

The Way of Truth

Vol. 80

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

No. 7

LOVE

See page 15

July 2022

Is Living for the Lord Interesting?

Message begins on page 6

“Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.”

—Hebrews 3:10.

HOW DOES God view our generation? It is clear by the above scripture that He has been grieved with generations of the past. A *generation* is defined as: “the entire body of individuals born and living about the same time.” God’s attitude toward any given generation is determined by the conduct of that people and their attitude toward Him.

If we know anything about the Lord, we know that He can be pleased and He can be grieved. So many are blind to this fact thinking that God is incapable of feelings of displeasure and grief towards mankind. Today, in our generation it seems everyone is going to heaven regardless of the lives people are living. I challenge my readers to examine Romans 11:22, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.” So to have a proper understanding of God, we must conclude that there are two sides to our Creator. But we must not comprehend the Lord as an ogre or one who has a club ready to beat us over the head when we make a mistake. He is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish (II Peter 3:9). He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11).

In fact, though God may be grieved with a generation because of their rebellion, it is possible for Him to be pleased with individuals within that generation.

Let us look at some past generations. We begin with the antediluvian world. Genesis 6:5 says, “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” What a state to be in! It seems like our generation is morphing into a like condition. God was so grieved with that generation that He decided to destroy the earth with a flood. But in the midst of that wicked generation was a godly individual. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Genesis 6:22 declares, “Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.” Genesis 7:1 affirms my point: “And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.”

When God was disposed to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah by fire, He proved He was not willing to destroy the righteous with the wicked.

After God sent Moses to deliver His people from Egypt, the children of Israel proved to be an unthankful lot. “They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.”—Deuteronomy 32:5.

According to Psalm 78:8, they were a stubborn and rebellious generation: “And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that

set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.”

Why was God displeased with that generation?

Though He delivered them with a great deliverance, they turned on Him at the first hint of danger.

Psalm 106:7—“Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea.”

Though He gave them manna to sustain them, they were not satisfied with what God gave them—they were always discontented.

Psalm 106:13-15—“They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel: But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.”

They rebelled against God-ordained leadership.

Psalm 106:16-18—“They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord. The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan and covered the company of Abiram. And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.”

They made their own gods.

Psalm 106:19-23—“They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. They forgot God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea. Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.”

They hearkened not to His voice.

Psalm 106:24-27—“Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word: But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord. Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness: To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.”

There are comparisons to our generation!

Jesus’ generation also grieved God. Notice the descriptions God gave them.

“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, **O generation of vipers**, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”—Matthew 3:7.

“Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto **this wicked generation.**”—Matthew 12:45.

“Then Jesus answered and said, **O faithless and perverse generation**, how long shall I be with

ABOUT THE COVER

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THE WAY OF TRUTH

(Registered Trademark)

Vol. 80

July 2022

No. 7

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

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

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

—Gregory E. Tyler, Editor

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you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.”—Matthew 17:17.

It was this generation which crucified our Lord!

But it was followed by a special generation which heard the voice of God. I Peter 2:9 declares, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” The early morning church turned the world upside down!

This was followed by several generations of gross darkness known as the Dark Ages.

Then came a generation willing to accept light led by Martin Luther proclaiming the truth of, “The just shall live by faith.”

This was followed by a generation led by the Wesleys emphasizing holiness obtained by sanctification.

The generation of D. S. Warner then burst on the scene trumpeting the message of unity among believers—II Corinthians 6:17, 18, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” The Church of God took the world by storm in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

Unfortunately, ensuing generations were catagorized by schisms and divisions which clouded the message and drained the church of her power.

Jeremiah said in 23:1-5, “Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scat-

tered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord.”

Let us close by looking at our generation. Though the wickedness of our present generation is great, we must be determined not to grieve God individually or collectively as a church. Philippians 2:15 reads, “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”

What kind of generation will history record on our behalf? It is still to be written. Will we follow in the footsteps of previous generations? Or will we from this moment blaze a trail of higher dedication? Will we let the Lord tear down the walls of division built by past generations and truly *endeavor* to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace?

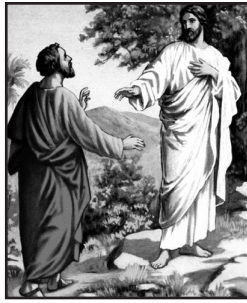
May it be said of our generation, “This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.”—Psalm 24:6. †

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STEPS WE MUST TAKE TO WALK WITH GOD

Radio Message by the late
Bro. Alvin Craig



UR SUBJECT today is “Steps We Must Take to Walk with God.” Our text is Micah, chapter 6, verses 6-8: “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

Enoch walked with God (Genesis 5:24); Noah walked into the ark with God (Genesis 7:1); Abraham walked before God (Genesis 17:1); Moses walked up Mount Sinai to meet God (Exodus 19); Elijah walked with God as God took him in the fiery chariot (II Kings 2); The disciples walked with God in Galilee and on the road to Emmaus.

Now notice what the prophet Amos said in Amos 3:3: “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” *Be* means “to exist or live; of substance.” *Agree* means “the same mind”; *to be agreed* would mean “of the same in mind and substance.” In other words, you don’t just think it; you become it. A sinner cannot walk with God. “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” All were sinners, but God has always been willing to forgive.

We are told in I John 4:19, “We love him, because he first loved us.” If it had not been for God’s love for us, we would have never been saved, and we would have never been able to love Him. But “we love him, because he first loved us.” Because He loved us, He gave His only begotten Son to come into this sin-cursed, sin-sick, sin-benighted world to die upon the cruel cross of Calvary so that we could be saved from sin.

We know God by the Scriptures, not by our senses. John 5:39 tells us, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” So we know God by the Scriptures and through the Scriptures. It’s not some funny feeling that we have in our stomach or somewhere else. We know God through the Scriptures and because of His love in giving His only begotten Son for us.

Don’t travel to some supposed holy site to find God. Find Him in His Word. I have made a number of trips to what is called “The Holy Land.” I appreciate the privilege of traveling to that part of the world and seeing the places where our Savior and many other Bible characters lived and ministered, but going to those places does not make one holy. You have to find God for yourself and find Him in reality. As far as truth con-

cerning God, you’ll find Him in His Word. In His Word, you’ll find out how to become a child of God, how to be saved from sin, and how to be delivered or to be translated out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of God’s dear Son. You’ll find in the Word of God that you must be born again; otherwise, you cannot become a child of God. You’ll find in the Word of God where Jesus said, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” Peter told those on the day of Pentecost, “Repent.” He also told them in the third chapter of Acts that they must repent and be converted that their sins may be blotted out. So you don’t need to travel to some supposed holy site to find God. You’ll find about God in His Word, and you’ll find God by obeying the Word of God. That’s how you become a Christian. You get deliverance out of sin and out of bondage by accepting Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior, and by believing and obeying the Word of God.

Micah says that we are to walk humbly with our God. We are to walk after His Spirit and not after the flesh. We are told in Romans, the eighth chapter, that we are to do this. We are not to walk after the flesh or live after the flesh, for they that live after the flesh shall die, but they that live after the Spirit shall live. Here in Romans 8, the apostle Paul said, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.” Again, Micah says that we are to walk humbly with our God. You cannot live after the flesh and walk with God. You cannot live after the flesh and walk in the Spirit.

We are told in Romans 8:14, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” And the Spirit of God never leads anyone to live after the flesh. The Spirit of God never leads anyone to sin. The Spirit of God will lead you in the way of righteousness, purity, holiness, and truth. So we are not to walk after the flesh, but we are to walk after the Spirit.

The carnal mind will always lead away from God. Note that fact: *the carnal mind will always lead away from God.* “For to be carnally minded is death; Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:6, 7). So the carnal mind will always lead away from God. When we talk about the carnal mind and living after the flesh, we are talking about one and the same thing. The word *flesh* comes from the Greek word, *carnis*, meaning “the flesh.” So the carnal mind will always lead away from God. “For to be carnally minded is death; Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” There are people who talk about us sinning more or less every day, and we just have to follow the old, carnal, fleshly man. They don’t know

what it really means to be delivered from the carnal mind. They don't seem to know what it means to be delivered from the lust of the flesh and to walk after the Spirit. But we're talking about two entirely different ways.

All through the Bible, there is a thread of thought that there are two ways. From Genesis to Revelation, you'll find this line of thought brought forth in one fashion or another that there are two ways. Jesus spoke of it as the broad road which leads to destruction, and the narrow way that leads to life eternal. The apostle Paul, in Romans 8, talks about two ways. One of them is walking after the flesh, following the carnal mind, and the other one is walking after the Spirit and living in the Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." If we want to walk with God, then we must live in the Spirit.

We are God's servants, and He is sovereign. Paul wrote to the brethren in Ephesus, "Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Ephesians 6:6, 7). That's one of the problems in the religious world today. People seem to think that because they can please men in a religious way that they are pleasing God. Beloved, we are to please God. The apostle Paul said that if he endeavored to please men, he should not be the servant of Christ. So we serve Christ, and we serve Him with a willing heart. We seek to please Him and not men. Oh, there are a lot of men pleasers in the world today! There are a lot of men pleasers in the religious world today. But if you're going to please God, you're going to be more concerned about what God thinks about you than what the worldly-minded think about you. So we're not to please men. We are not to seek to please men. We are to seek to please God. Remember, we are His servants. He is sovereign. We are to serve Him, walk with Him, and not as men pleasers, but as servants of Christ.

We are the sheep and Christ is the shepherd. Psalm 100:3 tells us, "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." We are the servants. He is the master. Jesus Himself said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). We find in the beautiful Psalm, Psalm 23, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." The Psalmist started out by saying, "The Lord is my shepherd," making it personal. It has to be personal. If we're going to walk with God, it takes a personal experience with God. The only way the Lord will lead you is in the paths of righteousness. He will never lead you in the pathway of sin and unrighteousness. If the Lord leads you, He will lead you in the paths of righteousness. If you're going to walk with the Lord, you're going to walk the pathway of righteousness. The Lord will not walk with the proud and the haughty. He will not walk with the scornful. If we're going to walk with God, then we must walk humbly with our God, and walk the path of righteousness.

Micah 6:8, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy

God?" So in walking humbly with our God, we will do justly, we will love mercy, we will love God, we will love our neighbor, and we'll love our very enemies. These things are required if we're going to walk with God. All through the Bible, we have lesson after lesson of humility. God hates a proud look. Pride goes before a fall. Humility is one of the marks of a true Christian. If we're going to walk with God, we must do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him.

In the book of Daniel, we read about the great King Nebuchadnezzar. He had a dream about a tree that was cut off, and the trunk of the tree was left. His wise men could not tell him the dream or the meaning of it, but Daniel, the man of God, told him that he (Nebuchadnezzar) was the tree. Daniel exhorted him to cut off his wickedness by doing what was right, and to spare himself with what was coming upon him. But about a year later, Nebuchadnezzar was walking in his palace, and there he was boasting about the great Babylon that he had built. "This is the great Babylon that I have built," but at that very hour Nebuchadnezzar was removed from the throne, and he went out and was treated as an animal. He ate grass as an ox. His hair grew like feathers and his fingernails like claws. For seven years he lived that kind of life, until he was willing to lift his eyes heavenward and acknowledge that God ruled in the armies of heaven and in the kingdoms of men. When he acknowledged the God of heaven, his kingdom was restored unto him. So I say, all through the Bible we have lessons in regard to humility.

Our text today says, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" The Scriptures ask us, "What do we have that we have not received?" In other words, what do we of ourselves have to be proud of? Why should we be puffed up? Why should we think we are anything? The Lord has told us in His Word, "Without me ye can do nothing." Our very breath is given to us by God. Paul tells us in the seventeenth chapter of Acts that it is God who gives to all life, and breath, yea, and all things. Beloved, if you're going to walk with God, you're going to walk humbly with Him, for He will not walk with the proud and the scornful. †

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- ___ CD #1339 Breaking Down the Wall—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #1340 Eternal Life—Rebecca Bland
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- ___ CD #1350 Mini-Sermons—Various Speakers
- ___ CD #1351 Broken and Spilled Out—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1352 The Guarantees of Life—David Martin



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

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

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

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

QUESTION: Is water baptism essential to salvation?

ANSWER: Forgiveness of sins and cleansing from their guilt does not come through water baptism but through repentance and faith. Therefore, water baptism is not essential to receiving the forgiveness of sins. But water baptism is plainly taught in the Scriptures. Therefore, it is the duty of all to be baptized. Willfully to refuse to do known duty on any line becomes sinful. Our sins are washed away in a figure only in baptism. The cleansing in reality is wrought by the power of God, not by any external element. Baptism should not be neglected.

QUESTION: Please explain the nine spiritual gifts as recorded in I Corinthians 12. Are they for us today?

ANSWER: Wisdom is the God-given ability to use the knowledge you have obtained. To have the gift of wisdom would be to have a special ability on this point. The same can be said in regard to knowledge; one would have a special ability to see and understand things, especially those things which would be helpful to the body of Christ. All Christians have faith but there is a gift of faith, and a person with this gift would be able

to believe for things others would not. The gifts of healing is the God-given ability to pray for the sick, even "hard cases," and see them healed. Now healing does not have to be instantaneous. Miracles would enable a person to pray for the sick and see them instantly raised up. Of course the gift of miracles would not be limited to healing.

Prophecy is "foretelling the future," also a "divinely inspired utterance." Therefore, preaching is called by some, the gift of prophesy. Discerning of spirits is the God-given ability to discern what kind of spirit a person has. There are many false spirits in the world, especially in the religious world, and they would come in among the saints and profess to be the true Spirit. This gift working in the body would help protect the saints from such false spirits. Divers, or different kinds of tongues, is the God-given ability of speaking languages that you did not learn in school or by your own natural means. Interpretation of tongues is the God-given ability of telling people what another said even though he did not know the language before he heard the person speak.

Now all these gifts are given by the Spirit of God. In others words, the Spirit rests upon a saint in a special way enabling him to pray for the sick, to foretell the future, to instruct others, etc. These gifts are given for the profit of all, not just for the person who has the gift. The gifts of the Spirit are for the church today as God sees fit to give them. Let me point out that Satan has a counterfeit for all these gifts and many of his "gifts" are manifested today. All power is not necessarily the power of God.

QUESTION: In James 2:14 it is stated, "What doth it profit my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" I understand that you teach a person can be saved at home, in the field or almost anywhere. If your teaching is right, what can you tell me about James' teachings?

ANSWER: We do indeed teach that a person can get saved anywhere when he is willing to meet Bible conditions and do so. We understand Paul was saved on the road to Damascus; that the jailer at Philippi was saved in the jail! You do not have to be in a "church" building to be saved. Three thousand were saved on the day of Pentecost. I assume they were out in the open.

If you will consider the next few verses following James 2:14, I think you will be able to see what kind of "faith" James was talking about. "Dead faith," which does not produce action, will not benefit anyone, but live faith will produce results, or works, as James says. Live faith will cause a person to be a doer of the Word and not just a hearer. I pay little attention to the statement, "I believe God can do anything," when I see no results, no fruits, no works! Real live faith produces results.

Let me add, James does not teach that we are saved from our sins by works! Some people think he and Paul teach contrary doctrines, but they do not. A person is saved through faith in the Son of God; but when he is saved it will produce works. Works do not produce salvation; salvation produces works. †

THE POETRY PAGE

SEARCH FOR GOD

Thomas Curtis Clark

I sought His love in lore of books,
In charts of science's skill,
They left me orphaned as before—
His love eluded still;
Then in despair I breathed a prayer;
The Lord of Love was standing there!

I sought His love in sun and stars,
And where the wild seas roll,
And found it not. As mute I stood,
Fear overwhelmed my soul;
But when I gave to one in need,
I found the Lord of Love indeed.

HOLD OUT A LIGHT

Addison Howard Gibson

Hold out a light,
The way is dark,
No ray to guide
Yon struggling bark.
Rough rocks are near,
And wild waves roar;
Hold out a light
To show the shore.

Hold out a light;
Your brother may
Win back to land
With your small ray;
New courage find
Life's storms to face
With strengthened faith
To win the race.

SPEAK GENTLY

David Bates

Speak gently: It is better far
To rule by love than fear;
Speak gently: Let no harsh words mar
The good we might do here.

Speak gently to the little child
Its love be sure to gain,
Teach it in accents soft and mild
It may not long remain.

Speak gently to the aged one,
Grieve not the careworn heart;
The sands of life are nearly run,
Let such in peace depart.

Speak gently, kindly to the poor;
Let no harsh tone be heard.
They have enough they must endure
Without an unkind word.

Speak gently to the erring; know
They must have toiled in vain;
Perchance unkindness made them so,
Oh, win them back again.

BEAUTIFUL

W. A. Bixler

Beautiful sun that giveth us light,
Beautiful moon that shineth by night,
Beautiful planets in the heaven so far,
Beautiful twinkle of each little star.

Beautiful waters so blue and so clear,
Beautiful sound of the surges we hear,
Beautiful brooklet, its ripples so sweet,
Beautiful flowers that bloom at our feet.

Beautiful springtime when all is delight;
Beautiful summer, so warm and so bright;
Beautiful autumn, with fruits and with grain;
Beautiful winter, with snowflakes again.

THE JOYFUL HEART

Catherine Janssen Irwin

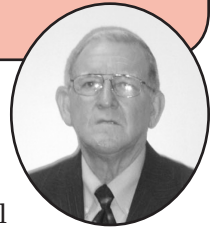
Thank the Lord for little things
For they can surely grow
Into the greatest treasures
That you may ever know.

Don't covet worldly riches
That may not be for you,
Nor overlook the special gifts
That God has given you.

Let "giving" outweigh "getting"
On your scale of happiness,
And your joyful heart will bask
In the glow of godliness. †

IS LIVING FOR THE LORD INTERESTING?

Message delivered 4/21/13 by Bro. James Arch



I AM GOING to be reading this morning from Psalm 103:1-13 and from Isaiah, chapter 1: "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

And from the first line of Isaiah, chapter 1 and verse 18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord."

What I would like you to do for the few minutes that I'll be here this morning is to take note of the words found in verse 4 of Psalm 103 where it says, "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction."

Is living for the Lord interesting? I can tell you from experience the answer is yes. What does *interest* mean? It means "a feeling of wanting to know, see, do, own, share in, or take part in." Anything to do with God or about God is interesting. The very existence of God Himself—no beginning or no ending—makes it very interesting. If you look in Psalm 90:2, it says, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." The creation story is very interesting. If you read the first part of Genesis, you will see what I'm talking about. It's a long, long story. Only God could do such a thing. As I prepared for this message this morning, I thought about the song that we sing:

*O Lord, my God,
When I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made;
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, how great Thou art.
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, how great Thou art.*

It's a beautiful worship song. How beautiful it is to know we have a God today who is so great and loving

and kind, so powerful and so majestic, so authoritative, yet so small He can live in the heart of a man. So big He holds the world in the palm of His hand. The creation story is a beautiful and interesting story.

The redemption story—what an interesting story that is! It's the whole record of Jesus Christ as He spent the few years on Earth, as He walked around the little roads of Nazareth and Galilee and frequented the homes and the friends that He had and those that loved Him. In fact, the Bible says He came back to Nazareth where He had been brought up, and He went into the synagogue and opened up the book, and He quoted the scripture from Isaiah, as is also found in Luke 4:18: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted ..." What a story! He walked about barefooted probably. Everywhere He went, He went about doing good. He caused the cripple to walk and run. He opened the deaf ears, He opened the blinded eyes. He brought hope and love to people. His mission was people. His mission is still people today. He cares about every one of us. What a loving Father we have! The story of Jesus. No wonder the blind hymn writer wrote that beautiful old hymn:

Tell me the story of Jesus, write on my heart every word;

Tell me the story most precious, sweetest that ever was heard.

Tell of the years of His labor ...

Tell of the cross where they nailed Him.

What a story! It's a love story, the greatest story ever told, the story of Jesus Christ and His redeeming love. It's a very interesting story. The most interesting fact is that He included us in His wonderful plan. You see, He changed our lives and our minds. Now we are attracted to Him. God can change a man around and take him off the broad road of sin and turn him around and give him a new life. We sing a chorus at home that says:

*God is good, God is good,
God is good, how can I let Him down?
How can I let Him down? ...
He's so good to me.*

*He picked me up, turned me around,
He placed my feet on higher ground.
How can I let Him down? ...
He's so good to me.*

When God made man, He placed him in Paradise. Everything was clean and pure. I'm thinking of Eden this morning where the rivers went through and the beautiful trees. He placed man in the garden. He placed

him in nature. Everything was clean. No pollution. No filth. No sin. No corruption. What a place that was! No wonder it was called Paradise. But the tempter came along and disrupted the plan. As a result of this tempter, Eve and Adam both yielded and plunged the whole world into what we see today. They really fixed us up. They really blundered. What we're suffering in the world today is as a result of the fall in the garden. They failed. But you know, that was not the end of the story. The purpose of the plan of redemption was so that we could be restored back to a relationship with God. Of course, Adam and Eve were created pure. We were born in sin since the fall. That's the little difference there. But at least we can get back to God. We can have that deep, settled satisfaction and peace in our souls that nobody else can do for us, and nobody else can take away either. You can have a relationship with God. If you don't even have a church building to go and worship God in, you can build a life, you can build a relationship with God. You can do it, although it might not be as easy as if you had a church to go to.

We are brought back by the blood of Jesus. Do you remember hearing the story of the little boy who made a boat and was sailing the little boat in the water? The string broke and the boat was lost. Sometime after, the little boy went downtown and saw a little boat in the showroom window of a shop. It looked like the boat he had made. It had a price tag on it. It was a dollar or two. He went inside and he purchased the little boat. The sails were all torn and the paint was all taken off of the little boat, but he held it up and said, "Now you're twice mine. I made you and I bought you." That's what God did for us; He bought us back and we're His. All of us are God's by the right of creation. Every soul on Earth is precious in the sight of God. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1). But we can be God's by the right of redemption through the blood of Jesus the Son of God.

God has extended an appeal to mankind. He said, "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18). God is a reasonable God. His service is a reasonable service. I believe that! I teach it, I preach it. God's service is a reasonable service. God knows that we are human beings; none of us are angels. We're not God; we're human. God knows human needs. That's why He sent this appeal out: "Come now, and let us reason together." We drift away from God. It's us that must come back to God.

The Psalmist reminds us of His benefits, too. God is good to the just and unjust. He sends the rain on the unjust as He does the just. God is so good. "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" (Psalm 103:1, 2). Every morning that you roll out of bed, that's a gift. Every day is a gift from God. It's a blessing from God. The gift of life. What a wonder it is! Let us make the best use of every day that God gives us, because they run up kind of fast. These days they go swifter than they used to go. I look back sometimes and I think about the space between 18 years and 69 and it seems like it has vanished. It's gone. We can't call that back. It's like a spring or a battery.

Life winds down. One of these days we all will leave here and go on to eternity. Let us make the best out of our days that God has given us.

God knows the potential that there is in man. He knows every one of us. He knows what we can do and what we can't do. It's a good thing everybody is not alike. What a God of variety! God saw some potential in Paul. That's why He called Paul in the miraculous way that He did. God sees something in every one of us. Every child has a potential. The children aspire to do something and they work on it and, let me tell you, they do it. These children these days are so smart and intelligent. There's potential in every soul on the earth.

He assures us of what God does for us. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:3). God forgives. That's what He does. When God forgives us, we're forgiven. He prevents the total destruction of our lives. "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies" (Psalm 103:4). He satisfies the total man. What a satisfying God!

"Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's" (Psalm 103:5). He doesn't only satisfy the spirit, but look at the good things we have to eat. He satisfies the body. You can pick, choose, and refuse. What a land of plenty! What a beautiful country this is, so many things that you grow here that you're able to partake of and eat. God placed them there. What a kind and loving God!

God works with us to make us all we can be. As a Christian, you're not going to make it the first day or the first week. It takes time to build up a life and establish a life with the Lord. He said, "The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (Psalm 103:6-8). He's patient with us. We sing a song at home:

There was One who was willing to die in my stead,

That a soul so unworthy might live,

*And the path to the Cross He was willing to tread,
All the sins of my life to forgive.*

They are nail'd to the Cross, they are nail'd to the Cross,

O how much He was willing to bear!

With what anguish and loss, Jesus went to the Cross,

And He carried my sins with Him there!

The Lord cleanses us and purges us of our dross. He works with us. The longer you live for the Lord, the more you should know about Him, too. The closer we get to Him, the more we learn about Him. He doesn't look at the extent of our sins. This is one of my special Psalms. I use this all the time for funerals. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities" (Psalm 103:10). Where would some of us be today if God looked at that? Some people go

very deep, but it doesn't matter how deep people go, sin is sin. God doesn't look at that; God takes it away from us and relieves us of the burden of that. We are free from it. That's what God does. That's what justification is. He doesn't look at the depth of sin that we've gone in, but He takes us out of it. He cleans us up completely.

"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him" (Psalm 103:11-13). Do you have grandchildren? You know how hard it is to tell them no. It's hard to deny them. He pities us, just like we pity our little grandchildren when they come to ask us for something. God cares about us, you know. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?" (Luke 12:6). "But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." That's what Jesus said. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12:7). So He cleans us up completely.

There's a reason that we need to reason with God. "Come now, and let us reason," He said. There is no sin so bad that He cannot fix. We are the ones who need Him. We are the ones who offend God. We are the ones who sin against God. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." We must come back to God for regeneration and be redeemed.

The Bible tells us the story of a man who began to reach out to Jesus. It's recorded in the nineteenth chapter of St. Luke. Although he was rich, the Bible says he sought to see Jesus, which might not be all together the case in today's world. Jesus had entered and passed through Jericho. Perhaps there was a reason why Jesus passed through Jericho at that time. There was a man in need. "And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature" (Luke 19:2, 3). He must have been a very small man. In his zeal and eagerness to see Jesus, being so little he couldn't see over the crowd of people. He ran before, and he got up into a sycamore tree because Jesus was to pass that way. In other words, he made sure he was going to see Jesus. If only we could see that much eagerness in the world today to see Jesus. Zacchaeus made sure he was going to see Jesus.

Jesus was equally as interested. "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up." I'm reading the Bible now; these are not my words. "And saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house" (Luke 19:5). How did Jesus know Zacchaeus was there? Jesus knows every heart. We can't run from ourselves. We could take the wings of an angel and go to the uttermost parts of the sea, He's there. Some people try to run from God, but you can't run from God. You can't hide from God. Jesus knew Zacchaeus was up in the tree. He knows when we're down in the valley, too. He knows when we're tiptop for Him. He knows when we're bubbling spiritually. He knows when we're down. He knows when we're depressed. He knows when we're discouraged. That's

when you need Him most. Don't run from Him then. That's when you need to go to church. That's when you need to go to the altar. That's what the altar is for—coming to God and getting back to where we were.

Zacchaeus never wasted any time in responding to the call. "And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully" (Luke 19:6). Those that were around there murmured at Jesus. "Look at who He's mingling with—a man who is a sinner! I wonder if He knows who Zacchaeus is." The Bible says, "And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner" (Luke 19:7). Why did Jesus come anyway? Who did Jesus come for? He came to seek and to save the lost. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Every one of us had to leave sin to come to God. He called us out of that. Suppose He had shunned us, where would we be today? Zacchaeus was no bigger sinner than anybody else.

Zacchaeus paid little mind to them. In fact, he did all in his power to get right with God and to get right with his fellow man. "And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Luke 19:8). You know something? If we want God, we can find Him. If we want God bad enough, we are going to get Him. We are going to find what we're looking for. The old people used to say, "Where there's a will, there's a way." If you don't want to serve the Lord, you're not going to serve Him. It doesn't matter who preaches or exhorts. We have to come to the Lord ourselves. We have to have a mind to serve the Lord. We have to be willing to serve the Lord. We have to sell out to Him and say goodbye to this old world and give ourselves to God.

Zacchaeus was selling out to the Lord. The Holy Spirit must have convicted him of things he had done in the past. He was making sure that he got clear with everyone he could. Once Zacchaeus met the conditions, Jesus forgave him and set him free. "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:9, 10). No one today needs to be lost.

The story of Jesus is told so many times. The Church of God gospel has been preached in Cayman for over 110 years. The message has been there and still there are those who don't seem to care and don't seem to want anything to do with this loving God.

Back to Psalm 103:17: "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children." "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Psalm 103:14). God is here this morning. He's not far from every one of us. Isaiah said, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord," but he didn't stop there. There was a reason. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18). Who but God would clean up a life and give them something to live for? I've heard people say in my ministry: "I've nothing to live for. Nothing." That's a trick of the devil. You have a lot to live for. You might not

have a dollar in your pocket, but God loves you. God cares about you. If you seek the kingdom of God, He might supply you with a lot of those things you didn't dream you would have. God does things for people that others cannot do. Thank God, this morning, He has promised to supply our needs, not only spiritually, but materially as well. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him," and He promised that He would "direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

So Isaiah said, "Come now, and let us reason together." Though your sins are there, He can take them and clean you up and wash them away. I believe Jesus saves, and His blood washes whiter than snow. Thank God for the blood that flows.

*Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee—
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

I trust that there's someone here this morning that the Spirit of the Lord is speaking to. Don't put Him off, but yield to the Spirit's voice and let Him be your Master and Lord. †



Dear Young People,

As we meditate on this month's thought of honoring God, it makes us think about our understanding of Him. How do we really view God and His Word? What picture does our actions and thoughts paint of the importance we place on honoring God? Seeing Him in His glory, as Isaiah did, and

seeing ourselves compared to Him is an important thought that we should focus on from time to time. Our lives, our example should be structured in a way that we honor God; our habits, interests, and associations should all align with this primary purpose. God is worthy of honor!

We trust that Bro. Cade Goodyear's thoughts this month will stir us to take a few moments out of our busy days and think about ways that we can indeed honor and bring glory to our God.

Blessings,
Bro. Doug

HONORING GOD

By Bro. Cade Goodyear

GOD CREATED us with a plan and that plan was to glorify Him. We need to glorify God in all that we do, as it says in I Corinthians 10:31: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."



I have two questions: (1) What is God's goal in creating and governing the world? (2) How can I bring my life into alignment with that goal? If our life is not in line with God's will and we don't know His goal, we will find ourselves at cross purposes with God. It's a fearful thing to be at cross purposes with our Creator. But on the other hand, nothing inspires courage and endurance for daily living more than knowing God's purpose. Nothing has nourished my Christian faith as much as knowing God's ultimate plan and discovering how to bring my life and behavior into alignment with that goal.

Let's focus on the first question: What is God's goal in creating and governing the world? The text that I have chosen to focus on is Isaiah 43:1-7: "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon me. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."

God created the world so that we can live in the world to glorify Him. Verse 1 and verse 5 tell us how God does not want us to fear what man or nature can do to us. In verses 1-4, God tells us why we're not to fear because of what He's done for us in the past. The things that God has done for us in the past prove His love for us. I like how verse 1 says "I have redeemed you and called you by name, because you're mine." It's encouraging to me to think of God calling my name personally. Verse 7 says how we were created for His glory and honor.

Now let's shift to the second question of how to bring our lives into alignment with God's goal. Matthew 5:16 says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." This verse can go a long way in answering our question. Jesus clearly commands us how we are to behave so God will get the glory. I Corinthians 10:31 ties in with Matthew 5:16 as well, by telling us that no matter what we do, do all to the glory of God.

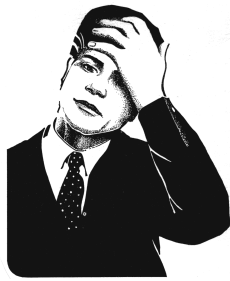
No matter how deep we go into the goal that God has for us, there is not one layer that is not love. †

If you are saved and between the ages of 13 and 30, and would like to share a testimony, poem, or article for publication on the Young People's Page, please feel free to send it. Mark it, Attention: Doug Shenberger.

Finding Jesus

By the late H. R. Matthews

THE SCRIPTURES give little information concerning the man Zacchaeus, except that he was a publican who was not well liked. This meant that he was a Jew who was hired by the Roman government to collect taxes from his own countrymen. In doing this, he was extorting money from his countrymen by collecting more taxes than he was required.



How Zacchaeus knew of Jesus and just what he knew of Him is somewhat of a mystery. Being a Jew, he may have learned from the Old Testament prophets somewhat about the coming Messiah. Perhaps he had listened also to the stories of Jesus of how He forgave sinful men of their wicked ways and made them new creatures in Christ Jesus. He may have heard of the miracles wrought by Jesus, of how He healed the lepers, the blind, the lame, and all manner of sickness and disease, even raising the dead to life again. Jesus cast out devils. He turned the water into wine.

Who wouldn't want to see such a man? Therefore, the throng was so dense on the Jericho Road that on that day, Zacchaeus, being short in stature, would have to find a way wherein he would be able to look over the heads of the crowd. What was he to do? He worked his way to a sycamore tree not far distant. He climbed the tree, perched on a branch, and anxiously awaited. Soon, there He was, there was Jesus! He had stopped beneath the tree where Zacchaeus was looking down on Him. Then an amazing thing occurred. Jesus looked directly into the face of Zacchaeus and speaking to him, said, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house" (Luke 19:5).

Zacchaeus had not expected to have personal contact with Jesus, but there he was, not only looking into the face of Jesus, but Jesus knew that he was in the tree. He knew his name, and Jesus saw into his heart that there was a great drawing that went deeper than just a desire to see Jesus in the flesh, for when Jesus invited Himself to dine with Zacchaeus, his heart leaped in anticipation of becoming a new creature in Christ.

Jesus is passing your way. He knows your name. He is calling. He knows your dwelling place and desires to dwell within your heart. He knows your heart. He knows that the Spirit of God is drawing you, but finding Jesus can be difficult. The world bids for your attention. The fiery darts of the wicked can make the Jericho Road perilous to those who are endeavoring to find Jesus. Many find the way so strait and narrow that they seek for the road whose gate is broad and the way is wide. This seems to be an easier way, but Jesus never travels this road and can never be found there. Many seek to find Jesus in many of the church houses. Jesus can only be found in "the house of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"

(I Timothy 3:15). Others find the social life not to their liking on the narrow way, along with the biblical life style. God have mercy on those who are endeavoring to climb up some other way when Jesus declares, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). A vast number declare that Jesus was only a prophet, a good man, but not the Son of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

The radar screen of complacency never locates the Lord Jesus Christ, for the Lord Jesus Christ declared, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). Jesus did not hear the voice of the foolish man who built his house upon the shifting sand when he cried, "Lord, Lord" (Matthew 7:21). The rich blessings of grace do not flow to those who seek secondly for the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33).

What about those who are almost persuaded? There is no record that King Agrippa ever became fully persuaded, for he had said to the apostle Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28). For ages, without end, Agrippa will cry out in the regions of the lost, "Oh, why did I not become fully persuaded, why did I not become a Christian?"

The rich young ruler went away from the presence of Jesus sorrowful because his riches became a stumbling block. Jesus knew that his riches would be a stumbling block and endeavored to show him a better way. The Scriptures give no record that this young man that Jesus loved ever returned to Him and became His follower. Many are the stumbling blocks that place Christ beyond reach in this our day. Stumbling blocks occur among mankind because of indiscreet choices and decisions.

To those whose earthly goals are earthly gains, the Day Star (Jesus) is hidden behind a clouded sky. The merchant man who, when he found the Pearl of Great Price (Jesus), sold all that he had and bought the Pearl of Great Price.

We find greater wisdom in the apostle Paul than we do in the wise man, Solomon, in his expiring days. "Though I might have also confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I might win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Philippians 3:4-11).

Some would frown on this consecrated life, but Solomon warned of a life without God: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days

come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). What are the evil days? The evil days are the consequence of a life without God, the days when the lungs begin to fill with fluid from the use of tobacco products, the days when the heart begins to fail because of addiction to alcoholic beverages, the days when marital problems begin to arise because of improper conduct relating to the marriage vows, and in finality, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

To the flesh, Paul's consecrated life would seem like an unhappy existence, but let us allow the testimony of Paul to sink down deep into our hearts: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake, we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35-39).

Consider Paul's consecrated life as he neared the day that would end his earthly sojourn, that day that he knew the executioner's sword would free soul from body, leaving him no longer betwixt two: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me in that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Timothy 4:6-8).

The apostle Paul was called to the greatest missionary effort in New Testament history, enduring a life of self-sacrifice unknown to many of earth's pilgrims. Persecution may have been Paul's thorn in the flesh for which he sought the Lord three times that it might depart from him. God answered these petitions by saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul's response reflected his consecration to the great mission of taking the gospel to the heathen: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (II Corinthians 12:9, 10).

Jesus said to all who would follow Him, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Paul's self-denial is probably unequaled among men.

Paul said, "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils

of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils of the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (II Corinthians 11:23-28).

From the day Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus, to the day that Nero ordered that the sword bring his life to an end, Paul was made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some" (I Corinthians 9:22).

Had the apostle Paul not most gladly submitted to the thorn in the flesh, the power of Christ would not have rested upon him, even as it has to this day. Only eternity will reveal the thousands that have cast off the yoke of bondage because Paul fought a good fight, he finished his course, he kept the faith.

Will you find Jesus? Are you willing to humble yourself and come to Him? Will you deny yourself and take up your cross daily and follow Him? Will you fight a good fight? Will you finish your course? Will you keep the faith? †

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

FAITH AND MIRACLES

PETER AND JOHN AT THE GATE BEAUTIFUL

Scriptures: Acts 3:1-8, 16.

Acts 3:1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

16 And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Memory Verse: And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.—Luke 5:17b.

Aim: To show that the apostles were vested with power to heal, as was their Master.

INTRODUCTION



WE MIGHT divide faith into three parts. First, we have the faith that an individual may exercise in his own behalf without any outside help. Then we have that kind of faith where two unite their faith in order to gain their purpose, and third, that faith in which an individual believes for another without his help. This latter kind is the faith that is described in this lesson. In order to help others to the blessings of divine healing, it is very necessary that we have a real compassion for them in their sickness. Jesus' success in healing was due in a great measure to His faithfulness in prayer and His compassion.

MEDITATIONS

FAITHFULNESS IN PRAYER MUCH NEEDED

—Acts 3:1—At the hour of prayer—There can be no question but that they were much exercised over the great victory that they had gained so recently on the day of Pentecost when so many were added to the young church. They had seen a mighty outpouring of the Spirit of God, such as had never been seen before. The influence of that great event was still coursing through their spiritual veins, and they felt equal to any occasion that might come before them.

A CASE OF HUMAN MISFORTUNE—Acts 3:2—Laid daily at the gate—His invalidism was so great that he had to be carried to and from the place of begging. Having been laid there daily, his pitiful condition was widely known, and thus a miracle wrought upon his body would influence a large number of people. The situation would seem more hopeless, but those things that seem impossible with men are no problem with God. **Verse 3—Seeing Peter and John—**Financially speaking, these two men were poor, but they must have had some appearance of prosperity or the beggar would not have asked an alms of them.

WORDS THAT INSPIRED HOPE—Acts 3:4—Look on us—Peter and John were not thinking about this man as they approached the gate. The beggar gained their attention by asking an alms, so Peter suddenly encouraged his expectation by asking him to look upon them. The words of Peter, "Look on us," carry weight. Something is going to happen. The beggar is filled with expectancy.

MEN WHO HAD SOMETHING TO GIVE—Acts 3:5—Expecting to receive—He usually received small sums of money, so that was his expectation now. His hopes were being built up; and he was experiencing one of his few pleasant moments, moments of anticipation. Apart from happiness, life means little to anyone, and the constant search of the heart is for that elusive treasure, happiness. He who has truly found Christ has found that elusive treasure. **Verse 6—Silver and gold have I none—**As far as silver and gold were concerned, Peter and John were as destitute as the beggar. But they had something to give that money could not buy. However, it seems that the gift of miracles resided with Peter alone, for here he states, "I give," not "We give." When he said, "Silver and gold have I none," surely the curiosity of the beggar was aroused, his anticipation, somewhat repulsed. Peter did not come in his own name,

but in the name of Jesus Christ. He had something to give, but it was what he had received; it did not originate with himself. It was necessary that every servant of God recognize Christ and always give Him His rightful place. "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:14).

FAITH THAT COULD NOT BE DEFEATED—Acts 3:7—Took him by the right hand—

The lame man knew little concerning the thing Peter was talking about. He did not rise at the command of Peter but rather sat there in bewilderment. He sought an alms, but what was this that was happening? But Peter had a faith that would not be defeated. When the man failed to rise to his feet, Peter immediately reached down and took the man by the hand and with physical force lifted him; and as he did so, God rewarded his faith and sent His healing power from heaven through his body. Feet that had been useless now were vitalized with strength. God did not create feet to be useless, and useless feet do not do the will of God. All feet should do the will of God; therefore, we should bring to all sufferers the marvelous gospel of healing, as Peter did.

FAITH REWARDED—Acts 3:8—Walking and leaping—We who can walk anywhere we please little appreciate the good use of our feet and ankles, but this man, who had never known what it was to walk, was so overjoyed at the experience that he leaped with joy, and he praised God mightily for the great "alms" that he had received at the hands of His servants. This happened at the hour of prayer, and many were gathered together at this hour; thus the great work of God was made widely known, for he was known as a beggar for so many years.

THE ALL-SUFFICIENT NAME—Acts 3:16—Faith which is by him—

This was a magnificent opportunity for Peter to give a convincing argument in behalf of the divinity of the Lord Jesus. Many there were adherents of the practice of the law and had spurned the name of Jesus, but here was another one of His very notable miracles. They thought that they were rid of the imposter forever, but here He was as much alive as ever, still doing marvelous miracles. It filled their minds with wonder and certainly filled their wicked hearts with conviction. Peter pressed the truth home to the hearts. He spoke with the same boldness to the sinners as he did to the afflicted one. The man actually was lame from his mother's womb, never had he walked, but now before them all he stood perfectly whole.

CONCLUSION

The influence of this miracle that Peter performed was great. A large crowd was in the temple. They were all well-acquainted with this man upon whom the miracle was performed. At once Peter began to preach to them, and it seems that the hour of prayer must have been greatly interrupted, for they arrived about three in the afternoon and continued on until eventide. The emotion and influence became so great that the rulers of the Jews became indignant and put the disciples in prison. However, their efforts were too late, for about 5,000 were persuaded of the truth by this incident and the preaching of Peter. The success that was experienced

on this occasion among the followers of Christ was not made possible by great personalities or trained men, for these men were ignorant and unlearned. The secret of their success lay in the fact that they had power with God.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What had just recently happened that raised the faith of Peter and John to such a high pitch?
2. Why is it that all Christians cannot perform miracles?
3. Did the crippled man exercise any faith?
4. Name three different divisions of faith.
5. Why did Peter take the lame man by the hand?
6. Consider the results of this miracle. †

SHADOWS OF GOOD THINGS

By the late Russell R. Byrum

(Part X)

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

PRIESTHOOD, or an attorneyship in sacred things, is one of the most ancient of religious institutions, and has been characteristic of almost every known religion. The first mention of a priest in the Bible is that of Melchisedec, king of Salem and priest of the most high God. To him Abraham paid tithes of the spoils from his battle with the kings. The priesthood of Aaron and his sons is the next mentioned of the true religion.

But the priests of heathen religions are often mentioned in the Bible and history. The priests of Egypt were a powerful and privileged class to whom Pharaoh gave a special portion of the land (Genesis 47:22). The king of Egypt honored Joseph, his prime minister, by giving him the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. Moses married the daughter of Jethro, priest of Midian. Four hundred and fifty priests of Baal ate at the table of the wicked queen Jezebel. Mention might also be made of the druids of Gaul and Britain, the Magi of Persia, the Sacerdotes of Greece and Rome, the caliphs of Mohammedanism, the medicine men of various savage tribes, and of the influential orders of priests in heathen lands today.

But why is priesthood thus coextensive with religion? Like the altar, that other most ancient religious institution, the priesthood is the answer to a fundamental need in man's religious nature as he is now constituted. The guilt of sin is upon his soul, and he feels himself unfitted to come into the presence of a holy God. Therefore he needs a daysman, an arbitrator, or a mediator to deal with his offended Creator for him. Not only do the ethnic religions ancient and modern have such a middleman, and of the true religion not only the Israelites, but, thank God, Christianity has its great High Priest, our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. He is the true mediator between God and men. He intercedes for us.

In the religion of the patriarchs no priesthood existed. Every man was his own priest for himself and family. Abel offered his own lamb. Noah officiated at

the altar after leaving the ark. Nothing is more characteristic of the life of Abraham than his altar to Jehovah, on which he himself laid the offerings. Job also offered burnt offerings for his sons: this may be accounted for by the fact that they were either in an undeveloped state of society or sojourners among idolaters. Certainly God's original design was that every man should have personal acquaintance with Him and worship Him directly. In view of this it has been suggested that Mosaism was a step backward in religion in this particular. But may we not rather allow that the spiritual-minded Israelite, like David, still had direct spiritual intercourse with God, and added to this and as an aid to it this typical priesthood to remind him of that true Priest greater than Aaron?

Also the existence of the priesthood would the more forcibly remind the sin-burdened Israelite of that awful truth which he already knew instinctively, that sin had separated between him and his God. He is too sinful to be looked upon by the holy eyes of Aaron in priestly dress God. He is not worthy to commune with his Lord. He is as the guilty criminal before the righteous judge. He is a fugitive fleeing before infinite justice. An impassable gulf yawns between him and his Maker, and he himself cannot bridge it. He is a rebel against his rightful Sovereign and needs a friend of that Sovereign to entreat for him. Like guilty Adam he would hide from God. He shrinks from the presence of the Holy One, and, like the terrified Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai when the voice of God spoke the Decalogue in tones of thunder, he tremblingly looks about for one who can approach the holy God for him, and says with them, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die."

On the other hand God also, desiring to become reunited to His sinful subjects, needs a middleman. He cannot sacrifice His infinite dignity and righteousness to receive to Himself vile sinners. If He was ever to forgive His ungrateful, unworthy creatures one must be found who could serve as a connecting link and who could bring man to God by way of atonement for a broken law. To unite God and man there must be a spiritual attorney who can lay His hand upon both. There must be one such as is but dimly foreshadowed in those ancient priests, who shall reconcile God to man by making man holy as God is holy.

The Levitical Priesthood

(Exodus 28, 29)

The priesthood in Israel is called the Levitical priesthood because the priests were from the tribe of Levi. The priesthood was the ministry of worship as the tabernacle was the place of worship for the Israelites. The priests had a very close connection with the tabernacle in its constitution and as a complement of it in that ancient religion of types and shadows. The tabernacle would have been useless and meaningless without a priesthood. So close was this relation that the inspired writer stops his description of the furniture of the tabernacle at the end of the twenty-seventh chapter of Exodus, before giving the description of the golden altar found in Exodus thirty, to devote the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters to the calling and consecrating of Aaron and his sons.

The command to Moses was, "Take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office" (Exodus 28:1). Aaron was to be the high priest, and the son's common priests. Viewing the Israelitish priesthood in its broadest phase, it contained three classes:

1. The whole tribe of Levi was a priestly tribe, and the Levites were divinely appointed helpers of the priests proper, to assist them in caring for and transporting the tabernacle from place to place, and in teaching the law to the people. Because of these important duties the Levites were given no regular inheritance in the land of Canaan, but were scattered among the other tribes and made dependent upon the tithes from the other twelve tribes for their living.

2. The common priests were of the sons of Aaron, who was of the priestly tribe of Levi. These were consecrated with Aaron to the sacred service of Jehovah, but it is worthy of notice that in the calling of them with Aaron it is said that "he" may minister in the priest's office. Aaron was *the priest*. They were priests only because of their relationship to their father *the priest*. They were merely his helpers in serving at the altar and in instructing the people in divine things.

3. The high priest, whose office was the basis for those of the other class, was the real mediator of the Mosaic religion. He stood between the sinful people and their holy God. He it was only who entered once each year into the holy of holies to make atonement and to intercede before Jehovah for them. He bore their names ever upon his breast. As far as that ancient service is concerned, there would have been no other priests if he could have performed this service alone.

Aaron and Melchisedec

In the Old Testament we read of two great priests, Aaron and Melchisedec. Much is said of Aaron, of his ancestry, call, anointing, duties, descendants, and death. But to Melchisedec a very small niche is given in the annals of Old Testament history. Turning, however, to the New Testament, we find him given a place of more prominence than is given to Aaron, and he is shown to be superior to Aaron, and typical of Christ in a special way as Aaron was not.

For but one brief instant Melchisedec appears on the scene of Old Testament history. He was a priest of Jehovah in the ancient city of Salem; and Abraham, the father of the priesthood of Aaron, therefore greater than Aaron, acknowledged that this extraordinary character was still greater than himself, as the writer of the Hebrew epistle reasons, by paying tithes to him. We do not know how this devout priest of the true God happened to be dwelling there among those idolatrous people; neither do we know anything of his birth, death, parentage, nor descendants. For the Aaronic priests it was necessary that they be able to trace their ancestry back to Aaron. But Jesus, the great High Priest, is not of the family of Aaron. Consequently He is described in the epistle to the Hebrews, quoting from the prophecy in the Psalms, as being "a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Aaron died and so could not continue to mediate for his people, but we have no

record of Melchisedec's death. In that his priesthood is apparently without beginning and without end, but perpetual, so it is reasoned that his priesthood is like that of Jesus. *Christ is a priest of the order of Melchisedec, but he exercises the office after the manner of Aaron.* Melchisedec well typifies the fact of Christ's continuous priesthood, but Aaron is a more exact type of Him as the true mediator between God and men. †

GENUINE CHRISTIANITY

Why does earthly, fleshly, sensual "Christianity" draw so many people? Because earthly, fleshly, sensual religion draws earthly, fleshly, sensual people, and there is a large pool available. Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

Genuine Christianity is demonstrated by the change in heart, which is manifested in the life of the individual—the new creature—"being then made free from sin and a servant of righteousness, "with the grace of God, "teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." All of these scriptures indicate that once we are saved, we are to live our lives in holiness, that being, in obedience to the teachings of the Word of God. As it is written in I John 2:4-6, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." It could not be more clearer. Followers of Christ are to follow Christ. They are to be holy in word, thought, and in deed every day. Yet, many churches teach just the opposite. They teach Christians sin in word, thought, and in deed every day. This is in direct conflict with what the Bible teaches.

So-called "sinning Christianity" is a broad way; it is the doctrine of false prophets, and Jesus was very clear concerning such—"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:13-20). Salvation is by faith, but Christianity should be seen by its fruit.

—Bro. Darrell Sanford
Hattiesburg, Mississippi †

LOVE

Message delivered 4/6/18

by Bro. Terry Deville



LET US TURN to Song of Solomon, chapter 8, verses 5-7: “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth that bare thee. Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.”

In this reading, you’ll find that there are some wonderful, wonderful examples of love’s value and love’s power. It’s amazing what real love, whether it be the love of God, or the love that He has placed in our hearts, can do and will do. I think one of the greatest gifts of salvation is knowing that my heart has been shed abroad with the love of God, and His love has been revealed to us.

I’ve seen love in its works. It’s a powerful, powerful force. It can touch the coldest heart. It can warm the coldest day. Real, pure love in action is a mighty, mighty positive force. God expressed it in the giving of His Son, and now He wants us to be able to express it to one another, to Him, and to the world. He didn’t give us this love just to keep to ourselves. True love loves to express itself, loves to show the object just how much it loves it. So thank God for real, pure love that only He can give.

Do you remember the song “Love Found a Pardon for Me”? A portion of it says—

Love sent the Savior from heaven,

Love beyond all degree.

Love paid the debt of atonement,

And love found a pardon [Praise the Lord!] for me.

Paul said, “Though I speak with the tongues of angels, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and have faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not [love], I am nothing.”

This real, pure love is more than a feeling. Love is manifested more than just in words. It’s in actions. It’s in deeds. It’s an expression of what you have in your heart toward others. Love can be felt. This powerful love is seen. If you have it, you can’t hide it. Either we have it, or we don’t. But the devil likes to come along and try to quench it. He just wants to pour a bucket of cold water on our love. Our love is so powerful that no water can quench our love for God or for one another. Let’s use this great love that God has placed in our hearts. We need it towards each other, and God is certainly deserving of it.

The Bible said to be careful not to let our love be with an ulterior motive. “Let love be without dissimulation” (Romans 12:9). Let it be real. Let it be pure, no hidden agenda. As a rule, people can see and feel the difference. This love is so pure and powerful that if we’ll let it go out to God and to others, it will make a difference in this world in which we’re living. I think we all want to make a difference. Remember what Jude said? “And of some have compassion, making a difference” (Jude 1:22).

Real “love worketh no ill to his neighbour” (Romans 13:10) and “the love of Christ constraineth us” (II Corinthians 5:14). In other words, the love of Christ controls my life. I’m glad His love is in control of our attitudes, our words, and our actions. Love will help you to tell somebody you’re sorry. Love will help you to say, “I wish I hadn’t said that.” Love will confess faults and say, “I’m sorry I held this attitude toward you.” That’s the kind of love people need to see expressed. I, for one, since I’ve had this treasure, owe it to everyone. I’d rather have an experience of real love than to hold a grudge against someone. A grudge and love don’t mix together. But I tell you what love can do: it can cover a multitude of sins. That’s how powerful and wonderful the love of God is and in our hearts. When it’s allowed to work, it’s a beautiful and powerful force in our lives.

Paul said it this way: “And yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.” That was the last verse in chapter 12 of I Corinthians. And we know that chapter 13, the love chapter, follows that verse. He was telling us that even with all the gifts that God bestows upon His people, yet we could have all these gifts, but we can’t beat living love’s way.

I preached a message at home some time back: “Doing It Love’s Way or Self’s Way.” There’s a difference. I want to do it love’s way. I don’t want an ounce of self in my life, in my words, in my actions. I don’t want people looking at me to think I’m something when I know I’m nothing. I am what I am by the grace of God. I don’t want to draw any attention to myself, because that is self. Self mars the beautiful force and power of love.

I was talking to Bro. Harley and somehow *self* came up. Do you know that self is our enemy? Self can hide itself in so many ways. It’s in the motive, deep down in the motive. It can be magnified, or it can be just the slightest bit of self. Self mars the beautiful image and power of love. Self doesn’t always mean malice or hatefulness. A lot of times we show it because it is our human nature. I said, “Bro. Harley, we have to look for it. It’s not like self just jumps out to you.” When you start looking for it and examining it, you might be surprised that a little bit of self might have been in that action, in that attitude, in that word.

Bro. Harley said, “Bro. Terry, you hit the nail on the head.”

Try it, and the more you can see it, the more you can’t deny it. Don’t we want to show the world God’s love and God’s way? Self ties God’s hands. Some greater than others. But when we deny self, guess what that does? It gives God opportunity to fulfill all His will in us. It was said of David that he was a man after God’s

own heart because he could fulfill all His will. I want that kind of heart. That's a heart of love that wants God to be magnified.

None of us are immune from self. Who is it up to recognize it and see it and then deny it? Even Paul said, "I die daily" (I Corinthians 15:31). If you want more of the blessings of the Lord, if you want more of the power of God, if you want a sweeter, deeper relationship with God, get self completely out of your way. When you look for it and find it, then all God wants you to do is just be honest with Him and put it on the altar and deny self. We owe God everything. We want Him to have all the honor, all the glory, all the praise, because it is He that went down into the wilderness of sin. What was He doing? He was looking for wanderers. He was looking for sinners. He was looking for those lost sheep that had wandered astray.

It's a beautiful reading. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness?" (Song of Solomon 8:5). What it's talking about here is that Jesus went down to the wilderness looking for all of us. Then when we heard His voice, we answered His call. Then what happened? We leaned on Jesus, and He brought us out of the sinful state of the wilderness. He is the one who brought us out of that state. I tell people back home, you surrender your heart and God will help you to come to the altar.

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" I had the long hair, the beard, the whole thing, but when I leaned on my Beloved, He led me to an altar of prayer. When I went back to work on Monday, the people said, in effect, "Who is this? Who in the world is this? This is not the Terry I used to know. He doesn't even smoke or curse. Matter of fact, when we're here smoking and taking a break, he's outside reading his Bible!" I was different. I had leaned on my Beloved, I had answered His call, and He brought me out of that wilderness. Although people thought it strange, I didn't care. I had the love of God in my heart. I was glad to tell them I had given my heart to God. Again, they were amazed because "who is this? He's not the same person he used to be." I was like a sheep gone astray. But Jesus went down into that wilderness of sin calling for me, and I answered, leaning on my Beloved, returning to the Shepherd and Bishop of my soul. Praise the Lord! I'm still leaning on the Lord. Are you still leaning on Him? I'm learning to lean. I'm so glad I can still lean on the Lord. Many days I lean on the Lord. Many, many days I have found strength and comfort and a different way of looking at things because I was leaning on the Lord.

What have I to dread? What have I to fear? I'm leaning on His everlasting arms. I have perfect peace because my Lord is so near, because I'm leaning on Jesus. Saints, there's no better leaning place in the time of sorrow, suffering, pain, people misunderstanding you, and on and on. Jesus knows better than ever. He's been through it all. Let me tell you, there's no friend like Jesus that we can lean on.

"Bro. Greg, you came up shouting, didn't you? You remember the day?" Those of us that went way out, when we came out of the wilderness we were amazed at this other world. The joy, the love, the peace that filled our souls! Let me tell you, He's just the same

today. He's still going into the wilderness calling people out. But He wants you to call out to Him, because it's a strong wilderness filled with dangers. You need to come out to where the Lord will bring you "leaning on her Beloved."

"I raised thee up." Isn't it amazing that God now is our Father! Who's raising you tonight? I appreciate my mother and father. But right now, God is my Father. He's nurturing me. He's teaching me. He's giving me understanding. I have this promise: I "know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). In the middle part of the next verse, it goes on to say that we are "conformed to the image of his Son."

God teaches us through many avenues and ways. He raises us. He nurtures us. But all these things that come to us in life, He is able to use them if we'll listen to Him and obey and trust Him. He's able to use them to conform us into the image of His dear Son. Look at verse 29. That was His whole plan, not only to bring us out, but to use the things of this world and life to conform us more into His image. You know what? You'll never reach the pinnacle. But the more we let Him have His way, the more He conforms us to the image of His dear Son.

Isn't it wonderful tonight that we can say "God's in charge of my raising. God's in charge of building me up, of nurturing me, of teaching me"? I thank God that He's in charge of that. That's even better than mama and daddy. Don't take that wrong; He uses mama and daddy. But just think, God is perfect. God is love. He's full of compassion, mercy, and He's raising us to be like Him! The Bible even says that we "have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15). We have the Spirit of His Son. That's why we can say God is my Father, and He's raising me and He's nurturing me. "I raised thee up under the apple tree" (Song of Solomon 8:5).

You know where Nathanael was? He was under a certain tree. No doubt he was communing with his Father, praying, meditating. Then someone came and got him and said, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:45). When Nathanael came, the Lord saw him and said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" (John 1:46). In his communing, in his interacting with the Father, God was working a great work in this man's life. Dear Ones, we need to give time to God so He can work in our lives. His presence is still the best place on the earth to be. It's still fullness of joy. At His right hand are pleasures forevermore. Take all the worldly pleasures; I'm enjoying the pleasures of God tonight.

Bro. Greg knows how much I love wildlife. He brought up on the webcam things in Africa, bears in Alaska. All of this is going on right now. The song says "this is our Father's world." I've enjoyed my Father's world so much since I've been saved. It's our Father's world. But again, we need the communing, we need the connection, we need to spend that time so that God can teach us and nurture us and bring us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The father takes the head. But we see the mother as well. "There thy mother brought thee forth" (Song of Solomon 8:5). The father takes the lead; he's the head. But the Mother, which is the church, has a part to play as well. After much travail and labor, she brings forth children. I think, next to Jesus, a mother's love is the greatest there is. There's a bond between a mother and her children that you just can't put words around. But the Mother, the church, has a work to do as well. "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26). The church is the Mother of all of us who are free tonight. It seems like the first word a little child wants to say is "mama." I guarantee you, they recognize her voice. They recognize her touch. It's special. Thank God for praying, godly, loving mothers. They have a lot to do with who we are. But let me tell you, that child responds to that mother's touch, that mother's voice. All the mother is doing is caring for it, taking care of it. She wants the very best for that child. Most mothers would die for their children. Children are a gift from God. The old-fashioned mother would have one child dangling on her hip while stirring the pot and cooking the dinner and another child clinging to her skirt. It even talks about that in the Bible, how the children would dangle from the mother's hip. I can't remember where the scripture is, but it's beautiful. Old-fashioned mothers had the spirit of sacrifice. Do you know what? Mothers, you don't need to get too modern. I remember old-fashioned mothers had something special. They had the spirit of sacrifice and love.

There is something special about a mother's love for her children. Church, this is what we want. We want to have a mother's love, the old-fashioned love for the children; not just the little children, but for the children. We're all children. We're part of the Mother. The church is the Mother of all of us all. We're part of the church with a mother. What a calling! We're the bride, the Lamb's wife. We should see each other as little children. Remember, we're part of the bride of Christ, the Mother of all the free. Do you ever wonder why you love her so much? She's your mother. Don't lose your identity and your vision of her. I know we're living in a weird time where a lot is messed up, but still the church is the Mother. We're a part of her. I see her, and she is beautiful.

Solomon is saying, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart." This is saying that our love be solemnized forever. Let nothing break the seal of this love that God has set upon our lives. Let our love be so strong for the Father, for the Son, for the Mother that when people see they can observe that "These people don't just have a profession. They have a real, real love. I can see the sign. I can see the signature there for the love that flows from their hearts." By all means, let nothing quench this great love for God the Father, for the Son, and for one another.

May the signature of God's love always be seen in our affections, in our thoughts, and in our actions. I want the signature of God's love to be stamped upon all of those. Shouldn't it be our goal to show the love of God to one another and to the lost of the world? Shouldn't that be the goal? It's easy to look down on people, but I believe the Lord loves people. I know hypocrites have a hidden agenda. That's a different story, but it's God

Almighty that reaches out to the outcast, the downtrodden. Again, if you had seen me, you wouldn't have thought there was any hope for me. He saw me and still loved me. I'm overwhelmed sometimes because of the signature of His love that He has put in our hearts that we have the privilege and honor to be able to show and express to people.

Peter said to the lame man, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee." Peter had the love of God in his heart. The love of God is a powerful, powerful magnet, and a powerful, powerful force. He has put the signature of His love on our hearts.

Solomon also said "love is strong as death." Jesus proved it. Jesus went into the horrible realm of death. Death is an enemy. I hate it. Jesus, because of this love, this love was stronger than death. Why did Jesus go into the horrible realm of death? To conquer it for us; to break its bands. He is the resurrection and the life. "Martha, do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ." Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me shall never die." He broke the bands of death, but He had to go into the realm. Death has been conquered. I don't have the same attitude toward death as I used to. Jesus has conquered it for me. He'll bring me right to it. Do you all believe that? We don't to have to face it alone. The love of God has made a way for us to go through that realm. Jesus tasted death for every man.

"Jealousy is cruel as the grave," our text says. Do you know the Bible says that God is a jealous God? There's a godly jealousy. It is cruel to God to let our love go out to other things that would cause us to be unfaithful to Him. Think about it. That's cruel to God. It actually pains God when our love starts going out to things more than for Him. For us to be unfaithful to God, to His Son, and to the church is cruel. I think if we'll comprehend more of God's love for us, we'll be extra cautious. We'd never entertain any thought of being unfaithful. I can't stand the thought of hurting or making God feel bad. He has feelings. It's cruel to Him for us to be unfaithful to Him.

Do you remember Bro. Barrett singing this? "I love Him too much to fail Him now. Too much to break my vow. For I promised the Lord that I would make it somehow, And now I love Him too much to fail Him now." I can just see him singing it. He was special to us. He had the love of God in his heart. He meant that. That's my testimony. I don't want to fail God. I love Him too much. If you love Him that much, you won't fail Him. If you stumble and make a mistake, be honest and confess it to God. That's not sin. Sin is turning away from God; rebelling. But sometimes we stumble. I'm going to be honest with God. "That was my fault, Lord; and I'll do whatever you want me to do." If I have to go and make it right with someone, it's because I love Him too much. I believe you do, too.

Fervent love is the kind that is needed. "Many waters cannot quench [this kind of] love" because it so intense, so powerful, so deep; "neither can the floods drown it." What are we talking about? We're talking about two kinds of love: *the love that God has for us* and *the love we have for God*. No matter the trials, the floods, the temptations, the things that would try to overwhelm

us, I'm going to keep my love focused on God. It shall be like coals of fire—fervent love for God. The devil would try to quench it and drown it out. But the love of God is so powerful. It conquers every flood. This love will not be quenched by any flood or anything Satan tries. The God of heaven will lift up a standard against him. That standard is that we love God with all our heart, soul, and mind.

Paul said, "Nothing shall separate us from His love to us." So whether it be agony, pain, or tribulation, the devil lies when he says "God doesn't love you." Nothing should separate us. That helps me to get over things. When I'm going through things that don't make sense and things are piling on, I know God still loves me. It lifts me up, because that's what matters the most to me. God loves me. Not even death is going to separate me. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38, 39). Jesus went down to the wilderness so all of these things could be opened up to us.

There are probably some here tonight that the Lord is sending out the call to. Just think about that. He wants to bring you up. He wants to take you out of the wilderness of sin and put you into peace and joy and righteousness in the Holy Ghost. He wants to put you in His kingdom, but not only that, He wants to show you His great love. He wants to put it in your heart so you can love God and love one another. It's available because Jesus went down into the wilderness to call you. All you have to do is to surrender your will and be willing to repent. You can lean on Jesus to come up out of the wilderness, then you'll have God as your Father, Jesus as your Friend, your Lord and Master. You'll have a church that will love you—the church of the living God—the Mother of the free.

Will you all please let the Spirit do its work tonight? If you want more love, it's available, too. Ask and you'll receive. We want more love, but what we want most of all is precious people to come out of the wilderness of sin, and get up on Mount Zion, where the air is pure and real.

May God bless you. †

WATCH OUR WORSHIP SERVICES LIVE!

As many of our readers know, we can be found on the internet at

www.wayoftruth.org

where in addition to reading past issues and other information, you can watch our general services every Sunday LIVE at 10:40 A.M and 6:00 P.M. E.D.T. Enjoy Spirit-filled singing and preaching. Also, our mid-week service at 7:00 P.M. Wednesdays is aired live. There is a chatroom where you can interact with us and share your prayer requests. Tune in and worship with us!

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



A DESPERATE PRAYER

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

"Mom," I grumbled, "I hate chickens!"

"'Hate' is a strong word," my mother replied.

"Well, I dislike them intensely," I said as I raised the bucket of eggs I'd gathered and thumped it down onto the kitchen counter.

"Watch it!" said my mother. "You swing the bucket around like that, and you'll have a mess of broken eggs to clean up!"

I continued my complaining. "Chickens are not smart at all, and they are always in a bad mood."

"I don't care what kind of mood they're in," said my mother, "as long as they lay eggs." She paused and looked at me sharply before continuing. "And don't be rough with the chickens just because you don't like them. You'll slow down their egg production if you upset them too much."

I sighed and got out the egg scale. Part of my job was to clean and sort the eggs after I gathered them. The larger eggs were sold in order to supplement our income.

"Did you have to take care of chickens when you were young?" I asked my mother.

"I sure did," she answered. "We always had chickens." She pointed to the egg scale I was using. "In fact," she said, "that is the very same egg scale we used. My mother gave it to me a couple of years ago after she stopped selling eggs."

"Didn't chickens get on your nerves sometimes?" I asked.

"On my nerves?" my mother repeated with a snort. "You'd better get stronger nerves if you let chickens bother you."

I cleaned the eggs in silence for a few moments, and then I heard my mother chuckle. "Did I ever tell you about the time I knocked out one of our chickens?" she asked.

"No!" I exclaimed. "You knocked out a chicken? How old were you?"

"Old enough to know better," she answered. "Probably about the age you are now—maybe ten or eleven years old."

"How did you do that?" I asked.

"Well," began my mother, "I was supposed to be cleaning the chicken house, but I was piddling and playing around instead of getting down to business right away."

I tried to picture my mother playing around, but it was impossible. My mother was always focused on the task at hand.

"I picked up a couple of rocks—just little ones—and started throwing them at the hens."

“Why?” I asked in surprise. As much as I disliked taking care of our chickens, I had never thrown rocks at them.

“Oh, I don’t know,” said my mother. “I just wanted to hear them squawk, I guess.” She paused, and then smiled. “My aim was just a little too good. I threw a rock and hit one of the hens right in the head!”

I gasped. “In the head!” I said. “What happened?”

“She keeled right over,” said my mother. “Her eyes closed, and she fell on the ground. I ran over to her and shook her a little bit, but she just lay there, limp as could be.”

In my mind’s eye, I could see my mother kneeling beside the chicken, stroking its feathers, trying to wake it up.

“What did you do?” I asked.

“I prayed for that chicken,” my mother said. “I knew if it was dead, I was in big trouble with my mother. What had happened was my fault, but I prayed, anyway. I prayed hard!”

“Was the chicken dead?” I asked.

“She appeared to be dead,” said my mother, “but when I lifted her up to throw her over the fence, she opened her eyes and came to! She got up and went over to the chicken feed and started pecking at it like nothing had ever happened!”

“You must have felt desperate, praying for that chicken,” I said.

“I was desperate,” my mother agreed, “and I sure was glad when that hen got up on her feet.” She paused and gave me a serious look. “But throwing rocks at the chickens was downright silly to begin with. I learned a lesson, all right. Sometimes we end up asking God to get us out of a situation we should have avoided in the first place.”

This month’s wise saying comes from Proverbs 28:5b, which says, “They that seek the Lord understand all things.” We can always seek the Lord when we need help. Sometimes our own foolishness gets us into trouble, and we must ask the Lord to help us solve a problem we have caused. But God is a kind and compassionate Father. If we keep a humble attitude, He will help us learn from our mistakes. As we seek to become more like God, we will grow into a greater understanding of how to live the kind of life that glorifies Him.

Activity

Which Bible character ...

1. _____ prayed fire down from heaven as a witness to the prophets of Baal?
2. _____ was thrown into a den of lions because he prayed to God?
3. _____ prayed that God would give her a son, and promised to give him back to God?
4. _____ prayed that a Shunammite woman’s son would be restored to life?
5. _____ saw a vision from heaven as he prayed on the housetop?

July 2022

Answer to Last Month’s Activity

1. “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; **he shall not stand before mean men**” (Proverbs 22:29).
2. “Thou hast commanded us to keep **thy precepts diligently**” (Psalm 119:4).
3. “Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be **found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless**” (II Peter 3:14).
4. “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently **seek him**” (Hebrews 11:6). †

INDEPENDENCE DAY QUOTES THAT ENCOURAGE US TO STAND UP FOR WHAT’S RIGHT

“Independence Day: freedom has its life in the hearts, the actions, the spirit of men and so it must be daily earned and refreshed—else like a flower cut from its life-giving roots, it will wither and die.”—Dwight D. Eisenhower

“America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, on imagination and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand.”—Harry S. Truman

“I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”—Patrick Henry

“In the truest sense, freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved.”—Franklin D. Roosevelt

“Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.”—John F. Kennedy

“We must be free not because we claim freedom, but because we practice it.”—William Faulkner

“This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.”—Elmer Davis

“Patriotism is easy to understand in America. It means looking out for yourself by looking out for your country.”
—Calvin Coolidge

“Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth.”—George Washington

“Freedom makes a huge requirement of every human being. With freedom comes responsibility.”
—Eleanor Roosevelt

“All great change in America begins at the dinner table.”—Ronald Reagan

“God bless America, my home, sweet home.”
—Irving Berlin †

The New Birth

Radio message by G. E. Tyler



ON OUR broadcast, we are considering the thought, "The New Birth." I'd like to read a portion of scripture from the third chapter of the book of St. John—

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, 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 answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (St. John 3:1-8).

Many people have heard the term "Ye must be born again." Certainly, that is a biblical truth. Therefore, the Church of God stands for, and believes in the new birth. But just what is the new birth? The *new birth* is "being born again." That term has been used so loosely in our present world that people are not clear as to what it means to be born again. To be born again goes farther than a mere profession.

This man Nicodemus was a very religious man. He was part of the Sanhedrin, if I understand correctly. He was a Pharisee which was the strictest sect of the Jews' religion. He had a profession of religion, but he was not born again. Therefore, Jesus taught him this beautiful lesson as recorded in St. John, chapter 3.

In the few moments that we have on our broadcast, we would like to consider the new birth and what it means to be born again. We want to break down the term *born again* into two separate parts. First, the *born part* and secondly, the *again part* of it.

Everyone knows what it means to be born, and a child when it is born, it is brought into life. It begins to breathe and move about. It begins to grow. These things are all part of life. Birth is the beginning of life—the impartation of life.

Beloved, *to be born again* is a second giving of life. This is what confused Nicodemus as Jesus was teaching him. He asked the Master if a man had to go inside his mother's womb and be born again the second time. Nicodemus, like so many people, think of things in terms of the flesh, in terms of the physical world, but Jesus was speaking not of the flesh. He was speaking of the Spirit, and He pointed out that He was speaking of the Spirit.

We believe and teach that when an individual is born, when he actually becomes a life, he is born not only physically, but he is also born spiritually. We believe that it is the spirit of man which makes the body alive, for we are told in the Bible that the body without the spirit is dead. So when a person is born, he is not only physically alive, but he is also spiritually alive.

In the spiritual sense, life and death is dependent on the spirit's condition towards God. *Death* is "separation from God." *Life* is "connection with God." So every child that is born into this world is connected to God. Its life came from God, and it is innocent in God's sight.

Now what happens to an individual to separate him from this condition of life? Well, sin, we are told in the Bible, separates man from God. "Your sins," Isaiah said, "hath separated you from your God." So sin is what separates an individual, a soul, a spirit from the favor and presence of God. Hence, comes spiritual death.

What is sin? *Sin* is "a transgression of the law," but in the biblical sense, "a known transgression," for sin is imputed unto us when we knowingly transgress. A little child who is innocent might do something that's wrong, but as long as it does not know, sin is not imputed. But when an individual comes to a place when he knows right from wrong, and knowingly chooses wrong, sin slaves that individual.

Do you remember Adam and Eve in the beginning? God said to them, "In the day that you sin, you shall die. In the day that you eat of the fruit of that forbidden tree, you shall die." That's exactly what happened. They died spiritually. Sin separated them from God, and God physically separated them from the Garden of Eden.

Paul said, in one place, that before he knew the commandment, he was alive, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and "I died." Sin separates from God. Sin is spiritual death. Being born again is being brought from the state of death back into life the second time. Born again. Every one of us were born physically and spiritually when we came into this world.

Let me digress just for a moment. We believe, too, that a child when it comes forth from the mother's womb is really approximately nine months old. I know we celebrate that day as its birthday, but an individual actually comes into existence when there is a uniting of cells, and God breathes into that uniting the breath of life. Without life, the child could not form within the mother's womb; therefore, we feel and believe and teach that when a child is slain in the mother's womb (abortion), it is actually murder—killing an individual.

As I said earlier, we believe that when we are brought into existence physically, God imparts life to us spiritually, but when sin comes into the life of individuals and

they knowingly do wrong, and knowingly transgress God's Word, they die spiritually. They need to be born again. We all know what again means. *Again* means "again; not the first time." A second and a third time could be termed under the word *again*. I believe the Bible teaches us that even after we are born again, if we commit sin as we did the first time, death is imparted to us again, and we need to be born again. Whenever we are dead and separated from God, we need to be born again.

We are told in the Bible, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This translation comes into the life of all who are born again. They are not the same individuals when they are born again. Being born again is not just a profession of religion. It's not just professing with your lips that you believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Being born again is an actual change that comes into your life, and your dead life (dead in trespasses and sins) is passed away, and you are resurrected in Jesus Christ.

We believe in a spiritual resurrection. We believe that Jesus taught a spiritual resurrection. "For every one that hearth me shall come forth," Jesus said. He spoke of it in two ways: "They shall come forth in the last day from their graves," of course, but also, "They shall hear and live." In other words, they shall be brought back to life because sin had separated them from God. They needed to be born again.

I want you to notice verse 8 in our scripture text of St. John 3. Jesus said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." What was the Master speaking of? He was speaking of evidences of being born again. You know when the wind is blowing, not necessarily because you can see the wind, but you can see what the wind does. So it is with individuals who are truly born again. They do not conduct themselves in the same way. They do not lie and cheat anymore. They do not commit sin anymore. No, Beloved, they are translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

Paul said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This is the born again experience. If we are truly born again, there is a change in our lives. The things we used to do, we do them no more; the things we used to say, we say them no more. Beloved, don't be deceived. Whatsoever we sow, that shall we also reap.

We want you to understand and know that when we say the Church of God believes in the new birth, we are talking about an experience with God. We are talking about a change in an individual's life. We are talking about Jesus Christ reigning in the life and heart of an individual.

We are told in the book of Titus, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." So the Church of God believes, teaches, and lives the born again experience. †

July 2022

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, 6:00 A.M.

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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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James Arch, Pastor

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THE CHURCH OF GOD STANDS FOR

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

YOU SHOULD KNOW MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH OF GOD

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

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COMING MEETINGS

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Church of God, Carmichael, California
September 1-4, 2022, Lord willing
Bro. David Goble, Host Pastor

HATTIESBURG FELLOWSHIP MEETING
Bellevue Church of God
2802 Hwy 589, Hattiesburg, Mississippi
September 2-5, 2022, Lord willing
Bro. Darrell Sanford, Host Pastor

ESCONDIDO CAMP MEETING
1863 Harmony Grove Rd.
Escondido, California
November 9-13, 2022, Lord willing
Bro. John Romero, Host Pastor