

The Way of Truth

Vol. 77 “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” No. 7

July
2019

When My Heart Is Overwhelmed...
What Shall I Do?

For the Answer, See Page 17

SOCIETY'S NEED OF INTEGRITY



ACCORDING to the dictionary, *integrity* means: “adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty.”

I don't believe very many of my readers would disagree with me when I state that there seems to be a void of integrity in society. Politicians have a terrible reputation when it comes to integrity. Big business has proven that the almighty dollar takes priority over “doing the right thing.” Even law enforcement has been exposed as lacking honesty. Public education is guilty of revising history for politically correct positions. Even religion has been embarrassed by revelations of immoral conduct and pure hypocrisy. It seems to be the prevailing thought of society that everybody has a skeleton in his or her closet. Everyone is evil—just some more than others. What have we come to?

I know that there has always been sin in the world. But it used to be there was an expectation of public figures and leaders to be honest and exemplify moral integrity. It seems to me that today there is no such expectation. It is as if it is too high a standard to hold and that it is impossible to find anyone who is honest and ethical. But I believe integrity still matters! The following biblical principle is still true in our generation: “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”—Proverbs 14:34.

Let me point to some Bible examples of adhering to moral and ethical standards. Let's start with Job. He was someone God could count on. Job was consistent and trustworthy.

Job 2:3, “And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.” When the battle got hot, Job's wife said to him, “Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.” He was steadfast and would not go against what he knew was right! He said in Job 27:5, “God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.” O for men of integrity today!

Yet another example of honesty is Joseph. Proverbs 11:3 reads, “The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.”

Joseph's integrity was tested time and again, yet he held fast towards his brothers who hated him and sold him into slavery. He forgave them! He retained his integrity towards Potiphar who trusted him, towards Potiphar's wife who tempted him, towards the jailer after he was wrongly imprisoned. Even when he interpreted the butler's dream and told him he would be restored to the king, and told the butler to remember him, Joseph retained his integrity when the butler forgot all about him. But God brought him out on top, and because he was a man of integrity, Joseph became ruler in Egypt, second only to Pharaoh.

There are many more examples of integrity. Just let me say this: the Church of God still preaches a standard of integrity—and lives it! The ministry of the Church of God are men and women of integrity. Not only so, but each born-again child of God through the new birth has integrity. This is manifested by living the life—being a good example—supporting the truth—never speaking evil of another—respecting the ministry—in return, the minister respecting the congregation—loving our fellowman.

It is not impossible to be men and women of integrity!

You can develop your integrity if you will:

1. Keep your word. If you say something, make certain it is the exact truth.

Choose the harder right over the easier wrong. There are times when you are faced with choices of right or wrong. No matter what your boss thinks ... no matter what the stockholders think ... no matter if you will lose your job ... choose the right.

2. Guard your principles. This means that you must be trustworthy and principled. This is a part of maintaining your integrity as well.

3. Do the right thing. When you are in a situation that you stand to lose a lot by stating the complete truth, that is exactly the time to do the right thing. When you treat others with respect, they will treat you with respect as well.

Integrity, not money or fame is the ultimate success of a life!

“Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.”

—Proverbs 19:1.

Society needs integrity—the church needs integrity—individuals need integrity.

I will close this editorial with ...

Abe Lincoln's great laws of truth, integrity:

A long career ruled by honesty

by Gordon Leidner

Mary Todd Lincoln once wrote to a friend that “Mr. Lincoln ... is almost monomaniac on the subject of honesty.”

The future president was first called “Honest Abe” when he was working as a young store clerk in New Salem, Illinois. According to one story, whenever he realized he had short-changed a customer by a few pennies, he would close the shop and deliver the correct change—regardless of how far he had to walk.

People recognized his integrity and were soon asking him to act as judge or mediator in various contests, fights, and arguments. According to Robert Rutledge of New Salem, “Lincoln's judgment was

ABOUT THE COVER

Mirror Lake in Yosemite National Park in California graces our cover this month. Surrounding are the mountains of rock which exemplifies the beauty of the park. Our Rock is not a natural mountain, but is rather the “Rock of Ages.” “From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I” (Psalm 61:2).

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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

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—Gregory E. Tyler, Editor

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Lincoln lost his Senate bid to Stephen Douglas. Two years later, however, he found himself running against the same man for the presidency. When Douglas was told of Lincoln's victory, he unselfishly told his informants: "You have nominated a very able and very honest man."

By the time Lincoln was president, statements he had made previously, such as "I have never tried to conceal my opinions, nor tried to deceive anyone in reference to them," and "I am glad of all the support I can get anywhere, if I can get it without practicing any deception to obtain it" had become a source of strength for him as a leader.

Everyone, even his bitterest political opponents, knew exactly where they stood with Lincoln. Because he didn't have to waste time convincing his opponents of his sincerity, he was able to devote his energies to solving political issues and winning the war.

Finally, in search for the reason Lincoln was so adamant about honesty, a quote by one of his closest friends, Leonard Swett, is revealing:

"He believed in the great laws of truth, the right discharge of duty, his accountability to God, the ultimate triumph of the right, and the overthrow of wrong."

Today, historians tell us there is not a single credible story of Lincoln's being unfaithful to his wife. †

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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.

final in all that region of country. People relied implicitly upon his honesty, integrity, and impartiality."

As a member of the Illinois legislature and later in his law practice, he took advantage of his reputation for honesty and fairness to help broaden his constituency. His good name helped win him four consecutive terms in the legislature.

Lincoln soon moved to Springfield, Illinois, and began his law practice, a profession at which he admitted there was a "popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest." His advice to potential lawyers was: "Resolve to be honest at all events; and if in your judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer. Choose some other occupation, rather than one in the choosing of which you do, in advance, consent to be a knave."

According to Judge David Davis, in whose court Lincoln practiced for many years, "The framework for [Lincoln's] mental and moral being was honesty, and a wrong cause was poorly defended by him." Another judge who had worked with Lincoln agreed, saying "Such was the transparent candor and integrity of his nature that he could not well or strongly argue a side or a cause he thought wrong."

Lincoln was ethical not only in his legal dealings with clients, but with his personal relationships.

Always comfortable telling jokes and stories around the men of Springfield, he usually was awkward and self-conscious around women. In Lincoln's early political years, he wrote, "I want in all cases to do right, and most particularly so in all cases with women." This was a principle to which he remained true all of his life.

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Drawing Strength from Our Salvation

Message delivered 03/08/15 by Bro. Brian Richards



IT IS A privilege to be in the house of the Lord. I'm so thankful that we have a place to come and worship, don't you? I'm thankful we're in a place of locality where other saints can meet and worship. We're not here to form an organization or go through a form. We want to worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth. We want to feed upon the Word of God. We want our souls to be fed when we come to the house of the Lord.

The responsibility has been given to me to try to bring something to you. I trust that I'll be able to bring something that will encourage us and feed our souls. The thoughts are centered around "Drawing Strength from Our Salvation."

Before we get into those thoughts, I'd like for us to give a little bit of our consideration to our enemy and how he works. Satan knows us better than we know ourselves. Have you ever stopped to consider that thought? Satan knows each and every one of us better than we know ourselves. It's not hard for us to comprehend that when we realize that Satan has been battling the family of man since the beginning of time. He knows human beings. He knows our weaknesses. Satan knows how to set up a snare; a trap. He knows how to tempt us. He knows how to work with the family of man. We see how Satan works with the family of man through the example of Job. We see how Satan came again and again with an attack on Job.

THREE TOOLS OF SATAN

There are three tools that I would like for us to think about a little bit that Satan uses against us. The first one is: *discouragement*. If I were to ask each one of you here this evening which one of the greatest tools that the enemy uses against us, as Christians, I would think discouragement would be right at the top of the list. The devil uses discouragement against the family of man. He tried discouragement on Job, didn't he? Job faced an extraordinary amount of discouragement. I don't think that Job's case is the norm, or something that we will all face and see, but it does show us the extent the enemy will go to try to discourage us. Job not only lost his material possessions, but he lost his family, his health, his friends, and even his companion. Now, I know she didn't pass away at that time, but she was no longer a support or a comfort to him. In that regard, she became a test to Job. So discouragement is something that Satan uses on each and every one of us. He brings things upon us. He brings things that will cause us to lose our joy and become discouraged.

The second one: *accusations*. The devil uses accusations against us, doesn't he? Even against the Son of God, Satan came with accusations. Should it surprise us that Satan would come against us with accusations? Satan said to Jesus, "If thou be the Son of God ..." He was trying to make accusations and cause Jesus to doubt and wonder. Many times accusations and dis-

couragement are mingled together, aren't they? They go hand in hand as weapons against our souls.

The third one: *temptations*. We find this is a tool that Satan uses against us.

The devil tempts us in many different ways. He will have out and out temptations that are unhidden, just right out in the open, and presented not in any type of sneaky fashion. There are other times when the devil will take advantage of an opportunity. He'll see an opportunity to set a temptation in our way. Again, he knows us better than we know ourselves. He looks for opportunities to perhaps weave a little discouragement in and throw in a few accusations: "If you're a Christian. If you did this better. What about this?" He weaves those things in, setting us up for maybe a temptation that comes along unexpectedly, or in a way that we're not prepared for.

Satan said to Jesus, after He had gone through fasting in the wilderness, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Our Lord was hungry. He had fasted. He was weak in His body. He was in a position to be taken advantage of and the devil lost no time in doing it. Satan tried to take advantage and tempt our Lord. He tried to tempt Jesus into turning those stones into bread.

Those three weapons that I tried to describe a little bit are not just individual weapons that the enemy would bring against us, but many times he will weave all three of those at us at once. He will hit us from every angle possible, wouldn't he? Sometimes we think, "Well, we have to watch out for temptations or discouragement," but at times the devil accuses us, discourages us, and throws temptations at us all at the same time. We may not even realize the onslaught of attacks that is coming against us; we may not even realize just what a snare the devil is trying to lay in our pathway.

BE NOT IGNORANT OF SATAN'S DEVICES

Sometimes we notice temptations. The Scriptures teach us that we should not be ignorant of Satan's devices. We need to recognize how the devil works. That happened to me recently. I saw the temptations, but then I stopped and tried to look from a bigger picture, and I realized that not only were there temptations that the devil was sending my way, but it was discouragement. Then I noticed some accusations that had been coming as well. All of a sudden, I realized the devil was battling me in a way far greater than what I recognized. It is during those times when we realize what an attack the enemy is using and we need to seek the Lord for strength. We need to draw close to Him and realize that the enemy is attacking our souls and endeavoring to destroy us.

In Proverbs, chapter 18, verse 14, there is a simple verse that would do us very good to consider: "The spirit

of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?" What is that verse saying? It is simply saying that if our spirit is strong, if our inner being is strong and defended, then it will help us through our weaknesses. It will help us through the difficult times of life. It can even bear our infirmities, and even some physical weaknesses and other things that we have to bear; but the inner man needs to be strong. He need not have a wounded spirit.

SATAN WANTS TO BREAK US

We've heard of people using the term, "He's a broken individual," meaning the inner man, the spirit of man has been broken. It's a sad thing to see someone who's broken or discouraged. That's really what the devil would like to do with every one of us. He'd like to tear us apart and break us down. Jesus said to Simon, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." He would like to break us down. "... a wounded spirit who can bear?" We need to take heart to that verse and realize that our inner man needs to be strong. We need to sustain the inner man to be able to overcome the battles and tests of life.

With that thought in mind, we must draw strength from the wells of salvation. We find in Isaiah 12, 2, 3: "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." What does it mean to "draw strength"? How do we go about drawing strength? How do we go about feeding our souls? We look to the Scriptures, don't we? We look to the promises of God. We look to our Lord and Savior for encouragement, for Him to uplift us and to challenge us to draw closer to Him. We spend time in prayer and meditating on the Word of God.

THE JOY OF THE LORD IS OUR STRENGTH

The Scriptures tell us in Nehemiah 8:10, "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Let us consider this scripture. If we allow Satan to rob us of our joy, if we allow him to bring in discouragement and accusations against us (things that will tear down the inner man), we're not going to be strong. We're not going to be the people that we need to be. We're not going to be in a place where God can work through us and use us. We must draw strength from the wells of salvation. We must have the joy of the Lord as our strength. If we find ourselves struggling to come to the house of worship, if we find ourselves struggling go to the Lord in prayer, if reading His Word becomes a burden, and if we start to see our interest waning in the things of God, we need to take that as an alarming condition. We need to take that as a warning that we're on shaky ground and do something about it. "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

The devil would like for nothing more than for us to keep our mouths shut when we come to services. He would like nothing more than for us to keep to ourselves and to not encourage one another. He would like for us to find other things to do—anything and everything but drawing strength from the wells of salvation. The devil wants us to be busy and involved in the respon-

sibilities of life. I'm not saying that there's not any responsibilities in life, for there are, but the devil would want us to be so caught up in those things. He'll try to get us to be so side-tracked with those responsibilities of life that it will rob us of our joy. Again, the devil knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows that if he can rob us of our joy, he's a long way towards robbing us of our salvation. We need to keep in mind that the joy of the Lord is our strength.

Paul realized that there are things in life that the devil would use to rob us of our joy. He realized that, even in the time he was living. Again, Paul knew and understood that there were things that the devil would use against us to try to lead us astray, to try to get us to be troubled and worried. Let us turn to Philippians, chapter 4. There are some very sound verses of good instruction here. Beginning with verse 4: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Paul goes on to give further instructions: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Paul was challenging the saints at Philippi and encouraging them to keep their eyes fixed on the Lord, to think on those things that were positive and good. He was encouraging them to draw strength from the wells of salvation. Paul started off by encouraging them to, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." Again, the devil would like nothing more than for us to keep quiet and not worship the Lord and draw strength from our service to the Lord. The devil wants to keep us reserved and unwilling to draw from the wells of salvation.

DRAWING POWER FROM OUR SALVATION

There are some privileges and blessings that we have, as being children of God and partakers of this great gift of salvation, that I would like for us to consider. One is: *power*. We have power in the Lord. The Scriptures tell us, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." What a privilege and a blessing to know that no matter what we face in life, or what comes our way, "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." I'm so thankful that sin no longer reigns in this mortal body. I'm thankful that we have power over sin. We don't have to succumb to the beggarly elements and the vices of the world. I'm so thankful that we have power to live free, pure and holy, and to live at peace with our Lord and Savior. What a blessing and privilege that is!

As children of God, we have the privilege of *prayer*. What a blessing! I feel I don't take enough advantage of it; but what a blessing and a privilege it is when we stop and think that we, as mere human beings, can talk to almighty God! He's the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending." We have the privilege of

going on our knees and talking to almighty God. What an opportunity, a blessing, and a source of power!

RECEIVING A SOUND MIND

We, as Christians, can have a *sound mind*. Thank God! “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (II Timothy 1:7). We don’t need to be worried and anxious, do we? “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” We don’t need to be worried. We can have a sound mind. Do you know stress can kill? If we’re worried, fretful, and nervous, if we’re allowing the devil to unsettle us and have us to be disturbed in our minds, it can affect our physical bodies. What a blessing and a privilege it is to have a sound mind! We are able to go out into this troubled world with a sound mind and be at peace with our Maker and ourselves.

We, as children of God, have the privilege and the opportunity to understand and to experience what true *contentment* is. “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (I Timothy 6:6). Something else comes to my mind when I think of contentment: you can be you. Have you ever thought of that? I don’t need to try to be someone else; I don’t need to try to please someone else; I don’t need to try to be someone that I’m not; I don’t need to try to keep up with the Joneses, but I can be me. I can be who God wants me to be. I can be myself. I can be contented in the things of the Lord and in the place He wants me to be. What a blessing! Contentment sounds so simple and so desirable. So many people want contentment, and yet it is something that’s so few have. So few in our world today have contentment.

RECEIVING A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

We, as Christians, can have a *clear conscience*. I’m not worried about what I did last night. I didn’t wake up this morning with a hangover. I didn’t wake up wondering who I was with last night. I’m not worried. There are some health benefits to that, too. Thank the Lord that I can have a clear conscience, a clear mind. I think of the song Bro. Brad Crooks and others in Louisiana sings: “How does it feel to know you’re all right, When you lay your head on your pillow each night, And know that it’s real?” You don’t have to worry or fret. You know that when you lay your head on your pillow at night that you have peace with the Lord and with your fellowman. You know that you don’t have to worry what might happen tomorrow. If you awake tomorrow, you’ll have peace, contentment, and a clear conscience. These are things, Saints, that we shouldn’t take for granted. We should be thankful and grateful for these things. These are blessings that we receive as being children of God.

The Scriptures teach us that the Lord makes even our enemies to be at peace with us. I know that’s not always the case, for the Scriptures tell us, “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men,” but in general, I believe that because in the heart of Christians we have love, peace, and joy reigning, this makes it easier for us to get along with our fellowman. I believe that even people we may consider to be rather

difficult to get along with, the Lord gives us the ability to live at peace with them. What a blessing that is!

We are blessed in this country that we’re living in. Even after 9/11, and other attacks that have been attempted, we still, to a large degree, are at peace. We live in a peaceful country. What a blessing and a privilege that is! Think of ISIS and the different terrorist groups that are ravaging places in certain parts of the world. What a blessing it is to live in peace and in harmony with our fellowman!

GOD’S PROMISES GIVE STRENGTH

We have promises from God Almighty. I can’t even begin to list all of those, but I’d like to mention a few for us to consider. Again, we’re talking about drawing strength from the wells of salvation and realizing that the joy of the Lord is our strength. We read in Romans, chapter 8, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” I believe if we really take that to heart, apply it to our thinking and in our attitude, we will have the courage that we didn’t realize we could ever have. We would have the courage and the strength to face the difficult places in life that we never thought we could face. We will have confidence in knowing that God will be there for us. We can face come what may, no matter what the situation may be.

The next verse that goes along with that is Philipians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Each and every one of us should say that verse to ourselves from time to time. Make it personal: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” There’s an acknowledgment there; “through Christ”—not in our own power or strength, but through faith and confidence in Christ. It is through standing on this verse that I read from Romans, chapter 8: “If God be for us, who can be against us?” Having that mindset and knowledge will help us to understand and say, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

We read in Hebrews 13:5, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Verse 8: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” Do you believe those scriptures? Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday as in ages gone by? He was the same back then as He is today; not only that, He is going to be the same going forward. Whatever we face, or whatever the future may hold, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” That’s the Word of God, Saints. We can anchor our lives on the Word of God. What a blessing and a privilege to know that our Lord and Savior has promised to never leave us nor forsake us! He has not lost any of His power. May the Lord help us to take that to heart.

I know we’re not seeing much salvation work done, but that does not reflect on our Savior. That doesn’t reflect one bit on His power, does it? The fact that people are not reaching out for the things of Christ as they have in years past does not reflect on the fact that He is still the same today. He’s still the same as He was; He’s still interested in the souls of men and in healing bodies; He’s still interested in you and me. “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

Christ “will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (I Corinthians 10:13). What a blessing and a comfort and an assurance that brings when we’re going through the time of temptation! What a precious promise! What a blessing it is to know that our Lord and Savior knows what we’re going through! He knows the tests and trials that we face. He sees every step of our way. He has promised not to bring more on us than what we can bear.

A CROWN AWAITS US IN HEAVEN

Lastly, we have that eternal reward in heaven. It does us good, whether young or old, to think about eternity from time to time. It does us good to think about what a day that will be. What a day of victory that will be when the face of our Savior we shall see! What a blessing! We read in I Corinthians 15:58, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” Our labor is not in vain in the Lord. Whether people flock to the Lord, or whether it’s hard when we only win one at a time, our labor is not in vain.

We have a crown of life to lay hold of. James 1:22, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” This scripture doesn’t tell us that the Lord’s going to lead us away from temptation or away from difficult places, but it says “when he is tried [tested], he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” There’s a crown of life for each and every one of us to gain, Dear Ones. We need to do as Paul said: “Fight the good fight of faith.” We need to lay hold on the crown of life; we need to lay hold on eternal life.

When you lay hold of something, what do you do? You have ahold of it with all of your might, don’t you? If you were tossed off a ship in the waves and someone threw to you a life preserver tied to a rope, what would you do? You would try to get ahold of that, whether you could swim or not. You would try to get an arm around that life ring and an handhold on that rope like you’ve never held a rope before. You would try to lay hold of it and not let go, because it’s your connection to safety. We need, Dear Ones, to lay hold on eternal life. Yes, there will be battles and things for us to face, but when we get to heaven, what a day of victory that will be! It will be worth it all when my Savior’s face I see.

Whether we are blessed with 70, 80, or 90 years of life on this earth, it is such a small portion of time. Time is such a small portion of eternity. There is something more to this life than just living here on this earth. There is a heaven to gain and a hell to shun. We need to fight the good fight of faith. We need not allow the devil to take our joy from us. Again, if he robs us of our joy, he robs us of our salvation. We need to draw strength from the wells of salvation.

CONCLUSION

When the choir sings, “What a Day That Will Be,” I see a note of victory in that song. This world is not

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our home. There’s something more to work for, Saints. There’s a heavenly home to gain.

There’s a song in our hymnal which says—

*Now the kingdom of God is within us,
It is peace, it is comfort and joy,
And a hope in our blessed Redeemer
Which the tempter can never destroy.*

Dear Ones, the devil is after our joy and our hope, but we can never allow him to take that from us. We can never allow him to destroy us and take our hope from us.

I have a picture in my mind of the saints of all ages and places—Jamaica, Cayman, the U.S., and throughout different places of the world. Some of the saints have gone on before, and some will be going on before us in the future, but one day all will be gathered together, singing on the shore, and making the heavenly arches ring. What a day of victory that will be! †

OUT OF BOX 88

Dear Editor,

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of *The Way of Truth* issues of July-December 2018. This publication remains an immense blessing to my Christian faith, experience, and daily building of my strength to live for God in an increasingly challenging social space.

I have finished reading the July issue with the theme, “The Valley of Dry Bones,” and have been blessed by the various messages. I particularly found Doug Shenberger’s position very invigorating when he concludes, “There is so much rejection and so many dead souls in the world today that it’s easy to start believing that they can’t live, but they can.” This gives me hope, as well as challenged me to increase my sharing of the Word of God with people, no matter the circumstances.

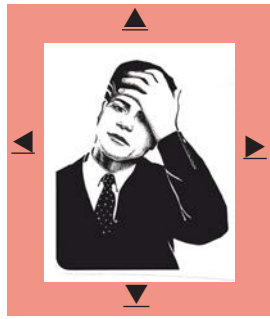
As is my practice, I read all the sections and found all the articles very inspiring and spiritually touchy. Mick Akers’, “The Kingdom of God, not in Word, but in Power,” stood out to me also, especially in further reflecting on the reaction of Peter and John to the threat of the Jerusalem authorities after the miracle of raising the crippled person. Acts 4 emphasis that “Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost said unto them ...” points to the need for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to accomplish kingdom tasks and not to depend on human capabilities. The Bible did not say that Peter displayed his social status, or academic credentials, but rather it is the power of the Holy Spirit that enabled he and others to speak and act boldly in the defense of the gospel of Christ. I have generally enjoyed reading this edition, including the Poetry Page celebrating America.

Thank you for keeping me on your mailing list as I also pray that the Lord will strengthen you to continue the good work. God bless!

—O. I., Nigeria

STANDING AT THE CROSSROADS OF UNITY

By Bro. Darrell Sanford
Hattiesburg, Mississippi



I HAVE NOT written on the subject of unity for some time, partly for fear of redundancy, but I feel pressed in my spirit to share my heart, ever how redundant the message may be. This is very serious, this subject of unity in the body of Christ—the glorious church of God. I believe God has brought us to a crossroads at which we must all choose a course. We can either put forth a genuine and determined effort to be one in the body of Christ—to endeavor to keep (or, in this case, to establish) the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, or we can continue on our separate paths within these groups which have been born out of strife and division. To continue on as we are is untenable, for if we recognize that there is this problem, then we are responsible to address it, and if we do not, we will be held accountable. We are the generation which has been given this choice, or perhaps I should say, this task; not “generation” in the sense of a certain age group, but a generation in the sense of a certain time. Brethren, it will not be the same for us after this. I fear darkness awaits us if we fail to act—if we fail to follow in His steps. Is the call to unity any less vital than the call to salvation, to sanctification, to obedience to any degree of light? Can we recognize a fault in our personal spiritual lives and not move to correct it? Can we recognize a fault in our practice of unity with all of God’s people and allow it to continue? Some may take the position (and yes, some do) that there is no fault, that there is no problem; that *their* group, their fellowship, is *the one* to which all others must come. They may contend that every practice, every teaching they hold must be submitted to fully in order to have unity and be accepted by God. My Brethren, we could read the writings of many old ministers from the past 140 years who would define that position as sectism. Obviously, there are some things which are fundamental to the teachings of justification, sanctification, the church, and even holiness, and there are other things which either are not fundamental, or they are held ignorantly by some in honest error, or they “are hard to be understood,” or perhaps ambiguous. Can we not endeavor with one another if we are fundamentally one? Can we not try our brethren’s spirits? I am not naive, I realize there is blatant apostasy in our “family tree” (I use the term loosely to identify our common heritage). I realize there has been serious doctrinal defection along the way which resulted in division. I do not endorse apostasy, man rule or false doctrine. (Yes, I do believe doctrine matters.) I endorse the true, pure, church of God, and I believe we will recognize that in one another.

Are We Willing to Draw the Line on Brethren?

Are we willing to designate every other “fellowship” of saints other than our own as unsaved? If we are, do we realize what we are saying? If we call them compromisers, fanatics, or apostates, and God calls them His children, where will that leave us with the Head of the church? Are we comfortable enough with that position to take it the judgment? If we are not confident enough to draw that line, and if we can instead say, “Yes, I believe many of the saints and ministers in these different fellowships are true saints of God, living to all they know, and if they die they will go straight to heaven,” then we must seek to be one with them, and heal this injury to the body. Else, how can we live with ourselves? To see it, to understand it, to believe it, and yet refuse to help heal it is the greatest of neglect! Violence has been done to the spiritual body of Jesus by attacking and rejecting one another for less than sufficient reasons. As a matter of fact, there is no sufficient reason for one part of the body to attack another. I’m convinced that many of the divisions caused were perpetrated by some who have long since passed. Perhaps they thought their reasons were valid, perhaps some were misunderstandings, perhaps some were even the result of pride and carnality. Will the whole body—saints who are alive and living for God today—for all the remainder of time, suffer for the deeds of a few who are not even alive today? Only in the case of true heresy, true apostasy, known sin, do we have the right to divide from that which has already separated itself from the body. Seriously, Brethren, if we believe that our group is “it,” we are fooling ourselves. If we believe that it’s better than it’s ever been—we are fooling ourselves! I urge each and every pastor to examine their own heart, and to consider these words for the sake of himself, his flock, and the church of God in all the world.

Isolated and Personal Issues Are Hindering Unity

Brethren, are there issues between various ones which are hindrances to our unity? They must be addressed—they must, for the sake of all, be resolved. If one part of the body suffers, do we all not suffer? These problems of which I speak are, of course, issues between ministers. But it is the poor saints who are caught in the middle. Are not saints separated from saints because of problems between pastors? Now, I can only address this in a general sense, as this article will be read by people of many different fellowships, most of which I am not intimately familiar. I do not know all the issues which may exist among you, but, having been saved for 39 years and a pastor for 14, I’m fairly confident they exist, and I *know* they hurt the body of Christ. How can this continue? Brethren, this is not merely an issue of one man (men) against another man (men), or sister, as the case may be, this is the precious church of Jesus Christ we are talking about. We pastors are interrupting—forbidding—the proper working of the church and the sweet fellowship of the saints because of these issues. I appeal to all in the strongest terms and by the love of Christ. What is the issue? Is it a misunderstanding? Is it a personal offense? Is it more serious than that? It matters not the cause; for the sake

of Christ, His body, His saints, and the work of the gospel, it must be attended to. Please, Brethren, and fellow ministers, I seek not to demand that you do my will, but rather the Lord's will. I have no authority to demand anything of you. I am but a minister as yourselves, and only speak what we all know is true.

Unfortunately, such situations rarely confine themselves to two, or a few people; they inevitably draw others into the conundrum from both sides, and then we have perhaps hundreds of saints who are isolated from each other. How can we love Christ and love His church and allow such things to exist, when we have the power in our grasp to deal with the problem? Do we have the power to deal with it? Do we? Do YOU have the ability to address, and hopefully solve, a particular issue? Then we must act! We appeal to you and to the saints in order that peace may be secured. Pray saints! Pray! If you are aware of such matters, pray! Pray for the sake of souls! Pray for the sake of the church of God which you so dearly love! May God help us, ministers and saints—this is not OUR church; this is the church of Jesus Christ—the church of the living God. We are lacking the fullness of the power and blessings of God, because we are not one as Christ and the Father are one! Sincerely, my Dear Loved Ones, you cannot look me square in the eye with a straight face and tell me that we are scripturally one! How can God honor us as we desire, and as He desires, once we know we are not one, lest we correct it?

Brothers and sisters, if we believe that we can continue as the church of God with strife and variance in our midst, we are fooling ourselves! These words may be strong, but the burden is stronger! The pain in our heart, at seeing what is being done to the beautiful church of God, is greater and deeper than any words could ever express! Is it not so among you, my brethren? Is it not so among you, saints of God?

James 1:22-25, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

Brethren, are we doers? We, who have the oracles of God? We, who boast the full light of the evening time? What are we doing with it? We read the Word of truth concerning the church, concerning unity, and we say, "We see that!" If we see, but do not do, where does that leave us? If we look into the mirror of God's Word and see our face—our knowledge, our understanding concerning the unity of God's people, and along with it the spot or blemish of disunity, will we endeavor to wipe away the spot, will we seek a healing ointment for the blemish, or will we turn away and forget what we saw? It is time to look into the perfect law of liberty—that which revealed to us the glorious truths of redemption, sanctification, and the one, true, divinely built and united church of God, and continue therein! Brethren, we are preachers of unity, we must be doers of the same! If so, we will be blessed in this deed!

July 2019

John 17:17-23, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

We have been made holy and set apart to do the work Jesus called us to do. He has sent *us* to seek and save those who are lost. He has called *us* to be one. He has commanded *us* to love one another with a pure heart fervently. He GAVE HIMSELF for that! He prayed "for them also which shall believe on me through their word." That includes the present generation—the generation which is now called to restore unity—"that they all may be one ... that the world may believe." The souls of men, the work of Christ is our responsibility, my Dear Brethren! What will we allow to hinder? What will *we* allow to hinder? We must be one in Christ—we must be made perfect in one. It is not done by human organization, or three-day conferences, or submitting to someone's list of requirements; it is done by humbling ourselves as individuals before God, by submitting ourselves one to another in the fear of God, by confessing our faults, by walking charitably toward our brother—by endeavoring—by repairing in ourselves what may need repairing.

It has been a long journey to the state in which we abide; this did not happen overnight. Many have lived and died in division, though not of their making or fault, and therefore they have lived in all godliness before God in all the light and understanding they had and, no doubt, had glorious experiences and rich lives. But, it is a different day, it is a day of revelation, a day of responsibility. It is a day to rise up and build back the walls—not the walls of separation, but the walls of the Holy City in which we are all to dwell together.

Law or Tradition—Which Is It?

Lastly, I would like to illustrate another hindrance to our oneness by relating my personal experience. I spent 37 years in a fellowship of the church of God which forbade men to wear beards. After some years as a pastor, I came to the position that I could no longer impose such a standard without sufficient scripture and reason to uphold it. (I must add that I was not alone in my feelings, as roughly half of my fellow ministers believed as I did.) After sharing my position at our annual minister's meeting through a comprehensive presentation utilizing scripture, related material and reasoning, we spent the next two years at various meetings "discussing" the matter. Finally, in one such meeting, I, and others who shared my view, were given what amounted to an ultimatum, basically, a list of eight standards which were put forth as necessary if one "was to be church of God." Among these, of course,

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was, "No Beards." Now, I had no problem with most of those standards which were presented in that list, but there were a few points upon which there was not complete and universal agreement, and, even though those differences had been tolerated for many, many years, suddenly, with the making of this list, they were reckoned as compromise, worldliness and, ultimately, sin. This assemblage of eight points, written without consultation with, or knowledge of, myself and others, was the drawing of a line in the sand. Its effect was predictable; for lacking conformity by all, to all, it would eliminate some from fellowship. H. M. Riggle wrote in *The Christian Church, Its Rise and Progress*: "It is a fact of history that the primary purpose of historical creeds was not to unite men, but to separate them." A fair assessment by Bro. Riggle, I would say.

Allow me to ask all the readers of this article this question: Is the list of eight standards, drawn up and agreed upon by this party of nine men as being essential to acceptance in the church of God, binding upon the entire body of Christ? Is it binding upon you? When someone, anyone, establishes standards, or in reality, laws, with which adherence is necessary in order to be accepted into fellowship, they are establishing laws which govern who is saved and who is not. To say otherwise reveals a lack of understanding as to the very basis of fellowship, for our fellowship with one another is predicated upon one thing—individual fellowship with God. Concerning the beard issue, they deemed them worldly and prideful, therefore sinful. I'm sure that will come as a shock to many good, saved, faithful brethren who wear beards, as well as the Old Testament prophets, Jesus, the apostles, and a good many more faithful Christian laborers throughout history, including D. S. Warner and many of his contemporaries.

I don't relate this incident to attack anyone; I state the facts, and divulge them here, because such things as this ought to be exposed to the light of examination, and because I do not believe this is an isolated incident but rather practice with deep roots. A group can have a tentative, teetering kind of fellowship under such conditions, until the next issue arises, but the entire church of God never will. Nearly 35 years ago the dividing issue among one group was the "misdefining" of a symbol in Revelation, and the contention was, that by defining the symbol wrongly the ones doing so "destroyed the church." Well, lo and behold, by arguing the issue to the point of division—they did in reality, exactly what some claimed was being done symbolically! No, the church was not destroyed, but unity was, perhaps souls were, our witness to the world suffered, and many friends and family members were divided, and are to THIS DAY. How many times has this happened? Again, let me say: sin, true compromise, apostasy, false doctrine, etc., are valid reasons for separation, but these incidents I have mentioned were not. How many more were not? Or, how many were created by people who are no longer even in this world, yet the division goes on? When we make laws regarding salvation (in reality ONLY God does that), they should be universal to all the church of God, otherwise, they are traditions or convictions, or a matter of our own judgment, which is fine, but they should be recognized, preached, and treated as such.

The Standard for Standards— The Word of God

May God help us, Brethren! Let us be certain that we do not have a list of preferences, of traditions, of customs, of personal convictions designated as "standards." Jesus once told His disciples, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." The purpose of His statement is found in Matthew 15. The point is that the Word of God alone is sufficient to govern us.

I am certain that many things which have been imposed as standards have been well meaning, and I am not criticizing ministers for holding standards in the care of their flocks, and for the integrity of the gospel—I hold legitimate, scriptural, godly "standards" as we all do. But, we are men and women of our times, understanding, personal constitutions and spiritual upbringing, and must realize that those influences do affect how we view issues which arise in the age, or area, in which we live. That may be a frightful and unsettling statement to some I'm sure, and I understand, but I ask that you consider it in the light of what I have related concerning the "beard standard." The beard standard was instituted in a time of cultural change, when being clean shaven was the societal norm for men in the USA and other places, and when many young people, who were considered anti-establishment, were beginning to grow beards. Therefore, those in a certain fellowship of the church of God raised the standard, or rather, insisted that "the Holy Ghost raised the standard," against beards. Let me interject that a certain standard was instituted by the leadership of the Amish hundreds of years before, in a time when mustaches were closely associated with, or required for military men. The Amish, of course, being pacifist, shaved their mustaches (but left the beards) to distinguish themselves from these warmongers. The association of mustaches with the military is long gone, but the bare lips of the Amish remain. It is a settled tradition.

I do not condemn anyone for not wearing a beard for whatever reason, nor do I necessarily condemn these brethren for doing, 60 years ago, what they felt was proper to distinguish themselves from undesirable and worldly people. But, when such standards are imposed for transient reasons, to address transient circumstances or social climates, we should understand that those associations may not always exist. That particular association (with the 1960's counterculture movement) did not exist for hundreds, or thousands of years prior to 1960 and, in a very short time it ceased to exist again, but, as with the hairless lips of the Amish, the standard remained with no direct scriptural support and little reason. For a people who claim to be governed by the Word of God and hold *that* up as our standard, such a tradition can become a difficult thing to defend, and, such standards, when not universally observed, will be a hindrance to universal unity. Holding a standard in a congregation for the welfare of the people, and in accordance with one's understanding of the scripture is one thing, but trying to bind that on every other congregation and pastor as a requirement for unity is something else. I reiterate, I am not speaking

of things we hold as standards, which are clearly defined in the Word of God, either by command or solid principle. I am speaking of such things along the lines of the situation I faced with the beard issue.

My Brethren, I hope some of these issues I have addressed will encourage us to pursue, with greater diligence, the unity of the faith which we proclaim, and seek to secure our oneness in Christ. It is incumbent upon us to do this work—it is our time and we must act. Let us do what we have ability to do, and what God grants us power to do. Surely, we can do much by those means alone.

I also want to say that progress has been made, I don't belittle what has been done, for some fellowship has been restored and established. I have personally been the beneficiary of some mended fences, and it is a wonderful thing to meet new brethren, who are really old brethren, but from whom circumstances had kept me from engaging. I believe also that many others are talking about and considering the opportunity God is setting before us. Please contact *The Way of Truth* publication and share you thoughts with us. We would love to hear from you.

Brethren, please, if any area of this article stirs your hearts, if any situation locates us personally, I beg you to consider it deeply in prayer and meditation; especially we ministers. We affect so many—the dear saints of God, as well as all the host of lost souls looking for a people who are truly living the truth of the gospel. We must be one—we must! May the grace and blessings of our precious Lord be upon us all. †

MORE FROM BOX 88

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I wanted to let you know that I received *The Way of Truth* that you sent me after I contacted you indicating that I had not received my May issue.

I wanted to let you know how God blesses us in such ways that we don't even realize. It seems that my next door neighbor, who has so very many problems, had it delivered to her house, and she had nothing to read so she decided to read it and then give it to me the next day. She forgot and she called me, after I received the second issue from you, to apologize and said she had read it from the front to the back in total. What a blessing ... how God spreads the Word! I will be giving her my monthly copy after I read it each month.

What would we, who have no Church of God, the true heavenly Church of God, in the area where we live do without you in our lives?

I listen to your services on the Internet and praise God for my fellow brothers and sisters in Hagerstown. I am so blessed to be able to be online with you and I feel that I know all of the dear brothers and sisters in your congregation. I don't know what I would do without your services and publications.

Thank you for being in my life. Thank you again and again. May God bless and continue blessing all of the wonderful work that you are doing throughout the world.

—S. M., Indiana



Dear Young People,

Greetings! I trust this finds you holding on to the precious promises of our Lord. He has supplied our every need. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

My thoughts this month are based on something Bro. Dennis Shenberger, from our local congrega-

tion, said several years ago. He reminded us that if we fail or make a mistake in our Christian walk, DON'T DWELL ON IT. Dwelling on our mistakes gives the devil opportunity to discourage and push us down. It is not the will of God that you should be discouraged. "As the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged." Bro. Dennis also noted that if, when faced with obstacles or tests, we do WELL, we should NOT DWELL ON IT. Allow yourself to feel the blessing and satisfaction of God, but do not allow your mind to linger on how well you did. The devil could bring in thoughts of pride or a false sense of security. I Corinthians 10:12 says, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

We are concluding our reading this month of *The Heavenly Footman* by John Bunyan. I would like to thank Sis. Dolores Morehouse for suggesting this book for our readers. I know that I, personally, have been helped by the thoughts contained therein.

May the Lord show His kindness to you this month.

With love,

Sis. Crystal Gossard

The Heavenly Footman

By John Bunyan

The Fifth Use

A GAIN, here you may see, in the next place, that is, they that will have heaven must run for it; then this calls aloud to those who began but a while since to run, I say, for them to mend their pace if they intend to win; you know that they which come hindmost, had need run fastest. Friend, I tell thee, there be those that have run ten years to thy one, nay, twenty to thy five, and yet if thou talk with them, sometimes they will say they doubt they shall come late enough. How then will it be with thee? Look to it therefore that thou delay no time, not an hour's time, but speedily part with all, with everything that is an hindrance to thee in thy journey, and run; yea, and so run that thou mayest obtain.

The Sixth Use

Again, sixthly, You that are old professors, take you heed that the young striplings of Jesus, that began to strip but the other day, do not outrun you, so as to have that scripture fulfilled on you, "The first shall be last, and the last first"; which will be a shame to you, and a credit for them. What, for a young soldier to be more courageous than he that hath been used to wars! To you that are hindmost, I say, strive to outrun them that

are before you; and you that are foremost, I say, hold your ground, and keep before them in faith and love, if possible; for indeed that is the right running, for one to strive to outrun another; even for the hindmost to endeavor to overtake the foremost, and he that is before should be sure to lay out himself to keep his ground, even to the very utmost. But then,

The Seventh Use

Again, How basely do they behave themselves, how unlike are they to win, that think it enough to keep company with the hindmost? There are some men that profess themselves such as run for heaven as well as any; yet if there be but any lazy, slothful, cold, half-hearted professors in the country, they will be sure to take example by them; they think if they can but keep pace with them they shall do fair; but these do not consider that the hindmost lose the prize. You may know it, if you will, that it cost the foolish virgins dear for their coming too late—"They that were ready went in with him, and the door was shut." "Afterward," mark, *afterward* came the other, the foolish, virgins, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered, and said, 'Depart, I know you not'" (Matthew 25:10-12). Depart, lazy professors, cold professors, slothful professors. O! methinks the Word of God is so plain for the overthrow of you lazy professors, that it is to be wondered men do take no more notice of it. How was Lot's wife served for running lazily, and for giving but one look behind her, after the things she left in Sodom? How was Esau served for staying too long before he came for the blessing? And how were they served that are mentioned in the 13th of Luke, "for staying till the door was shut?" Also the foolish virgins; a heavy after-groan will they give that have thus staid too long. It turned Lot's wife into a pillar of salt. It made Esau weep with an exceeding loud and bitter cry. It made Judas hang himself: yea, and it will make thee curse the day in which thou wast born, if thou miss of the kingdom, as thou wilt certainly do, if this be thy course. But,

The Eighth Use

Again, How, and if thou by thy lazy running shouldst not only destroy thyself, but also thereby be the cause of the damnation of some others, for thou being a professor thou must think that others will take notice of thee; and because thou art but a poor, cold, lazy runner, and one that seeks to drive the world and pleasure along with thee: why, thereby others will think of doing so too. Nay, say they, why may not we as well as he? He is a professor, and yet he seeks for pleasures, riches, profits; he loveth vain company, and he is proud, and he is so and so, and professteth that he is going for heaven; yea, and he saith also he doth not fear but he shall have entertainment; let us therefore keep pace with him, we shall fare no worse than he. O how fearful a thing will it be, if that thou shalt be instrumental of the ruin of others by thy halting in the way of righteousness! Look to it, thou wilt have strength little enough to appear before God, to give an account of the loss of thy own soul; thou needest not have to give an account for others; why, thou didst stop them from entering in. How wilt thou answer that saying, You would not enter in yourselves, and them that would you hinder; for that saying will be eminently fulfilled

on them that through their own idleness do keep themselves out of heaven, and by giving of others the same example, hinder them also.

The Ninth Use

Therefore, now to speak a word to both of you, and so I shall conclude.

1. I beseech you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that none of you do run so lazily in the way to heaven as to hinder either yourselves or others. I know that even he which runs laziest, if he should see a man running for a temporal life, if he should so much neglect his own well-being in this world as to venture, when he is a-running for his life, to pick up here and there a lock of wool that hangeth by the way-side, or to step now and then aside out of the way for to gather up a straw or two, or any rotten stick, I say, if he should do this when he is a-running for his life, thou wouldst condemn him; and dost thou not condemn thyself that dost the very same in effect, nay worse, that loiterest in thy race, notwithstanding thy soul, heaven, glory, and all is at stake. Have a care, have a care, poor wretched sinner, have a care.

2. If yet there shall be any that, notwithstanding this advice, will still be flagging and loitering in the way to the kingdom of glory, be thou so wise as not to take example by them. Learn of no man further than he followeth Christ. But look unto Jesus, who is not only "the author and finisher of faith," but who did, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God" (Hebrews 12:2). I say, look to no man to learn of him no further than he followeth Christ. "Be ye followers of me," saith Paul, "even as I also am of Christ." Though he was an eminent man, yet his exhortation was, that none should follow him any further than he followed Christ.

Now that you may be provoked to run with the foremost, take notice of this. When Lot and his wife were running from cursed Sodom to the mountains, to save their lives, it is said that his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt; and yet you see that neither her practice, nor the judgment of God that fell upon her for the same, would cause Lot to look behind him. I have sometimes wondered at Lot in this particular; his wife looked behind her, and died immediately, but let what would become of her, Lot would not so much as look behind him to see her. We do not read that he did so much as once look where she was, or what was become of her; his heart was indeed upon his journey, and well it might: there was the mountain before him, and the fire and brimstone behind him; his life lay at stake and he had lost it if he had but looked behind him. Do thou so run: and in thy race remember Lot's wife, and remember her doom; and remember for what that doom did overtake her; and remember that God made her an example for all lazy runners, to the end of the world: and take heed thou fall not after the same example. But, if this will not provoke thee, consider thus,

1. Thy soul is thy own soul, that is either to be saved or lost; thou shalt not lose *my* soul by *thy* laziness. It is thy own soul, thy own ease, thy own peace, thy own advantage, or disadvantage. If it were my soul that

thou art desired to be good unto, methinks reason should move thee somewhat to pity it. But alas, it is thy own, thy own soul. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). God's people wish well to the souls of others, and wilt not thou wish well to thy own? And if this will not provoke thee, then think again,

2. If thou lose thy soul, it is thou also that must bear the blame. It made Cain stark mad to consider that he had not looked to his brother Abel's soul. How much more will it perplex thee to think, that thou hadst not a care of thy own? And if this will not provoke thee to bestir thyself, think again,

3. That if thou wilt not run, the people of God are resolved to deal with thee even as Lot dealt with his wife, that is, leave thee behind them. It may be thou hast a father, mother, brother, etc., going post-haste to heaven, wouldst thou be willing to be left behind them? Surely no. Again,

4. Will it not be a dishonor to thee to see the very boys and girls in the country to have more wit than thyself? It may be the servants of some men, as the horsekeeper, ploughman, scullion, etc., are more looking after heaven than their masters. I am apt to think sometimes, that more servants than masters, that more tenants than landlords, will inherit the kingdom of heaven. But is not this a shame for them that are such? I am persuaded you scorn, that your servants should say that they are wiser than you in the things of this world; and yet I am bold to say, that many of them are wiser than you in the things of the world to come, which are of great concernment.

Well then, sinner, what sayest thou? Where is thy heart? Wilt thou run? Art thou resolved to strip? Or art thou not? Think quickly, man, it is no dallying in this matter. Confer not with flesh and blood; look up to heaven, and see how thou likest it; also to hell, of which thou mayst understand something by my book, called, *A few Sighs from Hell; or the Groans of the Damned Soul*, which I wish thee to read seriously over—and accordingly devote thyself. If thou dost not know the way, inquire at the Word of God. If thou wantest company, cry for God's Spirit. If thou wantest encouragement, entertain the promises. But be sure thou begin by times; get into the way; run apace and hold out to the end; and the Lord give thee a prosperous journey. Farewell. †

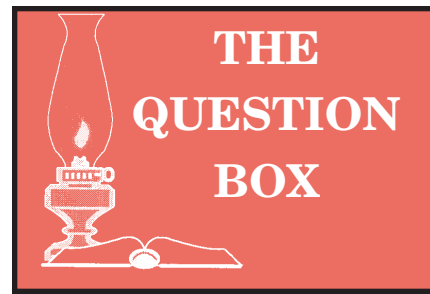
STILL MORE FROM BOX 88

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank God for the truth of God's Word! It is forever settled in heaven. I have been blessed and encouraged through reading *The Way of Truth* magazine. A number of years ago, I began receiving *The Way of Truth* through the gift of my dear brother in the Lord, J. H. He has since gone home to be with the Lord.

I am sending this donation to help support the good news of the gospel. ... Thank you in the name of the Lord. Keep up the good work. May God continue to bless you.

—B. H., Ohio



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 you please explain Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25?

ANSWER: In regard to Romans 8:24, whenever God, through Christ, or because of Christ's death, justifies a person, forgives him, and no longer condemns him, then no one else can. Christ not only died but He arose and returned to the Father, and is now making intercession for us. Even though He is in heaven, He is still the Head of the Church, King of the kingdom, and is concerned for us.

In regard to Hebrews 7:25, the first word "wherefore" calls our attention back to what has been said, and the writer has pointed out that Christ has "an unchangeable priesthood" (verse 24). Because of this, and because He has given His life for us, He is able to save to the uttermost—to save from the power, guilt, nature, and punishment of sin.

Jesus said that no one could come to the Father except through Him, and that is stated again in this verse. We notice that it is also pointed out in this verse as in Romans 8:34 that Christ makes intercession for the redeemed.

QUESTION: Please explain John 20:23: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." What type of sin is that?

ANSWER: One of the many things the Jews found fault with Jesus over was His statement to a man, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." They said that only God could forgive sins. Of course, Jesus Christ is God the Word, and He had power to forgive sins. However, we are not to understand from this verse that God's ministers can forgive sins that are committed against God, as Christ did.

Taking Matthew 16:19 and 18:18, along with the verse you have asked about, we understand that Jesus gave the apostles the doctrine of reconciliation and condemnation. They who believed the preaching of the gospel and obeyed it had their sins remitted; those who did not, remained bound. When God's true ministers preach the gospel, the Spirit of God bears witness to the truth, and all heaven backs it up.

QUESTION: How do we adorn the hidden man?

ANSWER: This question comes from the scripture found in I Peter 3:4. To adorn anything is to make it more attractive by addition of something. So to adorn

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



EASY TO SAY

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

the hidden man of the heart would be to add to it something that would increase its beauty. In I Peter 3:4, we are told to adorn the inner man with a meek and quiet spirit. In other words, meekness and quietness are becoming to the Christian. He who is meek will not be found taking undue honor to himself. He will be preferring others before himself; he will always acknowledge God as the sovereign of the universe.

Quietness is a God-given grace and is characteristic of the Christian soul. Then other adornments are given in Galatians 5:22, 23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." These fine qualities beautify the inner or the hidden man and anyone can have as much as they desire.

QUESTION: After Achan confessed his sins, was he not worthy of forgiveness as such is the manner of God? Why did he and his family have to die?

ANSWER: The Bible does not say whether Achan sought God's forgiveness or not. He did confess to Joshua what he had done. But suppose he did seek and obtain God's forgiveness. That does not mean he was not to be punished for his sin. Many people have sought God's forgiveness, but still had to serve time in prison and some put to death. We had that in our nation some time back. She said she had been born again. Many pled for her to be spared, but she was not. The governor felt she should pay for her crime.

We need to realize that God's forgiveness does not always mean we will not have to suffer for past sins. Some Christians suffer the rest of their lives. You spoke of Achan. He caused the death of 36 men—possibly husbands, fathers and brothers—his confessing did not bring those 36 men back to their families. Sin is very costly!

QUESTION: What is the difference between conscience and the Spirit of God in man?

ANSWER: The Bible speaks of one's conscience, especially the New Testament writings of Paul, but nowhere does it give us a description of it.

Random House Dictionary says it is "the sense of what is right or wrong in one's conduct or motives, impelling one toward right action." Since the Bible speaks of some having a conscience seared with a hot iron, it would not always be safe to follow. The Bible is given to us to live by; our conscience is to be guided by it.

The Spirit of God is the third person in the Godhead. If you speak of man's spirit, we understand it to be the "nonmaterial self," that which goes to be with the Lord—if you have been regenerated—when you did physically, that which leaves the body at death.

QUESTION: What are spiritual blessings?

ANSWER: Part of the meaning of the word *blessing* is, "to make happy or prosperous." Spiritual blessings are blessings that come to the soul or the spiritual man. The greatest of all is salvation! Your soul could be blessed by a Spirit anointed sermon, a song, a testimony, by an answer to prayer, etc. †

There's that sign again! I said to myself, as my sisters and I climbed the wide department store stairs with our mother. I slowed to look at the fascinating placard on the easel that stood on the landing. It featured three attractive ladies with excited smiles. Above the women's faces, a speech bubble arose. "It's so easy to say 'Charge it!'" the women were saying.

I'm going to try saying it, I thought, *and see how easy it is.* "Charge it!" I whispered to myself. *That was easy, all right,* I thought. I said it again, a little louder, "Charge it!" *Who could ever find those two words difficult to say?* I wondered. *Why would someone make a sign about it?*

My mother turned around. "What are you doing down there?" she asked. Get up here with the rest of us before you get separated, and we don't know where you are."

I continued thinking about the sign as I followed my mother to the sewing department. I thought about it while the clerk measured and cut the fabric my mother had selected.

There are lots of phrases that are just as easy to say as "Charge it," I thought to myself. I tried a couple of them. "Open it," I whispered. *That was just as easy to say,* I thought. "Close it," I said. That, too, was easy. *What is the significance of "Charge it"?* I wondered again.

I decided to ask my mother. "Mom, why is it easy to say 'Charge it'?" I asked her as we passed the sign again on our way down the stairs.

My mother snorted in disgust. "It's easy to say, all right," she said, "but it's a bad idea!"

Oh, no! I thought to myself. *I said "Charge it" two or three times to myself just now. I wonder what is going to happen to me?*

"Why is it a bad idea?" I asked my mother.

"Because it makes people spend money they don't have," she said.

Now I was really confused. How could you spend money you didn't have? But my mother was headed for the parking lot like she meant business, and I knew better than to ask any more questions just then.

I decided to wait and ask Grandma about it. Grandma didn't have a big garden to tend and a lot of little children to look after, and so she usually had the time to answer my questions in detail.

"Why is it a bad idea to say 'Charge it'?" I asked the next time I visited her.

Grandma looked at me. "Do you know what it means when someone says, 'Charge it'?" she asked.

“No,” I told her. I explained about the sign on the landing of the stairs at the department store with the pretty ladies that were telling everyone how easy it was to say.

“Well, honey,” Grandma began, “when you ‘charge’ something at the store, you are allowed to take it home with you if you promise to pay for it later.”

“That’s a good thing, isn’t it?” I asked.

Grandma shook her head. “Not really,” she answered. “You see, the storekeeper adds extra money to the bill when you pay it back. The extra money is called ‘interest,’ and it is charged to you for the privilege of owning an item while you pay for it.”

“My mother said when you charge something, you spend money you don’t have,” I told her.

Grandma laughed. “That’s a good way to put it,” she said. “You pay extra money to own something you can’t afford.”

“Mom says it’s not a good idea,” I told her.

“Well,” said Grandma, “charging too many things can make problems. Sometimes people go so far into debt they have trouble getting out.”

I thought about Grandma’s words many years later when I worked to pay off my own credit card debts. I remembered the pretty ladies who said, “It’s so easy to say ‘Charge it!’” It had been easy to hand my plastic credit card to the sales associate when I needed a new refrigerator I couldn’t afford. But it was hard to pay the money back, month after month, with the extra “interest” added on.

Many things are easy to say but harder to carry out. It is easy to say, “I love you!” to your mother, but it is harder to show it in your actions. When your mother asks you to do a chore for her, it is not always easy to stop your play and do the work with a cheerful attitude. Although it might be difficult, doing so would be a way to prove to your mother that you really do love her.

It is the same way with God. It is easy to say, “I love you, Jesus,” when we kneel in prayer. But we must ask for strength and grace to prove our love by following every command we are given in God’s Word.

This month’s wise saying comes from Proverbs 6:2, which says, “Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.” If we say something that we do not prove by our actions, our words will become a snare to us. None of us wants to be caught by our own words.

Activity

Jesus once told a parable about a boy who was snared by his own words. See if you can find the location of the “Parable of the Two Sons.” Read the story and then tell it to someone else. Maybe one of your parents or grandparents would like to hear it. Be sure to explain to your listener how the boy was caught by his own words. Tell your listener what you learned from reading the story Jesus told.

Answer to Last Month’s Activity

Were you able to name the wise Bible character who gave each piece of godly advice?

July 2019

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

2. “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right” (Paul; Ephesians 6:1).

3. “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass” (David; Psalm 37:5).

4. “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” (Peter; Acts 3:19). †

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

JUSTIFICATION

FORSAKING SIN

Scriptures: I John 3:7-9; Ezekiel 33:11; John 8:11; Romans 6:1, 2, 7, 12, 14; Matthew 19:27-29.

I John 3:7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

John 8:11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Matthew 19:27 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Memory Verse: He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.—Proverbs 28:13.

Aim: To teach that a Christian lives a sinless life.

INTRODUCTION

SIN ALWAYS has been and always will be death to the spiritual life of any man, for in the Garden of Eden, in the very beginning, man was told that disobedience to the will and Word of God would bring death; and Paul declares in Romans 6:23 that the wages of sin is death. No man can be truly happy if there is any sin in his life, for sin always separates the soul from God; and separation from the gracious Spirit of God leaves the soul hopeless and desolate. The great purpose of the coming of the Lord into the earth to offer His life as a sacrifice was to deliver men from the power of sin. Any man who is delivered from the power of sin certainly is not found under control of it. Sin is the transgression of the law and is not to be understood as errors of the head and shortcomings of the flesh. If any man knows he should do a thing and refuses to do it, he breaks the command of God and is guilty of sin. If the sin is not confessed and forsaken, he will certainly be lost through all eternity. Therefore, it is of the greatest importance that we make sure that our lives are free from sin, and that every day we are walking in the favor of almighty God.

MEDITATIONS

KEEPING ALERT—I John 3:7—Let no man deceive you—Righteousness is of God! Righteousness is simply doing that which is right. He who is born of God, and thus a child of God, seeks to do what is right. Let no man deceive you; a person who is living in sin, or a religious person who sins more or less every day, is not a righteous person.

SIN'S END—I John 3:8—Destroy the works—It is the devil who planted the tendency to sin in the human heart, or, in other words, it was he who degenerated the nature of man, bringing him into the state of depravity. It is the purpose of the Lord Jesus to destroy this work of the devil out of the human heart and thus restore it to its original purity, and the first step in doing this is justification. In the light of this great truth, how foolish it is to think that the work of the Lord on Calvary was only for the purpose of destroying sin day by day as fast as the devil brought it into our lives if we confessed our sin. This is ridiculous. The Lord has no fellowship with a sinner. Truly, every man who commits an imputed sin is of the devil. There is NO exception to this rule.

SALVATION DELIVERS FROM SIN—I John 3:9—Doth not commit sin—Some religious teachers would have this verse say that a person does not sin as he used to, or does not sin habitually as he formerly did, but the verse says a person who is born of God does not commit sin. Thank God for deliverance from sin. The latter part of the verse is not to be understood as saying it is impossible for a person to return to a life of sin, but as long as he retains the Word of God in his heart he will not sin.

OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS REQUIRED TO TURN AWAY FROM SIN—Ezekiel 33:11—Turn ye—The only way that men could have favor with God under the law was to be obedient to the requirements that He made of them. Ezekiel also told us in chapter 18, verse 4, that the soul that sins shall die. Imputed

sin separates the soul from God and leaves it lost. It was and is God's plan that men turn away from and forsake sin.

SIN NOT—John 8:11—Sin no more—Notice the command of Jesus to the woman. He was forgiving: "Go, and sin no more." Jesus meant what He said. It is dangerous to believe false doctrine about sin.

IS A CHRISTIAN PERMITTED TO SIN?—Romans 6:1—God forbid—Because the great grace of God is sufficient to deliver from the worst of sin is no reason why men should sin just to appropriate this grace. Paul says "God forbid."

DEAD TO SIN—Romans 6:2—How shall we—If a person has truly died to sin how could he continue a life of sin? True, the tempter may entice a saved man, and he may yield to the temptation, thus sinning; but if he does so, he is now a sinner and no longer a Christian, just as Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden. If a saved and sanctified man yields to temptation and sins, the devil plants anew the nature of sin in his heart.

DEAD TO THE WORLD—Romans 6:7—He that is dead—He who is dead to the world through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is separated from its sins and pleasures. To be separated from sin is to be freed from it. He who is freed from jail is no longer held by the jail. He who is freed from sin is no longer in its bondage.

RESISTING SIN—Romans 6:12—Let not sin ... reign—As long as we are in the world, sin will try to bring us back into its bondage after we have been delivered, but we are commanded not to let it reign in our flesh. We know that the wages of sin is death; therefore, we are to avoid it as if it were a deadly rattlesnake.

POWER OVER SIN—Romans 6:14—Not have dominion—God has granted to each one of His children enough power to overcome sin when it attacks him; therefore, it cannot have dominion over him. Did He not say by the apostle Paul that He would not allow us to be tempted above that which we are able? He watches our strength very closely and does not let the devil attack us with more force than we are able to resist. This being true, no man has any excuse for failing and returning again to the practice of sin.

FORSAKING ALL—Matthew 19:27—Followed thee—To really follow the Lord means that we do forsake all, not only sin, but also our personal ambition, even though it may be legitimate. The things of this world are temporal and have no spiritual significance; but the life that Christ calls us to is eternal, beginning here in this world, and merits the very best that we can put into it. Our all is a very small price to pay for the marvelous gift of salvation.

EVERY ONE A KING—Matthew 19:28—Followed me—The Revelator declared that God had made the redeemed kings and priests unto God. Even now the redeemed soul is reigning daily over the power of sin, the flesh, and the devil. And he who overcomes will Christ give to sit with Him in His throne even as He has overcome and is set down with His Father in His throne.

JAMAICA CONVENTION REPORT

Cornwall Mountain, Westmoreland

March 5-10, 2019

Sis. Nardia Wilson, Reporter

Submitted by: *Sis. Grace Ramsay*

Theme: “Christ’s Peace in Troublesome Times”

Pilot scriptures: John 16:33 and Psalm 121:1

It is difficult to find words to express how God came through for us in this convention. Only a personal experience could paint a true picture. Prior to the start of this convention, many prayers and fasting were observed.

Below is a brief synopsis of the services:

Tuesday

6:00 A.M.—Prayer Meeting (though not the official start)—Bro. Tim Matthews was in charge and he used II Corinthians 10:3, 4.

7:15 P.M.—Evangelistic Service (the official start). Speaker: Bro. David Shaw. Excerpts: “I came here 42 years ago. We are here to hear from the Lord. We have a beautiful theme for this convention. There is trouble everywhere. If there is one place we should have peace, it should be in the church. Jesus said, ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation’ (John 16:33), but in Him, we shall have peace. Peace written on paper is not peace.”

Wednesday

6:00 A.M.—Prayer Meeting—Bro. Mick Akers led. Excerpts: “Despite this group of people, we cannot do anything without God. There are many things we want to see accomplished, so with our expectation we come to God.”

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Franklyn Bascoe. Excerpts: “I thank the Lord that He spared our lives to be here. Jesus said, ‘Without me ye can do nothing.’ In John 16:28-33, Jesus was preparing His disciples for what was to come. There is peace in the time of trouble.”

2:30 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Tim Crooks. Excerpts: “Whenever we come to the truth, we are to give ourselves to the Lord. He gave Himself for us. John 14:27 says, ‘Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.’ Officials cannot give peace. Christ can give peace.”

7:15 P.M.—Evangelistic Service. Speaker: Bro. Mick Akers. Excerpts: “Salvation, a force for good. Without righteousness, there can be no peace. One reason that righteousness is connected to peace is that there is purity in peace. All the trouble in this world is because of unrighteousness. Righteousness and peace work interchangeably. Peace is found at the altar of salvation.”

Thursday

6:00 A.M.—Prayer Meeting—Sis. Dorrette Clarke was in charge. She read Psalm 24 and Romans 4:20. Excerpts: “God is all-powerful and mighty. God will answer prayer. There are times when it seems like

PRESENT REWARDS—Matthew 19:29—Shall receive—In one of the other Gospels one of the rewards that is promised is persecution, which most people would rather not inherit. But persecutions are valuable. They increase our reward in heaven if we successfully survive them. They increase our spiritual strength and understanding in this time world, and they are stepping stones to higher ground. Though our earthly friends forsake us because we accept Christ, we are told that God will furnish others. If our property is taken, we will be supplied with what we need.

CONCLUSION

When David maliciously took the wife of Uriah, he committed a very serious sin and was made to cry out, “I have sinned.” Sin always brings the remorse of conscience, and nothing we can do within ourselves can remove the sting. In some cases the sting becomes so great that the sufferer resorts to self-destruction. Of course, this only makes matters worse, for he has put himself in a place from which he can never recover. But how wonderful it is that if a man does do wrong, God in His mercy has provided a way that he may escape and recover to the point that it is just the same in the sight of God as though it had not happened. What are the advantages in forsaking sin? First, we have the promise of eternal life, in which everyone is interested. Second, in this time world he who forsakes sin will find the forces of nature working in his behalf, whereas before, nature was working against him. Paul declared that he who commits fornication sins against his own body. The cigarette smoker is daily destroying his body. So to forsake sin is profitable in every way you look at it, and we must encourage all men to depart from a wicked life.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What does sin do for the human family?
2. Give the Bible definition of sin.
3. Is a mistake of the head a sin?
4. Explain the teaching that he who is righteous is righteous even as Jesus is righteous.
5. What is any man to be called who commits sin, and to what family does he belong?
6. Is the Christian permitted to sin?
7. What does it mean to be dead to the world?
8. What does it mean to be a king unto God? †

THE HIGH COST OF POSTAGE RATES

Postage rates continue to climb. Especially expensive are international rates. We have a vision to increase our readership, not cut back.

Though there is no subscription price to our magazine, we would like our readers to know that your offerings to help defray expenses are gratefully received!

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE

For many years, The Way of Truth publishing work has provided Church of God Sunday school literature. If you would like a sample of Bible-based literature and a price list, please request it. We have a six-year series of lessons. Order your sample today.

things will not work out. Let us not close the windows of faith. Let us stand up and show the world that God is all-powerful.”

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Sis. Orinthia Shaw-Allen. Excerpts: “There is peace in the time of trouble. In our problems and ships of life, there are other ships around us, but our full trust and confidence must be in God. Don’t wait until the water reaches our necks for us to cry out. Cry out to God at all times.”

2:30 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Hezekiah Lamey. He used Romans 1:1-7. Excerpts: “We are living in a troublesome world, but Jesus said, ‘Blessed are the peace makers ...’ Our world is filled with heartaches and problems. ‘I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.’”

7:15 P.M.—Evangelistic Service. Speaker: Bro. Mick Akers. He read Revelation 19:9. Title: “A Call to the King’s Table.” Excerpts: “It is up to God to determine who the message bearer is going to be. I am blessed to be able to be used by God. Noah was a preacher. He spoke to a set of people who didn’t want to hear. His message was unfamiliar to the people. He told them it was going to rain. This was something that never happened. Jeremiah told the people that an awful destruction was at hand. They didn’t believe until it happened. Many of them were destroyed. God sent His Word for the benefit of mankind. He wants us to hear it.”

Friday

6:00 A.M.—Prayer Meeting—Bro. Ronald Wilson was in charge. He read Romans 5:1-5. Excerpts: “Great is the faithfulness of God. Let us not take the mercies of God for granted. God has all the blessings for us. We just need the place to receive it.”

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Samuel. Excerpts: “What do you have today? Use what you have to glorify God and He will bless it. Bring what you have to the Lord. The little lad brought what he had to the Lord. Jesus blessed it. The oil is always there, but the vessels are lacking.”

2:30 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Peter Ramsay. Excerpts: “Despite what is happening around us, let us be assured that with God, we have peace. There will always be oppositions in life, but with God, we have His peace. If Job didn’t have the deep-settled peace in God, he would have lost the battle. Peace is vital in our world today.”

7:15 P.M.—Evangelistic Service. Speaker: Bro. Rupert Shippy. Excerpts: “Praise the Lord! God is good. I want to praise Him with all my heart. ‘Some through the waters, some through the flood, Some through the fire, but all through the blood.’” Bro. Shippy illustrated the story of the Red Sea, and we know that there is nothing impossible with God.

Saturday

6:00 A.M.—Prayer Meeting—Sis. Linette Jutan was in charge. Excerpts: “Thank God for the blessed hour of prayer. Mark 11:24 says, ‘Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.’ Whatever we put in this morning is what we will get out. The almighty God is watching us. Our desires will be granted if we believe. Jesus said, ‘Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.’”

10:00 A.M.—A Divine Healing Service. Speaker: Bro. David Shaw. Excerpts: “Many times we suffer so much because our concentration is on the problems, sickness, and other struggles of life. If we know the God we serve, it would not be so. Psalm 103:1, 2, says, ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.’ We must always reflect upon the goodness of God.”

2:30 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Donovan Darby. Title: “Benefits of Making Peace With God.” Excerpts: “It is an honor to sit and listen to the Word of the Lord. We do not manufacture peace. God gives us peace. Romans 5:1 says, ‘Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ We must endeavor ‘to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’”

7:15 P.M.—An Appreciation Service took place. Ministers serving 10 years and over were appreciated. This included our beloved Sis. Ruth Cummings who has just relinquished her post as pastor of the host congregation in Cornwall Mountain. Our keynote speaker was Bro. Ray Hydes of the George Town congregation, Grand Cayman.

Sunday

6:00 A.M.—Prayer Meeting—Sis. Desiree Kelly was in charge. Title: “Embracing the Power of Prayer.” Scripture: I Thessalonians 5:16-18. Excerpts: “‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.’ As we pray, let us embrace the power of God.”

9:30 A.M.—Our Sunday school was conducted by Sis. Desiree Kelly. After a welcome by Stephen Llewellyn, some Sunday school students sang. Bro. Franklyn Bascoe taught the lesson. It was a beautiful lesson inspiringly taught by our dear brother.

11:30 A.M.—Divine Worship Service. Speaker: Bro. Tim Crooks. Title: “The Value of Your Soul.” Text: Matthew 16:24-26. Excerpts: “Things have different values at different times. *Value* means, ‘the importance and use of something.’ Down through the ages, men have put a low value on their souls. We have to put the proper value on our souls. Consider your soul.”

5:30 P.M.—An Ordination Service took place. Three brothers were ordained to the ministry, namely: Brothers Gladstone Lynch, Peter Ramsay, and Ronald Wilson.

Crowning Service—Speaker: Bro. Mick Akers. Text: Genesis 41:41-57. Excerpts: “Heaven is a holy place. Pharaoh had a dream; his own people were not able to interpret it. Pharaoh had a butler who knew Joseph. Joseph was able to interpret the dream by the power of God.—Genesis 42:1-2. Ephesians 1:3-8—The pre-terminated manner was ordained by God for us to live holy, righteously, and godly. The storehouse of God is rich, and whatsoever our needs are, we can go to God’s storehouse.”

God met with us in a very special way. He is an amazing God. We are left with many special memories as we were in heavenly places. The church is on higher ground, praise the Lord! He is just the same today. He has not lost His power.

May the Lord bless each one richly. †

When My Heart Is Overwhelmed

Message delivered 01/25/15 by Bro. Gregory E. Tyler



THANK THE Lord for His blessings. It's good to be in the house of the Lord. I wish we had a full building, but there's more than two or three gathered here, so Christ has promised to be in our midst. I believe we have felt His presence. We trust that He will continue to bless us through the message.

I started preaching in 1974. That's a long time ago. I was thinking as I was preparing this message that the Bible is still so very inspiring. It's very thrilling to study the Bible and to learn from it. Though I've spoken quite a few times through the years, it never becomes easy. It's still a great responsibility, and we always need the help of the Lord.

I have a very familiar verse of scripture to preach on tonight. I don't ever remember using this verse as a text, but I've referred to it many times. It's found in Psalm 61, verse 2: "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." The title of the message is: "When My Heart Is Overwhelmed."

I'm sure we know what *overwhelm* means, but I've written down some dictionary definitions of the word. It actually comes from the root word *whelm*, which means, "to submerge or to engulf; to overcome utterly, as whelmed by misfortune." *Overwhelm* means, "to overcome completely in mind or feeling: such as, overwhelmed by remorse; to overpower or overcome, especially with superior forces; to destroy or to crush, such as, Roman troops were overwhelmed by barbarians." Thirdly: "to cover or bury beneath the mass of something, as flood waters, an avalanche, such as lava from erupting Vesuvius overwhelmed the city of Pompeii." We know what it means to be overwhelmed. It's not a good feeling or a good experience.

I want you to notice, first of all, that the scripture did not say *if* my heart is overwhelmed, but it says "*when* my heart is overwhelmed," which tells me that it is a common experience to the family of man. If we live at any length of time in this world, sooner or later we're going to run into circumstances that overwhelm our hearts, things that we cannot deal with ourselves. How we respond to those times when our hearts are overwhelmed can determine our destiny forever.

LEAD ME TO THE ROCK

So many people, when overwhelmed by the cares of life, turn to different things to find relief. Some even attempt to take their own lives because they are overwhelmed by the cares of life. Some turn to alcohol, to drugs, or to this or that, or the other thing. But, the scripture that I read in your hearing tonight tells us, "When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." There is a Rock that is higher than us. That Rock is Christ.

What do we do when we are overwhelmed? How do we deal with it? What is our course of action? The

Psalms said, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Now, we can interpret that scripture, "Let me *seek* the Rock that is higher than I," or, "Let me *go* to the Rock that is higher than I"; but it says, "*Lead me* to the rock that is higher than I." I gave that some thought. Why should we have to be led in times when we're overwhelmed? Because I believe in some circumstances when we're overwhelmed through the things of life, we hardly know what to do. We can't think straight. We're beside ourselves, and sometimes we need help to be led to the Rock that is higher than we are.

We can be led by the Spirit of God. May the Spirit of God lead me in times when my heart is overwhelmed. May the Spirit of God lead me to that Rock that is higher than I am. True friends will lead me in that direction. True friends, when they see me overwhelmed, will not egg me on to feel sorry for myself, or tell me to seek some other way, but true friends will lead me to that Rock that is higher than I am. They will give me proper counsel and advice. They will help me to pray. "Precious Lord, take my hand; Lead me on, let me stand." We need help sometimes. We need to help one another to that Rock that is higher than us. Sometimes through a message we can be led to that Rock that is higher than we are. We can be pointed through the Word of God. We can be inspired to cast our cares upon Him and to find relief. "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth. He said in chapter 10 of his first letter: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." The Rock that is higher than we are, of course, is none other than Christ Jesus the Lord. He is the Rock of Ages; He is the solid Rock; He is a strong high tower. Jesus never fails. He is always available to those who'll seek His face. "On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand," the song writer said.

Christ will make a way of escape. He will help us through the times when our hearts are overwhelmed through the course of life. He will never fail us. He will never forsake us. He is available for all who will seek Him. "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." In other words, *lead me to the place of prayer; lead me to a place where I can bow on my knees and seek the face of almighty God.* That's what we're talking about when we say, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." We're talking about being led to a place where we can

call upon His name, where we can communicate with Him. “Just a little talk with Jesus makes it right.” I’ve found it so through the years. There’s sweet relief to be found at the place of prayer. Peter said, “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” That’s in time of trouble; that’s in time when your heart is overwhelmed. He cares for you and will take care of your need if you’re able to cast your care upon Him. The Hebrew writer said, “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” *Lead me to the Rock; lead me to the place of prayer; lead me to the Word of God.* That’s what we’re talking about.

We heard about the Word of God this morning. There’s something about the Word of God that helps us through times of difficulty. When my heart is overwhelmed, the Word of God can help me, comfort me, and encourage me. Paul said to the Roman church, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” There is comfort in the Word of God. There is comfort in the Rock of Ages. There is comfort when we come to that Rock that is higher than we are.

I was thinking that it could also mean *lead me to the congregation of saints*, for that’s where the Rock is—in the midst of His church. There’s something about meeting with the saints of God. There’s something about assembling with the Church of God. It brings us comfort when we’re going through a struggle and a battle. Sometimes when people become overwhelmed by the cares of life, they stay away and refuse to come to the house of God. There’s something about coming and having fellowship with the saints of God. It gives us strength. We can encourage one another. We can get a blessing and encouragement from the songs of Zion. “Truly God is good to Israel,” said the Psalmist, “even to such as are of a clean heart. But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.”

Coming to the sanctuary of God is one way that we can express coming to the Rock that is higher than us. Yes, we can seek His face in our homes, but there’s something about being with the saints of God where we feel the presence of the Lord in a sweeter way. In the Church of God, when one member suffers, we all suffer with it. When one member rejoices or is honored, we all rejoice with it. We’re able to comfort one another with the words of Christ. So, there are different ways of carrying out that expression, “Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

SOME CAUSES THAT OVERWHELM US

Let us expand a little bit tonight in the message on situations in which we can become overwhelmed. Now, if you have never been overwhelmed in your life, more power to you, but I have been overwhelmed on numerous occasions through the years, so much so that I don’t think I could have made it without the help of the Lord.

The first thing I want to mention is based on Psalm 77:3. In studying for this message, I was a little surprised of how many times the Scriptures used the term

overwhelmed. Psalm 77:3, “I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed.” When we come to a place of **complaining**, we’re in trouble. Now all of us could complain if we want to. There are things we could complain about, but complaining shows that we’re overwhelmed with a certain situation or a certain need. Oftentimes when we complain, as the Psalmist did, it’s because we’re feeling sorry for ourselves. Things aren’t going just the way we want them to go.

For some reason, we have this thought in our mind that because we’re Christians, everything is going to be fine and dandy. Everything is going to be smooth sailing. Well, being a Christian is a wonderful thing, and compared to the life of a sinner, it is wonderful and glorious and marvelous. There’s no comparison, but we still live in a real world. We still face a real devil. There are going to be times when things won’t go the way we want them to go. Feeling sorry for ourselves is the worst thing we could do, because the devil takes advantage of that, and just piles on and piles on and piles on so that our hearts are overwhelmed.

The Psalmist said in Psalm 42:5-8, “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. O my God, my soul is cast down within me [Has your soul ever been **cast down** within you? Certainly, it has on different occasions.]: therefore will I remember thee [The secret to victory—to remember God, to remember His faithfulness and promises.] from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command his lovingkindness in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.” How many times has a song come to our mind at just the right time? When we’re feeling bad, or our souls are cast down, a song will come to our mind of encouragement and blessing. God is faithful. Let us not ever give into the attacks of the adversary. Let us not be overcome by the cares of life. “When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

How about **affliction**? Sometimes the Scriptures have a preliminary statement or a description of what is going on in the Psalm or portion of scripture. This is not in all Bibles, but it is in mine. In Psalm 102, verse 1, my Bible says, *This is a prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed and pours out his complaint before the Lord.* “Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee”—the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed. Have you ever been overwhelmed by affliction? Has sickness ever gotten you down? Sometimes it’s not your own affliction that brings you the greatest discouragement and trouble, but the affliction of someone who is close to you. Many times we’d rather suffer ourselves than to see one of our loved ones suffer. I know what I’m talking about, but when we’re overwhelmed, we should not get down and discouraged and pressed under; rather, we should be led to the Rock that is higher than we are, for in times of affliction we can find grace to help in times of need. “When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

I was thinking about Job. Job was an upright man. The Bible says so. He was perfect and upright. God was proud of him. When God and Satan had a discussion, He said to the devil, "Have you noticed my servant, Job?" "Yes, yes, yes," the devil said, "for You bless him and take care of him, so why shouldn't he serve You? Take away his possessions and see what happens." Though Job had done no wrong, he was attacked by the enemy.

Job was in a certain place and a servant came running to him and said, "The Sabeans have come and attacked your oxen in the field. They took away your oxen. They have killed all the servants and I'm the only one left to come and tell you."

While he was yet speaking, another servant came and said, "The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee." Job's problems had just doubled in a very short period of time.

Can you imagine this? While that servant was yet speaking, another servant came running to Job and said, "The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee." Job's problems had tripled. Do you think Job was overwhelmed? You can almost feel how overwhelmed he would have been, but that was not the end.

While that servant was yet speaking, another servant came running to Job and said, "Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee." Overwhelmed! Job was overwhelmed. When I am overwhelmed, what do I do? Quit? Give up? Feel sorry for myself? "When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

Job said at that hour when those servants, one after another, came with the bad news, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." What a man! What an example! That wasn't the end of it. Job held his integrity and God reminded the devil of that. "Have you seen my faithful servant, Job? Even though you've moved against Me to allow things to happen to him, he still proved faithful."

Now, God told Satan earlier that he could take Job's possessions, but he could not touch his body. God sets the limits. God is in control. Saints of God, remember that He is in control when you run into trouble and difficulty. He's only going to allow to happen to you what you can go through. He's not going to forsake you. The devil said to God, "Flesh for flesh. A man will give anything for his flesh, so let me touch his body and see what happens." God said, "OK, you can touch his body. You can afflict him, but don't you dare take his life." Again, God is in control.

Job was stricken with boils. The Bible says, "From the sole of his feet to the top of his head." Boils are painful. I can only imagine the pain Job was suffering. He was scraping his boils. Doubtless, he was crying out

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in pain. Have you ever been in so much pain that it caused you to cry out? Job was in trouble physically. He was struggling. He was overwhelmed physically, and his wife was also overwhelmed. She came up to him and responded as so many people do, blaming God and cursing Him. She said, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die." Job, in all of his pain, had lost his possessions, his children, and his health, but he did not lose his integrity. Job said, "Woman, thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

As you read the book of Job, you will see that Job did suffer some things and made some very interesting statements, but he never did lose his integrity in the sight of God. Why? Because when his heart was overwhelmed, he allowed himself to be led to the Rock that was higher than he was. Thank God that Rock is still there. That same Rock that Job served and went to is available for every one of us tonight. We're talking about occasions or circumstances that can cause our hearts to be overwhelmed.

This, in my opinion, is right down where we live—things that we deal with—things we have to think about: Psalm 124:4, "Then the waters had *overwhelmed* us, the stream had gone over our soul." I thought about that statement and it seems to me that it signified discouragement, depression, or despondency when the stream had gone over our souls. Have you ever been discouraged? I know the song says, "We should never be discouraged," and that's a true statement. We *shouldn't* be discouraged, but who among us has not been discouraged from time to time? A discouragement, if allowed to develop, can overwhelm us. It can cause us to be down and out and even cause some to quit; but when we're facing discouragement and our hearts are overwhelmed with it, "lead me to the rock that is higher than I." God can and will encourage us. He will challenge our hearts. He will inspire us in times of discouragement if we'll let Him.

The prophet Isaiah said in chapter 41, verse 10: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed [discouraged, depressed]; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." That is the Word of God. Do you believe it? I believe it. I've have practiced it. I've seen it operate in my behalf before. I felt the hand of God around me in times of discouragement. He lifted me up from the doldrums of discouragement and put me back on the right track. We're talking about circumstances that can cause us to be overwhelmed.

Psalm 142:3, "When my spirit was *overwhelmed* [There it is again!] within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me." In meditating upon that verse of scripture, I came up with the thought of being overcome by **failure**. So many have been overcome by failure, by falling short, by making a misstep. Some have given up, never to try again. Who among us has not failed along the line somewhere and had to be chastised by the Lord? Failure should not cause us to be over-

whelmed. We should cast our care upon God with the realization that He cares for us.

Paul said to the Galatian church, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." If that was the command of God's Word to the church, we should take it that God Himself will also restore us because He knows how we are tempted.

Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Peter failed of the grace of God, but he did not let that failure conquer him. He got back on the right track and became a great man of God. Don't allow failure to overcome your heart. Acknowledge your mistake. Look to the Rock that is higher than you are. Allow God to forgive you, to strengthen you and to keep you on the right path.

Over to Psalm 143, verse 4: "Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate." *Desolate*, "fruitless; lonely." I know some people are overcome and overwhelmed by **loneliness**. It's a real problem in our world. Loneliness is a terrible experience. Everyone wants to be accepted. Everyone wants to have a close friend, but there are so many people who are overcome and overwhelmed by loneliness. Do you know that even some married couples are lonely? The husband is lonely and the wife is lonely. They've never been able to bond. Families are lonely, even large families.

Loneliness can overwhelm someone, but there is a God in heaven who has promised to never leave you. When I am overwhelmed by loneliness, "lead me to the rock that is higher than I." You'll find something there if you're dealing with loneliness. You'll find Someone waiting with open arms. "Remind me, Lord, that You are there." Hebrews 13:5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." The choir sings from time to time, "No, Never Alone." If you're overwhelmed by loneliness, be led to the Rock that is higher than you are. You'll find comfort and fellowship there. You'll find companionship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm 55, verse 5: "Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me." Some are overwhelmed by **fear**. Some have the fear of flying. Some people are even fearful of leaving their house for the fear of traveling. Some people have a fear of giving God a chance in their lives. They're overwhelmed by fear. They're conquered by fear. God would not have it to be so. II Timothy 1:7 says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." If you're overwhelmed by fear, be led to the Rock that is higher than you are. God will take away your fear and replace it with calmness and assurance.

The seventh situation that I have written down here is: **drowning under financial stress**. Can financial stress overwhelm someone? I believe so. Financial stress can overwhelm people. I've seen it happen. I believe that God wants us to be fiscally responsible. He doesn't want us to spend more than we earn. He wants us to be wise in our money dealing, but it takes a lot of money

to live today. There are a lot of monetary pressures and some people have been overwhelmed by financial stress. If you're overwhelmed by financial difficulty tonight, be led to the Rock that is higher than you are, for God will see you through. God is the Way-maker. He'll make a way for those who will seek and trust in Him.

Isaiah 43:1-3, "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; [Sometimes it feels like you're drowning under financial stress and responsibility. Bill collectors are calling. It doesn't seem to be any way to make payments and so on. Overwhelmed! but God is available for those who will trust in Him, and the waters will not overflow them.] and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour."

If you're drowning under financial stress and pressure, look to the Rock that is higher than you are. Trust in God. Listen to His teachings and He'll see you through. I've seen it happen. I've seen people who were in a financial hole and it seemed impossible to get out of, but because they trusted in God and were led to the Rock that was higher than they were, He saw them out of it. He made a way. He worked things together. He is the Way-maker.

It is possible to be overwhelmed with **grief**. Many a person has been overwhelmed with grief. I know some people, even today, who are still grieving. Grief can be caused by different things, but I'm especially thinking about the loss of a loved one. The loss of a loved one can cause deep grief to the heart. It can be overwhelming. The sense of loss, the sense of regret, the sense of grief. Paul understood this. He said in Philippians 2:27, speaking of Epaphroditus, one of his fellow laborers, "For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." Grief can cause sorrow upon sorrow. Sorrow and grief can overwhelm you if you'll let it. If you're overwhelmed by sorrow and grief, be led to the Rock that is higher than you are. There is so much in that Rock. The answers that plague mankind's problems are found in the Rock of Ages. Christ is the answer and He will see you through.

Paul said to the Corinthian church, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." God is "the God of all comfort." So when I'm overwhelmed with grief, "lead me to the rock that is higher than I." We've all had to do it. We've all had to seek the Lord for help and assistance and comfort in the times of grief. It's real. It's possible to be overcome and overwhelmed by grief, but "the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God," is always ready to comfort us.

Situation number nine that I have written down here is unique to the family of man, those who are not serving God. I believe this promise that I'm preaching

on tonight: “when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I,” is good for the entire family of man, even those who are outside the ark of safety. If there be any unsaved under the sound of my voice, either in this building or listening on the Internet (or reading in *The Way of Truth* magazine), be careful because **sin** can overwhelm you. Sin has power.

*Sin will take you farther than you want to go,
Slowly, but wholly taking control;
Sin will leave you longer than you want to stay,
Sin will cost you far more than you want to pay.*

Many a man and woman have been overcome by sin and distraught. Their lives are destroyed and broken in pieces. Sin can overwhelm.

I read of a man in Mark, chapter 5. We don't know anything about his history. We don't know anything about his background, but we do know that he was overwhelmed by sin. Somewhere along the line, sin got into his life and he gave into it. The devil took control of his life. He was overtaken. He was overwhelmed by Satan and became a servant and a slave of Satan. So much so, he was like a wild man. Among the tombs, no one could tame him. He was overwhelmed by sin, but he ran to the Rock that was higher than he was. All the devils in hell could not keep that man from going to the Rock. When Jesus arrived on that shoreline, he went running to Jesus and found deliverance.

If you're in sin, if your life is wrecked and ruined by sin, and you've been overwhelmed by sin, let the Spirit of God lead you to the Rock that is higher than you are. There's hope in God. God can change your life. He can redeem your soul. God can put the broken pieces back together again in your life. “When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

THE PRODIGAL SON WAS OVERWHELMED

I think about the prodigal son who intended to enjoy life. He asked for his portion of goods from his father. He went out and was foolish and wasted his substance in riotous living. He didn't know where sin was taking him. He didn't comprehend what was awaiting him down the road, but soon his money was gone. This prodigal son was destitute and overwhelmed by sin. He sold himself to a citizen of the country to slop the hogs, but he came to himself. He realized that he was overwhelmed. Sin had overwhelmed him. The wages of sin had overwhelmed him, as it has so many of our loved ones and friends. Sin is an overwhelming power. If you play with sin, sooner or later it's going to overwhelm you. The prodigal came to himself, and he realized in essence, “I've been overwhelmed by sin, but I know what I'm going to do. I'm going to go to that Rock that is higher than I am. I'm going to return to my father's house. I'm going to retrace my steps, and I'm going to tell my father that I'm not worthy to be his son, just to make me a hired servant.” We all know the story of how the father was waiting with open arms to accept him.

I say unto you tonight, though sin may overwhelm you, if you'll allow the Spirit of God to convict and draw you, you can be brought to the Rock that is higher than you are. That Rock can set you free.

My tenth and final circumstance in which we can be overwhelmed is a little different. We can be over-

whelmed with **emotion**. We can be overwhelmed as human beings with the mercy of God, overwhelmed by the grace of God, and overwhelmed by the love of God. You can be overwhelmed by what God has done for you so that you can't keep back the tears. You don't know what to say. You don't know how to express it. You're overwhelmed when you think about God answering your prayers. You might be overwhelmed by being spared from danger with a close accident. Close accidents have happened to me several times, and I was overwhelmed by the goodness of God to me that I was not killed.

Overwhelmed with joy at the birth of a child. I'll never forget my son, Greg, when he first saw Gina. He bawled like a baby. Do you know what he said to me? “Dad, now I understand how you could be so forgiving to me for all I've done. I could never understand, with all the things that I've done against you and Mom, and how deep into sin I went, just how you could forgive me, but when I see this little child, I know now the love between father and child.” Overwhelmed! Overwhelmed with joy; overwhelmed with the healing wrought; overwhelmed by seeing one of your children saved—a good type of being overwhelmed.

CONCLUSION

I gave out cards before the service, which say, “May you always be overwhelmed by the grace of God, rather than by the cares of life.” It's OK to be overwhelmed by the grace of God. We should be overwhelmed by the grace of God. “When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” You see, we can be led to that Rock, not asking for something, not to beg for something, but just to simply praise, adore, and thank Him for all that He has done. “When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” Lead me to the altar, lead me to the place of prayer. There's a song in our hymnal, which says: “No matter what happens, He will care for me.”

Being overwhelmed doesn't mean that you're conquered. Being overwhelmed doesn't mean you're defeated. Being overwhelmed is just a circumstance of life, but when you allow the Spirit of God to lead you to that Rock that is higher than you, you'll find a solace there. You'll find a peace that passeth all understanding and you'll have victory. “From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” †

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Bible concordances, dictionaries, atlases, commentaries, pictures, calendars etc., nor offer correspondence courses

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Kentucky, Prestonsburg, WDOC 1310, 7:30 A.M.
Louisiana, Ball, KWDF 840 & 99.7 FM, 9:00 A.M.
North Carolina, Mooresville, WHIP 1350, 6:30 A.M. Sat.
Listen live—tunein.com/radio/whip-1350-s29320/
Oklahoma, Marlow, KFXI-FM 92.1, 7:00 A.M.
Listen live—Go to www.kfxi.com
Pennsylvania, Altoona, WFBG 1290, 9:00 A.M.
Pennsylvania, Martinsburg, WJSM 1110, 11:03 A.M.
Pennsylvania, Martinsburg, WJSM-FM 92.7, 11:03 A.M. & 7:30 P.M.
Listen live—Go to www.wjsm.com
Tennessee, Chattanooga, WLMR 1450, 3:00 P.M.
Tennessee, Chattanooga, WLMR-FM 103.3, 3:00 P.M.
Virginia, Narrows, WZFM-FM 101.3, 8:00 A.M.
Virginia, Blacksburg, WKEX 1430, 8:00 A.M.
Virginia, Christiansburg, WKEX-FM 105.9, 8:00 A.M.
Virginia, Lynchburg, WKPA 1390, 1:30 P.M. Fri., 5:30 P.M. Sat. & 6:00 A.M. Sun.
Virginia, Lynchburg, WKPA-FM 106.7, 1:30 P.M. Fri., 5:30 P.M. Sat. & 6:00 A.M. Sun.
Virginia, Roanoke, WKBA 1550, 1:30 P.M. Fri., 5:30 P.M. Sat. & 6:00 A.M. Sun.
Listen live—Go to www.wkbaradio.com
Virginia, Smithfield, WKGM 940, 6:30 A.M.
West Virginia, Summersville, WCWV 92.9, 8:30 A.M.

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.
Listen live—Go to www.winb.com

COMING MEETINGS

2019 INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF GOD CONVENTION

12819 Point Salem Rd.

Hagerstown, Maryland U.S.A.

July 2-7, Lord willing

Bro. Gregory E. Tyler, Host Pastor



2019 CAYMAN CONVENTION

83A Walkers Rd.

George Town, Grand Cayman

November 26-December 1, Lord willing

Bro. James Arch, Host Pastor



REVIVAL SERVICES

Miami, Florida

July 10-14, 2019, Lord willing

Sis. Margerie Allen, Pastor

Contact number: 305-685-5707



Jamaica Youth Revival

Grants Mountain, St. Ann

July 23-28, 2019, Lord willing

Sis. Linette Jutan, Pastor