then also say, 'you must go by such a gate, by such a stile, such a bush, tree, bridge,' or such like. Why, so it is here; art thou inquiring the way to heaven? Why, I tell thee, CHRIST IS THE WAY; into him thou must get, even into his righteousness, to be justified; and if thou art in him, thou wilt presently see the cross, thou must go close by it, thou must touch it, nay, thou must take it up, or else thou wilt quickly go out of the way that leads to heaven, and turn up some of those crooked lanes that lead down to the chambers of death.

Now thou mayest know the cross by these six things: 1. It is known in the doctrine of justification. 2. In the doctrine of mortification. 3. In the doctrine of perseverance. 4. In self-denial. 5. In patience. 6. In communion with poor saints.

1. In the doctrine of justification, there is a great deal of the cross, in that: a man is forced to suffer the destruction of his own righteousness for the righteousness of another. This is no easy matter for a man to do; I assure you it stretcheth every vein in his heart before he will be brought to yield to it. What! for a man to deny, reject, abhor, and throw away all his prayers, tears, alms, keeping of sabbaths, hearing, reading with the rest, in the point of justification, and to count them accursed; and to be willing, in the very midst of the sense of his sins, to throw himself wholly upon the righteousness and obedience of another man, abhorring his own, counting it as a deadly sin, as the open breach of the law! I say, to do this in deed and in truth, is the

biggest piece of the cross; and therefore Paul calleth this very thing a suffering; where he saith, "I have suffered the loss of all things" [which principally was his righteousness], that I might win Christ, and be found in him, not having [but rejecting] mine own righteousness." That is the first.

2. In the doctrine of mortification is also much of the cross. Is it nothing for a man to lay hands on his vile opinions, on his vile sins, on his bosom sins, on his beloved, pleasant, darling sins, that stick as close to him as the flesh sticks to the bones? What! to lose all these brave things that my eyes behold, for that which I never saw with my eyes? What! to lose my pride, my covetousness, my vain company, sports, and pleasures, and the rest? I tell you this is no easy matter; if it were, what need of all those prayers, sighs, watchings? What need we be so backward to it? Nay, do you not see, that some men, before they will set about this work, will even venture the loss of their souls, heaven, God, Christ, and all? What mean else all those delays and put-offs, saying, 'Stay a little longer; I am loath to leave my sins while I am so young, and in health?' Again, what is the reason else that others do it so by the halves, coldly, and seldom, notwithstanding they are convinced over and over; nay, and also promise to amend, and yet all is in vain? I will assure you, to cut off right hands, and to pluck out right eyes is no pleasure to the flesh.

3. The doctrine of perseverance is also cross to the flesh; which is not only to begin, but to hold out, not only to bid fair, and to say, 'Would I had heaven,' but so to know Christ, to put on Christ, and walk with Christ as to come to heaven. Indeed, it is no great matter to begin to look for heaven, to begin to seek the Lord, to begin to shun sin. Oh! but it is a very great matter to continue with God's approbation! "My servant Caleb," saith God, "because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully [followed me always: he hath continually followed me], him will I bring into the land." Almost all the many thousands of the children of Israel in their generation, fell short of perseverance when they walked from Egypt towards the land of Canaan. Indeed they went to work at first pretty willingly, but they were very short-winded, they were quickly out of breath, and in their hearts they turned back again into Egypt.

It is an easy matter for a man to run hard for a spurt, for a furlong, for a mile or two; Oh, but to hold out for a hundred, for a thousand, for ten thousand miles! That man that doth this, he must look to meet with cross, pain, and wearisomeness to the flesh; especially if as he goeth he meeteth with briars and quagmires, and other encumbrances that make his journey so much the more painful.

Nay, do you not see with your eyes daily, that perseverance is a very great part of the cross? Why else do men so soon grow weary? I could point out many, that after they have followed the ways of God about a twelvemonth, others it may be two, three, or four (some more, and some less) years, have been beat out of wind—they have taken up their lodging and rest before they have got half-way to heaven, some in this, some in that sin; and have secretly, nay, sometimes openly said that the way is too strait, the race too long, the

religion too holy, and they cannot hold out—I can go no farther.'

And so likewise of the other three, namely, patience, self-denial, communion, and communication with and to the poor saints: how hard are these things? It is an easy matter to deny another man, but it is not so easy a matter to deny one's self; to deny myself out of love to God, to his gospel, to his saints, of this advantage, and of that gain; nay, of that which otherwise I might lawfully do, were it not for offending them. That scripture is but seldom read, and even more seldom put in practice, which saith, "I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, if it make my brother to offend." Again, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." But how froward, how hasty, how peevish, and self-resolved are the generality of professors at this day! Alas! how little considering the poor, unless it be to say, Be thou warmed and filled! But to give, is a seldom work; also especially to give to any poor. I tell you all these things are cross to flesh and blood; and that man that hath but a watchful eye over the flesh, and also some considerable measure of strength against it, he shall find his heart in these things like unto a starting horse, that is rid without a curbing bridle, ready to start at everything that is offensive to him; yea, and ready to run away too, do what the rider can.

It is the cross which keepeth back those that are kept from heaven. I am persuaded, were it not for the cross, where we have one professor we should have twenty; but this cross!—that is it which spoileth all.

Some men, as I said before, when they come at the cross can go no farther, but back again to their sins they must go. Others stumble at it and break their necks; others again, when they see the cross is approaching, they turn aside to the left hand, or to the right hand, and so think to get to heaven another way, but they will be deceived. "For all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall," mark it, "shall suffer persecution." There are but few when they come at the cross, cry, 'Welcome cross!' as some of the martyrs did to the stake they were burned at. Therefore, if thou meet with the cross in thy journey, in what manner soever it be, be not daunted and say, Alas! what shall I do now? But rather take courage, knowing, that by the cross is the way to the kingdom. Can a man believe in Christ and not be hated by the devil? Can he make a profession of this Christ, and that sweetly, and convincingly, and the children of Satan hold their tongue? Can darkness agree with light? or the devil endure that Christ Jesus should be honored both by faith and a heavenly conversation, and let that soul alone at quiet? Did you never read that the dragon persecuted the woman, and that Christ saith, "In the world ye shall have tribulation"? †

OUT OF BOX 88

To The Way of Truth,

Your paper has been an encouragement and a teacher through many years. ... Thank you.

—S. B., Ohio

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, TURN TO GOD

Radio Message
by Bro. James Arch



I HAVE been impressed to bring to you a very simple message on this program, but one I hope will help you. The text is taken from Psalm 116. I will read verses 1-6: "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me." Again, "The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me." I would like to use as a subject for this message today, "When All Else Fails, Turn to God."

How frail man is! how utterly dependent upon God! When earthly things upon which we depend so much, and on which we build our lives are gone, we may still have God. Health, loved ones, material possessions, all the things which make for security may fail us, but God is there waiting to be heard and sought.

*'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile:
"What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?"
"A dollar, a dollar"; then, "Two!" "Only two?
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?
Three dollars once; three dollars, twice; going for
three—"But no,
From the room, far back, a gray-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;
Then, wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loose strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet
As a caroling angel sings.
The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?
Three thousand, once, three thousand, twice,
And going and gone," said he.
The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand
What changed its worth." Swift came the reply:
"The touch of the master's hand."*

*And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.*

*A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine;
A game—and he travels on.
He is "going" once, and "going" twice,
He's "going" and almost "gone."
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.*

Just recently, in a Sunday morning service, I delivered a message entitled, "Coping with Parenthood in a Changing Society." Today, we will explore briefly, the realities of coping with life in general.

There has been in recent years many inventions by man. Mankind continues to search for ways to increase the comforts of life, and to a great extent, he has succeeded. We have it so comfortable today, materially speaking, compared to many who lived long ago. Many have the ability, and not only the ability, but the privilege to acquire good clothes to wear. They have the privilege and the ability to acquire a good house to live in, good beds to sleep on, good jobs that keep them going. I could go on and on and name the list. We have good automobiles to drive around in, money in the bank, good things to eat, yet the pressures and the problems of life are overcoming so many. They have become so real to so many in a rapidly developing society. So many have so much today, and yet have found life to be so empty.

I want to tell you, Friends, life without the joys of salvation will become empty, because all of those good things that I have mentioned, and all of the material possessions in life that you may be able to acquire, can never bring that deep-settled peace and joy and satisfaction to the heart of a man. There are times in life when only God can help us. I know there are counselors and ministers of the gospel and others who are qualified to help other people. I know there are times when those people can help, but there comes a time in the lives of many people when only God can help. It seems that so few are calling upon Him in their need, in their despondency, and in their despair. Let me impress upon your minds today, My Beloved Friends, God is still there.

Many today are shackled by heavy burdens. There are broken marriages. Divorce is increasing by leaps and bounds. Never before in the history of the world has there been as many divorces as there are today in our societies. Disappointments! God can mend the broken pieces and make us over. He can make us that man or that woman that He would have us to be. Don't give up hope, My Beloved Friends. There is hope! There is hope for the hopeless.

We have before us today a text taken from one of the Psalms. I know in the New Testament there are numerous records of Jesus when He touched those who needed Him: those who needed physical healing; those who needed their eyes opened so they could see; those who needed their deaf ears unstopped; those who needed their crippled limbs brought back to normality. But we

find here in this text, a very, very heartrending and searching portion of scripture. Here is a man who had experienced the depth of despair, for we find in this sixth verse that I read, "I was brought low, and he helped me." I want to tell you, Friends, we need God. I hope that many of you who are listening to me today will find the realities of knowing God as your helper. When all else fails, God will help you. Our mothers and fathers may forsake us, children may turn their backs on us, our wives and our husbands may turn their backs on us, but God will never fail.

This man in our text (Psalm 116) had experienced the depths of despondency, the depths of despair, the depths of hopelessness, when it appeared as if all friends had forsaken him and he seemed to be alone; but there was One he turned to, and that was God. Do you know that this man acknowledged it was God who had preserved and kept him? He said, "The Lord preserveth the simple." I'm so thankful today that we are simple enough to turn to God. He also acknowledged the mercy of God, for he said, "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful." Where do you think many of us would have been today without the mercy of God?

I want to tell you, My Beloved Friends, and many of you who are listening to me, you are here because of the mercy of God and His goodness upon you. Acknowledge God, My Friends. Remember God. Don't be taken away with the pleasures of the world and the material possessions of life. Remember God! Give Him a little of your time in your life.

This man in Psalm 116 also saw death and hell as a hunter with traps set to take him in, and he feared it. Verse 3: "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow." What a world we're living in today! Young People, those of you have become trapped with drugs and alcohol and other habits of life, there is a helper. There is One who you can turn to that can deliver you from these evils that have penetrated into our society. In this man's troubles and problems, he called on God. Do you know what he said? Verse 4: "Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul." Can you feel the condition that this man was in? Can you feel the hopelessness and the despair? All else had failed him, but God was on hand and was so willing to reach out to this poor man. Because of what God had done for this man, he expressed his love for Him. Do you know what he said? "I love the Lord."

I wonder how many of you listening to me today really love the Lord? Do you know what Jesus said? "If ye love me, keep my commandments." If we love Him, we'll try to do the things that please Him. If we love Him, we'll refrain from doing the things that displease Him. Too many people serve God with their lips and pretend only for a few minutes until their troubles are gone, and then they go right back into their old lives. This man was not that way. He said, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications."

If you noticed, I came from the bottom verse of my text (Psalm 116) to the first, in order to try to bring to you a true outline of what this man really expressed. Do you know what he did? He promised to call on God

for the remainder of his life. Friends, when we make a covenant with God, when we promise God that if He would save us out of our problems and would heal us, we'd serve Him, we better be true to our word. This man said, "Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live."

I don't know how old this Psalmist was who wrote Psalm 116. Perhaps he had many years left ahead of him to give his services and his life and his time to God. Then he wondered and contemplated of what he could do to render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward him. Verse 12 says, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" Think on those words today for a few moments. Think of the good mattress that you're sleeping on, think on the good plate of food that is on your table, think on the good clothes that you are wearing, think on the beautiful children that He has given you, think on the good job that you have. Shouldn't you give God something for all His benefits toward you?

I know I am speaking to a mixed audience. I trust that those of you today who don't know God will search for Him with all your heart, then you will find Him. Those of you who claim to be Christians, be better Christians. Give God a little more. He deserves nothing less than our best. The touch of the Master's hand will make all the difference. My Beloved Friends, don't give up hope. Don't feel that you have gone too far. It makes no difference how deep you have gone. God is there to rescue you out of your hopelessness and despair.

Remember the old violin that was being auctioned for a dollar, then two dollars, then three dollars. It was up to a thousand, then two, and then three. The people wondered and cried, "What changed its worth?" It was the touch of the man who made it sing.

*And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.
Why not try Jesus? †*

VIEW OUR WORSHIP SERVICES LIVE!

As many of our readers know, we can be found on the internet at www.wayoftruth.org where in addition to reading past issues and other information, you can view our general services every Sunday LIVE at 10:40 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. E.S.T. Enjoy Spirit-filled singing and preaching. Also, our mid-week service at 7:00 P.M. Wednesdays is aired live. There is a chatroom where you can interact with us and share your prayer requests. Tune in and worship with us!

DECEPTIVE SPIRITS

By the late D. O. Teasley

From *The Holy Spirit and Other Spirits*

EVERY spirit of the devil is deceptive, but in this chapter we shall expose a few general principles of deception, rather than name different spirits.

The devil uses many different ways to deceive the souls of men; such as false impressions, deception through false teachers, etc. We shall now examine separately a few of the most common ways of deception.

False Impressions.—By false impressions we mean impressions direct from the spirits of devils. Some may not be ready to believe that Satan can send us impressions direct through evil spirits, but it is true, nevertheless. Satan deceived Ananias and “filled his heart to lie to the Holy Spirit”; and so does he still continue to fill the hearts and minds of men and women and causes them to lie to God and their fellow men.

Deceptions of the devil are manifest on every hand in the form of false doctrines and fanatic ideas. The devil will impress a man that a certain doctrine or idea is right, and he will go to the Bible with a preconceived notion and hunt for a few abstract passages to support his theory. In this way hundreds of people are deceived by the devil, and go on believing they are right and trying to bring everyone else to their deceptive way. For illustration, we shall take the Catholic doctrine of forbidding the priests to marry. Paul declares this to be a “doctrine of devils” (I Timothy 4:1, 3), and yet the Catholics in general believe it to be of God. This is a fair sample of thousands of doctrines and ideas that emanate from the devil.

Possibly one of the most prolific means in the hands of the devil to deceive souls is

Deception Through False Prophets.—To many the prevalence of false prophets is a great source of discouragement, but when we see their appearance foretold in the Bible and see there the faithful warnings of the men of God, it should only cause us to “draw nigh to God.” To point out even a few of the most noted false prophets of the past century would require several volumes. “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (II Peter 2:1).

When the devil has succeeded in deceiving a man, he naturally makes a good agent for the devil, to be sent out as a false prophet to deceive others. We need not be surprised if some of our number who have been our nearest and dearest friends are sometime led away and made false prophets; for Paul says, “Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:30). Neither will they always be unsuccessful; for “many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of” (II Peter 2:2). These deceptive agents of the devil often come in shining garments and innocent robes. Jesus says, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly

they are ravening wolves” (Matthew 7:15). However, we need not fear them; for “a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit” (Matthew 7:18). “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20).

Many false prophets will never realize their condition until the judgment day. Then they will awake, when too late, to the fact that Satan has deceived them. Jesus says, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord! Lord! did we not in thy name prophesy, and in thy name demons cast out, and in thy name many works of power perform? And then will I confess to them, I never approved you, depart from me, ye workers of lawlessness” (Matthew 7:22, 23).—*Rotherham*.

Self-Delusion.—While the devil has many ways to deceive, it is possible for a man to deceive himself. However, in such cases I do not think it would be unjust to ascribe a part of the cause to the devil, as he never fails to lend all the assistance possible when the gain is in his favor.

One way of self-deception is to hear and understand the Word of God, and refuse or neglect to obey it. “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, *deceiving your own selves*” (James 1:22). Another way is to profess religion, and neglect to bridle the tongue. “If any man among you seemeth to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but *deceiveth his own heart*, this man’s religion is vain” (James 1:26).

A man who is deceived by the devil, by false prophets, or a man who deceives himself, may escape the dark powers of the devil through the mercy and power of God; but there is a way which if a man enter, there is no chance of escape. This is the way of

Strong Delusion.—A man who travels the way of self-delusion far enough is sure to end in the dark gulf of strong delusion, and this is the way it is generally reached: “Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). In this state the soul sleeps a perpetual sleep, only to wake at the last trump, when all hope has fled and mercy is no more.

A Warning.—In the Word of God we are repeatedly warned of deceptions and deceivers, and every minister of the gospel should be diligent in warning the people of God to shun every false way. Jesus said, “Take heed that no men deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many” (Matthew 24:4, 5). Again He says, “If it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:24). Paul says, “Let no man deceive you with vain words” (Ephesians 5:6). “Be not deceived” (Galatians 6:7). Again He says, “Let no man deceive himself” (I Corinthians 3:18). John says, “Little children, let no man deceive you” (I John 3:7).

The New Testament abounds in such warnings, which were given for the reason that “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (II Timothy 3:13). Let everyone who values his eternal welfare take warning and beware of deceptive spirits, false prophets, and self-delusion. †

JUSTIFICATION

FORGIVENESS

Scriptures: Psalm 78:36-43; Isaiah 38:17; Psalm 32:1, 2; Colossians 1:14; Mark 11:25, 26.

Psalm 78:36 Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

37 For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant.

38 But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

39 For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

40 How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!

41 Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

42 They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.

43 How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan.

Isaiah 38:17 Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

Psalm 32:1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

Colossians 1:14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.


Mark 11:25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Memory Verse: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.—Ephesians 4:32.

Aim: To set forth the teaching of forgiveness in the plan of salvation.

INTRODUCTION

 ACCORDING to the Word of God, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and since there is no way by which a man can atone for his sin, the only way he can be freed from the guilt of them is to be forgiven by the One who has been sinned against. How wonderful that God has promised us that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9). Ofttimes men in sinning against God sin against their fellow men. To be clear before God, one must also ask forgiveness of them against whom he had sinned. True forgiveness also includes forgetting, and the situation is the same as though it had never happened.

MEDITATIONS

ISRAEL TRANSGRESSES—Psalm 78:36, 37—Heart was not right—The writer is here speaking of the children of Israel after God had brought them out of Egypt. They, like many today, flattered Him with their mouths and lied unto Him with their tongues. Why? Because their hearts were not right. Thank God for the faithful few who did serve Him.

GOD FORGIVES—Psalm 78:38, 39—He remembered—There were different times when the children of Israel did evil. Some of them lost their lives, but through the mercy of God when the people turned back to Him and sought forgiveness, He was full of compassion, and forgave their iniquity. He remembered that they were but flesh. That is not to say He approved of their sins, but that He was aware of their frailty.

PROVOKING GOD—Psalm 78:40, 41—Grieve him—At one time the anger of God rose to the point where He was ready to destroy all of them, except Moses; but Moses interceded and God spared them. God worked many miracles in behalf of the children of Israel. He blessed them in various ways, yet He would have done more for them if they had not limited Him by their evil ways and unbelief.

BLESSINGS FORGOTTEN—Psalm 78:42, 43—Remembered not—God brought various plagues on Egypt. He divided the waters of the sea and brought Israel out from the house of bondage, yet they remembered not. Is that not true of many today? God has poured out His blessings upon so many, and yet so few are grateful! Still I believe we can say He has compassion, and will forgive if precious souls will only turn from their own selfish, sinful ways and seek Him.

STATE OF UNFORGIVEN SOUL—Isaiah 38:17—Had great bitterness—The unforgiven soul dwells in a state of fear, sorrow, uncertainty, and midnight gloom. These things are all bitter and cannot be escaped from by any system of education, labor, or human manipulation. Only when the lost soul beholds Jesus with His great love and delivering power can he again have freedom from this bitterness, but we find a deep, lasting joy to replace the bitterness.

THE STATE OF BLESSEDNESS—Psalm 32:1—Blessed is he—The devil has no hold on the man who has come to the Lord Jesus and obtained forgiveness, for his sins are covered by the blood. He is a citizen now of the heavenly country and sets out on his journey for that eternal home. However, along the highway of holiness the devil will throw stumbling blocks in the way, but Christians must carefully avoid them all. **Verse 2—There is no guile**—The natural heart is full of the wares of the devil—guile, wrath, hatred, malice, etc.; but he who has been to Jesus and received His full salvation is delivered from all of these. Our rulers today are greatly in need of a trip to Jesus that they may have their spirits delivered from guile.

CHRIST, THE ANSWER—Colossians 1:14—Forgiveness of sins—Many people are looking to their church membership to give them eternal life with the Lord, but it is only through the shed blood of the Son of God that we can obtain forgiveness and know life.

MAN’S PART IN FORGIVENESS—Mark 11:25
—Aught against any—It makes no difference who it may be or what is the nature of the grievance, if we would have peace with God, we must, with cheerfulness and readiness, forgive. Oh, the peaceful and happy state of the heart that is possessed of a forgiving spirit! Although in some instances forgiveness may cost millions of dollars, Christ is worth far more; and no one can afford to let anything stand in the way of the indwelling of His presence and approval.

RESULT OF AN UNFORGIVING SPIRIT—Mark 11:26—Do not forgive—No one needs to misunderstand this; it is plain that an unforgiving spirit on our part will block the forgiving Spirit toward us. Life does not consist in the abundance of things that we possess. Life consists of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; so if a man loses his reputation and retains Christ, he is still far ahead.

CONCLUSION

Paul describes his state as a sinful church member in Romans 7:24, “O wretched man that I am ...” However, after he met the Master and was forgiven of all his sinful and wicked deeds, including persecuting the Church of God, he was able to exclaim, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus ...” (Romans 8:1). Let us encourage every student who does not now know the Lord to seek His forgiveness and know the peace that pardon brings.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What percent of the people who make their way into the earth need forgiveness?
2. Why did the children of Israel forget so quickly the things that God had done for them?
3. Under what conditions did God forgive the iniquities of any man?
4. Is it necessary for any man to fail of the grace of God?
5. How did the children of Israel provoke God? How do you think God is looking upon the pleasure-loving citizens of your country? †

OUR SERVICES ON CD'S

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- ___ CD #991 Birth of Christ in Word and Song—Program
- ___ CD #992 God's Message to Mankind—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #993 Christ and the Individual—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #994 Mini-Sermons—C. Reyes, D. Swain, G.O. Tyler
- ___ CD #995 Your Pastor's New Year's Wish List—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #996 Promises We Can Rely On—Thomas Harris
- ___ CD #997 Take Heed—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #998 Be Thou Faithful—Rebecca Bland
- ___ CD #999 Do You See the Church of God?—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #1000 Seeing Into the Spiritual Realm—Brian Richards

March 17, 2017—

My Dear Bro. Tyler,

Oh, how your communications encourage my heart! You are a light and a blessing given to me from God and I treasure your fellowship! I have begun a reply to your latest e-mail, but it requires more time, and I must drive to Vicksburg this morning and pickup my granddaughter for the weekend. I will complete it this afternoon when I return. Until then, may God bless your day and grant you all grace and strength. Oh, and thank you for the message. I look forward to reading it.

Your true yokefellow in Christ,
 Bro. Sanford

March 18, 2017—

Good Morning,

I began your message, “The Necessity of Standards,” last night and finished this morning—a great message, and familiar, as I believe I could have preached it myself! Truly, we are one in the Spirit and the faith, and apparently always have been, even though we did not know one another; but our “fellowships” knew of one another! How sad, these walls which have separated God's people for so many years. They will continue to if ministers and saints do not stand up and refuse to participate. I am grateful that your fellowship is more accepting of these sentiments as evidenced by the fact that you make these thoughts freely in your messages and they are readily received. It is a shame that my messages of the same nature, such as “Love, Law, and Lasting Unity,” is seen as a threat by my fellow ministers. What have we come to! ... May God help us to feed the sheep and stir the lost. My, how we need Him!

—Bro. Sanford

March 24, 2017—

Good Morning, Bro. Silas,

I trust that this communication finds you well and encouraged in Christ Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. I appreciate the privilege of being workers together with God. We share a burden which few seem to have—that passion to see the Church of God arise in these last days, filled with glory and power, not under our own terms, but His terms alone. Oh, may “He with whom we have to do” (Hebrews 4:13), help us everyone to lose ourselves completely in His will, submitting ourselves to Him and to each other!

To quote a famous civil rights leader, “I have a dream.” Well, my dream is that animosity will cease between brethren and that the Holy Ghost will have His way to melt the hearts of His people into one. I am convinced there is not visible unity of God's people today because saints have not been allowed to let God knit their hearts together with other saints of God. In essence, pastors have forbidden such a thing to take place! Colossians 2:2, “That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.” Oh, if we would just get out of the way and let God ... It is comforting to me to know you have the very same dream.

I have hope that our dream will become a reality! We ran “The Diotrephes Syndrome” again in the March issue of *The Way of Truth*. I received a letter yesterday from [a brother] from California. I quote: “Bro. Greg, fantastic article; you nailed it! Hope you can forgive me for taking the liberty to distribute it to some who have not heard. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.” He went on to say that he sent a copy of the article to [several ministers]. Some of these I know, some I do not.

We pray that these seeds will germinate and produce a mindset different than the one that has prevailed up to this point.

May the Lord bless your services on Sunday. The Holy Spirit has burdened my heart with an evangelistic message for Sunday morning. I long for souls to be saved! Pray for me that God will give me a greater soul burden.

Unworthy servant of God,
Theo

March 24, 2017—

Bro. Theo,

Thank you for the e-mail which is very encouraging. May God bless it and open men’s eyes. Perhaps it is time to publish, “Is Christ Divided?” and strike while the iron is hot! I am yet hesitant to put my name out openly at this time with the things going on in my present situation. ... I so desire to see the “Dream” realized. I believe there are many out there who are ready to embrace the clarion call to true restored scriptural unity! How terrible is the spirit of man-rule and traditions substituted for the precepts of God’s Word! The dear saints have been secured in pens of division by such for far too long; it is high time they be allowed to follow their Shepherd into the green pastures and feed beside one another.

Matthw 15:13, “Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.” That is another verse which stood up before me as a citadel of truth some time back! I pray, may God *root them up!* Every unsound, unscriptural tradition born in the mind of man—even if its born in my own! The kingdom of God has no place for them and we shall all end up in the ditch following them! As said by Bro. Riggle in his message, *The True Standard*: “Our motto is, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Therefore, the creeds, teachings, and doctrines of men we no longer recognize as the standard; nothing but the Bible.”

I’m afraid some have grown so accustomed to their “form” of unity, that the clear, true teaching of oneness will seem radical to them. May the Lord help us brother in our endeavors and lead us into all truth.

Your unworthy brother in His service,
Bro. Silas

March 27, 2017

Dearest Bro. in Christ,

I trust you had wonderful services yesterday. We certainly did! One young man was saved. One soul is worth more than the whole world. I am so encouraged by your fellowship and have bright anticipation for what God has in store for us. To be frank, I wish you were not 800 miles away. I would love to spend a couple of

hours picking one another’s brains, praying together, searching the Word together. Revival in Deville, Louisiana, begins April 30. Then we move to Jonesville, May 4-7. I hope to see you sometime while we are there.

I’ve attached another message for your perusal. This one I preached in 2004 along the lines of “The Spirit of the Gospel.” I only do this that we might see into each other’s souls, and show our passion for the advancement of the kingdom of God. Our spirits genuinely blend together!

—Theo

March 28, 2017—

My Dear Bro. Theo,

Thank you for the e-mail this morning; it certainly brightens my day to hear from you. So glad to hear that you had a soul saved yesterday—that is what we are here for! that is what the church exists for! I fear some are so caught up in the politics of “being the church” that they’ve left off *being the church*. May God help us to fulfill our holy calling!

We had a short weekend revival here with a brother from —. He is a good brother and supports me in our recent conflict. It was a real blessing, and we also had one seek salvation on Sunday morning—thank God! I long to see more—give us children, lest we die!

I certainly am planning to see you when you come for revival. I don’t know just what day, but we will be there, Lord willing, one or two days. ...

I will check out the message. Thank you for sending it. I always enjoy them and I am amazed at how close we are in our thoughts and burden. May the Lord ever bring us closer together.

—Bro. Silas

March 28, 2017—

Good morning! This is a day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it! Just a short note today, mainly because I had such an unusual experience this morning in devotions. I’m perusing the Psalms at present and two verses caught my attention today. The first, Psalm 133:1, 2: “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments.” I have read this verse doubtless a hundred times, but this morning it took on new meaning! You came to my mind and I was flooded with a desire to see and fellowship new brethren. Now, I am close with the brethren here and those with whom I have labored for 40 years—very close. That hasn’t changed. But now these verses on fellowship and unity are pressing me on in a new direction. I want it to be pleasant and I want it to be good. Honestly, I fear some unpleasantness is waiting for us both as we pursue God’s will. So be it! God has revealed to me that His will is that brethren dwell *together* in unity, and if we do, He will make it good and pleasant. Unfortunately, not everyone will allow His will to be done.

The second verse I was inspired with this morning is Psalm 119:126: “It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law.” As you said in your article, “Is Christ Divided?,” many are satisfied with the status quo and thereby making void the law of unity.

But could it be that it actually is time for God to work? I would like to think so. Who can stay His mighty hand!

Enough rambling on! I just wanted to share those scriptures with my dear brother. Have a great day.

—Theo

March 28, 2017—

I was just about to send this e-mail, and when I went to my e-mail to send it, I saw yours—amazing! God is stirring our hearts, brother! Surely, it is time. Lord, help us to be easily guided by your hand!

I awoke this morning with a scripture upon my mind and heart. The Lord so vividly applied it to this great cause which lies before us! How can I forebear? It is as fire in my bones! ...

May God bless you with strength and encouragement this day!

—Silas

March 31, 2017—

My Dear Bro. Theophilus,

... My brother, I feel it is time. Difficulties, oppositions, and persecutions will always approach from some quarter, but along with them, great opportunity and hope of increase. It appears that the Lord has ministered to me so clearly of late through the Word you have shared with me, as well as in my own devotions, that the time is right to embark openly upon this mission which we have privately embraced. If you agree, I would like to read over and make any further edits on "Is Christ Divided?" and ask if it would be possible for you to print it in *The Way of Truth*. You, of course, are welcome to proofread, correct, and make any suggestions you feel may be needed. I am open to any counsel you may have concerning the article itself or the timing.

May God help us in this endeavor. It is not "my" endeavor or "our" endeavor—it is truly, I believe, the Lord's command to fulfill His purpose. I look forward to hearing from you.

Your brother in labor,
Silas

There is much more correspondence between Bro. Sanford and myself, but I trust what we have shared these past three months has been a blessing and inspired you. Bro. Sanford and many of his congregation did support the revival in Jonesville, Louisiana, in May 2017. Also, an entourage with Pastor Howard Moncrief from Greenville, Mississippi, attended. The favor of God was on the effort as heaven came down in a wonderful way! Bro. Sanford and some saints from Hattiesburg attended the 2017 convention in Hagerstown in July, and again the Holy Spirit placed His approval on the effort by anointing and drawing saints close to each other. Over Labor Day weekend in 2017, Hattiesburg hosted a fellowship meeting wherein saints, who had been separated, came together hearing anointed messages and embracing one another as brethren. I attended. It was glorious! Throughout 2018, we continued building our fellowship and inviting others to join this movement towards oneness. And as we look forward to 2019 and beyond, let us allow it to come to pass that we be one as the Father and Son are one that the world will believe that Christ is Lord. †

March 2019

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

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/

Oklahoma, Marlow, KFXI-FM 92.1, 7:00 A.M.

100,000 Watts—Heard in part of OK and TX

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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*

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*

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

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

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.

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**THE CHURCH OF GOD
STANDS FOR**

An eternal God	Psalm 90:2
A divine Christ	John 1:1, 14
An infallibly inspired Bible	II Timothy 3:16
Salvation from sin	Matthew 1:21
The new birth	John 3:1-7
Entire Sanctification	Ephesians 5:25, 26
A holy life	Titus 2:11, 12
	Hebrews 12:10-14
Unity of God's people	John 17:21
	I Corinthians 12:13
Divine Healing	James 5:14, 15
The ordinances	Matthew 28:19, 20
Eternal life	Matthew 25:46
	John 3:15; 6:54; 10:28
Eternal punishment	Mark 9:43-46
	Revelation 20:15

**YOU SHOULD KNOW MORE
ABOUT THE CHURCH OF GOD**

Jesus bought it with His own blood	Acts 20:28
It has a good foundation	Ephesians 2:20
	I Corinthians 3:11
Christ is the Head	Ephesians 1:22; 5:23
	Isaiah 9:6
Christ is the Door	John 10:9
	John 10:1
	Acts 2:47
Only the saved are members	John 15:2-6
	I John 3:8, 9
Membership is offered to all	II Peter 3:9
	Revelation 22:17
Membership is rewarded	John 14:2, 3

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



REVIVAL SERVICES

Hagerstown, Maryland
April 2-7, 2019, Lord willing
Bro. Doug Koerner, Evangelist
Bro. Greg Tyler, Pastor



Flowers Bay, Roatan, Honduras
April 2-7, 2019, Lord willing
Bro. David Shaw, Evangelist
Bro. Aldrin McLaughlin, Pastor