

The Way of Truth

Vol. 76 "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." No. 9

September
2018

"We Be Brethren"

Message begins on page 4.



REPAIRING RELATIONSHIPS

THE STORY is told in Spain of a father and his teenage son who had a relationship that had become strained, so the son ran away from home. His father, however, began a journey in search of his rebellious son. Finally, in Madrid, in a last desperate effort to find him, the father put an ad in the newspaper. The ad read: "Dear Paco, meet me in front of the newspaper office at noon. All is forgiven. I love you. Your father."

The next day at noon in front of the newspaper office 800 "Pacos" showed up. They were all seeking forgiveness and love from their fathers.

So it is in our world. Families are in trouble. Parents and children are separated by ill-will, misunderstandings and lack of communication. Siblings won't talk to one another. Married couples seem to break up under the flimsiest of excuses. No one really wants it this way, but there seems to be no commitment to working through problems or working to repair broken or strained relationships.

Someone has said, "Right relationships are the soil in which the reward of righteousness can grow. And the only people who can sow these seeds, and who will reap the reward, are those whose life work it has been to produce such right relationships."

The Bible is very clear as to the proper attitude we are to manifest toward our fellowman.

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (I John 4:15-21).

Family is where the gospel of Christ begins. "Home is where life makes up its mind. It is there—with fellow family members—we hammer out our convictions on the anvil of relationships. It is there we cultivate the valuable things in life, like attitudes, memories, beliefs, and most of all, character."—Selected.

Someone has rightly said that if you can't live the gospel in the home, you can't live it anywhere. The problem is so many marriages today are not built on true love and don't have the Lord as its foundation.

Peter Marshall said, "We are souls living in bodies. Therefore when we really fall in love, it isn't just physical attraction. If it is just that, it won't last. Ideally, it's also spiritual attraction. God has opened our eyes and let us see into someone's soul. We have fallen in love with the inner person, the person who is going

to live forever. That's why God is the greatest asset to romance. He thought it up in the first place. Include Him in every part of your marriage, and He will lift it above the level of the mundane to something rare and beautiful and lasting."

We have a beautiful example of a relationship being repaired in Jacob and Esau. There is no doubt that animosity existed in Esau's heart because of Jacob's deception. But Jacob made the first move in coming back and desiring peace. He wrestled all night and prayed through. Esau came to meet Jacob with 400 men and it was not a welcoming committee. But whatever Esau's intent was, it was changed as they fell on each other's necks and wept. They were reconciled!

I am sure all are agreed that reconciliation should be made among family members. But strained relationships are not isolated to family interaction. There is a real devil who makes it his business to plant roots of bitterness among the brethren in Christ. Here is where real commitment and humility needs to be manifested by the saints.

Notice what Jesus said in Matthew 5:23, 24: "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." It takes humility to be reconciled. It takes grace. Often it takes someone making the first move.

"Reconciliation is not weakness or cowardice. It demands courage, nobility, generosity, sometimes heroism, an overcoming of oneself rather than of one's adversary."—Author Unknown.

Quarrels over silly things have separated brethren for generations. What does the Word of God say about this? Colossians 3:12-15, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

Quarrels come through the course of life, sometimes through circumstances out of your control. Effort should be made to avoid quarrels, but sooner or later, the human element takes over and things happen. At those times, our attitude makes

all the difference. We can either make peace or sow discord. I choose to make peace! Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

Romans 14:19 says, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things where-with one may edify another." Oh, if we would follow this instruction!

ABOUT THE COVER

Two men are paddling a canoe down a stream in northern Canada. Everyone knows that two must work together in order to navigate any rapids. If they work against each other, the canoe will possibly capsize. Similarly, if those of us who know the truth work against one another, disaster results. See "We Be Brethren," beginning on page 4.

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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Vol. 76 September 2018 No. 9

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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“In our relationships with others, often what passes for love is little more than a neat business transaction. People are kind to us, so we repay them with equal consideration. When they treat us unjustly, our negative response is really what they asked for. Everything is so balanced, so fair, so logical with this eye-for-an-eye and tooth-for-a-tooth kind of justice. But Christian love never settles for only what’s reasonable. It insists on giving mercy as well as justice. It breaks the chain of logical reactions.”—Author Unknown.

General Robert E. Lee was asked what he thought of a fellow officer in the Confederate Army who had made some derogatory remarks about him. Lee rated him as being very satisfactory. The person who asked the question seemed perplexed.

“General,” he said, “I guess you don’t know what he’s been saying about you.”

“I know,” answered Lee. “But I was asked my opinion of him, not his opinion of me!”

As you will notice in the Convention message, “We Be Brethren,” beginning on page 4, there is a movement at work to bring into fellowship God’s people who have been long divided. This can only continue as we all put into practice Ephesians 4:1-3, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

I am thrilled at the way the Lord worked in our recent convention and have high hopes for the future. Let us labor together for the truth, repair any damaged relationships, and allow God to have His way. †

OUT OF BOX 88

Dear Sir,

We really like *The Way of Truth*. We have been in the Church of God for over 25 years and truly love our Lord and Savior. ... God bless.

—D. & C. H., New Mexico

Thank you so much for *The Way of Truth*. I get a blessing from reading it. It makes me feel so close to Jesus. I thank God for you all.

—B. B., Florida

Greetings to you in the blessed name of Jesus,

I am a subscriber of the magazine, *The Way of Truth*. I just want to thank you for sending it to me. It helps me so much in my spiritual life and very encouraging to me in serving the Lord. ... May God continue to bless you.

—S. C., Spain †

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HAGERSTOWN CONVENTION REPORT

July 3-8, 2018

Theme: "Living Godly in this Present World"
(Titus 2:11, 12)

(From notes by E. Arch)



WE ARE thankful to God for meeting with us in another convention. Saints from various states and countries assembled with the local congregation for six days of services. Truly, the Lord's presence was felt in every way. There were 10 nights of prayer meetings before the convention in asking the Lord to lead in His own way.

Below is a brief synopsis of the services:

Tuesday, 6:00 A.M.—Bro. Tim Crooks, Jonesville, Louisiana, brought a few thoughts from Ephesians, chapter 6. A season of prayer followed.

10:00 A.M.—Bro. Greg Tyler, Host Pastor, spoke on the theme. This full-length message will be printed in a future issue, Lord willing.

2:30 P.M.—Before the message, a privilege was given for expressions of appreciation from anyone in memory of our late pastor, Bro. Alvin A. Craig, who went to be with the Lord on March 7th of this year.

Bro. Franklyn Bascoe, pastor at Jacks River, Jamaica, was the speaker. He spoke on the theme of the convention. He used the scripture of the theme as well. Excerpts: "The work of God doesn't belong to any one person. We are workers together with God. I believe Paul had a lot of confidence in Timothy and Titus. The grace of God has appeared to all men. The grace of God teaches us some things. We have to be teachable so we can make heaven our home. There are great benefits in living godly. It's wonderful to be on the side with God."

7:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Harley McClung, pastor at Craigsville, West Virginia. "What Advantage Do God's People Have?" was the title of the message. Lord willing, this full-length message will be printed in an upcoming issue.

Wednesday, 6:00 A.M.—Sis. Hyacinth Goodlitt, Jamaica, read Philippians 4:6 and spoke briefly before the saints prayed.

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Raymond Martin, pastor at Shawsville, Virginia. His message was based on the theme, "Living Godly in this Present World." This message will be printed in a future issue, Lord willing.

2:30 P.M.—"Living for God as a Christian" was the title of the message by Bro. Rupert Shippy, pastor at Axe-and-Adze, Jamaica. This message, Lord willing, will be printed in an upcoming issue.

7:00 P.M.—Bro. Terry Deville, pastor at Deville, Louisiana, brought a message entitled, "The Great Exchange." Text: Matthew 16:24-26. Excerpts: "It is true that we must give up everything that is contrary to Christian principles, but it is also true that for all we give up, we in return in exchange receive something far superior than we could ever dream of. I'm not overstating that. That is just how great this salvation is. There is something special about the people of God

coming together for worship. How blessed we are! I love the Church of God! Christ wants us to be one. We are joint-heirs with Jesus. There is coming a day when we shall be rewarded according to our works. I want to receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. That is what God is offering in this exchange."

Thursday, 6:00 A.M.—Bro. Oliver Fisher, Honduras, exhorted before prayer, using the scriptures, Deuteronomy 7:9; Hebrews 11:11.

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Howard Moncrief, pastor at Greenville, Mississippi. "We Be Brethren" was the title of the message which begins on page 4.

2:30 P.M.—Bro. Mick Akers, pastor at Patton, Pennsylvania, was the speaker. Title: "A Sanctified Spirit." Text: I Corinthians 6:20. Excerpts: "Living godly is a wonderful thing. I'd like to speak about two things that are connected with our theme: glorifying God in our spirit (in purity of spirit) and unity. God has a plan for our spirit and what we think. It is important in how we maintain our hearts and thoughts. Our spirit is different than the worldly spirit. Things that matter to us are the things the world discards. We consider heavenly things. In our manner of living, the world must see the difference. We must glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's."

7:00 P.M.—"Denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts" was the title of the message by Bro. Doug Shenberger of the Hagerstown congregation. Lord willing, it will be printed in a future issue.

Friday, 6:00 A.M.—Bro. Jim Storts, Tennessee, exhorted for a few minutes before a season of prayer.

10:00 A.M.—The Divine Healing message entitled, "The Price Is Paid," was preached by Bro. David Shaw, pastor at Medina, Manchester, Jamaica. Text: Exodus 15:26. Excerpts: "We are assured of the power of God existing among us as His people. If you'll obey the Word of God and seek the Lord diligently, He said that He would supply your need according to His riches in glory. I assure you that the God we trust and serve is willing to heal any disease that we have. It is said that some diseases are incurable, but I am thankful that it is not so with Jesus. Our faith needs to take hold of the Word of God."

7:00 P.M.—An Easter Drama entitled, "The Sword and the Cross," written by Sis. Rebecca Bland of the Hagerstown congregation, was presented. God's Spirit witnessed to the truth presented in a very special way.

Saturday, 6:00 A.M.—Sis. Siggie James, pastor at Sandy Bay, Honduras, exhorted on Colossians 3:1, 2; Matthew 6:33. This was followed by prayers of the saints.

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Doug Koerner, pastor at Essex, Maryland. Title: "Learning to Live Godly." Lord

willing, this message will be printed in a future issue.

2:30 P.M.—Bro. Gary Alwell from Deville, Louisiana, spoke on, “How the People of God Live.” Text: Titus 2:11-14. Excerpts: “A lot of people in the world say that they are Christians, but if you will look at their lives, there is a different story. Part of the reason why is because false religion has told them that they really can’t live that way. I’m so thankful that we can live the way the Bible teaches us how to live. Having the grace of God is where it starts. There must be a change of heart. We must walk in the Christian way for the unsaved to see that a difference has been made.” After this service, a few were baptized.

7:00 P.M.—Before the message, Bro. Matt Deville, Bro. Gary Alwell (Louisiana), and Bro. Melbourne Chisholm (Florida) were ordained as ministers for their respective congregations. Bro. Doug Shenberger was ordained as the assistant pastor of the local congregation.

Bro. Duane Jeffries, Grand Cayman, brought the message entitled, “The Potter’s House,” which will be printed in an upcoming issue, Lord willing.

Sunday, 6:00 A.M.—Sis. Enid Jones, pastor at March Town, Jamaica, exhorted before prayers followed.

9:30 A.M.—A few selections by our Sunday school children were presented before Sis. Dorrette Clarke, Salem, Jamaica, gave a synopsis of the lesson entitled, “The Family of God at Prayer.”

10:40 A.M.—Bro. Terry Deville was the speaker. Title: “The Value of God’s Hedge.” This message, Lord willing, will be printed in a future issue.

6:00 P.M.—This brought us to the last service of this year’s convention. Speaker: Bro. Harley McClung. Title: “Getting a Glimpse of Heaven and Hell.” Text: Ephesians 2:1-6. Excerpts: “When Paul said, ‘You hath he quickened,’ he was talking about being reconciled to God and regaining life (becoming a Christian). Paul also said, ‘And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.’ I believe we have been sitting in heavenly place this week, but has everyone who has come into this building this week been sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus? Have they gotten a little taste of what heaven will be like? I dare say, not all. You know, a lot of people didn’t understand Jesus. They asked, ‘Is He not just a carpenter?’ Thank God for the vision that we have to see who Jesus is. Hell is eternal imprisonment. There is never an end. It’s an unquenchable fire. It’s going to be totally depraved. Terrible things are going on in our world today. Memory will be something that will haunt those in hell. I know we can’t comprehend it all, but we can get a little glimpse of what I’m saying. If you go there, you will remember what we’ve tried to tell you. Do you want to be among the cursed? Come to Jesus tonight to be saved.”

We certainly give God all the praise and the glory for meeting with us during these services. There was a good spirit of unity throughout the entire six days. Thanks to all who helped in any way to make the convention a success.

May the Lord continue to give us all we need to fight the good fight of faith! †

September 2018

2018 HAGERSTOWN CONVENTION CD'S

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

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

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- CD #933 Living for God as a Christian—Rupert Shippy
- CD #934 The Great Exchange—Terry Deville
- CD #935 We Be Brethren—Howard Moncrief
- CD #936 A Sanctified Spirit—Mick Akers
- CD #937 Denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts—Doug Shenberger
- CD #938 The Price Is Paid—David Shaw
- CD #939 Learning to Live Godly—Doug Koerner
- CD #940 How the People of God Live—Gary Alwell
- CD #941 The Potter's House—Duane Jeffries
- CD #942 The Value of God's Hedge—Terry Deville
- CD #943 Getting a Glimpse of Heaven and Hell—Harley McClung

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"WE BE BRETHREN"

2018 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Howard Moncrief



WE ARE grateful for being saved this morning. We are grateful for the saving power of God. Whether you were a gang banger in the streets of Chicago, or a biker in Louisiana, God is mighty to save and mighty to keep. I thank God that He's not only a Savior, but a Keeper. In this world that we're living in, it's challenging to get saved, and just as challenging to stay saved because of what we're facing. I thank God for being saved, and not only for being saved, but sanctified and uniting me with the body of Christ.

I thank God for Pastor Tyler and the brethren. Lord willing, time permitting, we'll say a few things concerning how we came to be, but we're grateful just to be in the house of God.

We invite you to study along with us this morning. Genesis 13:1-8: "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; Unto the place of the altar, which he had make there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord. And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle [I don't believe there would have been such a strife if their substance was not as what it was.]: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren." Our thoughts this morning: "We Be Brethren."

Abram and Lot both called on the name of the Lord. Abram did not want any discord between himself and Lot. Abram said to Lot, "There should not be any strife between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen." Why? Because "we be brethren."

LET THERE BE NO STRIFE

Let there be no strife among us. Let there be no bitterness, no conflict, no discord, or no struggle to survive, and to mingle with one another. Why? Saints of God, Church of God Ministry, it's because "we be brethren." We're not like the world. This is not Washington, D.C. We're not the Democrats and Republicans. "We be brethren."

There are some battles that we don't need to fight. There are some battles we shouldn't struggle with. Why? We're brethren. We're saved and sanctified and

filled with the Holy Ghost. "We be brethren!" You might live in Jamaica, and we in America, but we're still brethren. You might live in the Cayman Islands, or wherever you are living, it doesn't matter, we're still brethren. It doesn't matter whether you're rich or poor, black or white, short, tall, educated or uneducated, we're brethren.

There needs to be something that separates us from the world, because anybody can say that they're brethren. Anybody can say that they're related, but spiritually speaking, not everybody can say, "We be brethren." The Scriptures say, "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one" (Hebrews 2:11). It doesn't say two. It says that they are *one*. It doesn't matter what your financial status is, we're still one. When one hurts, all hurt; when one cries, all cry. When you succeed, I succeed. Why? "We be brethren." We're one.

Too many times individuals allow things to separate them: differences, preferences, ideas, and opinions. When oneness takes preeminence, we'll be brethren. Abram had to step in and say, "Let's not let this thing escalate. Let's nip it in the bud right here. Let's stop it right here. I see this contention; I see this strife. We be brethren. This is not how we resolve issues; this is not how we deal with problems. We're one; we're brethren." I tell my children at home, "If you can't play with your own brother, don't go and try to play with anybody else. If you can't get along with little Howard, if you can't get along with Brandon (two of my children), don't go out there and try to play with anybody else." Why? "You have the same mother and daddy."

The Bible tells us, "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." We mind the same thing. We have the mind of Christ. We don't take our marbles and leave when things don't go our way. We don't get upset and divide, like the world does, over little issues. We're not the world. We're not the world! We are the Church of God. "... to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12:23). We're not the world. "We be brethren."

LOVE AS BRETHREN

There are some expectations that the saints should have for the ministry because "we be brethren." They should trust us. They should have confidence in the brethren. A lot of times when you talk, or bring out a point, you say "the brethren." There's a confidence that you want to have in the brethren that we're not going to divide over anything.

Bear with me for a moment here. For far too long, Saints of God, individuals have been acting like we're not brethren. We need to be acting like we're brethren.

We should act like, “Bro. Tyler, I don’t want to hurt you; Bro. Doug, I don’t want to hurt you; I don’t want to hurt you, brother.” The scripture says, “Love as brethren” (I Peter 3:8). Don’t just talk about it; don’t just sing about it; don’t just preach about it: “Love as brethren.” When problems arise, love as brethren. When disagreements come, love as brethren. Love is greater than our differences; and if we stay together long enough, we’re going to find that there are some differences. But guess what? I love when we triumph over our differences. If you don’t do it the way we do it, my love for you, brother, covers faults. “We be brethren.” Saints of God, I don’t want to hurt you. There might be some things that I feel strongly about, but whatever I feel strongly about, if it causes us to divide, I’m going to get along. Why? “We be brethren.” “Love as brethren.” Love, love, love, love!

The Scriptures say, “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” What if Christ had said, “No, leave him alone, he’s a drunkard, he’s a gang banger”? The Bible says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” We quote that scripture a lot, but there is some depth to that scripture. It’s more than just a Sunday school scripture we learned when we were seven years old. God loved us in spite of the way we were. Christ loved the brethren. He loved us!

WHAT MAKES US BRETHERN?

What makes us brethren? One scripture comes to my mind: “We are the offspring of God.” *Offspring* means, “children.” We are the offspring of God, by the Holy Ghost. There’s neither Jew nor Greek. We’re all the offspring of God; and since we’re the offspring of God, you’re my brother, you’re my sister. Why? We have the same Daddy. Your eyes might be blue, but we still have the same Daddy. We’re still brethren.

John 3:3, “Jesus answered and said unto [Nicodemus], Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” You have to be born again to become a brother. Because you grew up in the church, it doesn’t mean you’re born again; because you know the history of the Church of God, of D. S. Warner, and all these Revelation symbols, those don’t make you a brother. Nicodemus was an educated man. Education doesn’t make you a brother. How well you speak doesn’t make you a brother; how much money you have doesn’t make you a brother. Let’s bring this down where it really is. Jesus told Nicodemus, “You must be born again.”

You have to repent. You must! There’s no other way. In order to be a brother, you must! What made us brethren? We had to be born again. We were living contrary to the Word of God. Our hearts and minds were continually on the things of this world. We were not brethren. We needed to be born again. That old carnal heart, that old stony heart had to be taken out of us and God had to put a heart of flesh in us. He said that He would put in you a heart of flesh and cause you to walk in His statutes. It will cause you to submit and humble yourself; it will cause you to love the brethren, and even your enemies.

I Corinthians 12:13, “For by one Spirit [Did it say ‘two Spirits’? No!] are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” I like those words: “have been all.” I asked the saints back home, “How much of all is all?” It’s all of it! It’s everybody. All is all. He hath made all to do what? “To drink into one Spirit.” Listen: There are no stepchildren in the Church of God, spiritually speaking. We’ve all been born of the Spirit of God. The moment you knelt down on your knees and prayed was the day the beggar became a millionaire. He made us brethren by one Spirit. He birthed us into the kingdom of God. We quoted the scripture, “But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” Jerusalem signifies Mount Zion, or the Church of God. She is the mother of us all. I thank God for the Church of God; I thank God for the kingdom of God.

What is the kingdom of God? “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Romans 14:17). I thank God when the Pharisees demanded of Jesus, “When shall the kingdom of God come?” Jesus answered, “Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” I thank God for being a brother. We appreciate what God did for us over 23 years ago, but I thank Him that He’s doing even more for us.

LET US WORK TOGETHER

Let’s go to II Corinthians 6:1. There’s another thought I want to bring out about “we be brethren.” Can we work with God and refuse to work with one another? I’m going to make it plain to us: People would love to jump over God and do their own thing. We cannot work with God and refuse to work with one another. Can’t do it. “We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.” God doesn’t give us the grace of God to always complain, to always find fault, to always say what they didn’t do, or what they should have said. We frustrate God’s grace when we do that. It is so easy to pick out something about this meeting if you want to, but the scripture says, We are “workers together with him.” We’re workers together! It’s not your show and it’s not my show. It’s God’s show, and we have to work with God. We’re workers! We should be working for the kingdom of God and not working against it. Saints, we accomplish more working together than we can divided. God help us!

We sometimes feel that we can do it on our own, and some things we probably could do on our own, but the road map that God has for the church is that we work together. I’m going to prove that to you. Let’s go to Acts 9:10,11: “And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth.” To shorten the story, the Lord sent Ananias to Saul. Some of the people were scared of Saul, because they said that he did such and such to the saints, but when we work together with God, we’re not worried about what people say about this brother. What

did the Lord tell Ananias to go to Saul to do? Verses 12 and 13: "And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem." Saints, when I got saved, I was officially a brother. I was a brother from the time I got off my knees. From the time he got up off his knees, Paul was a brother.

I'm going to show you something else here. Acts 10:1, 2: "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house [He had a testimony that some Jews didn't even have. He was a brother], which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." Cornelius wasn't a Jew in a sense that everybody was afraid of going outside of being one. The Jews and the Gentiles had a wall between them. When the Holy Ghost came and the brethren started working with the Spirit of God, and letting Him lead, it caused Peter and Cornelius to come together. "We be brethren."

Let's continue with the story. Acts 10:3-8: "He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa." Now look, God was working with Cornelius on this end, and He was working with the brethren on that end. Now, the Holy Ghost, who is faithful, was going to work with Bro. Peter on the other end. Saints of God, God is going to bring His people together if we will allow Him.

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I grew up, spiritually, from *The Way of Truth* Sunday school lessons. I didn't know Bro. Tyler was in the world. I didn't know Bro. Craig was in the world, but I grew up having those Sunday school books. It just so happened, over a space of time, that when I became pastor, I began to search out some things, and God was dealing with me about touching bases with Bro. Trisler. I didn't know Bro. Trisler was in the world. Periodically, I would read *The Way of Truth* paper and it disclosed where revivals would be held, so I would look on the back cover. One said that Bro. Tyler will be holding a revival in Jonesville, Louisiana. Mind you, I didn't know Bro. Tyler. I called Hagerstown to get the number. I began to talk with Bro. Trisler. He had a wonderful spirit. I don't know how to explain it. I said, "Bro. Trisler, I would like to come and sit in during your revival." He said, "Sure, Brother, sure; come on, come on."

I had not talked to Bro. Sanford, pastor of the Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Bellevue congregation. I had no idea that Bro. Sanford was talking to Bro. Tyler, because

he didn't tell me that he was talking to him. He and Bro. Tyler began talking and getting to know one another. I got a call from Bro. Sanford, saying, "Bro. Moncrief, I will be going to Jonesville to a revival. Bro. Tyler will be there." I said, "Jonesville? You mean Jonesville, Louisiana?" He said, "Yes." I said, "Bro. Sanford, I've been talking to Bro. Trisler about coming to that revival." "We be brethren!" God is calling His people unto one fold. The trumpet is being sounded. God is calling His people to one fold, one body, one people! So we went to that revival, and the rest is history. I've been talking with your pastor, Bro. Tyler, in trying to know him and the saints here better. Saints of God, by God's grace, my desire is to worship God in Spirit and in truth.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD UNITES SAINTS

As we have mentioned in Acts, chapter 10, the Spirit of God was working with Peter on the other end. Verses 13, 14: "And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." We need to be careful that we don't put the brakes on the Holy Ghost. We need to be careful that when God is trying to bring us together, we'll let Him do it. The Bible says, "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought." We don't have to worry about it. If it be of men, you'll see their spirit, you'll see how they can't humble themselves. You'll see how they have a lying spirit and things must go their way. You'll see it! "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

There are some things, historically, Saints of God, that may be we may not have been accustomed to, but we need to walk in the Spirit so we can be led of the Spirit. The Bible says, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." We use that scripture sometimes to justify doing certain things, but there was one time the Spirit of God said to Paul, "Don't go." We have to rely on the Spirit of God, not so much as what we heard about the body of Christ. Professing is not reality in a lot of things. We have to be led by the Spirit of God.

Acts 10:15, 16: "And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice." Three times He had to show Peter! How many times does God have to show us that He wants unity? How many times does He have to show us that He wants one church? Not two churches, not three, but one! "We, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Romans 12:5).

CHRIST BREAKS DOWN THE WALLS

We'll go to Ephesians 2:12: "That at that time [I was without Christ.] ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." This world doesn't have Christ. They have religion. They sing very well. They can motivate you with their preachers who have become prosperous and with those who are motivational speakers. I'm not going to name names, but I'll say "these preachers."

They tell the people what they want to hear. They have these “feel-good messages.” When they leave, they feel good, but they’re not brethren. They’re not changed. They’re still in sin, but they heard a feel-good message.

We were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope.” Ephesians 2:13: “But now [I like those words.] in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” I remember the dope and the gang banging, but what about now? We were made nigh. Well, what made us nigh? The blood of Christ. Verse 14: “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.” If we are brethren, we should want peace. How can we be brethren and not want peace? The scripture says, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” Well, He is our peace. How can you be a brother and peace is not abiding in you?

The Lord has broken down the middle wall of partition between everybody and made everybody one. He has torn down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles. I like this part, too: “And hath made.” Listen, *the only way we can be made one is to agree to be one.* How many of you were forced by Christ to be saved? He wouldn’t force anyone. He said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour.” Well, the only way He can make us one is: we have to want to be one. “For this cause shall a man leave [his] father and mother, and [be joined] to his wife: and they twain shall be [What?] one flesh.” She can’t be my wife unless I ask her to be my wife. We can’t be one unless I ask her, “Honey, will you marry me?” We’ve been married 17 years. Too late now for me to ask her, but I had to ask her to be one. We have to want to be one; we have to want to be made one in Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:15: “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.” Saints, all through this Bible, you’ll see the number *one*: one mind, one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith. Two’s a crowd. This is the only thing where two is a crowd. Can’t have two in the Church of God. There’s only one Spirit in God’s church. Whether you’re in Jamaica, or Illinois, if you do it God’s way, it’s going to make us one. You might not have all the same understanding, or your knowledge might not be the same, but the Spirit that worketh in me is going to work in you.

“Brother So-and so, could you submit that?” “I’m not going to submit that!” Now, there are two spirits manifested, but Jesus Christ has one Spirit. Someone might say, “I have so much love for the church, but I can’t submit. I can’t humble myself.” God help us!

Ephesians 2:16: “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” What’s that one body? The church. It isn’t just Hagerstown. The church is innumerable. “Well, how many are in the Church of God?” I don’t know. It’s innumerable. Let me prove it to you. Hebrews 12:22: “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.” “How many church

of God’s, Pastor Moncrief?” Well, you just read it. It’s innumerable. Thank God for the innumerable number! Thank God for the saints of God who are in that number! Isaiah said, “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.”

LOVE STRONGER THAN DIFFERENCES

Our problem today is our love. *Our love has to be stronger than our differences.* Did you hear me? I’ll use the example of husbands and wives. We have some differences when we get married, but with our differences, we should love our wives so much that we’re willing to change and work with her with our differences. “I’m not changing that. I’m not doing that.” I loved my wife to the point that I said, “I’m going to change this because I want to stay with her.”

How are we doing as the people of God? In our differences, do we see some things that we can change for Christ’s sake? It’s causing problems, not harmony. It’s not promoting harmony. I could see if it was something you didn’t do, and it had something to do with sin, but what if it’s not sin? It’s just a preference maybe, or the way you do things. Do you love God or the church enough to submit it because you love the church? Do you know what those women did who brought that baby to Solomon? Rather than have that baby cut in half, the real mother said, “I love that baby. That’s my baby, and I know it.” I love the church!

Can you say, “I love the church, my pastor, and the saints”? This isn’t going to cause division and split the church. Give me the church! Give me the baby! Don’t kill the baby. Some people say, “I want my way; kill it. If you’re not going to do it like I want to do it, kill it dead.” But wait! Abraham said, “Let there be no strife among us. We be brethren.” Don’t kill it! That’s what we have going on today. People are saying, “Kill it; divide it.” God help us!

DON’T DESTROY YOUR BROTHER

Turn to Romans, chapter 14. I want to bring out another thought about “killing it.” Romans 14:13: “Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way.” In whose way? “His brother’s way.” What are you doing that’s causing your brother to stumble? We hear in the world today, “Oh, that doesn’t bother me. The church is bigger than you. Oh, that doesn’t bother me.” We have to be careful that we don’t see the church and all we see is “myself.” When you see yourself, all you’re going to see is you. You’re not going to see the church. Verse 14: “I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean [Don’t put that on your brother.]. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.”

I want this to sink in: When we have a knowledge of something that is hurting our brother or sister, or something we know the pastor is not in agreement with, we’re not walking charitably. I want to get to this: “Destroy not him with thy meat.” Don’t destroy your brother. Maybe you’re able to do it, but don’t destroy your brother. Why? “We be brethren.” Don’t destroy

your brother! "Use not [your] liberty for an occasion to the flesh." We have liberty to do certain things, but don't use that liberty to destroy. "We be brethren."

CONCLUSION

Our last scripture: I Peter 3:8, "Finally [after all has been said], be ye all of one mind." This is not talking about having your own mind and being who you want to be. This is talking about having the mind of Christ. Romans 12:1, 2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by *the renewing of your mind*, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." We need the mind of Christ, not the mind of the world.

Continuing with I Peter 3:8, "having compassion one of another"—I think a lot of times we leave that out, because there are situations where we need to have compassion one for another. Our weaknesses are not to be exploited. We're family. As any family would do sometimes, we try to protect. We don't exploit. Why? Because "we be brethren." That's my brother! We need to have more compassion one of another in certain situations. I'm not saying that we shouldn't get it right, or clear it up, but we need to have compassion if the person is willing to clear it up. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." The next one says, "love as brethren"—brotherly love! It's not any big "I's"! There's a special bond that brethren have. It's not pick-pick nor fault-finding. It's not trying to find something I can get on you. "be pitiful"—sympathy, Saints. "be courteous." Verse 9: "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

How are we doing as brethren? Are we easily entreated? Are we too sensitive to judging? I didn't say *fault-finding* now. Someone tells you something and you just can't take it, but we're brethren. We don't want the attitude of Cain. Do you know what Cain's attitude was toward his brother? "Am I my brother's keeper?" Cain knew what he did. "We be brethren." Saints of God, let's put a knot in our love for one another. Hold on to it! The world is working hard against our love for one another. Do you know what the world is saying? "Oh, they can't get together, but they want me to come with them." How will a divided church reach a divided world? "We be brethren."

God bless you is our prayer. †

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE

For many years, The Way of Truth publishing work has provided Church of God Sunday school literature for many congregations. 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. We print quarterlies for Adults and Young People, Intermediates, and Juniors. We also print leaflets for younger children.



Dear Young People!

I trust this finds you keeping your eyes on our Lord and Savior. If you find yourself focusing on life's obstacles and difficulties, give yourself a shake. Find a verse promising God's care on which to stand. We are told in St. John that Jesus said if we are living under

God's commandments, we have the Father's love. That brings me (and I hope you!) peace.

This month, we have an article written by a dear sister from Ripley, West Virginia, Tara Crooks. May the Lord bless her for her contribution to His work!

With love,
Sis. Crystal Gossard

Dear Young People,

It is a pleasure to be a fellow soldier in God's army with you. We know the Christian life is a battle. So long as we endeavor to serve Christ, we will combat Satan and his forces. Each of us is an individual soldier who is responsible for our part in this great spiritual conflict. Satan's sole mission is to defeat the children of God and to destroy His kingdom. If we hope to overcome his evil plan and experience, we must employ the battle plan provided in the Word of God. This plan has been tested through the ages and is proven to work every time. If we are to be successful soldiers in God's army, we must prove the spiritual weapons described in the battle plan. To better understand how to combat our spiritual enemy, it may be helpful to consider how literal weapons are tested.



Nations around the globe have standing armies. These armies employ technology and weapons to overcome their enemies. Weapons, technology, and military tactics are put through rigorous testing before they are allowed in the field. Likewise, troops are expected to undergo extensive training in using these weapons before they are permitted to take them into battle. Weapons are often tested on military proving grounds. In the United States, there are nine facilities where weapons can be tested, and soldiers can develop knowledge and experience in using them. Each proving ground tests a different type of weapon and assesses it for strengths, weaknesses, and capabilities. The Yuma Proving Ground in Arizona, for example, is the only facility which tests long-range artillery, while the facility at Aberdeen, Maryland, evaluates tanks and wheeled vehicles for safety and effectiveness. These tests may take days or months—progress is not measured in time but in the successful performance and long-term use of the weapon. One does not take an untested weapon into battle without knowing whether: 1) it will actually work, and 2) the one using it knows how it works.

Soldiers in earthly armies need to know their weapons. But it is even more critical that soldiers of the cross know the battle plan and be able to use their weapons

effectively. The Bible tells us that “though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds” (II Corinthians 10:3, 4). The world around us is filled with turmoil and strife. Satan has been fighting humanity since the beginning of time and he has no plans to stop. We are told in the Bible that he is as a roaring lion who seeks those whom he can devour. He is a trickster and a liar who would deceive the most seasoned Christian among us if he could. For this reason, God’s battle plan instructs us to “put on the whole armor of God,” that we may be able to “stand against the wiles of the devil” (Ephesians 6:11).

The battle plan names some of our spiritual weapons in Ephesians 6. The armor of God affords protection and strength for spiritual soldiers while we fight against Satan and sin. It is essential that we get comfortable wearing it, as we will surely lose the battle without it.

Let us consider how each piece of God’s armor can be used as a weapon for spiritual readiness:

First, we must have “our loins girt about with truth, and have on the breastplate of righteousness” (Ephesians 6:14). Pontius Pilate once asked Jesus, “What is truth?” We as children of God must know that answer. We must know the truth of God’s Word, understand its laws and instruction, and prove—through our lives—that it is the only way to victory. We are in a battle for our spiritual lives, and we must be centered in God’s truth or we will be overcome by the enemy’s tactics.

The breastplate of righteousness protects our hearts from evil. If our hearts are not protected, we may succumb to temptation and lose the battle—and our standing as God’s children. Righteousness is simply obeying God’s commands. We must practice righteousness daily on our “proving ground.” How can we expect to prevail against the enemy if we do not put on the breastplate and become used to wearing it? We must be righteous in thought, action, and deed.

Next, we must have our feet “shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (Ephesians 6:15). This weapon is also protection for one of the most sensitive parts of the body. Many of us like to walk around barefoot—but we prefer soft, smooth ground. There will be times in our lives when the proving ground will not be comfortable or easy to walk upon. We will encounter stones, debris, or obstacles in our path. If we hope to overcome in battle, we must protect our spiritual feet so that we can focus on the enemy and not on the obstacles around us. Knowing how to wear our spiritual “shoes” will help us defeat the forces of evil surrounding us.

God’s armor allows both defensive and offensive moves to combat the enemy. The battle plan tells us “above all, take the shield of faith,” so that we may “quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (Ephesians 6:16). The world is full of the fiery darts of Satan, and they come in many forms. It might be a friend begging us to do something that we know is against God’s commandments. It might be peer pressure to do something because “everyone else is doing it”; or it might be a voice inside us telling us we aren’t even a Christian. Satan has countless darts in his arsenal and will use the ones

that will strike us the deepest. That is why raising the shield of faith over our hearts is so important. The shield signifies putting our trust in God rather than in ourselves.

Proving our spiritual readiness means being tested in spiritual conflict and using every weapon accurately and with ability. The “helmet of salvation” is a weapon of protection for our minds and should be a natural part of our spiritual being (Ephesians 6:17). We cannot be a soldier in God’s army unless we are fully cleansed and standing firm in God’s way. In physical combat, the enemy goes for the head because it is a quick way to incapacitate the body. Similarly, the devil will go straight for our minds—the “brain center” for our thoughts and decisions. The helmet of salvation provides assurance that we are children of God when the enemy tries to make us believe we are not. The battle plan gives us several ways we can test our salvation. God tells us if we are obedient to Him, then we are saved. If we are holy as He is holy, then we have salvation. If we love one another, but not the world, then we are partakers of salvation. If we are fighting on the side of righteousness, we can be assured that we are the Lord’s.

The final piece of the armor is the sword of the Spirit, or the Word of God. We are told that it is “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). A sword is a heavy weapon that takes strength to use. It takes practice for the soldier who relies upon it to pierce an enemy. Likewise, spiritual soldiers require much study of the Word of God, practice in testing its truth and promises, and experience in putting it into action. Satan cannot stand against the sword of Spirit. God’s Word makes Satan’s tactics of no effect. God’s Word can help us to try the spirits around us and know who is fighting with us and who is against us. However, if we use the Sword incorrectly, it can do damage to ourselves and to those around us. We must test this weapon in our daily lives so that we will be spiritually ready to do battle with the enemy.

Coupling these spiritual weapons with prayer and joy will make us powerhouses for the Lord. Prayer moves the hand that moves the world, and it is our main line of communication with our Captain. Joy gives us the will to keep fighting. Never forget that our proving ground is a place of action. We cannot afford to be spiritually lazy or careless. Our souls and the souls of our loved ones depend upon our handling of spiritual weapons. We must be willing to devote time, energy, and effort to this cause; otherwise, we will walk into battle unprepared—an easy target for Satan. Let us prove, by the grace and help of God, to be faithful, true, and worthy of our calling into God’s army.

“We are warriors. Warriors don’t give up and they don’t back down. Pick up your sword and shield and fight.”—Unknown.

“The enemy surrounds us, and we shall perish unless we fight. If we really fight, we are given assurance of victory.”—Francis de Sales. †

WE SEE JESUS

Radio Message by Bro. James Arch



What do we see with the natural eye? We see God's beautiful world, His master craftsmanship in nature. What a world we see and look at! We see the furious side of nature through the destructive forces of the weather, etc. We see the brutal side of sin in all the crime and violence that is rampant in our world today. We see change everywhere, and the acceptance of immorality and people losing their awareness of God. We see an element that is intent on excluding God and disrupting God's plan.

The text of scripture says, "We see Jesus." Yes, we see Jesus. We see human beings almost worshiped in the world today. We see power being abused and people being oppressed by their own fellowmen. We see human suffering, untold misery, resulting in people not being able to trust anything or anyone. All of these are a small part of what we see in the world today. Because of circumstances and problems that come upon people's lives, they have rejected God and turned away from Him. My Beloved Friends, God is just as real today as He ever was. It doesn't matter what problems or circumstances we may find ourselves in, the Bible tells us, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ... Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her." This is a part of Psalm 46. It goes on to say, "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

As I mentioned in the beginning of this message, the writer of the text (Hebrews 2), referred to Psalm 8, which is a beautiful Psalm. This Psalm refers to how God made man. Verses 3 and 4 says, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" In spite of all that God did for mankind, and what man would accomplish, the Hebrew writer goes on to say, "But we see Jesus." In other words, Jesus is the One who can do for us what no one else can do, and it is He who has the preeminence. It is good to know the Lord.

So many people seem to know about God, but how many really *know* God? How many build a relationship with God and have a relationship with Him? How many see God as a companion in whom they can call on all the time and who can walk with them on the pathway of life? We really need Him as our Pilot with us on this journey. Those who become followers of God today really need His help. We need to be strong and bold and courageous, for the enemy is always trying to derail us and to get us to do wrong. Jesus can do for us what no one else can do.

Paul emphasized this to the little church at Colosse when he was writing to the Colossian church. Colossians 2:8-10: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." If you'll turn to Colossians 1:16-19, you'll see there, "For by him were all things

I WILL BE speaking today on, "We See Jesus." I will be reading Hebrews 2:6-10: "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."



Those couple of verses that I just read are referring to Psalm 8, where it says, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" It is a beautiful Psalm. It begins and ends with "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" It speaks of how God delegated to man the things that He has delegated to him in the world that we're living in now.

We know what it means *to see*, generally speaking. *See* also means "to understand, or to comprehend; to take note of; to recognize, or to consider." *See* can mean merely to "use the faculty of sight"; but more often it implies recognition, understanding, or appreciation. In the text that I read, this can be implied as considering, recognizing, and understanding the preeminence of Jesus, what He means to us, and what He means to the world.

We live in a time where many are simply not interested in real down-to-earth Christian living. They'll tell you now, plain and straight, that they don't want to be bothered. The conservative system of Christianity is becoming challenged all the time. We need to sit down sometimes and consider Jesus and who He is, what He has done for us, what He means to us and to the world. I often think, *where would I have been today if it wasn't for the love of God and for the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ?* He came to give us abundant life. It's hard sometimes to reach where we should reach in the spiritual life, but God has given us the ability and the courage to do so, if we will avail ourselves to Him. There is much that He can do through humanity.

created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." Thank God for the power of God through Jesus Christ, His Son; thank God for the wonderful plan He gave us.

To see Jesus is to see hope and power to change lives. The woman at the well left her water pot. Jesus took time to converse with this poor, unfortunate woman along the road. In the midday heat of the sun, footsore and weary, Jesus came for people. Jesus didn't come for the cows, the horses, and the chickens. He came for people. His mission was people, and His mission is still people. Jesus still cares for people. He wants us to be His own; He wants us to live for Him; He wants us to live good and upright. That's why He came and gave His life. He spoke to this woman. She was surprised to see that He would talk with her; He being a Jew, she a Samaritan. Let me tell you, Friends, Jesus didn't see her nationality. He saw her soul. He saw the person who needed help. She had come to draw water from the well to drink, but Jesus gave her living water that was not in the well. He sent her forth to tell.

The little song says—

*Jesus gave her water that was not in the well,
Gave her living water and sent her forth to tell;
She went away singing and came back bringing,
Others for the water that was not in the well.*

We are told that many Samaritans believed on Him because of this woman's testimony. She went into the city and said, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Yes, He did something for her that no one else could do. Perhaps she had been scoffed at, scorned by society, and rejected by others. Let me tell you, Friends, Jesus came for the sinner. He said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." That's who Jesus came for. Even many of His own, during His time on earth, murmured at Him. Jesus sat down and ate with sinners. He came to try to win sinners to Him.

To see Jesus is to love Him. Mary used precious ointment to anoint Him. In other words, Mary used the best that she had. Nothing was too good for the Lord. I wonder how much sacrifice we're really making today to serve the Lord. It's so good to be up and around and to do a little for the Lord. Think about what He has done for us; think about His suffering and sacrifice; think of how He endured the suffering of the body and the torture He went through by those who crucified Him. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," and He fell asleep. The plan of redemption was complete.

Jesus gave His life. He was crucified and buried; but thank God, He arose again on the third day. That huge stone couldn't hold Him; that soldier couldn't hold Him. The Bible says, "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." He lives today and forevermore! Yes, to see Him is to love

Him. Mary loved Him. That's why she did the best she could do for Him.

The best thing that we can do is to follow Jesus. Take up our cross daily. Do you know what He said? "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Mr. Horatio Spafford wrote—

*My sin—O the bliss of this glorious thought!—
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to his cross and I bear it no more;
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

*It is well, with my soul,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.*

To see Jesus is to worship and honor Him, to give Him some of our time and devotion while we're here. We will only pass this way but once. God gave us one life, and sometimes it seems so long. It's really not long compared to eternity. There is only one life, and it will soon be past. Many today see the world only and what it offers. Do you know what Jesus said in Matthew 16:26? "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" To see Jesus is to know Him and to walk with Him.

David said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want [That's knowing Him.]. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. ... Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over [In other words, he was filled.]. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

To see Jesus is to know Him, to walk with Him, and to love Him! †

OUR SERVICES ON CD'S

CD's of our services are available for purchase. These are \$3.00 each; however, orders of 10 or more are only \$2.50 each, postage paid. Please write in the blank how many you would like to receive. Send check or money order to: The Way of Truth CD Ministry, P. O. Box 88, Hagerstown, MD 21741-0088 U.S.A.

- ___ CD #922 Great Is Our God—Paul Wilson
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- ___ CD #924 Repeat After Me—Rebecca Bland
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- ___ CD #945 The Good Master—Rebecca Bland
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- ___ CD #947 What Is Your Highest Aim in Life?—Brian Richards
- ___ CD #948 How an Individual Loses His Soul—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #949 Climb Every Mountain—Nancy Little
- ___ CD #950 Such as I Have—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #951 Unbroken—Paul Wilson

THE POETRY PAGE

LORD, SPEAK TO ME **Frances Ridley Havergal**

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone.

As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children, lost and lone.

Oh, lead me, Lord, that I may lead
The wandering and the wavering feet.
Oh, feed me, Lord, that I may feed
Thy hungering ones with manna sweet.

Oh, strengthen me, that while I stand
Firm on the Rock and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea.

Oh, teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

Oh, use me, Lord, use even me
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where,
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share.

THERE'S A WAY **Georgia C. Elliott**

There's a way that no fowl knoweth
And no vulture's eye hath seen;
Over it no lion goeth,
Neither passeth aught unclean.

There's a way where weary mortals
Find release from sin and strife;
'Tis a way that's everlasting,
Blessed way and truth and life.

'Tis a way that's straight and narrow,
Where we walk by simple faith,
Even through the midst of trouble
And the shadowy vale of death.

'Tis a way beside still waters,
Where are found the paths of peace,
Where we rest amid green pastures,
And our sighs and sorrows cease.

There's a way, and walk ye in it
Meekly, humbly with thy God;
They shall run and not be weary,
That are hid with Christ in God.

FAITH **S. E. Kiser**

Faith is not merely praying
Upon your knees at night;
Faith is not merely straying
Through darkness to the light.

Faith is not merely waiting
For glory that may be.
Faith is not merely hating
The sinful ecstasy.

Faith is the brave endeavor,
The splendid enterprise,
The strength to serve, whatever
Conditions may arise.

GOD'S LOVE **O. J. Robertson**

God's love is like the rolling ocean
So deep and very wide,
No force can ever hope to check
Or stop its surging tide.
Like craggy mountains towering upward,
Vast and strong and tall,
There is no measure for His love
And yet I have it all.

OUT OF THE VAST **Augustus Wright Bamberger**

There's a part of the sun in the apple,
There's a part of the moon in a rose;
There's a part of the flaming Pleiades
In every leaf that grows.

Out of the vast comes nearness;
For the God whose love we sing
Lends a little of His heaven
To every living thing. †



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

QUESTION: Do we really ordain a personality to a ministry or ordain the gift one has from the Spirit?

ANSWER: In the Church of God, what we call "ordain" is usually a recognition of what God has done, that is, given a *person* the gift of preaching or deaconship. As far as I know, you cannot ordain a gift.

QUESTION: What is the meaning of the scripture, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs"?

ANSWER: As we know, the plan of God originally embraced the Hebrew nation only. The Gentiles, as a rule, were not a part of the covenant people. Hence, the Hebrews considered themselves the chosen people of God, and they often referred to the Gentiles as "dogs." The Hebrews disdained dogs so much that even the price of a dog could not be put into the Lord's treasury.

When the woman came to Jesus, imploring Him to cast the devil out of her daughter, Jesus made this statement, knowing that He was sent to "minister to the lost sheep of Israel" and not to the Gentiles. Thus it did not seem advisable to grant healing, which was intended for the Hebrews (the "children's bread") to the Gentiles; however, the meekness and faith of this woman caused Jesus to grant her request. Note her humility when she exclaimed, "Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs."

Of course, with the death of Jesus on the cross, the "middle wall of partition" was broken down (Ephesians 2:14), and today, in the sight of God, Hebrews and Gentiles stand on the same footing. The divine admonition is, "WHOSOEVER WILL, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17).

QUESTION: What does hallelujah (or alleluia) mean? Why do some Christians use different spellings for this word?

ANSWER: The word *hallelujah* means, "Praise ye the Lord," so of course it is used to express praise, joy, or thanks to God. The word comes from the Hebrew "halaluyah." The word *alleluia* means, "Praise ye Jehovah" or the same, really, as hallelujah, but it is from the Greek "allelouia." Because one is from the Greek and the other from the Hebrew, you have a difference in spelling.

QUESTION: Explain "the holy city" as used in Matthew 27:53.

ANSWER: The reference is to Jerusalem. After it became the capital of a united Israel, the spiritual center was moved from Shiloh to Jerusalem. During the reign of Solomon, the temple was built, and God's presence was there. Because God met with His people there, it could be called "the holy city." Jesus told the Jews, "Your house is left unto you desolate." The holy city today is God's true church, for that is where His presence is manifested.

QUESTION: What is the difference between temptation and trial? How can someone know which is which when he falls into each of these?

ANSWER: There is an overlapping of these two—a trial can be a temptation—a temptation can be a trial, yet there are some differences. A temptation (as far as the child of God and right and wrong are concerned) is the devil putting forth effort to get the Christian to do wrong. A trial can test your patience, etc., without being a direct temptation to do evil. Yet if the devil can take advantage of the trial to tempt you to do wrong, he will.

God tried Abraham when He told him to offer his son. Our Bible uses the word *tempted*, yet God does not tempt anyone to do evil, so it really means God tried, tested Abraham.

QUESTION: In Hebrews 6:18, we read that God cannot lie. In I Kings 22:19-23, we read that God put a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophet in order to entice the king. I have gone through the story very well, but I wonder why God put a lying spirit in the mouth of this prophet.

ANSWER: The answer is this: Micaiah, the true prophet of God, had warned the king, had given him true counsel, but he would not accept it. He listened to the false prophets who were under the control of a lying spirit. God allows men to choose, He permits them to make their own choices.

This is what is to be understood by the verses you asked about: It is not that God made a lying spirit go to the king, but that He permitted it. The king did not have to listen to the lying prophets; he chose to do so. Therefore, he was responsible for what followed.

There are a number of verses in the Old Testament that speak of God "doing" so and so, when all that is meant is that He permitted it, not that He ordained it to be so. An example of this is found in I Samuel 16, where it speaks of an evil spirit "from the Lord" troubling Saul. What is meant is, when the Spirit of God departed from Saul, then an evil spirit was permitted to trouble him. Had he been true to the Lord, the true Spirit would have remained with him.

QUESTION: What does it mean by "let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness" in James 4:9?

ANSWER: I can only assume that James was speaking of a class of people who were not facing life as seriously as they should. He was not saying that it was a

sin for a Christian to laugh or to be joyous at times. There are times when a Christian needs to “mourn” over the lost, to bear a burden for the work of God, and not to be light and careless.

QUESTION: Do you think it wise for an evangelist in a revival service, where we are trying to increase the conviction of sinners to the breaking point, to use illustrations and stories that tend to provoke much laughter? It seems to me that laughter tends to weaken conviction or drive it entirely away.

ANSWER: Sin is a serious thing and the plight of the sinner is a serious thing. An evangelist who so far forgets the great importance and seriousness of the work in which he is engaged, that he gives himself up to joking and laughter-provoking stories in the pulpit, will find himself unsuccessful in getting that deep conviction that leads to dying out to sin. The trouble with much evangelism today is its superficial quality. We should avoid all things that are not consistent with deep and pungent conviction that is resting upon sinners. I have seen deep conviction laughed off by a congregation in two minutes’ time. †

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



PARTY LINE

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

“If our ride doesn’t come pretty soon, we’ll be late for school,” I announced. For what must have been the tenth time, I went to the window and looked out at the country road that ran past our house. The familiar blue station wagon that stopped to pick us up for school each morning was nowhere in sight.

“That’s odd,” said my mother. “Sister Virginia is always on time.” She frowned, thinking hard. “I wonder if her grandfather got worse during the night.” She paused. “Maybe we should call her and see if I need to find another way for you girls to get to school.”

My mother came to the window and looked out. Still no blue station wagon. “Go ahead and call Sister Virginia,” my mother told me. “Be very respectful and ask politely if there is a problem we can help her with.”

I picked up the telephone and waited for the dial tone so I could call Sister Virginia. There was no dial tone. Instead, I heard Sister Virginia’s voice.

“Well, thank the Lord he made it through,” she said.

“Yes,” said another voice I recognized as belonging to Sister Virginia’s aunt, Sister Stutzie. “Thank the Lord for that,” she said.

Very carefully I replaced the receiver of the telephone in its cradle, and turned to my mother. “Sister Virginia’s grandfather has died,” I said.

My mother nodded soberly, but my younger sister, Twila, was confused. “How do you know that?” she asked me. “All you did was pick up the telephone. You didn’t even talk to anybody.”

“I heard Sister Virginia and Sister Stutzie talking to each other,” I explained. “That’s how I know.”

Just then our phone rang. No one reached for it. Instead, we listened to see if the call was meant for us. In those days, many people who lived in rural areas, like we did, were on a “party line.” A party line was a telephone circuit that was shared by more than one household. Each family had a coded ring. Ours was two long rings followed by four short rings. If we heard any other ring code, we would not answer the telephone.

Sure enough, the ring code was ours, and so I picked up the telephone receiver. “Hello, this is the Castangs’ residence,” I said.

“I’m sorry I will be a little late picking you up for school today,” said Sister Virginia. “Please tell your mother that Brother Ernie passed away just a short while ago.”

“I’ll tell her,” I said. I didn’t explain that I already knew Brother Ernie had passed. I didn’t want to tell her that I had accidentally listened in on her conversation with Sister Stutzie.

The ability to listen in on other people’s conversations was not the only feature of a party line. A huge drawback to the party line system was that while someone in another household was using the line, no other household could use it.

Mrs. R, the neighbor who lived across the road from us, was also on our party line. Mrs. R was a widow with many friends. She often spent hours talking with them on the telephone, and while she was on the line, no one else could use it.

“Why does she talk on the telephone for so long?” I once asked my mother. “Doesn’t she think someone else might need to use the line?”

“You don’t need to make any calls, so don’t worry about it,” was her answer.

“What if there was an emergency?” I persisted.

“If there would ever be an emergency,” my mother said, “you could always pick up the telephone and say respectfully, ‘I’m sorry to interrupt, but I have an emergency. Could you please hang up for a few minutes while I make a call?’”

“But,” she continued a moment later, “you’d better never do that unless it’s a real emergency!”

A few years later our family moved to another farm where we had a private telephone line. It took us awhile to remember that every time the telephone rang, the call was for us. We enjoyed being able to dial out on our telephone any time we wanted. Of course, sometimes we would get a busy signal. That meant the person we were calling was already talking to someone else. It meant we would have to call back later.

Today, if we can’t reach our party, we can leave a voicemail and ask the other person to return our call. It still involves waiting, but we don’t have to call again and again to see if the other person is available.

Even with today’s cell phone technology, nothing compares to the immediate connection we can expect when we go to God in prayer. Our wise saying this month is found in Proverbs 15:8, which says, “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.”

We can call upon God in prayer at any time of the day or night. We do not need to worry that someone else might be on the line and that we will have to hang up and try to call again later. We do not need to worry about whether or not the signal will be strong enough to reach Him. We do not need to worry about leaving a voicemail for God because someone else has His attention.

It is a wonderful privilege to know that God's eyes are always upon us, and His ears are always open to our prayers. Our scripture tells us that the prayer of the upright is God's delight. It means that as long as we are His good and obedient children, He loves to hear our prayers.

Activity

PRAYER involves ...

P ___ God for His help in our daily lives (I John 5:15).

R ___ God to have mercy upon others who are in need (Philippians 4:6).

A ___ God to make us a blessing to others (Ephesians 3:20).

Y ___ ourselves to the will of God (Romans 6:13).

E ___ ourselves to make sure we have obedient hearts (II Corinthians 13:5).

R ___ God's blessings and praise Him (Psalm 25:6).

Answer to Last Month's Activity

Verses 23 and 31 in Psalm 37 tell us about taking careful steps:

Verse 23 - The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.

Verse 31 - The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. †

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

SIN, MAN'S GREATEST ENEMY THE PRESENT RESULTS OF SIN

Scriptures: Genesis 3:7, 8, 14, 16, 18, 19; John 9:31.

Genesis 3:7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

John 9:31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

Memory Verse: Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.—John 9:31.

Aim: To teach that sin brings punishment in this world.

INTRODUCTION

THE APOSTLE John tells us that sin is the transgression of the law (I John 3:4). We understand he speaks of the law of the New Covenant. To break the law of God is a very serious matter. God, by Christ, created all things, including the family of man, and God made laws to govern what He made. Some of these laws govern the literal world He made, and some are moral laws to govern the family of man. To break these laws will cause adverse effects. That is why we have wrecks on our highways. That is why we can ruin our own health, and that is why souls are separated from God, which brings spiritual death.

However, spiritual death is not the only "present results of sin"! Broken homes, wrecked lives, children being born out of wedlock, overcrowded prisons, abused wives, molested children, and many, many other things that could be listed, are the present results of sin.

If there be any unsaved person studying this lesson, we encourage you to turn away from such a costly, destructive way of living, and enlist in the army of the Lord to "rescue the perishing."

MEDITATIONS

THE RESULT OF EVE'S TRANSGRESSION—Genesis 3:7—Were opened—Eve's transgression of the command of God brought upon herself and all her seed the knowledge of evil. She and Adam were, at once, driven from the lovely garden, and the earth was cursed.

CONDEMNATION COMES—Genesis 3:8—Hid themselves—The excellent and holy nature of God was now very condemning to Adam and his wife, and they sought to hide themselves from the face of God. Any sinner today experiences condemnation when the presence of God is felt. **Verse 14—Thou art cursed—**Animals have no eternal soul, so they will know no existence or suffering in the next world, but that sin brought a curse upon the serpent, the most subtle of all beasts, is very clear. The curse of the serpent was above or greater than that of the remaining beasts. All animals are subject to suffering from disease.

THE PENALTY TO ALL WOMEN—Genesis 3:16—In sorrow—Men have sought for years to deliver women from this suffering ordained here by God in childbirth. But here is no escape from this. We see from this scripture that God said He would greatly multiply sorrow in childbirth. But, oh, the joy when the child is born! Man is trying to decrease and, in some cases, eliminate pain altogether, but pain in childbirth is natural.

THE EFFECTS OF SIN ON NATURE—Genesis 3:18—Thorns also and thistles—The sin of Adam and Eve brought forth a great array of obnoxious plant life that would plague mankind. In all the years that

have followed, although they have not been cultivated or protected in any way, weeds have survived and are still very thrifty.

THE MAN'S PENALTY—Genesis 3:19—Sweat of thy face—In verse 17, not in our lesson text, Adam was told the ground would be cursed because of his sin. Hence, man would have to work very hard in order to sustain himself. This was to be his portion for all of life, a present result of sin. Many people consider labor a disgrace, but with sin in the world now, labor is a blessing. To dust ... return—It would be quite possible, even though man is made from dust, for God to sustain him indefinitely (Adam lived past the 900-year mark). But, with the advent of sin, God declared that man should return to dust from which he was taken.

SINNER'S PRAYERS NOT HEARD—John 9:31—Heareth not—We know that God listens to the prayer of the penitent sinner, but the thought expressed here is that God does not hear the cry of a sinner if he has no intentions of leaving sin. The immediate present result of sin is the separation of man from God.

CONCLUSION

Sin is a reality, and it is daily making its pernicious inroads in society and the individual lives of men. What is done about it is in the hands of mankind, for God is always ready to furnish the power to escape from sin; and He delights in destroying it and its effects in the lives of mankind. But, when people love sin and roll it under their tongue as a sweet morsel, there is no way possible for them to escape unless a saint of God prays conviction upon them. But now, as in the days of John, the whole world lies in wickedness. No nation is so blessed with material things as America, but, behold how men are using these blessings. The sinful use of things is appalling, and the end is destruction.

Sin cannot receive its full reward until the final judgment, but it is certain that sin has a reward in this present life. The sinner, by his conscience, is sure to be smitten; and, like Cain, in his heart he will cry out that his punishment is more than he can bear. Some physicians say that cancer, doubtless, in many instances, results from the use of tobacco, and ulcers of the stomach are sometimes the result of worry. Paul declared that he who commits fornication sins against his own body. All the suffering in the world, including the horror of war, is a present result of sin. Paul also said that he who "soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." This is a solemn and certain warning to all. Therefore, let us set our affections on things above and not on the things of this earth. May God help each one to accomplish all he possibly can in hindering the present results of sin.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Name some of the present results of sin.
2. Name the immediate result of sin.
3. Why did Adam and Eve hide from God?
4. What was the penalty brought on the beast life after man sinned?
5. What was the penalty in the vegetable kingdom? †

WINNING A CROWN

By the late C. W. Naylor



(Part III)

THE MORAL STATE OF MAN

BACK IN the world's springtime, when nature was dressed in her pristine glory, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). Of nothing else of his creation is this said. Man is marked out as separate and distinct from all the rest of creation. He is of the creation, but rises to a higher plane, and possesses a something seen in nothing else. We read further, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27). This was not a physical image and likeness, for such it could not be, inasmuch as God is not physical and does not possess physical organs. It must, then, relate to his mental and moral being. In reason, judgment, choice, conscience, etc., he is in God's image, but we are concerned at present only with his attribute of holiness. As he came from the hand of God he was pure and holy. There was not in him a single element of defilement. God looked upon him and pronounced him very good, and was well pleased. The wise man, speaking of man's original state, says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright" (Ecclesiastes 7:29).

It was as natural for him to love God as to love anything else. He was blameless, and though without experience he could readily yield himself to all God's will. There was no barrier between himself and God. There was no hindrance to fellowship and intercourse. His pure soul shrank not from God. He knew no fear, but in the presence of his Maker walked as a son with his father. What halcyon days were those! But alas! that happy state did not continue. One thing had been prohibited. That prohibition was violated, and in consequence a cloud overspread the heavens. His conscience knew for the first time the sense of guilt and shame. The sweet, sympathetic fellowship between his soul and God was broken. He trembled and shrank in fear. His innocence was gone—that greatest charm, that which endeared him to the Father-heart. Then followed a life of sin, and when he begat a son, the child was in his father's own image. From that time on the current of human life has been a dark and murky stream.

Some tell us that man has never fallen, that he is now in as high a position as he has ever occupied in the moral scale. This, however, is contrary to the Scriptures, as well as to reason. When we look at his present condition and compare that with what the Bible shows him to have been at his creation, we rather marvel that he has fallen so far. The Bible deals with him everywhere as a fallen creature, one who is corrupt and defiled. Thus the record expresses it: "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Genesis 6:12). God

manifested his displeasure by destroying the old world.

The posterity of Noah traveled the same path. Hosea, viewing the situation in his day, exclaimed, "They have deeply corrupted themselves" (Hosea 9:9). So the current flows on. Paul draws a dark picture in the first chapter of Romans and elsewhere. It is true that man did not lose all. There is in him yet some elements of nobility, some godlike qualities; but these are, as it were, only a few good things that have survived the wreck of his life. And when God looks upon him, he sees not one holy element; and when he begins to make something of him, he must begin at the beginning and make of him a new creature. †

THE JOURNEY

By Sis. Enid Jones



JOURNEY suggests travel, movement, going from place to place, not being stationary. All journeys have a beginning, as well as an end. It takes good planning for a journey to be really fruitful or successful.

Man's life is a journey planned by the Supreme Master Planner, God, the Creator of heaven and earth. In Genesis 1:1, we read: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Some planning, I believe, went into creation for all things to have been so perfect. When we look around and see the harmony of nature, we are made to say, "How great is our God!" The sun, the moon, day and night, the stars, the animals, and man (God's great workmanship), all reflect the power and might of God. Man was given dominion over all things. He was told to have rule over everything. What an exalted position given out of love!

As parents, we set guidelines—some ground rules that must be obeyed. God also has guidelines to be obeyed. Man was told to enjoy all the fruit of the trees in the garden that He had planted, but there was a special tree that was forbidden to Adam. God has a right to set rules and boundaries. He said to Adam, "The day that you eat of the tree in the midst of the garden, you shall surely die." God saw that it was not good for the man to be alone, so He made a woman to be a companion, a helpmate for Adam. In Jeremiah 29:11, we read: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." God has plans to bless, to establish, save, heal, guide, and to protect His children; plans to make us more than conquerors, if only we would obey His Word.

A problem developed on the journey because there was an evil force in the world which manifested itself from as early as time began. Man was created with the ability to choose, so when Eve was presented with the choice to be *as wise as God*, as the deceiver told her, she latched on to the idea. Being told that eating the fruit of the forbidden tree would make her as wise as God must have been very appealing to Eve. Humans have a tendency to desire the things that are forbidden

for them.

The choices we do make have consequences. Sin entered as a result of disobedience. In Romans 6:23, we read: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." We work for wages, but a gift is freely given. Man chooses to collect the wages, so hopeless despair sets in. Isn't it good to know that God did not leave us there, that He provided a way of escape? Man did not have to continue the journey alone, praise the Lord! "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). What a promise, what a blessed opportunity! Believe and have eternal life, believe and live forever!

In John 14:6, we are told: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." So Christ came to open the way to eternal life. The world was in darkness. Gross darkness had settled on the face of the earth. The Savior, the Light of the world, was born. He was "Born that man no more may die, Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth." Hope came with the birth of the Christ-child! Glory to God! Angels heralded His birth, saying: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Born of humble birth, many refused Him; too poor, too lowly, unlearned, not enough class. Many today continue to refuse Him for the same reasons.

The journey continued. Jesus went about doing good: healing the sick, feeding the hungry, comforting those who were mourning, raising the dead. Oh, how happy the blind man must have been when he saw light for the first time! When Lazarus walked out of the tomb, oh, how his sisters must have felt relieved to see him! Jesus came as the Savior of sin, so today we have a lively hope. He was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." When the fullness of time was come, Jesus went to the cross for your sins and mine. He was arrested, given a mock trial, found guiltless. Pilate said, "I find no fault in this man," yet He was crucified on the cross of Calvary. Why? To offer salvation, freedom from sin and its penalty to all mankind. Sin is man's worst enemy, as well as the worst prison house one can find himself in.

As we reach the end of the journey, we see Jesus hanging on the cross, but the good news is, He did not remain in the grave where they laid Him. A guard was set to watch the tomb for fear that the disciples would come by night to take the body away. Vainly they watched the grave, but death could not keep his prey.

Up from the grave he arose,

With a mighty triumph o'er his foes;

He arose a victor from the dark domain,

And he lives forever with his saints to reign.

He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Today, pardon is offered, Dear Sinner Friend, pardon from bondage. Won't you accept the offer? You won't have to pay. The price has already been paid for one and all. Today is the day of salvation. Harden not your heart. Accept Jesus and start a new journey! †

WHAT CONSTITUTES TRUE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

By the late C. E. Byers



THE Word of God clearly and definitely teaches that the church is the body

of Christ. Paul, in writing to the church at Ephesus, said of Christ, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body" (Ephesians 1:22, 23). Again, Paul said to the Christians at Corinth, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (I Corinthians 12:27).

This makes clear what constitutes the church. It is a body of particular or special individuals. These individuals are a distinct and separate body from all other people of the world. Paul, addressing the church at Corinth in his day, said, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's" (I Corinthians 1:2). It is to be noticed that Paul did not include all the people of Corinth as belonging to the church of God. He specified the members of the church by saying "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints ... that ... call upon the name of Jesus Christ."

There were a great number of people in Corinth who had repented of their sins and believed on the Lord. These were the body of Christ, the church. Not only were all the regenerated people of Corinth members of the church of God, but Paul included in their fellowship all regenerated people everywhere. It is easy to see that to be a member of the church in the days of Paul meant more than to be taken in through a formal ceremony. A certain moral and spiritual condition of heart was required. Men had to have a change of heart, they had to become saints (holy persons). They had to be men and women who called upon the Lord Jesus Christ. They were a distinct and separate people. Jesus said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16).

The body of Christ, the church, in Paul's day was not a mixture of regenerated and unregenerated people, but every member had repented of his sins, believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and was translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. By conversion they were made new creatures (II Corinthians 5:17). True church membership in the days of Christ as well as now, was not acquired by outward ceremony, but by an inward change of heart, springing out of godly sorrow which produces repentance and faith toward our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Not only is Christ the head of the church, but He declares Himself to be the door to the church. He says, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). In Revelation 3:6-8, we have this message from Christ to John, "He that hath an ear, let

him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. ... These things saith he that is holy [Christ], he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth. I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." Christ in these words says to the pastor of the church at Philadelphia, "I am the door to the church. No man can open it, neither can any man shut it." Christ stands as an open door to His kingdom and church for the entire world. Whosoever will may come and enter by faith. Every soul thus entering will be saved from his sins, and simultaneously becomes a member of His church.

The writer of the book of Hebrews said, "But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of us all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." The writer here calls the church of the firstborn, Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, and says it is made up of the spirits of just men whose names are written in heaven. Surely this Mount Zion, the church of the firstborn, is none other than the one that Jesus built, of which He said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." In Psalm 87:5, 6 we read, "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there."

True church membership in the church Christ founded is acquired only by spiritual birth. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." When the people on the day of Pentecost cried out to Peter and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter did not say, "Join the church," but, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

The record says, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls ... praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:41-47). Nothing is said about joining the church, but the scripture does say, "The Lord added to the church." When they repented, God forgave them, regenerated them by producing in them a spiritual birth. Then, because of their conversion, God accepted them as His children and members of His church. Not a word is said about their joining anything, and nothing about Peter opening the door of the church to receive them into membership.

That which constitutes true membership is being born of the Spirit of God, and not being received into some humanly organized society by some formal rite or ceremony. One may have true church membership in the body of Christ, His church, without joining any denomination. Again, one may join one or more humanly organized religious bodies and yet not have true church membership in the body of Christ, His church. †

—Reprinted from the book, *The Church*, c. 1946

ABRAHAM'S SEED

By the late H. R. Matthews

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."—Galatians 3:16.



ABRAHAM'S seed, being twofold, does not come from a single source. From a natural sense, the genealogy of Christ reaches back to Abraham. Jesus was Jewish, and Abraham was the father of the Jewish nation of Israel. It was through the ancestry (seed) of Abraham that was formed the nation of Israel. Isaac, the son of Abraham's old age, was the son of promise. The Hebrew writer spoke thus of this birth:



"Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable" (Hebrews 11:12).

As Abraham's grandson, Jacob, was fleeing from his Uncle Laban, and returning to his homeland, he learned that his brother, Esau, whom he had wronged, was on his way to meet him with four hundred men accompanying him. Being fearful, Jacob wrestled in prayer through the night for protection from the wrath of Esau. As daylight was breaking, he refused to give up until God gave the assurance of victory. The angel with whom Jacob wrestled said to him, "Let me go, for the day breaketh. And [Jacob] said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

The twelve sons of Jacob, along with their father, grandfather, and great-grandfather became patriarchs that formed the twelve tribes of Israel, which would eventually cross the river Jordan, and settle the promised land of Canaan. In the meantime, they would have passed through Egyptian bondage, and their 40+ years of nomadic journey during the exodus from Egyptian bondage. All this became necessary to bring fruition to the covenant and promise God made to Abraham, that he would become the father of many nations. But what relationship is there between the expired covenant and the New Covenant in which they that be Christ's become the seed of Abraham?

This nation of Israel was the Hebrew nation to whom the law, written by the finger of God, was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. This was to be the law that would govern the Old Testament nation of Israel as long as that nation existed; possibly, to A.D. 70. That nation as God's chosen people ceased to exist, as Jesus in His dying moment said, "It is finished." It must be understood that the Old Testament nation of Israel does not now exist, nor shall it ever exist in the future, nor beyond the last day. The Israel of today is not the

ancestral seed of Abraham, for the Israel of today is the spiritual seed of Abraham. The spiritual seed of Abraham is made up of spiritual Jews. "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Romans 2:28, 29). The spiritual seed of Abraham is not determined by race, color, or culture. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:28, 29).

Through revelation from God, Abraham was able to understand that the promise extended far beyond the land flowing with milk and honey (Canaan), the land promised to his literal seed. "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons [Ishmael and Isaac], the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free" (Galatians 4:22-31).

What the apostle Paul is making clear is the difference between the two covenants: Old Testament—New Testament. The Old Testament gendereth to bondage, the flesh. In the New Testament, the Jerusalem which is above (the Church of God) is free, which is the mother of us all. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29).

Though Abraham was an Old Testament character, "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). This city is further defined by the Hebrew writer in the following verses: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and unto an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:22-24). This is the church of which the apostle Paul spake: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Ephesians 3:14, 15). This

is the church of which Jesus spoke: "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). This is the church whose church book is the book of life. This is the church which has only one door of entrance. Jesus said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9). This is the family (church) which we are born into. This is what Jesus meant when He said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

No doubt, there are many today who, as did Nicodemus, who do not understand what Jesus meant by being born again. Of course, He was not speaking of a man entering the second time into his mother's womb and being born. Jesus was speaking of a spiritual experience when He said, "Ye must be born again." Remember now, the new birth is not a fleshly experience. But when did the first birth take place? Was it not at the time of conception? For conception to take place, there must be life, spiritual life. Adam had no earthly parents, so he was not conceived. When God created the body of Adam, that body lay there dead as dead could be. It was not until God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (the creation of a new soul—spirit) that the body of Adam became alive. "The body without the spirit is dead" (James 2:26). When there is a separation of soul and body, the body dies and returns to the dust from whence it was taken. But what becomes of the soul? First, let us understand the definition of death. Death is a separation. When body and soul separate, physical death ensues. Sin brings spiritual death to the soul; that is, separation from God. The soul is eternal. Though it may be dead in trespasses and sins, it shall never cease to exist. If the soul fails to repent before the last day, it shall experience the second death, that is eternal separation from God.

The first birth then, takes place at conception. To be born again, there must necessarily be a death. This is speaking of a spiritual death. If the newborn dies in its infancy, it would immediately join its Creator in heaven. When the newborn reaches the age where innocence is lost, that bent toward sin received from its foreparents, influences it to choose the wrong and the soul becomes separated from its Creator (dies), and is now dead in trespasses and sins, and stands in need of being born again. Only then can his name be added to the Lamb's book of life. Only then can he become Abraham's seed, and heir according to the promise.

One might wonder, what is life all about? Why are we here? Where are we headed? Answers to these complex questions, doubtless, have been sought over and over and over again, with answers being more conjectural than matter of fact. One thing that is matter of fact is the fact that man's span here on earth is of a probationary nature. Joshua explained this probationary nature by challenging the Hebrew nation in the following manner: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15). This is what earthly living is all about. There are two great powers that exist in what is called the "spirit world." The greatest in power is the Spirit of good. The second in power is the power of evil. Man's probation is comprehended in his created ability

to choose which of the two powers he will serve. There is absolutely no possibility of simultaneous servitude.

When we study the book of Job, we find a controversy in progress between the two powers of the spirit world that we made reference to earlier in this article, God and Satan. The controversy involved God's "perfect and upright" servant, Job. Satan first challenged God to touch all of Job's possessions, including his children, claiming that if He did so, Job would curse Him to His face. God gave Satan permission to do all this, but He placed a limit on what Satan could do. God is always in control of Satan's evil deeds so that he cannot go beyond what God permits him to do. Satan then took away all of Job's possessions, including his children, but he spared his wife, for she later became a mouthpiece for Satan. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:22).

It has been contemplated that possibly controversy between God and Satan existed concerning the servitude of a race that would be created into a probationary human race. This did not occur in heaven, for heaven and heaven's angels are off limits to the prince of darkness. Possibly, God desired the fellowship of those, like Moses, who chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25). "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify Ghost in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Corinthians 6:19, 20).

No doubt, Satan believed that the controversy ended in his favor in the Garden of Eden when Eve succumbed to his lying spirit; however, there would be the Seed of the woman that would bruise Satan's head (Genesis 3:15), for He would come to save His people from their sins. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29).

To this day the antitypes of the New Covenant become more meaningful, more beautiful as the Old Covenant casts its types and shadows upon them. The New Covenant church is a reflection of Abraham's Old Covenant nation of Israel. Jesus declared, "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the new wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved" (Matthew 9:17). What Jesus is telling us in this verse is, when the Old Covenant has served its purpose, it must relinquish its existence to the new. The apostle Paul called it foolishness to endeavor to carry over the expired covenant into the new. Old Israel's Egyptian bondage was a type of sin. Deliverance from Egyptian bondage and the crossing of the Red Sea were typical of escaping sin's dominion and becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus, the seed of Abraham.

During the forty years of retribution in the wilderness, there were many types and shadows which all pointed to Christ and the church He would build. One of the most significant types came under the leadership of Joshua as they crossed over Jordan into the land flowing with milk and honey, the land promised to the Patriarchs at the time of the covenant of God to Abra-

ham. The antitype was the experience of sanctification where a second cleansing took place. This experience was introduced on the day of Pentecost, which took place fifty days following the second day of the Feast of First-fruits.

Sanctification is a message in itself, so we will not go into further detail concerning its work of grace, except to say that there are a number of Old Testament types of which it is an antitype.

In conclusion, we must summerize this message by saying, "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). †

RADIO LOG

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Alvin A. Craig, Radio Minister

(Aired on Sundays unless otherwise noted.)

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PLEASE PRAY FOR THIS RADIO MINISTRY!

RADIO LETTER

Good morning,

I just listened to your broadcast on WFBG 1290 AM, while I was in the office this morning. I'm from Williamsburg, Pennsylvania.

I wanted to thank you for your words and the effort you put into your sermon. It is hard to receive correction at times. It was a well-timed message that was a great reminder, and a needed one.

We all need to live less offended. If we would stop to consider what people's motives are, we would often stop our offense inside and take more responsibility, as we behave more accountably. We would be better representatives of Jesus' love.

Thanks again.

—K. M., Pennsylvania

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Paniqui, Tarlac, Philippines

December 26-30, 2018, Lord willing

Bro. Reynaldo Fabian, Host Pastor

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REVIVAL SERVICES

ROATAN ISLAND, HONDURAS

September 19-23, 2018, Lord willing

Bro. Donovan Darby, Evangelist

Various congregations throughout the island

THE CHURCH OF GOD STANDS FOR

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

YOU SHOULD KNOW MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH OF GOD

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

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