

# The Way of Truth

Vol. 79

“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

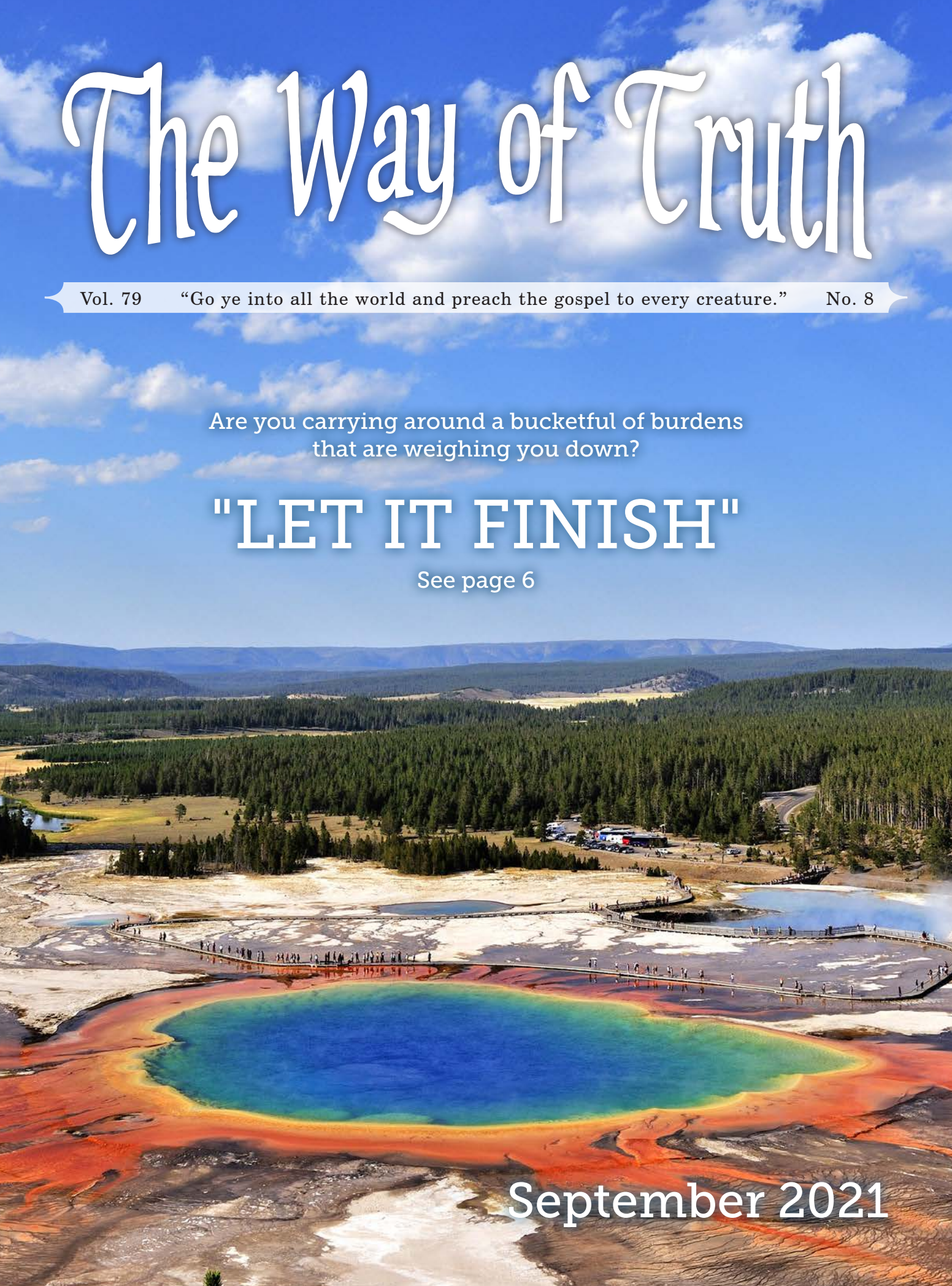
No. 8

Are you carrying around a bucketful of burdens  
that are weighing you down?

## "LET IT FINISH"

See page 6

September 2021





## RENEWING OUR STRENGTH

**T**HE THEME of our recent convention in Hagerstown was “Renewing Our Strength” based on Isaiah 40:31, “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” I believe the thought was inspired by the Lord who was present in our midst to inspire and instruct us in our journey through these dark times. The enemy has used the pandemic to his advantage in discouraging and weakening the saints in their resolve to be faithful. We were not able to fellowship in conventions, revivals, and fellowship meetings in 2020 and that left the church longing to be together, to renew our strength by worshiping God, feeling His presence through the preaching of the Word, singing the songs of Zion, renewing our love for one another as the redeemed by sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Oh, how we all needed that! And God was faithful. We are still being blessed by the residual memories of Convention 2021.

For this editorial I thought I would pen a few words about renewing our strength. God wants us to be strong! “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might” (Ephesians 6:10). We always need to be strong to overcome the devil. But particularly in times like these, we need our strength renewed.

The scripture in Isaiah says, “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.” Waiting here doesn’t mean killing time or twiddling our thumbs. This *waiting* on the Lord entails a drawing nigh to God in prayer, in meditation, in fasting in getting God’s attention. I picture this *waiting* as sitting at the feet of Jesus. By visualizing ourselves with Him, we become more patient, for we know He is in control.

Proverbs 29:18 declares, “Where there is no vision, the people perish,” and so it is. As our strength is renewed so our vision is renewed. In Psalm 103:5 we read, “Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” The comparison of an eagle to the Christian’s strength is revealing. Take eyesight for example. An eagle’s eyesight is excellent—20/5 compared with human’s 20/20. In case you don’t know what those numbers mean, consider the following: 20/20 vision means a person sees at 20 feet what a normal person can see at a distance of 20 feet. 20/40 means a person’s eyesight is faulty for he must move forward to see at 20 feet what most people see at 40 feet away. The best eyesight for a human is judged at 20/10 which means he can see at 20 feet distance what most people have to move up to 10 feet in order to see. But the eagle has the super eyesight of 20/5, which means an eagle can see at 20 feet what people can only see at the up-close distance of 5 feet. There is no limitation on our spiritual vision. When our vision is renewed like the eagle’s, we can see things which most people cannot.

Our strength is renewed by coming together as God’s people. Isaiah 41:1 says, “Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let

them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment.” Coming together is important. That is why I said that by keeping the saints apart through this pandemic, Satan has been successful in attacking our strength as a church. Hebrews 10:25, of course, backs up this argument by warning, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” The canceling of services not only adversely affects the local congregation, but also hinders the growth of fellowship between congregations intent on building confidence in one another and tearing down walls of division.

We renew our strength by strengthening our fellowship. We in the Church of God gladly sing, “No power on Earth or hell withal can rend us from each other.” Unfortunately, many have not backed that statement up with commitment. As the apostle Paul so eloquently penned in Ephesians 4:1-6, “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. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” It is easy to understand that our strength has been chiseled away because of a lack of lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance and love.

Renewing our strength will renew our dependency upon the Holy Spirit. We need to renew the place the Holy Ghost has in our lives and in our services. Paul said to Titus, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5). Sanctification is for the regenerated—renewing the Spirit’s influence on our daily lives. Consecration must be renewed for our strength to be renewed. Romans 12:1, “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.”

A renewal of strength comes with a renewal of our minds. Romans 12:2, “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.” Conforming to the world weakens us; being renewed in our mind transforms us. “And be renewed in the spirit of your mind” (Ephesians 4:23).

Renewing our love renews our strength, “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” The world in which we live has a tendency to cause our love to wax cold. That is why we need to be renewed. The

### ABOUT THE COVER

The picture on our front is of the Grand Prismatic Hot Spring in Yellowstone National Park. Old Faithful may be more famous, but the Grand Prismatic Hot Spring is the most photographed thermal feature in Yellowstone. That’s because of its crazy-bright colors and enormous size. The hot spring has bright bands of orange, yellow, and green ring the deep blue waters in the spring.

# THE WAY OF TRUTH

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

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love of God is the foundation of strength. Ephesians 3:17-19, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

Renewing our strength will renew our joy! Nehemiah learned this blessed truth long ago. "Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10).

We need to renew our strength daily. If we neglect our inner man we will faint. It behooves us to take daily inventory. "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (II Corinthians 4:16).

In this present trial, we cannot afford to faint. Galatians 6:9, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Isaiah 40:28-31, "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." †

## HOW EARNESTLY DO YOU LOVE THE BIBLE?

A man in Kansas City was severely injured in an explosion. Evangelist Robert L. Sumner tells about him in his book **The Wonder of the Word of God**. The victim's face was badly disfigured, and he lost his eyesight as well as both hands. He was just a new Christian, and one of his greatest disappointments was that he could no longer read the Bible.

Then he heard about a lady in England who read braille with her lips. Hoping to do the same, he sent for some books of the Bible in braille. Much to his dismay, however, he discovered that the nerve endings in his lips had been destroyed by the explosion. One day, as he brought one of the braille pages to his lips, his tongue happened to touch a few of the raised characters and he could feel them. Like a flash he thought, I can read the Bible using my tongue. At the time Robert Sumner wrote his book, the man had "read" through the entire Bible four times.

—The Bible Illustrator

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# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BLESSED?

Radio Message by Bro. James Arch

**I** WILL BE asking a question, and that question is: What does it mean to be blessed? The word *blessed* means, in part, “bringing happiness, pleasure, or contentment.” The Bible has a lot to say about blessed.



The twenty-fourth Psalm is a beautiful little psalm. The circumstances surrounding that is the ark of the covenant had been lodged at the house of one Obadedom. It was believed to be written on the occasion of the ark being taken from his house to Mount Zion. Verse 1 says, “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” It’s a very beautiful verse. It’s very important and relevant to the Christian body. God is the Creator of this world. He owns it, and all His creatures and all human beings belong to God. Verse 3 says, “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?”

God does not refuse anyone that approaches Him in humility and in reverence and in sincerity. Thank God, God is not like man. God had poured out special blessings on Obadedom. Every kind of necessary good. Verse 4 is answering verse 3. It appears to be meaning that the more spiritual we are, the closer we get to God, and the more real His blessings are on us. We really can’t get too close to God.

It is not only Christians who are blessed. God sends the rain on the just and the unjust. So what does it really mean “to be blessed”? It’s a wonderful question.

We sing a song among us, and it says—

*Through the sunshine and rain,  
Even sorrow and pain,  
Jesus still is my comfort and guide.  
And His love comforts me,  
And His grace has set me free,  
And some day I shall stand by His side.*

*I am blessed, I am blessed,  
Every day that I live, I am blessed.  
When I wake up in the morning  
Till I lay my head to rest,  
I am blessed, I am blessed.*

The second verse says—  
*I have shoes for my feet,  
I have plenty to eat,  
And a home in heaven by and by.  
Brothers and sisters on this earth;  
They are mine by my new birth,  
And we’ll share in that home beyond the sky.*

I suppose every day we hear very common phrases, such as: “I am blessed, God has blessed me abundantly, God has blessed me with good health.” I hear those phrases from all walks of life. Very sick people say, “I am blessed.” It depends on our attitude toward God. Very materially poor people say, “I am blessed.” Sometimes it appears as if the poorest are the most happy and contented.

In essence, the text (Psalm 24) is saying, “Christians should be happy and contented.” I would change that to say, Christians *must* be happy and contented.

The Bible gives a very comprehensive view on the word *blessed*. It says that those who choose to conquer sin are blessed. The very first verse of the first Psalm says, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” What a psalm! Verses 2 and 3: “But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

Psalm 32:2 says, “Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.” What happiness and peace and contentment that forgiveness brings to the soul of man!

Psalm 128:4 says, “Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.” Those that fear the Lord are also blessed.” The phrase *fear the Lord* means to “respect, honor, and reverence God,” not to be afraid of Him. God is our friend that sticketh closer than a brother and one in whom we can always hope and trust.

The Bible also tells us that they that endure temptation are blessed. The apostle James said in chapter 1, verse 12, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”

I suppose the most familiar about being blessed is taken from the fifth chapter of Matthew, the words of Jesus, and what we call “The Beatitudes”—

“And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” Jesus was a teacher and a preacher of the gospel. He taught by parables. He made it easy for people to understand. He taught it like it really is. So He said *the meek and the humble are blessed*.

*Those that reach out for all that God has to offer are also blessed:* “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”

*Those that show mercy are blessed:* “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”

*The peacemakers are blessed:* “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.” The world could do with some more peacemakers. I preach continually in my ministry that Christians are peacemakers. They have to be peacemakers. If Christians are not peacemakers, what will happen to all of us? Christians need to trust God in their problems with what they go through in life and take it calmly and reflect the image of God to the world around them.

The Bible says that we should live in peace. “Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them” (Psalm 119:165). Also, “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Romans 12:18). Jesus was a peacemaker.

*Those that take persecution for Christ’s sake would be blessed:* “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5 goes on to say, “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.” Again, these are the words of Jesus: “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” He went on to say, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it



is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

A life of victory brings a sense of accomplishment to us. We should always feel sheltered in the arms of God. The Bible tells us in Psalm 91, a beautiful psalm, and a very comforting psalm, “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.” Do you feel relaxed and at rest in the Lord today? Do you feel favored that God is with you? Think about it for a few minutes. He is so mighty that He holds the world in the palm of His hand, yet so small He thinks of that little individual. Among the billions of people in this world, we can gain audience with God. We can talk and commune with God. We can ask God, thank Him, and petition the throne of God. What blessings! This should make us feel special and honored to have the privilege to be a part of God’s family.

Do you feel blessed? What does it mean to be blessed? Thank God for the wonderful power of God that brings happiness, pleasure, and contentment. Reflect the image of God in your walk with Him as a Christian. He will see you through. †

## BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

### PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING

#### BUILDING A CHRISTIAN HOME

**Scriptures:** Titus 2:5; Joshua 24:15, 16; I Timothy 5:14; Psalm 127:3-5; 144:11, 12.

Titus 2:5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Joshua 24:15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods.

I Timothy 5:14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

Psalm 127:3 Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

Psalm 144:11 Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood:

12 That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.

**Memory Verse:** And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.—Joshua 24:15.

**Aim:** To show God’s plan and purpose for the home.

### INTRODUCTION

It takes much more than a house to build a home. To build a home as it should be built takes much time and the close cooperation of all who are concerned. Even though we gather together all that goes to make a home and fail to let Christ take His place in the home, we do not have a proper home. The world might call it a home when Christ is absent, but the results of such a home are, in the end, entirely vain. So the first thing in building a home is to make sure that Christ is in the hearts of all concerned. Then we are in a position to build a home that will be a praise to God in the earth and a blessing to the nation of which it is a part. It is the work of Christianity to see to it that its homes are built over the divine pattern. The reward of building a Christian home is great indeed. To live in a Christian home is a blessing. Then to be successful in pointing the children to Christ is to accumulate a reward that cannot be estimated. Then a Christian home is certain to leave behind an influence that will live on into the next generation and possibly into many others.

### MEDITATIONS

**CONDUCT OF THE WIFE—Titus 2:5—Keepers at home—**The words of instruction as contained in this verse are very essential to the operation of a home that is a blessing to the nation. To be discreet means to be wise in making decisions and in the guiding of the affairs of the home. *Chaste* means “pure in moral conduct.” To be a keeper at home is to employ oneself with the duties of the home, and leave the matter of earning the living to the husband. Good is the absence of all evil. The husband is the head of the wife; therefore, obedience to his leadership in the family is necessary. Inasmuch as this is the command of God, to break it in any point is to cause the Word of God to be blasphemed. Before marrying, every woman should make sure that she is getting a man whom she can respect and who has the proper qualifications to be the head of the wife.

**CHOOSING A RIGHT—Joshua 24:15—We will serve the Lord—**It has been said that decision is half the battle. Certainly, it is a great part of it. Joshua made the decision that he did because he knew the Lord and concluded that it was the only right way to live. Not only was he going to serve God himself, but also he was going to see to it that the house over which he had been made the head should serve God. Such is the attitude that every head of the house should take, for he must answer to God for the responsibility that he has taken upon himself when he instituted a new home. **Verse 16—Forsake the Lord—**There is a constant pressure being brought upon people by Satan in trying to get them to leave the worship of the true God and to serve him by one means or another. Therefore, it is

always necessary that there be a strong leader, as was Joshua, in keeping the people on the right track. When the leader fails, it is not very long until the people follow in the same failure. The pure gospel cannot be lived a week at a time, but must be lived each passing day.

**HOME INCOMPLETE WITHOUT CHILDREN**  
—**I Timothy 5:14—Bear children**—The modern woman and man, having been taught to seek pleasure in modern amusement, have found that children hinder them, both in the element of time and in the financial outlay. Therefore, to accommodate them, modern society has made it acceptable for a woman to abort her unborn child when she so desires. But the command of God is that the younger women marry and bear children.

**THE HERITAGE OF GOD—Psalm 127:3—Children are an heritage of the Lord**—There will be no babies in hell, for they who die in infancy shall be found in heaven. We are told, too, that unless we become as little children, we will not make it through. Children add an atmosphere to the home that nothing else can. Any heritage from God is good, and God has entrusted us with the responsibility of training the heritage that He has placed in our hands. Parents should seek God daily for the strength and wisdom to teach the children aright. They must be taught not to set their affection on things of this earth, but on things above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God.

**THE CURSE OF EVIL CHILDREN—Psalm 144:11—Strange children**—We are told by the Word of God that a child left to himself will bring his mother to shame. A child left to himself is certain to grow up under the influence of Satan and will be found giving expression to the base desires of the flesh. God has designed that His kingdom advance by the agency of teaching. Therefore, if we fail to teach a child the truth in regard to life and God, his life is going to be filled with evil by the wicked forces of Satan. The strange children spoken of here by David were those from the surrounding kingdoms who had been nurtured in the false religions of his day, chiefly paganism. Their morals were completely degenerated, and their knowledge of the true and living God, the source of all good, was very small indeed, and possibly nothing. We are approaching almost that same place in our great nation today. Due to the fact that the average religion is teaching only a theoretical doctrine, few people have an experimental salvation that reaches the heart. The commission that was given unto us as Christians that we should go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature needs to be heeded now more than ever. Time is short, and what we do we must do quickly.

**POLISHED DAUGHTERS—Psalm 144:12—Be as corner stones**—There is only one thing that can give the polish to our sons and daughters that they should have, and that is the pure truth of the Word of God. We cannot expect the morals of our children to be what they should be if we are going to permit them to frequent the moving picture houses, spend hours in front of the television, and keep late hours in questionable places of amusement. These things are of the world

and for the world, and they who do such things are building a character that is on a faulty foundation. Only one thing will stand the shock of the great judgment that is so soon to come upon us, and that is the soul's being nurtured in the Word of God. Let us seek to train our children in the things of God so that they may shine forth in the kingdom of our God as polished stones.

## CONCLUSION

God looks down on a well-ordered home with pleasure. Satan revels in a home that is built upon sinking sand. It is sad to have to admit it, but most of our homes are built upon the sinking sand. Therefore, Satan is gleeful. Fathers and mothers have been heard to say, "I don't want my children to know the hardship that I have known," and they provided for them a life of comparative ease. A life of hardship builds character if we let it, and a life of ease ruins character. Children in the home must be taught not only to work but also to value work and consider it honorable. God has not changed His mind in regard to the fact that man shall gain his living by the sweat of his face. A child is very quick to pick up the trend of existing conditions; and if the parent is seeking an easy time, such will be the disposition of the child. A well-ordered home is one that provides something for each child to do and sees that the chore is done on time and in a workmanship-like manner. A well-ordered home is one that is not a stranger to the family altar and prayer; the Bible occupies the important place that it deserves, and the name of Christ in reverence is frequently heard.

I would like to conclude the comments on this lesson with the words of the late J. Grant Anderson:

"Children should be taught that life is not merely moving and breathing; for all thoughtful people know and see that life is a battle—a conflict between good and evil; good influences drawing us upward and onward, bad influences drawing us down to the brutish, mean, and vulgar. It is in the daily home life that parents can teach the child to love the good and true and beautiful, and thus weave into its life thoughts and feelings, grand, rich, and noble, which will make all afterlife brighter and better. In those households where a form of worship is prevalent we find it is an agency that softly enfolds the homestead with its hallowed, smoothing power. It is in such homes that the mind of the child is expanded, the heart softened, hopes elevated, and pursuits ennobled. Earnest, tender, and reverential worship is one of the great factors that make for the foundation of the moral and religious training of the child. There can be no more important theme in this busy day, this perilous age, to claim the attention of thinking parents than those of home harmonies, the responsibility of keeping alive the home feeling in the hearts of children, and the teaching them of the fundamental laws of love, life, and duty they owe to each other.

"Some parents seem to have forgotten that silence is a dangerous thing when it consists of neglect in warning their children against the wrong. It has been said that a little learning is a dangerous thing, which may be true in part. We are inclined to believe that it is more dangerous to be left in ignorance."

## FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Name the things that it takes to make a true home.
  2. What is the place of Christ in the home?
  3. What is the place of the man in the home?
  4. What is the place of the woman in the home?
  5. What are the responsibilities of the children in the home?
  6. What do you think of Joshua's choice? Did he assume more authority than was his?
  7. What will happen to a child who is left to himself?
  8. What did the early disciples sacrifice? †
- 

## THE POETRY PAGE

### HIS LOVE

**Bess A. Fountain**

His love is like an ocean  
Or a calm and peaceful sea,  
His love dates from creation,  
It envelopes you and me.

We can never overtake it,  
We can never use it up,  
It is boundless, it is endless,  
And it overflows our cup.

### GOD'S BEEHIVE

**F. W. Davis**

"Be ye separate," saith the Master,  
From all worldliness and sin;  
"Be thou patient" in each trial;  
He will give thee grace to win.  
"Be ye doers" of the Bible;  
God's eternal truth proclaim.  
"Be not slothful" in His service,  
But "be zealous" for His name.

"Be ye holy," God hath said it,  
And there is no other way  
To a life of joy and victory  
With His presence every day.  
"Be not weary in well doing,"  
Soon will end the day of strife;  
"Be thou faithful" till He calls you,  
He will give a crown of life!

## FRIENDS

**M. A. Monday**

Aren't friends a wonderful thing, indeed?  
I mean the kind that all folk need:  
The friends who are always true when tried,  
The ones in whom you can confide;  
Who never waver but dearer grow—  
Such friends are good indeed to know.

Friends who come without a call  
When you are up against a wall—  
The kind who stay when others run,  
The ones who stick when others shun,  
Who never fail to do their part—  
Let you and I be friends like that.

## SAFE WITH JESUS

**M. J. Hughes**

Safe with Jesus! Oh, what comfort  
In the haven of His breast!  
None of earthly trials can vex me,  
All is calm and peaceful rest.

Let my tongue be ready, willing,  
Singing, telling of His grace.  
Let my feet be swift and tireless,  
Used for Him in all life's race.

Let my hands shew forth His goodness,  
Thus the victory can be won.  
Let my eyes be fixed on Jesus—  
This one aim, till life is done.

## CHRIST MY LORD!

**Edward M. Brandt**

CHRIST my Savior, CHRIST my Lord,  
CHRIST my joy and great reward!  
CHRIST my glory, CHRIST my King,  
CHRIST my all, my everything!  
CHRIST my Jesus, CHRIST my sight,  
CHRIST my Star and CHRIST my Light!  
CHRIST my song and CHRIST my praise,  
CHRIST my life and CHRIST my days!  
CHRIST my hope and CHRIST my trust,  
CHRIST my need and CHRIST my "must"!  
CHRIST my Shepherd, CHRIST my way,  
CHRIST my Leader every day! †

## CHRIST MY EVERYTHING!



# LET IT FINISH

## 2021 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. David Goble



AS WE READ the Word of God this morning, I believe the text that I'm going to use is fitting for the theme of the convention. We won't take a long time to rehearse the familiar passage on Jacob. You recall that Jacob had come from his father-in-law Laban. Jacob had labored there for seven years for his first wife whom he thought was going to be Rachel but was Leah. Then he labored another seven years for Rachel. At the conclusion of those fourteen years, Jacob left his father-in-law and he began traveling back to Canaan. He's coming from the east and going west. On the map, he's going through a valley, which is a major tributary that feeds the Jordan River.

Jacob has to get back to his father Isaac and he has to get back to his family. This is sort of where we begin this story. It's the story that is ending from that period. But those of you who are Bible scholars know that *Jacob* means what? "Supplanter." *Supplanter* means "to take the place of; something one hasn't the right to." That was Jacob. That's what his name meant; and yet, the Lord had determined that the blessing would flow through Jacob and not Esau. So even though Jacob started out as a supplanter, he was going to end up as something else. It's the "something else" that we want to get to this morning, but remember where he came from. Sometimes we don't always like to remember where we came from, but it helps to remind us of how far the Lord has brought us.

Let's pick up the story together. Genesis 32:1-7, "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim [which in the Hebrew means *to camp*. This will be important to remember as we go along.]. And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight. And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands." We'll pause right there. We're going to pick this story up later.

There are many titles that could be given to this message. This is the theme which is repeated time and time again in the Bible. I'm thinking in particular of Isaac and Abraham. I'm thinking now of Jacob and Esau, and ultimately, we'll find this theme concluded in Christ.

First of all, we need a Savior. Jesus is many things to us—Comforter, Healer, Counselor, and Friend. Isaiah said it well. He's all these things, but ultimately, Saints, the church needs to remember that Jesus is our Savior. We'll never outlive the need for a Savior in this life. We're never going to be too spiritual, too educated, too churchy that we lose the need to have a Savior. That's the first thing about this. We're reminded that we need a Savior.

The second in these biblical narratives that repeat themselves is this: people come to places in life with all kinds of stuff in their buckets. That's what I call it. Whether we are a sinner or a saint this morning (and God wants sinners to be saints), there are all kinds of stuff in our buckets. We like to think as saints that our buckets have been emptied. Well, they've been emptied of sin. Thank the Lord! That's the first thing God does for us. But even as saints, we go through life with stuff in our buckets. Stuff that we've grown up with, stuff from our family system, stuff from our own culture and heritage. We have stuff. It's not all bad, but it's there. We come to moments in life with our buckets and God desires to fill our buckets.

I love the thought in Psalm 23: "My cup runneth over." God desires to fill us and there's too much for us. We can't hold it. That's the way I feel this morning. There's too much for us. We have a Cuban brother at home and sometimes he can't handle it. In the service, he just pops up and starts praising God and saying, "Saints, I can't handle it anymore." He also said, "While at home praying, the love of God just overflows." That's the way it's meant to be, isn't it? We're meant to be cups overflowing with joy and overflowing with blessings, right? So that when we as the church in the world meet others, they can say, "There's something different about you. Why?" It's because I have something to spare. It's flowing out just the way it's meant to be. It's the river that God has put in our hearts. What was once a desert, God has made a paradise, an oasis. But what happens, our buckets get filled up with stuff, and that which God desires to fill is already taken up with stuff.

Now in the beginning and before we know it, sin is taken up instead of God. Holiness and sin don't mix together. Just like oil and water, they don't mix. So the first thing God needs to do for us is to empty the sin out of our buckets. Then He can begin to fill it with holy things. Even after we've been saved for quite a long time, we find that there's stuff in that bucket that's in the way. It's crowding out that which God desires to fill. That's my thought this morning. The title we have is "Let It Finish." And I'll tell you what I mean by that by the time we're done.



We come to God with stuff in our buckets and He needs to take it out in order to put in what He desires to put in. And so found Jacob. He found himself at this river, Jabbok, at a ford, coming in the evening with stuff in his bucket. The reason was, he was a thief and a supplanter. God had chosen him for His purpose. I've come to believe as time goes on, I don't doubt God's plan, and I don't judge things as I used to, because I believe we serve a merciful God. We look on people many times with a certain judgment, but God sees things that we can't see. We see a supplanter. God saw Israel, because by the time God was done emptying Jacob's bucket, he was going to be Israel. We see Jacob, God saw Israel. God help us.

Our vision of what the church can be needs to enlarge. We don't have to fear the "Jacobs" of the world and what they represent. I tell people, I don't fear the world. I don't love it, but I don't fear it because God has called us to be an evangelist to the world. God help us to love the sinner. How can I love the sinner if I fear the sinner? How can I love Jacob if I fear Jacob?

But God finds Jacob at this place and Jacob is full of fear. There is stuff in his bucket that needs to get out and God has chosen him. Jacob had stolen his brother's birthright and his blessing, and he knew the next morning that his brother was on the other side of the river. Esau was on the other side of the river and four hundred men with him. Remember, Jacob had stolen his brother's birthright and his blessing. So Jacob is thinking, "This is the end of my days. I'm in big trouble because my brother is waiting for me and tomorrow he will slay me."

I would like us to begin to find ourselves in this story. Sometimes we come to the river with our stuff in our buckets, and on the other side is the unknown or the doubt and the fear. We come to that river and might even say, "And I love God, and I've come to the river." There are times in life when we need to come to this river more than once. I realize it's a metaphor in the beginning for salvation. I get that. But I also believe that saints, too, need to come to this river, because we have things in our buckets that God needs to empty so that He can fill us with what He desires to give us. This business happens at the river. That's the essence of the message right there. There are a few more things I'll say, but that's about it.

Our burdens. Lord, help us to leave our burdens, the stuff in our buckets with you, so that we can empty this stuff and get what we stand in need of. Sometimes I don't even know it myself, but God knows what's in my bucket. "Find it, pull it out, and help empty it, please; I desperately need it."

I was thankful to hear the testimony of the sister yesterday about her loved one who suffers from anxiety. How debilitating that is! I can relate to that testimony. I felt that. Our youngest son is disabled and suffers from anxiety. This came upon him when he was eighteen years old. Up until that time, he was an A student. Today he can't work, but we know God. I know the God at the river. These things occupy our buckets, don't they? There was a moment several years ago when I was going to a meeting and the heaviness of this burden for the situation of our son was heavy on us. This is

after several hospitalizations. This was all new to us and we were learning about what this all involved. As I was driving down the road, I looked up, and I was weeping so hard I thought that I need to pull over. I couldn't see a thing. As I was traveling down the road, I said, "God, help." All we could do was to cry out to God, because there was no other help. Sometimes there's just no other help. I cried out, "God, help!" Agony. I can imagine Abraham with Isaac, "God, help me!" Jacob, at the river, "God, help me!" And Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, "God, help me!"

We have no other Savior. We have no other remedy. Saints, this is why we need a Savior, because there are times we have no other remedy. This is the only hope that we have. Why would anybody trade this for something the world offers? Especially today, as we've gone through this pandemic, and it's so hard in places and deaths, but we can say, "Yes, it's hard, but thank God for a Savior. He's my only hope. I have no other hope." Imagine if I was in the world, but worst than that if I had given up and given back what God had given me in exchange for the vanity of life, how hopeless it would be! But how thankful we are to have a hope in coming out through this period of time that we've had because we have a Savior. It's important for us to remember that we have a Savior who still saves us.

As I cried out, "God, help us," for our son's suffering, I got no answer. No relief came. The tears continued to flow, but it did not cause me to doubt. I didn't trade in my salvation because I didn't get an instant answer. The answers came later. Sometimes suffering produces something in us that makes us better, makes us more authentic, makes us more credible, and makes us better witnesses. It gives us a deeper faith. Sometimes suffering is what we need to take things out of the bucket. You say, "Brother, I want to renew my strength." I'm getting to that, but we have to be at the river first.

There were two camps at the river. Jacob sent half of his family over to one camp and by the time he was left in his camp, he was the only one that night. Now let's go to the wrestling part of the story. You might ask, "Bro. Goble, why did you say that you got no answer about your son?" This is where we're getting to the thought of our story this morning. When we find things that are in our buckets that are very difficult and seemingly we just can't get them out, and they're with us and part of us, stay with it. Don't try to avoid it. Don't wish it weren't there. Don't try to make it go away. Don't try to pretend that you're suffering or you're fearful or doubting. It's all real, and we pretend to avoid it and create what some people call a "coping mechanism"—how I deal with stuff. That's just a covering for what's in this bucket. What God wants to do is to ultimately take stuff out of our buckets that shouldn't be there. But the only way God can accomplish His purpose is if we stay with it. This is the hard part. When we recognize that we're suffering from fear, suffering from anxiety, suffering from worry and loss, the tendency is to run from it. But don't pretend it's not there.

I want to tell you something: in renewing our strength, *waiting* implies that something has to finish. Now it might be in God's time. It might take a while,

but *waiting* means “I’m looking for a finish to this.” In this case, “I’m looking for the renewal of my strength, so whatever it is that I need to wait on, I’m looking for a finish to my waiting.” Saints, for these things to get out of our buckets, they need to be finished.

The first thing that needs to end is sin. But after that, there are some stories in us that need to end. Sometimes good people suffer from stories in their lives and those stories influence behavior. If I’m stressed, I don’t react the way I’d like to react. There is a story somewhere in that bucket that needs to come out. That story needs to end. It needs to finish. By the way, I’m watching this happen. My wife and I counsel together sometimes. There’s a man who comes to us with all sorts of troubles. He’s a good person. He’s a saint of God and he wants to finish some stories. As he’s talking to us and as we’re working together, we’re watching the stories finish and come out. He’ll just be sitting there sobbing. We’re not causing anything or bringing him to any place, we’re just saying, “Stay with it. Stay with your troubles, stay with your pain. Stay with your problem you’re describing. We’ll be there with you and let God heal you.”

I believe this whole story with Jacob is just a metaphor. He finishes something. He comes with the supplanter, but he leaves with something else. The reason is, he finished the supplanter at the river. God helped him to finish the supplanter at the river. Genesis 32:22-26: “And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.”

Now we’d like to think that Jacob was in control of this wrestling match. I’d like to think it was the other way around. God was in control of this wrestling match. It was not Jacob who broke the angel. It was God who broke Jacob. Genesis 32:27, 28, “And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, [Praise God], 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.” God was telling him, “Your name is not supplanter anymore. Your name is power with God. You came with some stuff in your bucket.” God had chosen Jacob and it was through Jacob that He was going to deliver the promise to Israel, but He needed some stuff out of Jacob so that he could be different.

The wrestling match was the fact that Jacob was willing to stay present with Jacob and not leave. That was the wrestling match. Let me tell you something else, Jacob was coming from a dispute that he had with his father-in-law Laban. The two of them, when they parted, they set up a monument between them. It was an altar of stone. Laban said, “What’s on the east side of this altar is mine and what’s on the west side is yours, but if either of us cross over this place, then we have

the right to enforce what is ours.” In other words, “I’m done with you and you’re done with me.” Jacob could not go back. The only direction he could go was Canaan because he’d done his business. He had stolen from his father-in-law and had set up this boundary with his father-in-law. Jacob was done. He could not go back.

We need to get to the place where we’re just not willing to go back anymore, until the only option is to go into Canaan, to go forward. So that’s the only option. It’s going to be hard for us to do business with what’s in there. Jacob found himself in a pickle. He had to do business with God. The greatest business we do with God is when we have left all the other options and the only one that remains is heaven. As a sinner, that’s when I was converted. I said to God, “The world has forsaken me, lied to me, supplanted me, taken from me, and I’ve taken from them and nothing has really worked out. There’s no hope in the world. God, the only thing that I have that is left to you. What do I have to do?” Until we’re ready to be in that condition, we’re not going to be converted. We’ll get religion but not conversion. There’s nothing left but God.

God sees our buckets and we should say, “God, just pour out what’s in there. I can’t pour it out. I’ve tried. God, I need you to pour it out.” The first thing that God does is that He sends a Savior and the Savior pours out what we couldn’t get to. He makes a way for us to walk down that narrow road with Him. But then, later in life we come to things and we get stuck. Things are hard. We get to this place and God needs to pour out some more. He needs to take out some more. But invariably, what we do is that we run from it. We’re afraid of it. We don’t know how, but God says, “Just stay there; just stay with it.” He says, “Can you feel it? Just stay with it. I am a very present help in time of trouble.” Moses said unto God, “Who should I say sent me?” God said, “I Am That I Am” (Exodus 3:14). God is always present. I love this story. It’s one of my favorites.

Is everybody doing good, right now? You have problems, but I’m talking about *right now*. Do you feel good? Some of you are worried and thinking about what’s going to happen next. God is “not what’s going to happen next.” God is *right now*! If we stay present with *right now*, this is when God is. Just like somebody asks, “What will it be like in heaven when 10,000 years go by?” Ten thousand years won’t go by because it’s always going to be *right now*! There will be no time in heaven. There’s no past, no future, it’s *right now*! “I’ll be bored in heaven.” No, you won’t. It’s always *right now*! Boredom is a function of time. There’s no time in heaven. It’s always *right now*! I hear people saying, “Well, then I’m going to do this, then I’m going to do that.” No, you won’t. It’s always *right now*! In this life, God is *right now*! He’s a very present help in time of trouble. I’ll not take away that God is God in the past, in the present, and in the future, but He told Moses, “I Am That I Am.” I’m going to listen to what God says.

So when Jacob comes to the river, he’s wrestling with the *right now*. If we have problems, stay in the *right now*. Bring it to God, *right now*! Stay with it, *right now*! Stay with it until it finishes *right now*. God will do a perfect work—empty what needs to be gone—fill what needs to be there. Jacob’s name was changed. When God



does a perfect work, He changes our name. Does God still change our name? I like to this of it this way: when God saves us, He changes our name from darkness to light. But even as we go through life and we find more things about ourselves, He continues to perfect us and that name gets refined. This is a miracle.

My contribution to this is, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," not that they wait on their strength. The waiting involves finishing. It's not good enough to wait and then leave with the problem that we came with. Strength doesn't get renewed that way. We have to wait until some things finish. Now you say, "Brother, some things don't always finish." I understand that. That's why we need grace. But my desire is to wait until it's finished with God being my helper.

When we get to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, He's in agony. He said, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." He wanted to run. He wanted to go east from the direction that He had come on the Mount of Olives in the Garden below it, but He had to go west. This is where the temple was, and ultimately, His judgment and the cross. Jesus couldn't go back, so He stayed with His fear. Can you see the pattern being repeated? When Abraham was sacrificing Isaac, can you see how he was staying present with the agony he was suffering, and yet he was willing to obey God? In the end, God came through. In the Garden as Jesus is suffering, we find ultimately that He's submissive to the will of God. He totally resigned Himself to the will of God. We say, "Thank God, He didn't run," but you know, God wants us to do the same thing.

When Jesus gets to the cross and He's hanging there, there are soldiers bartering for His garment at the base of the cross, and only one of them said later, "Truly, this is the Son of God." But they had beaten Him, mocked Him, scourged Him, and said, "Let Him save Himself." Try to put yourself there. As He's hanging on the cross and sees this fallacy below Him, this kind of absurdity that the King of kings and the Lord of lords has to endure, the reason He stays on the cross is because it has to finish. Think of what He's present with. He's present with pain, with loss, with suffering, with a doubt perhaps, with human emotions, and He chooses to stay present with it. Why does He choose to be present with it? Love.

Love will draw us and keep us in the presence of God, even despite the pain, the disappointment, the misunderstanding, the persecution, the criticism, and the mockery. Love will cause us to be present with that and not let it turn to bitterness and not let it turn to a "I'll get even" spirit. Love causes us to be present with that. This is the ultimate lesson of the cross: God teaches us to be present with loss, with heartaches, and what is unlike love—because of love. Ultimately, that's the miracle God does for us. With all the problems we have, God chooses to be present with us and lets it finish so that we have a hope.

I'm encouraged today and lately as we've come out of this pandemic. I hope that I can contribute to renewing our strength through joy, even though it's difficult, but I would like to add to that, find yourself at the river sometime. In your suffering, don't run away from it.

Let it finish. The River is God. Bring it to the River. Bring it to the angel. Bring it to that moment. Bring it to the camp where you're the only one and let God break you, so He can empty you. Then He'll fill you with what you stand in need of.

The Lord bless you. Thank you for your help and your attention this morning. †

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## ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PAST —“I FORGET”

**D**EAR READER, have you forgotten the past things—every trial, disappointment, and discouragement? If you have not, let me exhort you today, even now, to do this one thing—to forget everything of the past that will not help you gain the prize of eternal life.

How much have you ever gained from meditating on past failures, disappointments, and discouragements? If you have sinned and God, by forgiving your sins, has put it behind you, what good can you gain by grieving over it? Failures and accusations are unpleasant to meditate upon. Grieving over the sins and the failures of misspent days is a poor way to occupy your present precious moments. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

The starting place of the Christian race is where we lay aside every weight, where God forgives our sins, relieves us of the burdens that Satan has laid upon us, looses our bands and sets us free. Like a man who runs in a race, from the moment we leave the starting point we should trouble ourselves no longer about the things that lie back of us; for the greatest accomplishments and the highest achievements of a life in sin are of little value compared with the grace of God. Of how little value, then, yea, how worthless and what a hindrance, to meditate upon are the failures and the sins of the past! Think of your past failures only as things left behind, as weights laid aside at the starting point.

"And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh [forgetting or making to forget]: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house" (Genesis 41:51). Joseph is a fair type. He had so completely forgotten the trials and the disappointments of his former life through the joy of his present surroundings that he called his firstborn son "Forgetting." He had forgotten not only his toil, but also all his father's house. His father's house is a type of the worldly friends and the kindred ties that hinder us in the Christian race. Jesus says, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more

than me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:37). This does not mean that a man who runs in the Christian race should not love his kindred nor provide for those of his own household, but that he should forget them and forsake them in every connection that would hinder him in the race of life or tie him to the present evil world.

While Job kept his eyes upon his troubles, he feared to forget his complaint or to leave off his heaviness and comfort himself; but when he got his eyes upon God, "Then Job answered the Lord and said, I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." As long as your attention is given to your trials or to your discouragements and despondent feelings, you are not likely to see above them; but if you will forget those things that are past, and will set your eyes upon God, victory is certain. "For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear: Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away: And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday: thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning. And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety. Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee" (Job 11:15-19).

Satan has hindered many dear souls from enjoying the blessings of God and from pressing on in the Christian race by pointing them to sins of the past—sins which God had forgiven. What if the mistakes of your life have been many; what if you have been in the depths of sin; did not Jesus forgive the vilest of sinners? Did He not say to the adulteress who was caught in the very act, the vilest of sins, "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more"? Hath not the Lord said, "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold"? (Psalm 68:13).

"Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates,

and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 54:4-17).

A discouraged person will often help the devil by bringing up things of the past that have been forgiven and trying to repent of them. The accused and despondent soul will often wander down by the dark shores of the sea of forgetfulness, and finding there a bark of discouragement, will launch it and sail out through the fog and mist of past life hunting for something over which to mourn. Often some mistake or sin of the past, which, like an ocean derelict, has long since been forsaken and forgotten is found; and pulling it ashore, the discouraged soul who is anxious to do something, invites friends and brethren to help in asking God to take notice and forgive. But God will not visit such a scene. What He has forgiven He has forgiven forever, and He cannot forgive it a second time, "for," says He, "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 8:12).

If a man should come to God and obtain forgiveness of his sins, live a faithful life for a while, and finally backslide and be lost, none of his former sins would be mentioned to him, nor would he be punished for any of the deeds of his former life, but only for those committed at the time of, and after, his fall. Neither will the Lord forgive only a part of our wrongdoings. When He forgives, He forgives all, and forgives forever.

So the only possible way out is to resist the devil and all accusations; cut the shorelines and consign the past to the waves of forgetfulness; make an eternal abandonment of all past sins and mistakes that God has forgiven; and set your face Zionward. †

—Reprinted from *Rays of Hope* by D. O. Teasley

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# WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO SIN?

2021 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Mick Akers



**I** WANT TO start by saying to you that all parables are not true. I didn't say the parables of Christ are not true. I did say that all parables are not true. Sometimes people use parables to make a point.

There's a parable in the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel. You can find it in your Bible. It's in verse 2: "What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?" It made me think of a question which I want to ask you: What is your response to sin? I'll get to the meaning of the parable in a few moments, but I think the question here tonight is relevant to all of us, isn't it? What is your response to sin?

Sin is so prevalent in the lives of so many people in the world that it affects all of us. Even as Christians, sin affects us; not our sins, because God has called us to the way of holiness and we have made a response to sin. We have, by the grace of God, chosen to abstain from it. But still sin has an affect on our lives. You might ask, "Well, how does it?" It's an influence on us, and people that are living in sin do sinful actions that affect us. It's really that simple. I know a lot of times when we think about sin, we think about our own personal sins we've committed before we were saved. But again, what I'm trying to bring to our attention is that there is impact and there are consequences of sin on us and other sinners, because when people commit sin, they think they're only affecting themselves. The reality is, sin has far-reaching consequences and impacts that they really don't understand. When people are sinning and doing things to themselves and to other people, their vision is so darkened that they just can't see in front of them. There is no good perception of the thought of tomorrow or what the consequences would be.

I want to tell you the story of what happened in the kingdom of Judah. We'll start with Manasseh. Manasseh was a king and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. He caused Judah and Jerusalem to sin. He went so far as to build altars for all the host of heaven in both courts of the temple. Can you imagine that? The place where God had come down and sanctified the temple at its initiation and how special the temple was to God? Manasseh was creating abominations in the temple and caused Judah and Jerusalem to err. He built up places which they might have called the high grounds and the groves. I understand that's where they would also do sacrifices. They would make sacrifices to other gods outside of the temple compound. The Bible goes on to say that the streets of Jerusalem ran with the blood of the innocent because Manasseh's sin was so great.

If you'll read II Kings, you may get under the impression that it was just Manasseh who was doing those

things, but it wasn't just him. It was his influence and his leadership that caused Judah to go astray and follow after sin. The impact of Manasseh's sin and the sinful condition of his heart had a great impact. I really don't think he even fully understood how great that impact was, because it really shaped God's judgment of Judah. It shaped it for a period of time. That's important to our story tonight.

But something happened to Manasseh. The Babylonians came and they humbled him. Manasseh needed to be humbled. They captured Manasseh with hooks and led him out of Jerusalem in fetters of brass and took him to Babylon. While he was in prison there, he found repentance. He turned and offered a prayer of humility and God honored it. Because God honored it, Manasseh was allowed to return to Jerusalem and live out the rest of his life there. That's a wonderful thing for him. But the point of our message tonight is the response to sin, and I would say that the consequences of Manasseh's sinful actions continued on after his conversion. Honestly, after his death, too. It was out of his control. It was beyond his control what happened. Manasseh could not take back those things.

After Manasseh's death, his son Amon reigned. Amon did that which was wicked in the eyes of the Lord. After Manasseh was converted, he cleaned up the temple, but he didn't tear down the high places. He allowed the people to continue to make sacrifices there. Because of that, it didn't seem like it was that difficult for Judah to turn with Amon in going right back to serving false gods since the places were already there. They didn't totally destroy them. They left the foundations, so to speak, of false ideas and false things. Here, the next generation was impacted by the sin of the father.

Then, there is a bright spot—a reformation—as you might say. There's a bright spot in Josiah. He was eight years old when he began to reign. I was reading in Kings and Chronicles and I was trying to get an idea of the time, because Amon was twenty-two years of age when he took the throne and was killed by his servants. Josiah was then put on the throne. I'm not clear on the time, but I was thinking about this. You know, Manasseh heavily influenced Amon. I know it was Amon's choice, but he chose to do that which was wicked because it was set before him. Even though his father was humbled and repented, Amon didn't follow his example. He continued to do that which was wicked, but I'd like to think in my mind that Josiah spent some time with his converted grandfather. Josiah cleaned up the temple and rebuilt that which needed to be repaired. He tore down the groves. He ran off and destroyed those who were dealing with familiar spirits and witchcraft. He cleaned it up so much that the Bible gives him quite the compli-

ment. It says, "And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might" (II Kings 23:25). Josiah gave all to the service of God.

We've been talking about the kings and about a family, but when you start talking about the people of the kingdom, influences are there. Again, this wickedness that we spoke of concerning Manasseh, was all along in the hearts of different individuals. So after Josiah's reign, there were Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. They all did that which was wicked in the sight of the Lord, except Josiah.

God rendered judgment on Judah. He caused Babylon to come and carry away and then to destroy. You ask, "What does that have to do with our parable in the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel?" Well, that parable had been rehearsed by the Hebrews in captivity. That was their response to their condition. That was their response to the situation that they were in, being in captivity in Babylon. It was, "Wait a minute. Our fathers did all of those sins. We didn't worship the gods of Manasseh. We didn't deal with familiar spirits. We didn't do all of those things, but yet we're dealing with the consequences of them." That's what the parable means. It says that the fathers ate the sour grapes, but the children are gritting their teeth. That was the message that they were sending to God. That's what their response was and God heard that.

In Ezekiel 18, God responded to that message, saying, "What mean ye? What are you talking about that they ate the sour grapes, and you are gritting your teeth and bearing the punishment?" He gave them a serious answer to their response; not only to their fathers' sins, but to their sins. It was their sins, even in that moment, that were hindering and affecting their lives. Yes, there are consequences all the way down. Their own sins made this saying into a sort of parable that they passed on through tradition to each generation. God wanted to get their attention.

I think I mentioned at the beginning of the message that sin has consequences that we cannot perceive. I doubt Manasseh and these other kings saw, even though it was prophesied to them, that Nebuchadnezzar would come and surround the city, carry away the captives, kill those that remained, and tear down the walls of the temple. There are people dealing with sin in the same way as the Hebrew nations dealt with it in Babylon. They're not blaming sin for the bad impact and the bad consequences in their lives, but they're blaming someone else.

Earlier I said, how we respond to sin pertains to all of us, because how we react to persecution and react to other things does matter, doesn't it? We may have reacted well yesterday, but we still need to be on guard each day. Every day we have to give a response to sin. Whether that's responding through holiness or backsliding, that still has to be determined, so we have to fight every day. The Bible says, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." I think it is important for us as Christians to recognize that.

I also believe that there are people who have the wrong ideas about the misfortunes and the difficulties in their lives that sin has caused. Because they have

the wrong ideas, they begin to doubt and have questions. They wonder, "Where is God? Why are all these bad things happening in the world? If there was a God, would He let those things happen? If God loves me, would He let those bad things happen in my life?" Yes, those are very common questions. It angers me, truthfully, not at the individual, but I get angry at the devil, because he has truly blinded the eyes of the unsaved.

You know, God gets blamed for everything and the devil gets off scot-free, doesn't he? There is a devil in the world and that devil is reeking havoc on families, on individuals, and he has persuaded people to say, "It's not really my sin that's the problem; it's the things that have happened to me. It's the things Satan's done to me." In effect, they're really saying, "Someone else has eaten the sour grapes, but I have the gritted teeth."

Again, in Ezekiel 18, God gave them an answer. In the fourth verse, He said, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: ..." You might think if that was the whole verse, that that's sort of a smart aleck answer, isn't it? God says, "Your soul is mine. I'll do with it whatever I want to." Well, really, He is God. He created man and breathed into him the breath of life. He gave man the very best of Himself, didn't He? He has put a spirit in us that we know how we can feel loved and have joy and peace. Where does all of those come from? They come from God. So He has the right by creation to do whatever He wants.

But the fourth verse in Ezekiel 18 doesn't stop there. God went on to say that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." So that really is the fundamental thing to answering our question about what our response is and what our response to the sinner or the backslider is. What is your response to sin, because God said "the soul that sinneth, it shall die"? If you'll stop and consider that, there are some things you should realize. It doesn't matter what has happened. I know that sounds very callous, but it's not. I want you to hear what I am saying. It doesn't matter who deceived you, it doesn't matter who lied to you, and it doesn't matter who cheated on you. Those things don't matter. It doesn't matter if people shun you. We've had some of those things happen to us as Christians.

Brother Goble said something in his message this morning and I have it written in my notes. He said, "Hard times will do one or two things for you. They'll either make you deeper in the things of God or you will be torn away from God. You'll give up; you'll backslide." Christians do have a response to sin. When we face these difficult times, we continue to hold on to God to retain our salvation. It's only through His grace, even in the most difficult moments, that we continue with Him. He picks us up and allows us to continue with Him. I want to say to you that as Christians, we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us. It's through His strength that we can continue pushing on daily. It's His strength that allows us to.

The backslider might say, "I'm backslidden because things didn't work out the way that I thought they would work out. Somebody hurt me. Somebody betrayed me. Somebody spoke to me poorly. I shouldn't have been treated that way." It's true you should not have been



treated that way, but that's the consequences of sin in the world. People get treated poorly, but what is your response? Are you going to focus on the bitterness towards those individuals or bitterness towards life or the perceived bitterness towards God? Are you going to deal with that which is necessary? That which is necessary is the sin that is in your heart. That bitterness and anger is keeping you from dealing with your sinful heart. That's a delusion from the devil. He tries to make you think that you are justified where you are right now. Dear Ones, you're not. It's your sin that has put you in spiritual death. It's your response to people and things in your life that has caused you to either backslide or to continue in sin. It's your response, your actions.

I'm not going to be held accountable for Bro. Terry's sins when he was unsaved. I'm not going to be held accountable for my son's sins and my daughters' sins. I'm not going to be held accountable for my father's and my mother's sins. I won't be held accountable for yours, Dear Friends, but I'm accountable for how I react to the situations you may have put me in. There's no excuse. You might ask, "How is it that there's no excuse?"

After God said "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," He went on to say in Ezekiel 18, "But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman, And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man, Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God."

Ezekiel was talking about a wicked man between what I just read and what I'm about to read: "Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like ..." and he went on to repeat that same list again, but concludes in the seventeenth verse that a person "That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live."

Dear Ones, judgment is coming. When you're unsaved or when you're a backslider, there are things that you do. You might wonder how I know, but the fact of the matter is, I was both of those at one point, and one of the things that I would do was to endeavor to think about anything else but pending judgment. As a matter of fact, I would come to services to satisfy my wife or my family, and I would think about anything that I could to fill my mind so that I wouldn't hear, not only what the minister was saying, but what the Spirit was saying to my heart. So by pretending that judgment wasn't coming, by pretending that I could handle what I'm in, I just put off salvation. I came into the church building and went out. I had done my part, supposedly.

I don't want you to do that tonight. There's no positive reward for you in remaining in sin. Things are not going to get better staying there. That's the truth of the matter. Your decisions tonight dictate your actions for tomorrow.

James tells us in chapter 5, verse 20, "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Well, think about that. What you decide tonight is going to affect how you're going to conduct yourself tomorrow. You're either going to continue on in your sins or you're going to deal with the issues at hand between you and God and be converted. By God's grace, you will have a positive impact tomorrow. You're not going to have to worry about the consequences of tomorrow's actions, as far as if you were unsaved in that time frame. Yes, I know we still have a response to sin.

I want you to consider the direction that you're going. It doesn't matter if you're young or old, you're still going to have an influence. Everyone here has an influence. If you're a young person, you have an influence. Are you an older brother or sister? You still have an influence. Are you a mother or a father? You have an influence. Are you a grandfather or a grandmother? You have an influence. You have it in the home, at school, at work. Wherever you go, you influence people. Honestly, as the backslider continues, the testimony that is given is there's really nothing in salvation. Influence is something you can't control. It is what it is, so be converted.

You may have never been saved or you may have turned your back on God, but the plea and the burden of God's heart is to have and to show mercy. God wants to show mercy. He wants to change your situation. He wants to release you from the captivity that you're in right now. He wants to free you from the situations that you are in. He can't work in your life for your betterment until you make that first step, which is giving your heart to Him. God can make changes. Yes, I'm telling you, God makes changes in people's lives. He institutes godly principles. Living for God makes a difference in your life. I'm not saying that your problems will be resolved when you get up from the altar. That's a starting point. Now you're in a place where God can work with you and help you. You're in a place where you can reach out to God to get help and strength. That's what you need to do to work out the problems in your life. That's what you need so you can pass on that godly influence to your children.

It seems that the longer people remain in sin, the longer their influence remains behind. Some of those old kings in our text didn't think of the destruction of all the people that was going to happen and the destruction of their beloved temple and city. I think the unsaved are not really thinking of the consequences in their lives. If you're young, it's your children. If you're a mother or a father, it's your children and grandchildren. If you're saved, you can have a godly influence on your children and grandchildren. Your response tonight affects more than you realize. The consequences of your actions. I'm not sure that even myself or you fully comprehend. No, we can't comprehend it.

Many people dabble in sin and just want to have a taste of it and enjoy the pleasures of sin for a little bit, but the next thing you know, they're in jail. The next thing you know, they killed somebody. The drunk driver never thinks that he's going to kill somebody when he sits behind the wheel. The drug addict just wants to escape the pressures of the world that he's under and gets high for a little bit so he can get away from the misery of his own life. He never thinks that it would lead him to steal. Then when he starts stealing to support his habit, he never thinks it would lead him to carry a gun to rob or to kill somebody. He doesn't think about that. Those are extreme cases, but influence is influence.

In closing, I'm asking, What will be your response? What is the response to the sin that is in your heart? What are you going to do with it? There are really only two choices: you can finish the service and allow the altar call to pass and walk out of those doors and continue on in sin, or you can come now and give your heart to God and embrace all the joys and benefits of salvation. There isn't a problem that God can't solve. There's not a grudge that God can't break. There's not a heart that He can't mend. That's what He came to do. He came to heal and to save those that are lost in sin. What will be your response? What are your prospects? Only you can answer those questions. †

## WINNING A CROWN

By the late C. W. Naylor



### Part XXXVI

#### The Value of Trials

**P**ETER tells us that the trial of our faith is “much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire” (I Peter 1:7). The question that now confronts us is whether we place such a value as that upon our trials. What will men undergo to get gold? They will scale lofty mountains and wade through deep snows. They will face piercing winds and all sorts of perils, if they may but have the hope of getting gold. Our trials are still more precious than gold, and it seems that we ought to be willing to bear them when we view them from that standpoint. However, there are a great many Christians who shrink from trials. Why do they? If they believe that trials are so valuable, why do they shrink? Ah, that is the trouble: they do not believe what Peter said. They can see no gold in their trials. They see no value in them whatever. They are something to be gotten away from.

The trouble is that we often look at the wrong thing. If a man goes after gold and looks at the hardships instead of the gold, he will not get any gold. But the gold-hunter does not look at the things that lie between him and the precious metal. He looks at the gold. He keeps his mind and his heart upon that. He presses forward through everything to gain that gold. There is gold for you and me in every trial. The trial lies between us and the gold. If we look at the trial, we may forget the gold, and that is just what is the trouble with so

many. They can see nothing but the trials. Beyond these lies the gold, yea, something far more precious than gold. Get your eyes off the trial. Look beyond it to the gold. Keep your mind and your heart set upon the gold, and you will find that you can face the trial a great deal easier than if you saw nothing beyond it. The gold of Christian character comes only through stress and storm. Fair-weather Christians never amount to much for God or souls, nor do they develop rugged characters. They are always contented with little fruit.

### Results of Trials

God always works out something worth while from our trials if we are true in them. He does not try us merely to be trying us. He has a definite purpose to accomplish. Of Israel He said, “Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end” (Deuteronomy 8:16). The humbling and the proving were only that He might do them good at the latter end. So it is with us: God humbles us and tries us just to do us good later. God's purpose is also made very plain in the parable of the Figs in the twenty-fourth chapter of Jeremiah: “Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans, for their good. For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart” (verses 5-7). God did not permit them to be carried into captivity simply as a punishment. It was that, to be sure; but His purpose was greater and more kindly than that. It was that He might do them good—that they should turn to Him with their whole heart, and that He should bring them back to their own land and make them a holier and more trusting people than before.

Job knew the good that was going to come out of his trial, and he said, “He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold” (Job 23:10). The Psalmist learned this same lesson. He says: “O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard: Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved. For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place” (Psalm 66:8-12). This is the way the Bible speaks throughout when it speaks of trials well borne. We may get into a net, and affliction may be laid upon us; men may ride over our heads; we may go through fire and through water; but the outcome of it will be that we shall come out into a wealthy place. And then, like the Psalmist, we can say, “Oh, bless our God!” Take your Bible and read also James 1:12; I Peter 1:7; and 4:12, 13.

There is another text that we shall do well to study over and over: “But we glory in tribulations also: know-



ing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts” (Romans 5:3-5).

### How to Count

Spiritual arithmetic is an important branch of study for the Christian. He who is not able to count properly in the spiritual life may come to some very wrong conclusions. It is important, therefore, that he give his attention to learning how to count accurately. If we do not learn to do this, we may fail in some critical moment, or at least we may view things from our own standpoint and have wrong ideas concerning them. James gives us a problem in this spiritual arithmetic and tells us how to solve it. He says, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations” (James 1:2). Many people have tried to solve this problem in their lives and have found that it did not work out according to the rule here enunciated. When they fell into divers temptations, they could not figure it out any way so as to make it come out joyful. The answer was something else always.

I have seen people in such difficulties and have heard some say to them, “Oh, count it all joy, brother; count it all joy.” They tried to do so, but for some reason they could find no joy at all. It felt more like sorrow and grief and disappointment and things of that nature. I have heard others in like situations say resignedly, “Oh, I am counting it all joy,” and their countenances at the same time were witnesses against them, for these showed that their owners had no joy in it at all.

When James said, “Count it all joy,” he did not mean that we should simply pretend that it was joy, but that it should really be joy. If we get the correct answer, it will be joy. There is a way in which we can work out these problems so that they will all come out joy. The reason that James could get joy for an answer is shown in the third verse: “Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.” He looked at the outcome, not at the thing itself. Paul expressed the idea when he said, “If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8:17). The reason why he could count it joy was that he looked beyond the present and saw the glorifying together at the end. He continued, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us” (verse 18). This is one thing that we must learn if we are going to find real joy as the answer in working out these problems. If we leave out that which is coming as a result of them, we shall certainly miss finding any good or glorying in them. Paul said, “No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous.” He knew that the joy was not in the trial or in the chastening, but he further said, “Afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness” (Hebrews 12:11). It was the “afterward” to which he looked. It is the “afterward” to which you and I must look if we are to get the joy.

There is one more thing that we must know if we are to get the right answer, and that is that there are three things which we must add to every trial in order to make the answer come out joy. If we fail to add any one of these, the answer will not be what we desire.

They are submission, obedience, and faith. Add these to anything that comes upon you, and the result is bound to be joy. The first thing is to submit yourself to God’s will in the matter. Let Him have His way fully with you. Be willing to endure whatever is His will that you shall endure. Let Him burn out the dross, if the fire must be hot. Let Him work out His pleasure, for that is always “good pleasure.” In whatever comes, obey Him. If we disobey for any cause whatever; if we turn our back on His commandments and the things that we know He would have us do, we cannot “count it all joy.” There will be nothing joyful in it, no matter how hard we try to count it so. Then, as we obey and submit, we must believe—believe that He will take us through victoriously; believe that He is working out His purpose; believe that He will be true to us. Believing thus, trusting thus, we can have the victory through it, and there will be joy indeed for our hearts. We shall not have to count it joy and feel it something else, for God will make our feelings correspond with the fact, and it will be joy to us. The joy may not come until the end of the chastening; it may not come when we are overcoming the temptation; but joy will come in the end, and we shall see that the problem is worked out in a satisfactory manner, and we shall not have to count and make believe that we have the answer desired, but we shall have it in the satisfaction of our own hearts. Let us look away from the toil to the reaping; and when at last we come with the reapers to that great harvest-home, we shall bring our sheaves with rejoicing, and we shall enter into the joy of the Lord, there to abide and to share in the pleasures that are at His right hand forevermore.

Let us think more about the glory that shall be revealed in us. When our life on Earth is over we shall forget about the toils, the hardships, and the disappointments along the way; and we shall join with the ransomed in the song of rejoicing and surround God’s throne, and through the ages of eternity we shall thank God that He brought us by that rugged way that led upward and onward to the world eternal. We shall then never repine for the thorns that were along our way. We shall then rejoice that He counted us worthy to suffer for Him. We shall then rejoice in Him with “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” Let us therefore press on. Let us not hesitate.

Let us, therefore, press on with courage to the goal of life’s race, where the heavenly hosts with harps attuned will greet our coming with anthems sweeter than any that ever fell on mortal ear, and where our glorious Redeemer will place upon each victor’s brow a glittering diadem and will welcome him to life eternal in those mansions of resplendent beauty, where he may dwell content through ages without end. †

### OFFERINGS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

Just a reminder that this magazine is sent out with no subscription fee to anyone who wants it. However, we are sure our readers know the expenses for postage and printing are great. We appreciate those of our readers who have a burden to help support the work of the Lord!

# THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



## SPOTLESS

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

"Why is Mommy erasing the ceiling?" my little sister, Twila, asked me. I looked up to where my mother stood on a ladder, rubbing the ceiling with what looked like a giant, soft eraser. Every swipe of her arm left a clean, white streak of wallpaper.

"She's cleaning the wallpaper," I said. "See how nice the finished part of the ceiling looks!"

It was spring cleaning time at our house. All winter long, the coal stove in our kitchen had blown soot into the air, gradually turning the white wallpaper on the ceiling to a dull gray. Since water would ruin the wallpaper, something else would have to be used to clean the soot off of it.

That was why my mother had bought the can of Kutol that sat on the kitchen counter. I had watched her open the red can and take out a handful of the soft, putty-like cleaner. The cleaner was white to begin with, but each time my mother made a swipe across the wallpaper with it, the surface of the cleaner turned gray from the soot that clung to it. She stopped and folded the gray surface upon itself, revealing a clean, white surface. However, before long, the entire lump was gray.

"Rebecca," my mother called down to me, "get me another handful of cleaner and throw this dirty lump away."

I ran to get a fresh lump of cleaner for my mother, anxious to see what it felt like in my hand. The cleaner was soft and flexible. I squeezed it, and it kept its new shape. *This is more fun to play with than the clay at school!* I thought to myself. I walked slowly toward the ladder where my mother stood, squeezing the cleaner as I went.

"Hurry up!" said my mother. "I'm waiting!" I handed the fresh cleaner up to my mother, and took the dirty, gray lump of used cleaner from her. It was gritty and beginning to fall apart. There was no temptation to play with it.

"If there is any cleaner left over when you are finished, may I play with it?" I asked my mother.

"There won't be any left over," she said as she made another fresh, clean swipe across the sooty wallpaper. It will take every bit of cleaner I bought to get this job done."

Neither my mother nor I had any way of knowing that Kutol wallpaper cleaner would one day become a plaything for children all over the world. As the years went by, fewer and fewer people heated their homes with coal stoves, and so the problem of sooty wallpaper became a thing of the past. Wallpaper, too, underwent

changes. The newer vinyl wallpaper could be cleaned with water.

Kutol wallpaper cleaner did not disappear, however. Its manufacturer took out the detergent, added color, and renamed it "Play-doh." Today it is sold in toy stores all over the world.

When I see cans of Play-doh on the shelf in the store, my mind travels back to my childhood. In my mind's eye, I see my mother standing on the ladder with a lump of snowy white Kutol cleaner. I see her make a long swipe across the sooty wallpaper on the ceiling. I see the snowy white cleaner turn gray.

The fresh lump of cleaner reminds me of a pure, clean soul. The sooty ceiling is like the evil in the world. As long as we stay close to God, evil cannot touch us. But if we stray from Him and mess around with things He has told us to stay away from, then we begin to pick up the uncleanness of the evil world. It may not be so noticeable at first, but after a while, our souls will become more and more soiled until we are like the dirty lump of cleaner my mother asked me to throw away.

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 11:19, which says, "As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death." To "pursue" something means to run after it. If you run after evil, it will turn around and catch you. Our scripture tells us that death will follow. This is not talking about the death of your body. It is talking about the death of your soul. When your soul dies, it is separated from God. Your body goes on living. You can still walk, and talk, and laugh, but you are no longer connected to God down in your soul. A great feeling of sadness comes into your heart, and the only way to be truly happy again is to ask God to forgive your sins and make your soul clean once more.

Your soul is the most important thing you will ever have. Ask Jesus to help you keep your soul pure, clean, and spotless from the evil that is in the world. Listen when your parents teach you about what is right and what is wrong. You will never be sorry if you stick with what is right and stay away from what is wrong. You will have life in your soul and happiness in your heart.

## Activity

Unscramble the words below to find the names of Bible characters who stayed away from evil and kept their souls pure:

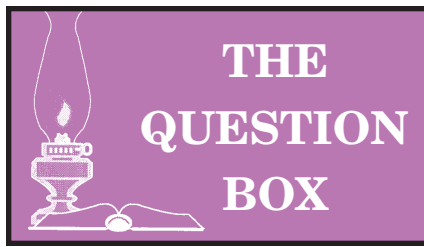
1. Hopjes
2. Somes
3. Ladeni
4. Mythoti

## Answers to Last Month's Activity

1. Some people say that God has chosen only a certain number of people to be saved. II Peter 3:9 lets us know that is not true. *The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

2. Some people say a person is not able to live without committing sin. I John 3:9 lets us know that is not true. *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* †





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



**QUESTION:** According to Romans 10:14, how are they to hear if there is no preacher?

**ANSWER:** In the previous verse Paul said, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Actually, that is a quote from Joel 2:32. Paul follows that up with the verse you ask about. It shows us the great need of speaking the gospel message to all the world so people can hear, believe and be saved.

Very few, doubtless, would follow the law of conscience and be saved, therefore the gospel needs to be preached to all.

**QUESTION:** Can a person lose their experience of sanctification and still be saved?

**ANSWER:** No. In the experience of sanctification the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts as an honored guest to stay forever, unless we sin by omission or commission. To lose the Holy Spirit out of our hearts is to lose the experience of sanctification, and if He leaves because of sin, He leaves us a sinner, destitute and undone, void of the grace of God and again in need of the new birth.

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

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

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

**QUESTION:** Is the rest spoken of in Hebrews 4:8-11 the seventh-day rest? If not, please explain.

**ANSWER:** First, let me point out that the word “Jesus” as used in verse eight is to be understood as  
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Joshua and not Jesus Christ. Adam Clarke says it is truly surprising that the translators translated the word Jesus and not Joshua.

No, this is not speaking of the seventh-day rest. God had given that to the literal nation of Israel through Moses before they ever reached the promise land, as a reminder of their deliverance from slavery in Egypt where they had to work seven days a week. That rest was a type of the soul rest that comes through the gospel of Jesus Christ when a soul is delivered from the slavery of sin, and that is what these verses speak of. Then there is the eternal rest to those who are faithful unto death.

**QUESTION:** I Peter 4:6, “For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.” How is the gospel preached to them that are dead?

**ANSWER:** Every sinner is “dead”—dead in trespasses and sins, so when the gospel is preached to sinners it is preached to the “dead.” If the dead will obey then they will be “resurrected.” This is in fact “the first resurrection,” and not a literal resurrection of the bodies of the righteous, as so many people teach today. Note these words of the Master, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear [obey] shall live” (John 5:25). Also, these words from the apostle Paul, “And you hath he quickened [made alive, resurrected], who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). Paul makes it clear in verses 5 and 6 that he is talking about salvation: “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

**QUESTION:** Please explain James 1:13, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.” If God did not tempt man, who tempted man and why did he tempt him?

**ANSWER:** The word *tempt* as used here is to be understood as tempting, or suggesting that which is evil. God never tempts anyone to do evil—as James has stated here. The tempter is the devil. He tempts mankind to do evil to get them to disobey God. Disobedience to the known commands of God is sin and brings death to the soul. If it is not repented of, and forsaken, it will send the soul to an endless hell; and this is just what Satan wants.

**QUESTION:** What does it mean by our “laughter be turned to mourning” and our “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 it was a sin for Christians to laugh or for them 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. †

# “YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN”

By the late Bro. Hoyt Matthews

**T**HIS IS a phrase of few words that are met with the curiosity of the angels of heaven and the men of the earth. These few words were born of the plan of redemption that was set in place before the foundation of the world. Since the angels were not recipients of this plan, they desired to look into the plan (I Peter 1:12). To the ears of multitudes, these are strange words speaking of the impossible. However, these words were spoken by He who is the Creator of all things. These all things include the angels of heaven, the earth and the fullness thereof, and he into whose nostrils God breathed the breath of life.



This phrase has eternal value, for it was in eternity's heaven that this phrase became the invaluable part of the eternal plan of redemption for fallen man.

This phrase was first expressed in spoken word in the early days of the ministry of Jesus Christ when Nicodemus visited Him in the hours of darkness; however, it became the leading part of a spiritual experience in the early days of creation.

To be born again, the new birth would necessarily have to be preceded by a death. Death is a separation. Death is not limited to the physical man, where it is preceded by the separation of soul and body. This is the death in which every man has an appointment. This is the death in which the body will return to the dust of the earth from whence it came. This is the death from which body and soul shall be reunited on the last day when all that are in the graves shall come forth. This is the death that shall be swallowed up in victory on the last day.

There is another death which is not an appointment, but rather a choice. It also is a separation, not of body and soul, not physical, but a spiritual separation between the soul and its Creator. "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). To avoid a second spiritual death to the soul, there must be a spiritual resurrection, which is the first resurrection that must take place prior to the second resurrection on the last day.

"Ye must be born again," takes place as the sinner experiences the first resurrection. The apostle Paul explains the first resurrection in the following manner: "And you hath he quickened [raised up, made alive, resurrected], who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1).

"And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it:

for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:15-17). Known disobedience to any divine law unquestionably brings spiritual death. The only option for those who are dead in trespasses and sins is godly sorrow and repentance, whereby they become new creatures in Christ Jesus through the new birth.

From Romans 3:23 we read, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." When Adam sinned, he died. The Scriptures seem to indicate that he was born again and is in heaven today along with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Call to mind, probably the most important words ever spoken will reverberate through the ages: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

For those who believe that the born again experience did not exist in Old Testament times, let us remember the words of the Hebrew writer: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). It did exist in principle if not in word. These same folks would have us believe that the Old Testament people of Israel could not live above sin, but what saith the Scriptures? "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (I Corinthians 10:1-4).

When Adam sinned, he died a spiritual death, became separated from God and stood in need of the new birth. This was true from Adam to Abraham, it was true from Abraham to Moses, it was true from Moses to Nicodemus, and it has been true from the moment that Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It has been true from that moment to this very moment of this generation, and it shall be true from this moment to that moment on the last day when time shall flee away. It shall be true in heaven in an eternity, which the human mind cannot comprehend. It must be remembered that when Nicodemus visited Jesus, they were still under the law of the Old Testament.

When we speak of being born again, we are not speaking of the natural birth when we left mother's womb. We are speaking of the instant when God created a living soul. This new creation would take place at the time of conception. Conception cannot take place without the creation of a new eternal soul. The new body, the dwelling place of the newly created soul, has an appointment with death at which time it begins its return to the dust of the earth. Though the soul may die a spiritual death resulting from disobedience to the pure, clean, holy commandments of God, its existence shall be eternal.

Let us now examine a little more in detail all that transpired during Nicodemus' nightly visit with Jesus. Though there have been a number of reasons as to why Nicodemus visited Jesus during the hours of darkness,



please bear with me as I offer an opinion. Jesus' day time schedule was such that He had little time for things other than His teaching His disciples gospel truth, preaching to the multitudes, carrying on a very busy ministry of healing, caring for His mother, etc. Not only so, but Nicodemus was ruler of the Jews as he headed the Sanhedrin. Doubtless he had little time for personal affairs during his daylight responsibilities. It matters little, however, in what hours the visit took place. The more significant issue of this visit is the message that Jesus left with, not only Nicodemus, but to all for whom Christ died. Please bear in mind that Jesus not only died for all that came before, but also for all who would follow after.

Being a high ranking Pharisee, Nicodemus would have had great familiarity with the Old Testament scriptures foretelling of a coming Messiah. Howbeit, when Jesus, the Messiah did come, He came unto His own, but His own received Him not, although they knew He was a man come from God, for no man could do the miracles which He did, except God be with Him. They acknowledged His miracles but they did not acknowledge His Messiahship. Curiosity brought Nicodemus to Jesus, but his fleshly mind could not understand the spiritual lesson Jesus was teaching: "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Jesus loved Nicodemus and did not conclude His effort to open his fleshly mind to the spiritual application of being born again. In continuing His effort, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Reader, give careful attention now, for many of religious thought in our time are misinterpreting these words of Jesus. "The word *water* as used in this verse is emblematic of the work of the Holy Spirit"—Adam Clarke; that is, being born again by the Holy Spirit, a cleansing, a purifying, becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus. In no way is the word *water* making reference to water baptism. Contrary to the teaching of some religious bodies of our day, water baptism never washed away one sin.

In following the giving of the great commission to His disciples, Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). As Philip preached Christ to the eunuch as they traveled along in the eunuch's chariot, the eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" (Acts 8:36, 37). Water baptism is a Bible ordinance which is a required rite, but must always be observed after the new birth.

So again, in John, chapter 3, verse 5, Jesus is making a spiritual application. In verse 6, Jesus is making it clear that He was not referring to that birth wherein the infant leaves the mother's womb and is cuddled in the mother's arms. Again, the first birth takes place at the time of conception and is a spiritual birth. When the birth of the infant takes place, the infant is innocent. When the age of innocence is lost, sin occurs. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). A spiritual death has occurred, and the soul that died

now stands in need of being born again, a spiritual rebirth.

Nicodemus was dead in trespasses and sins, and Jesus was faithful to him in pointing out, "Ye must be born again." The Scriptures seem to indicate that Nicodemus became a follower of Jesus before Golgotha. There was a time that the Pharisees sent officers to take Jesus, but they did not. When asked why they had not brought Him, they replied, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). "Nicodemus saith unto them, [he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them], Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" (John 7:50, 51). In this case, Nicodemus defended Jesus against those who wished to do Him harm. The last we hear of Nicodemus, he assisted Joseph of Arimathaea in taking the body of Jesus down from the cross and preparing it for burying.

Dear Reader, to be born again is the greatest blessing this side of the gate of heaven. If you sincerely desire to pass through the gate of heaven, "Ye must be born again." †



Greetings!

Recently we discussed the subject of "Contentment" in a Wednesday evening service. This thought is so pertinent to us as Christians, especially in this day and time. Perhaps we don't spend enough time seeking for it and to understand what it truly means. Vision

tends to leak from us if not maintained and cultivated. We so easily become complacent and distracted from great and powerful truths. These thoughts from the late C. W. Naylor may not be new to you, but they are a great reminder. If thoughtfully read, they can help us to think more clearly on this subject and examine our lives to make sure that we don't stray in our thinking or actions away from these fundamental truths. I trust that you will find them as inspiring and challenging as they have been for me!

Blessings,  
Bro. Doug

## CONTENTMENT

**C**ONTENTMENT is one of life's greatest blessings. But contentment is not something that can be sent down, nicely wrapped up like a Christmas gift from heaven. It is a state of mind. It is not dependent upon our situation or our circumstances. Many people are contented and happy in circumstances where others would be thoroughly discontented. Some people are discontented under the most favorable circumstances. Contentment is a structure we build ourselves. It is a state of mind we develop. It is an attitude toward things that comes to us through careful cultivation. It is something that lives inside us, not something that circumstances and conditions create.

*"If happiness hath not its seat  
And center in the breast,  
We may be wise, or rich or great,  
But never can be blessed."*

Contentment is sometimes spoken of as a lazy virtue. Perhaps that is because some people are content with things with which they ought not to be content. We should never be satisfied to permit things to exist that ought not to exist. We should never be satisfied to be less than our best. There are wrongs that need righting. There are conditions that need improving. There is progress that needs to be made. A sort of contentment that can view these things with indifference, ignore responsibility or evade duty, should be called by an entirely different name. When we have done our duty, met our responsibility, corrected those things that need correction so far as is possible for us, then we may have real contentment. Contentment does not mean surrender to conditions. It does mean being satisfied in the circumstances and conditions that exist for which we are not responsible.

Contentment is a lesson to be learned. Paul said, "... I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Philippians 4:11). He goes on to tell some of the things he has learned. "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:12, 13). He had learned a great secret. It was the secret of adapting himself to conditions and being at rest in those conditions. He could enjoy to the full the things that afforded him enjoyment. He could suffer patiently the things that came upon him to suffer. But whether rejoicing or suffering, he had that inner contentment of spirit, the calmness and peace of which enriched his soul and made quite tolerable a life that otherwise would have been intolerable.

We, too, need to learn the lesson of contentment. The command to Christians is, "... Be content with such things as ye have ..." (Hebrews 13:5). Speaking further upon this subject, Paul says, "Godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." A godly life is productive of contentment, but there are many Christians who, at least in some respects, are discontented. This discontent produces a constant urge to rebel against things.

It is a singular fact that many of the most contented people are those who live in poverty. In fact, the working people are the most contented of all people. I do not refer to that class of working people who are constantly being disturbed by the agitations of would-be labor leaders who are ever telling them of the evils of their condition. Justice to all there should be, but the useless breeding of discontent is a curse to those who are affected by it. Those who live on the common levels of life are the truly happy, provided they have the attitude of contentment.

There are many things people desire which can never give them contentment. One man says, "If I had

a million dollars I could be contented." Another thinks if he had political preferment, that would satisfy his ambition, and he would be content. Another has another thing to attain to make him content. These things when attained do not bring contentment. As already pointed out, contentment is a lesson learned, a state of the heart, an attitude toward things. Riches do not bring contentment. Andrew Carnegie, known to all for his wealth and a man who should have known what he was talking about, said, "Beyond a competence for old age, and that may not be great and may be very small, wealth lessens rather than increases human happiness. Millionaires who laugh are rare." Many of us would do well to pause here and carefully study this saying of a wise and prudent Scotchman.

Jesus told His disciples not to be anxious about food and raiment and such things and added, "After all these things do the Gentiles seek ..." (Matthew 6:32). Possession is a goal set before them by the unsaved. The question asked about a man often is, "How much money does he have?" His supposed happiness is usually rated by the size of his bank account. No greater error in the choice of a standard for measurement of happiness could be made. The command of the Scriptures is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." We should put first things first. If we do this, our needs will be few and our desires not much greater.

The basis of contentment is simplicity of desire. One of the things that is ruining more happiness than anything else is the desire to excel others. "We must keep up with the Joneses," is an attitude of mind fatal to contentment. It has caused more heartaches, destroyed more happiness, ruined more homes, produced more divorces, perhaps than any other one thing. This strife to excel often leads people into sin. The wife would outstrip her neighbors, so she makes large demands upon her husband for money. Pressed thus, he sometimes adopts business methods that are highly improper. In many cases, it has led to shame and disgrace. In any event, it leads to unhappiness for both husband and wife and for the whole family. Through envy, jealousy of others, and coveting what they have, many people have been brought to bitterness of soul and utterly to hate life. Better contentment in a cottage than discontent in a mansion.

Very often, prosperity in temporal things destroys happiness that has already existed in a less prosperous condition. Years ago, in one of our northern states, a man engaged in the lumbering business in a small way built a cozy cottage on the shore of a bay into which he brought his bride. They both worked, he in his saw mill and she in her cottage, and were happy. The years passed. He prospered in business and became rich. Then he built a fine mansion in the city and moved into it. After living there for some time and mingling with the society into which his riches gave them entrance, in speaking to a friend one day he said, "We are not as happy as we were in our little cottage on the bay."

A few months ago I heard Charles M. Schwab make an address over the radio. In that address he told of his big house in New York City and of another great house which he owned in the country. He said, "I don't own them. They own me. The only satisfaction I have



in them is that I have enough money in the bank to pay the taxes on them.” He has to look to other sources rather than to his possession for contentment and happiness.

Contentment is not built of gold or of precious stones. It is not constructed of honors or fame or the applause of the multitude. It does not come from outshining others. These may bring a sort of satisfaction but not a satisfaction which is contentment. Contentment belongs to the meek and lowly in spirit. Pride is destructive to it. Arrogance annihilates it. Covetousness curses it. Hatred poisons it. Malice thrusts a sword through it. Contentment can thrive only with the virtues. Faith, hope, and charity abide with it. Peace broods over its domicile. Blessed forevermore is he who has a contented spirit.

So many nourish discontent. They are all the time looking at the things they do not possess and coveting them. They are always reaching out, stretching themselves to something they cannot attain. They find fault with the things they possess instead of enjoying them. They minimize the good in things. They see all the faults and failures. They often feel their rights are being trespassed upon. There is a frown in their hearts and a frown upon their faces.

Who is to blame for all this? The individual himself. He has adopted a wrong attitude of mind and heart. He is facing the wrong way. He has the wrong standard. He cannot be happy. He needs to turn about, face the other way, adopt a different attitude, look at things from a different angle and set different standards for himself. He needs to learn the secret of the simple life—simple desires, temperate aspirations, bridled ambitions.

In the vale of contentment is calmness and sweetness of spirit, rest of soul. Through it flow the peaceable waters of quietness. In this vale, the song birds joyfully sing. The heart mounts up to God in praise. In it lies the spring of joy which bubbles up in gladsome song. When we have learned to be content with such things as we have and in our situation in life and in our circumstances, that does not mean that we lose all aspirations or that all effort ceases. By no means. To be content with today does not mean to be content with the same thing tomorrow. The right sort of contentment demands continual progress in the lines in which progress is possible. In fact, we cannot be contented not to make proper progress. In the vale of contentment, we are not to sit down idly dreaming away our days. On the contrary, there is a path that runs through this vale, and we are to walk in this path, ever forward, ever upward. †

—C. W. Naylor, from his book,  
*The Secret of the Singing Heart*

## **NEW RADIO STATION VIA THE INTERNET**

We are happy to announce that we now have a site streaming Church of God music and messages 24/7 recorded during our services. It can be found by going to [wayoftruth.org](http://wayoftruth.org) and clicking on:

### **Way of Truth Internet Radio**

# **RADIO LOG**

## **The Way of Truth Broadcast**

**Alvin A. Craig, Radio Minister**

(Aired on Sundays unless otherwise noted.)

**Alabama**, Mobile, WIJD 1270, AM & 97.9 FM 6:00 A.M.

**Georgia**, Augusta, WFAM 1050, 8:00 P.M. Wednesday & 11:30 A.M. Sun.

**Illinois**, Carmi, WROY 1460, 9:00 A.M.

**Kentucky**, Prestonsburg, WDOC 1310, 7:30 A.M.

**North Carolina**, Mooresville, WHIP 1350-AM, 99.3-FM, 6:00 A.M.

*Listen live—[www.1350whip.com](http://www.1350whip.com)*

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

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**Pennsylvania**, Altoona, WFBG 1290, 9:00 A.M.

**Tennessee**, Chattanooga, WLMR 1450, 3:00 P.M.

**Tennessee**, Chattanooga, WLMR-FM 103.3, 3:00 P.M.

**Virginia**, Narrows, WZFM-FM 101.3, 8:00 A.M.

**Virginia**, Blacksburg, WKEX 1430, 8:00 A.M.

**Virginia**, Christiansburg, WKEX-FM 105.9, 8:00 A.M.

**Virginia**, Roanoke, WKBA 1550

Fri. 1:30 P.M., Sat. 12:30 & 4:30 A.M.; 5:30 P.M.

Sun. 12:30, 2:00, 6:00, 11:00 A.M.; 5:30 P.M.

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**West Virginia**, Summersville, WCWV 92.9, 8:30 A.M.

## **SHORTWAVE**

**WWCR**, Nashville, Tennessee 4.840 on SW band

Sunday, 7:30 A.M. Eastern Time—12:30 G.M.T.

*Listen live—Go to [www.wwcr.com](http://www.wwcr.com)*

**WINB**, Red Lion, Pennsylvania 9.320 on SW band

Friday, 9:30 P.M. Eastern Time, Saturday, 9:30 P.M. Eastern Time—2:30 G.M.T.

*Listen live—Go to [www.winb.com](http://www.winb.com)*

## **INTERNATIONAL**

**JAMAICA**, MELLO-FM, 88.1, 88.3, 88.5, 7:00 A.M. Sundays

Heard throughout Jamaica

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James Arch, Pastor

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## LABOR DAY MEETINGS

### HATTIESBURG, MISSISSIPPI

Church of God at Bellevue

2802 Highway 589

September 1-5, 2021, Lord willing

Bro. Darrell Sanford, Pastor

Service times:

Wednesday thru Friday, 7 PM

Saturday and Sunday, 10 AM & 6 PM

Cookout on Monday



### CARMICHAEL, CALIFORNIA

Church of God

5334 Whitney Ave.

September 2-5, 2021, Lord willing

Bro. David Goble, Pastor

Service times:

Thursday & Friday, 7 PM

Saturday and Sunday,

10 AM & 6 PM General services

Also 4 PM Youth Services

Theme: "Conquering and to Conquer"

(Revelation 6:2)



## BAPTISM IN GRAND CAYMAN

Left to right: Minister Ray Hydes, Pastor James Arch, Candidates: David Arch, Jr., John Byrd, Jr., Denver Solomon, Minister Duane Jeffries.

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