

The Way of Truth

Vol. 80

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

No. 3

Your Life is Ebbing Away!

“It is appointed unto men once to die,
but after this the judgment.”

ARE YOU READY?

See page 3

March 2022

THE EFFECTS OF HAVING A FEAR OF GOD

THE BIBLE says in Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Unfortunately, we are living in a day and age when the majority of people have no fear of God before their eyes. This has produced a generation where God and the Bible have less and less of an influence on the morals and lives of the masses and allows the powers of darkness to have preeminence. The result is a world that is suffering because people are oblivious to the fact that they are sacrificing the eternal blessings which a fear of God brings for the curse of enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season.

Most people have a wrong conception of just what the fear of God is! Let me point out what the fear of God is NOT—it does not mean that I am afraid of God because He is cruel and hard. It does not mean that I fear that God means to do evil unto me. Nor does it mean I believe God is looking for an opportunity to punish me. All these ideas stem from a miscomprehension of the nature of God.

What is the fear of God? It is a respect of God's sovereignty and His right to tell us how to live. It is an acknowledgment that we all belong to God. As the Psalmist said in Psalm 24:1, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." The fear of God is an acknowledgment that God means what He says in His Word.

The apostle Paul proclaimed in 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." A fear of God produces worship and adoration of the Lord for who He is. It causes people to have an awareness of His all-seeing eye. A fear of God causes an individual to realize he must give an account of his life to Him. The fear of God produces holy living, as our text makes plain, "Fear God and keep his commandments." There's also a powerful statement in Proverbs 16:6, "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil."

The fear of God produces certain things in the life of the believer:

It causes the individual to cleanse himself. II Corinthians 7:1—"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

It causes the individual to be submissive. Ephesians 5:21—"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

"Let no man be so tenacious of his own will or his opinion in matters indifferent, as to disturb the peace of the Church; in all such matters give way to each other, and let love rule. In the fear of God—setting Him always

before your eyes, and considering that He has commanded you to love one another, and to bear each other's burdens; and that what you do in this or any other commanded case, you do as unto the Lord—Selected.

Another effect produced by a fear of God is that God has promised that all will be well! Ecclesiastes 8:12—"Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him."

The wise man reiterates basically the same in Proverbs 22:4—"By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life." Those who fear God are left wanting nothing. Psalm 34:9—"O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him."

The fear of God, coupled with the comfort of the Spirit of God, edifies the church. Acts 9:31—"Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

The fear of God brings protection. Psalm 34:7—"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

Having a fear of God opens the way for salvation. Psalm 85:9—"Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land." Psalm 145:19—"He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them."

It opens God's mercy toward the family of man. Psalm 103:11—"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." Luke 1:50—"And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation." Psalm 147:11—"The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy."

Pity is "sympathetic or kindly sorrow evoked by the suffering, distress or misfortune of another." Psalm 103:13—"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

The soul that fears God keeps His commandments. Deuteronomy 13:4—"Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him."

Let us look into Ecclesiastes 12:13 and 14 a little closer: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

There are reasons why our nation and we as individuals should fear God. First of all, He will bring every work into judgment. This is confirmed by Revelation 14:6, 7, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

This includes every secret thing—I Corinthians 4:5, "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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

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come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

This includes both the good and the evil—II Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

The fear of God can be taught. Our present generation has been neglected on this point. Psalm 34:11—"Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Psalm 111:10—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever." Proverbs 1:7—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

Let us see the fear of God and its effects more manifest in this coming year that we might set the example for others to follow, and teach the fear of God to our children and our children's children that we might enjoy the positive effects in generations to come. †

OUT OF BOX 88

Dear Saints,

I want to thank you for *The Way of Truth* that I get each month. I'm sending an offering to help with this good word. *The Way of Truth* has helped me a lot in my walk with the Lord. I got saved when I was 22 years old and I am now 92. May God's blessing be with you.—J. H., Kentucky

GREETINGS FROM AFRICA

Beloved Brother,

With much gratitude to God Almighty, I hereby wish to extend my sincere greetings of Christian love to you all in Jesus' name. With this, I am wishing you all a Happy New Year of 2022.

Therefore, as we endeavor to go through this year, we pray that the Lord will turn things around for our good in Jesus.

Below are the indispensable things:

H — hear God's Word (Isaiah 55:3; 54:8; Proverbs 7:2, 3)

A — answer God's call (Isaiah 6:8; Proverbs 4:4-6)

P — possess purity (Matthew 5:8)

P — promises to claim (II Corinthians 1:20; 7:1; Romans 15:8)

Y — yield to God (Romans 6:12; Colossians 3:5; I Peter 2:24)

N — no condemnation (Romans 8:1-34; 3:18; John 5:20-24)

E — enter into His rest (Hebrews 4:9-11)

W — walk in love (Ephesians 5:2; John 13:34; I John 3:11, 15)

Y — your tongue is a tree of life (Proverbs 15:4; Revelation 2:7)

E — example of righteousness (I Timothy 4:12-16; Titus 2:7)

A — ask in faith (James 1:5,6; Mark 11:24; Matthew 7:7-11)

R — rejoice in the Lord always (Philippians 4:4; I Thessalonians 5:16; Luke 10:20; Romans 12:12)

Yours in the love of Christ,

Chuks Uzor, Nigeria †

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



QUESTION: Would you please give me an explanation of Nehemiah 8:5-7?

ANSWER: “And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place.”

Ezra read the Word to them. The various ones mentioned helped them understand its meaning and the people bowed in respect to God, a sign of their submission to Him. We are not to think that God cannot, or will not hear us unless we bow to the ground. We must be humble and submit to His will in all things. It is good to bow or kneel when praying.

QUESTION: What is the meaning of the deity of Christ?

ANSWER: *Deity*, in part, means “the nature and essence of the Supreme Being, the Godhead.” So when people speak of the deity of Christ, they are saying that He was more than a good man, or a good teacher; more than just a holy man. He was, and is, God, the living Word. (See John 1:1-14 and Colossians 1:12-18.)

QUESTION: Is the Godhead three spirits?

ANSWER: Paul says there is only one Spirit, meaning of course the Holy Spirit. However, all that are in the spirit world are spirit beings. The angels are ministering spirits. Even the redeemed, Jesus says, in eternity will be as angels; that is spirit beings.

QUESTION: Please explain Revelation 20:10. How long will they (the devil and the sinners) be in the lake of fire?

ANSWER: The dragon spoke of in Revelation is a symbol used to represent paganism (see Revelation 12:9), but to answer your question, the verse says, “forever and ever.”

QUESTION: In Romans 13:1-3, we are told to be subject to the government. Is it the government of the church or the government of the world?

ANSWER: Paul is speaking of civil rulers in these verses. If everyone obeyed this command, we would have greater peace in our world. There may be some

things hard to understand since some rulers are cruel, but Christians are not to return evil for evil.

Possibly, a few quotes from Adam Clarke would help:

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. This is a very strong saying, and most solemnly introduced; and we must consider the apostle as speaking, not from his own private judgment, or teaching a doctrine of present expediency, but declaring the mind of God on a subject of the utmost importance to the peace of the world. ... Let every man be obedient to the civil government under which the providence of God has cast his lot.

“For there is no power but of God. As God is the origin of power, and the supreme Governor of the universe, he delegates authority to whomsoever he will; and though in many cases the governor himself may not be of God, yet civil government is of him.”

QUESTION: Do you believe the spirit of divination in churches to be from God?

ANSWER: There are many who claim to have revelations and visions from God that are under the power of Satan. From the standpoint of the Bible, the Scriptures use the word “divination” in reference to false systems, to the working of false spirits—see Acts 16:16-18. Now as to foreseeing or foretelling some future event, Jesus did say that the Holy Spirit would show us things to come. In the Scriptural sense, this would come under prophecy. I do not know of any of the Holy Spirit’s work being referred to as “divination.”

QUESTION: Please explain Isaiah 58:4, “Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.” How can I fast without making my voice to be heard on high?

ANSWER: We need to look at the entire verse to get the answer. The first part reads, “Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness.”

To have your voice heard on high, or in other words, to get your prayers answered, you must fast with a pure heart and with pure motives. These people were fasting to accomplish their own selfish and evil purposes. God will not be moved by such fasting. Again, to have your voice heard on high you must be honest before God; and what you are seeking must be to the glory of God.

QUESTION: Is a deacon a minister or an elder? If he is a minister, should I think that he has a higher office than a minister who is just an elder?

ANSWER: Not in the full sense of the word. A deacon is a helper, usually a helper to a pastor in a local congregation.

The word *elder* can be used when you speak of someone older in the faith, but I think, usually, in the New Testament scriptures, the word *elder* is used for ministers, leaders, overseers, etc.

No deacon has a higher office than a minister. When you speak of elders, meaning ministers, you are not speaking of deacons. Again, the office of a deacon is a pastor’s helper—in spiritual and temporal matters. †

ARE YOU READY?

Message delivered 01/23/22 by Bro. Greg Tyler



OUR TEXT comes from Luke, chapter 12, beginning with verse 37: “Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.” The title of my thoughts this morning is, “Are You Ready?”

We know what it means to be ready. When Mom or Grandma is fixing a meal, we get excited, but we don’t want to partake of it until it’s ready. Bread is in the oven, and after a while, it’s taken out. Then comes the call, “Dinner is ready.” Those are sweet words.

You young people know what it’s like to get ready for a test. You just can’t do nothing. You have to prepare for it. You have to get *ready* for the test.

One thing I miss in recent years is being able to travel. I loved to go to Jamaica, Honduras, Cayman, and the Philippine Islands. I’m unable to do that now. Whenever we want to make a trip, we have to do some planning. We can’t just go. We have to buy our tickets, prepare our suitcases, and have our passports. Then we’re *ready* to go.

You can ask Sis. Desiree what it’s like to get ready for a wedding. There’s a lot of planning and a lot of preparation for the big day. Flowers, dresses, caterers, etc.—so much needs to be done to be *ready*.

We know that even marriage itself needs preparation. Not all people that get married are ready to get married. It takes some maturity and some steps in life to get ready to be married.

But I’m not going to talk this morning about a meal or an exam or a big trip or a wedding. I’m going to talk to you about the judgment day.

Are you ready is a good question for all of us to consider. I’m not asking that question to criticize or to find fault, but just to challenge us. Are you *ready* for the judgment day?

Matthew 16, verses 26 and 27 says, “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” There is coming a judgment day. Every one of us will give account for the lives that we have lived. The Bible says, “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”

II Corinthians 5:10, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive

the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” We must all appear. Every one of us will appear. Are we ready for that appearance? When is it going to happen? We don’t know. It’s unknown. The day and the hour is unknown when Jesus is coming back. It’s unknown to us how long we’ll live. Jesus said in John 7:6, “My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.” We could go at any time. There’s no guarantee we’ll see tomorrow, so it behooves us to be *ready* today—this very hour—this very moment. We won’t have a day or a week or a month to prepare. When we’re called into judgment, it will be immediate. As we are, that’s the way we’ll be found.

When you ask the question, Are you ready? so many answer, “I think so; I hope so.” This is too important to use those terms! I’m troubled sometimes when people come down to the end of their lives, and you ask them, Are you ready? and many times they’ll simply just say, “Yes, I’m okay.” It makes you wonder. By saying, “I am ready to meet the Lord,” we’re saying something. That’s a big statement to make.

I have six points of readiness that I want to go over this morning:

Point number 1: *to be ready, we must be born again*. There’s no question about it. There’s no other way. There’s only one Savior, and that’s Jesus Christ. Every man has sinned and needs a Savior. We could say on the judgment day, “I attended services at the Church of God on Point Salem Road.” That’s good in its place, but that’s not sufficient. That doesn’t mean you’re ready. There are people who attend services here who are not ready. To be ready, you must be saved. You must have salvation. You must have your sins taken away. It’s more than shaking a preacher’s hand or signing a decision card. You must make a change in your life. Give your heart to Christ. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature” (II Corinthians 5:17). There will be evidence of being born again.

To be ready is to say, “I’m saved, I’m born again. I asked Jesus to forgive me of my sins, and by faith, I believe that He did. He died on the cross for me.” If you have that experience, you’re ready! Thank God for it! Thank God that every one of us can be made ready. God has provided every provision for us to be ready, but if you’re not saved, you’re not ready. I want you to know that when the time comes and you’re called into judgment, there will be no time to prepare then. Now is the time. Today is the day of salvation. Now is the accepted time. Now is when you need to make preparation. Now is when you must be ready. There’s only one Savior. Mohammed can’t save you. Going through a form of Buddhism or Hinduism or any of those eastern reli-

gions is worthless. There's only one Savior—that is Jesus Christ. He died for every man. If you want to say, "I'm ready to meet Him in the Gloryland," you have to be saved. It's not enough to know Christians or to live a moral life. That's not good enough. "Ye must born again," Jesus said to Nicodemus. The same is true for us today. To be ready, we must be born again. We must be saved. If we are saved, we are among the most blessed people on the face of the earth.

Point number 2: *we must be living a life free from imputed sin*. What do I mean by "imputed sin"? The Bible uses the term *imputed* for sins you are responsible for. Romans 4:8 says, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." It's possible to do something that is wrong and not know it. God does not hold you guilty of that; but if you do something which you know you should not do because the Word of God condemns it, that is a sin of commission which you are responsible for, and it is imputed unto you. When you refuse to do that which you know you are commanded by God to do, that is also imputed to you. It is a sin of omission. If you're guilty of sin, you're not ready. You might have been born again five or ten years ago, or last year, or last week, but the question is, Are you living without sin today? By the grace of God you can. This message is foreign to most people. Even though they're associated with a form of Christianity, they don't believe you're able to live above sin. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4). When you become a Christian, you have the power to make right decisions.

Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Sin brings death. Some people like to claim, "Well, I keep 50% or 75% of the commandments. There are only a few things that I do wrong." But the Bible teaches that if you commit one sin, you're guilty of all.

Turn to James, chapter 2, verses 10 and 11: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." That's Bible! If you're guilty of one imputed sin, it causes you not to be ready. If you commit one sin, you need to repent of it immediately to be right in the sight of God. By the grace of God, we can live above sin. I can't live above sin by myself, and you can't live above sin by yourself, but with God with us, He gives us the power to overcome temptation and live holy.

Point number 3: *to be ready, you must be walking in all the light that you know*. That's when you hear the truth, you understand it, and you're responsible for it. You then must put it into practice in your life. Before I was saved, I was smoking and drinking and doing other things, but when I got saved and I heard that those things were wrong, I ceased to do them. Thank God for it! John said, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." So we need to walk in the light that's brought to our attention.

A person is not responsible for what he does not know. That's why we can't judge people by appearance only. We have been blessed to know the truth of modesty. It's God's will for men and women to dress modestly, but if we see people dressed immodestly, we can't automatically assume that they're lost, because they might not know. We are only responsible for that which we know.

The same is true of sanctification. We know we need sanctification—becoming filled with the Holy Spirit. We need to be filled with the Spirit. That's a truth we preach here continuously in this congregation. But because we might meet someone out there in the world that is not sanctified, that person may not have heard about it, or know of it, so that person might still be justified in the sight of God. One thing for sure: to be ready to meet Him, we need to be walking in the light of the gospel. We need to be born again, free from sin, and walking in the light as it is revealed to us.

I don't suppose anyone could preach on being ready without referring to the Parable of the Ten Virgins, as found in Matthew, chapter 25. I'd like for you to turn there now. I'll bring out a couple points there. Matthew 25:1-13: "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them [these were not prepared; they were not *ready*]: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

All ten of those virgins had the intent of being ready, but only five of them were prepared. Only five of them were up-to-date. A lot of times *oil* referred to in the Scriptures refers to the Holy Spirit. So we could say, five of them had the approval of the Holy Spirit and were filled with the Spirit, but five of them were not. Five of them were unprepared and wanted those that had prepared to share with them. No one else can get saved for you, no one else can get prepared for you, and no one else can be *ready* for you. You have to make yourself ready. Every man is responsible for his own soul. While the foolish virgins went out to get oil for themselves, the bridegroom came while they were gone. It was too late. The door was shut. This just shows us and emphasizes the fact that we need to be prepared now. We won't have time to go out and buy oil, as it were. We won't have time to go out and get additional help. The help is available now. We need to be at a place

where we can say, "I'm ready to go. I'm ready, by the grace of God."

Point number 4: *to be ready, there can be no hatred in your heart towards anyone.* You can't be ready in the sight of God and have hatred for any one person on the face of the earth, no matter what that person may have done or said about you. If there's a seed or root of bitterness in your heart, and hatred in your heart for someone, you're not ready. You have to deal with that. "Oh, Bro. Greg, you don't know what that person did to me and said about me." It doesn't matter. What did we do to Christ? Yet, He forgave us. In order to be ready, our hearts have to be free from any hatred.

Notice First John 3:15: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer [that's the Bible.]: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." So, again I say, if you have hatred in your heart, you're not ready. We want to be *ready*. We want to be ready today, and we want to be ready tomorrow, of course, but today we have to make sure there's no hatred in our hearts. If there is, then you need to come and ask the Lord to take it away.

Point number 5 is closely connected to it: *to be ready, there can be nothing between you and a brother or a sister.* There can be no animosity, no conflict. If there's a conflict, it needs to be dealt with. You need to take the humble route to make sure there's nothing between you and a brother or a sister. If there is, you need to take care of it before the judgment day comes. Colossians 3:12-14: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."

Does any man have a quarrel? Quarrels and conflicts will come, but if any man have a quarrel against any, let him with forgiveness heal that quarrel. Take the humble route. There can be nothing in our hearts between us and a brother or a sister. This goes right down to the home. There can't be anything between a husband and a wife. To say "I'm ready" means that I'm ready with the relationships that I have—people that I deal with and know—my wife, my family, my co-workers, the church family. Name them all. I'm not going to allow anything to come between me and a brother or a sister. I'm not going to allow anything to come between me and my wife. Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Things will happen between husbands and wives. Where there are two people living in the same home, at times things will get on each other's nerves, and things will happen, but we can't let those things get out of place and cause us to have a root of bitterness against our wife or our husband. If you're going to stand and say, "I'm ready," that means you're ready with all your relationships. You're not leaving anything undone.

Matthew 5:23, 24, says, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy

brother, and then come and offer thy gift." "Oh, Bro. Greg must know something is going on in the congregation." I don't know anything that's going on among brethren in this congregation. I'm just preaching you a message from the Word of God. The essence of this message is to be ready. Don't allow anything to come between you and a brother or a sister, you and your wife, or you and your children. Our unsaved children can sometimes upset us and cause us grief, and if we're not careful, there can spring up a seed of bitterness. When bitterness tries to come up, we can't let it happen. We have to keep the way clean. We have to keep forgiveness in play. Remember that our enemy is the devil, and he is always trying to drive a wedge between us and our fellow man.

Point number 6: *to be ready in the sight of God means, nothing is intentionally neglected.* All of us can grow. All of us can learn. The Bible says, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." So there is growth for all of us. There are places in our lives where we can do better, but we can't knowingly neglect things and be right in the sight of God, especially when they are the things of the Spirit.

Hebrews, chapter 2, verses 1-3: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."

We cannot intentionally neglect our salvation. Being saved is a wonderful thing. It brings joy, peace, and contentment, but there are struggles and battles. We do have an adversary. There's a battle that's going on, and if we're not careful, we can neglect our salvation. What do I mean by that? We cannot intentionally neglect our personal devotion to God. We cannot intentionally neglect our prayer life. We need to pray every day. Every day! We must study the Scriptures on a consistent basis every day. We cannot knowingly and willingly and intentionally neglect those and be right in the sight of God. Those are our connections to God. That's our relationship with God.

To be ready, we cannot neglect coming to the house of the Lord. We cannot neglect our attendance in the services. If you're sick, stay home. We don't want to spread sickness here. If you're not sick, you need to be at your post of duty. Every one of us has a post of duty in the services. Every one of us has a responsibility of worshiping God and getting something from Him. We cannot forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. If we do, we are not *ready*.

We cannot neglect caring for our fellow man. There are different scriptures that refer to this. The Parable of the Good Samaritan is one. I'll call your attention back to Matthew 25. I can hardly read these scriptures without being moved. To be ready, we cannot neglect caring for our fellow man. Matthew 25:31-46: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations:

and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

We cannot be ready and knowingly neglect our fellow man. We cannot be ready and close our eyes to the needs around us. I John 3:17 says, "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" We cannot be selfish. If we're ready to meet the Lord, it means that we have love for our fellow man, and we're conscientiously doing what we can to help our fellow man. This congregation has been very good through the years on this point, but this is still real. When we stand before God and say, "I'm ready," we need to have fed those who were hungry, clothed those who were naked, visited those who were sick, and in prison. We need to be able to affect our fellow man in a positive way, because if we don't, listen to the rest of this reading: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

Does anyone else feel a burden along this line? A desire to help our fellow man in a greater way? I wonder sometimes, as pastor, if we're doing enough as a congregation. We're doing a lot, but are we doing enough? To be ready, we need to have fulfilled God's plan in us affecting our fellow man in a positive way. We cannot leave things undone.

We have the Parable of the Talents. The master gave one of his servants five talents; to one servant, two talents; and to one servant, one talent. You know the parable. When the master came back, the one with five talents had five more; the one with two talents had gained two more, and they were commended for it. But the one that had one talent, buried it, and what did the master say to him? He called him a slothful servant and condemned him to hell fire. We can be condemned

by neglect and not doing what we have the ability to do.

Matthew 23:23, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." We cannot neglect the weightier matters and leave them undone. We need to pay tithes. That's a part of the Christian's responsibility, but we cannot neglect to leave undone "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

We need a readiness of mind every day of our lives. This is an ongoing thing: to make sure that we are ready to meet the Lord today. The saints are the finest people on the face of the earth. From time to time, I give a challenge. We have a challenge this morning. Are we *ready*? Are we satisfied? Acts 17:11 says, "These [in Berea] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." We need to search ourselves every day with all readiness of mind, and search the Scriptures to make sure we are *ready*.

The apostle Paul was ready. He said in II Timothy 4:6-8: "For 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 at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Paul left no stone unturned. He made sure he was ready. We need to be found faithful. We need to be found ready at the last day.

Paul referred to the righteous Judge. Christ certainly is the righteous Judge. I don't need to judge people. Christ is going to judge people and judge them righteously. But we all have the same Bible to live and the same scriptures to put into practice in our lives. Christ has made every provision for each of us to be found ready when He comes.

Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." If you need more grace, He'll supply it, if you need more faith and more strength, He'll supply it. He has riches in glory for each one of us. He wants to find us ready when He comes. He does not want death to overtake any of us in the state of unreadiness. He wants us all to be ready. Therefore, He has given His Word to guide us, His Spirit to lead us, and His riches in glory to help us. "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Those are a few thoughts that have been on my mind recently. I trust they have been a blessing to you this morning. †

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE

We have a six-year series of lessons. Each quarter we print quarterlies for Adults and Young People, Intermediates and Juniors. We also print leaflets for Primary and Nursery-Beginner children.



Dear Young People,

There is so much safety in obedience! That is one of the first lessons that we endeavor to instill in our children, and we are proud of them when they learn to obey promptly and cheerfully. Surely, God expects obedience from us also, and it brings a smile of approval upon

us that blesses our lives and protects us from the dangers and harm He wants us to avoid.

As you take the time to read the thoughts that Sis. Desiree Harris has to share this month, it would be good to meditate on our lives and make sure we have an obedient spirit to whatever the Lord may be asking us to do.

Blessings,
Bro. Doug

OBEDIENCE

By Sis. Desiree Harris

Obedience: "compliance with order, request, or law; or submission to another's authority."

OBEDIENCE is something that is required and something that we should delight in as Christians! But what does this look like in the life of a Christian? It is one thing to get by with just simply not transgressing the law, but I believe God desires more from us. He calls us to *higher ground*. When we are obedient, it often requires a dependence on our Creator and Savior. He draws us closer to Him.

I would like to briefly look at two examples of disobedience that may seem innocent at first but dearly cost in the end.

First, the happening in I Kings 13. There was a man of God who had, after seeking the Lord, healed the withered hand of King Jeroboam. This man of God was invited to dine with and be rewarded by the king, but he denied the offer stating that the Lord told him to not eat, or drink, or go back home the same way he came. A false prophet then followed after the man of God, and through deceitfulness, persuaded the man of God to turn back and feast with him. You may remember the story ... the man of God upon leaving the false prophet was killed by a lion. Why? Disobedience. How could this man that was used in such a powerful way to reveal God's glory mess up in such a serious way? He believed the word of man rather than what he knew to be true of God's instruction. The man of God had stood fast in obedience at first but then was unfortunately persuaded by the voice of a human. We must have a relationship with God that allows us to have discernment in hearing and knowing His instruction



and desire for us as individuals: we must always follow the voice of God.

Now, take a look at Deuteronomy 32:48-52, focusing on verse 51. Moses, who led the children of Israel for decades, was unable to step foot in the Promised Land. Why? Disobedience. As we read in Exodus 17:1-6, we find that Moses was told by God to smite a rock with his rod to bring forth water. You will then discover after reading Numbers 20:2-12, that Moses hit a rock with his rod to bring forth water, but the Lord had told him to speak to the rock. How could this man that was used in such a powerful way to reveal God's glory mess up in such a serious way? Moses defaulted to previous experience and disobeyed what the Lord had asked him to do this time—speak to the rock, not smite it. How often do we in our own lives assume that what God wants from us now is the exact same as what He asked of us before? We need to stay in step and in tune with what God is telling us to do.

For an example of obedience, despite different instructions, let's take a look at II Samuel 5:17-25. King David's army was up against the Philistines. David inquired of the Lord if he should pursue in battle, and the answer from God was *yes*. David's army was victorious. Then, again, the Philistines came to fight the army of David. After inquiring of the Lord, the answer was to wait for a sign from the Lord. Due to the obedience of King David, the army was able to defeat the Philistines, by the help of the Lord, both times.

The takeaway: We must be obedient to the voice of God, and we must be willing to change our plans based on what God is instructing us to do now.

May our heart's cry be like the cry of the children of Israel in Exodus 24:7: "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient!" Delight yourself in obedience to God! ✠

OUR SERVICES ON CD'S

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SUCCESS VERSUS FAILURE

Radio Message by Bro. Doug Shenberger

I WOULD LIKE to speak for a few moments on something that most everyone is familiar with: "Success versus Failure." How many people desire to be a success? How many have ever made a failure or been a failure? How many people can say that they're a success? Maybe I need to define what success is.

If you're a Christian, you can say that you're a success. At some point in your life, you've made the right decision, and you're a success in that point, though you might not be a complete success. When you really think about it, there's no one that's a complete success, because there's always room for improvement. So if you're a Christian, you can say that you are a success.

There are a lot of definitions for the word *success*. If you go out into the world and ask people what it takes to be successful, they'll tell you all different things. Different people have different ideas and different goals they're aiming for. There's a huge number of people who believe that if they can make enough money, they'll be a success. There are a lot of people who think that they can gain power by becoming president and make a success of it. They think if enough people will look up to them, and if they're important enough, and have a nice house, then they are a success.

There are people then that are failures. That's a judgment of people, too. They might say that if you're poor, you're a failure, or if you don't have what they have, then you're a failure.

But I want us to look at success versus failure in the light of how God looks at it. What does God require for a successful person? What does He consider a failure? I believe that the Lord definitely considers a failure in any person in this world who is not living for Him. You've made a failure in your life if you're not living for the Lord. As I said earlier, if you are a Christian, you can say you are a success. If you will agree that by being a Christian you're a success, it is taking you toward your goal of a successful trip to be with the Lord in heaven, but we all need to consider what it takes to be successful as a Christian. If you're not successful as a Christian, then you'll lose your success. As we think about that, we think of people that begin the Christian way and then stray away from it.

I'd like to read Luke 14:29, 30: "Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish." If you begin to build your Christian life, and you don't finish it, then you are a failure. That doesn't mean that you've failed completely without hope of recovery. We can't live in this life without failing in some point or in some manner, but we learn from our failures. I'm not saying that we should fail as far as losing our experience, but there are failures we make in little things as we go through life. There are all kinds of sizes of success and failures. There's a failure to do the best you can today. There's a small success of helping someone, encouraging some-

one. That's a successful action that leads you towards a bigger success.

As you go through your Christian experience, and build your Christian experience, and have a failure, that's something that you can use to help you to build on your success if you handle it right. Also, a failure can be depressing and lead to greater failure and lead to a failure completely in your Christian experience.

I'd like to read another verse that goes along with the idea of failure. Revelation 2:4, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." If you leave your first love for the Lord, then you are a failure. I want us to see how important it is to be a success and to continue on in a successful path.

I want us to think about what it takes to be a success. I have a little saying by Albert Gray that I would like to read. If you listen carefully, I think there's a lot of truth in this. It says: "The common denominator of success lies in forming the habit of doing things that failures don't like to do." The first thing that came to my mind when I read that was, what don't failures like to do?

Failures don't like to work very hard. That affects you in your entire life—your Christian life—your material life, if you don't like to work very hard and put forth effort. This especially affects you in your Christian life, because you have to work in being a Christian. You have to form the habit of getting up early in the morning to have prayer and read your Bible. If you have to form the habit of coming to church every time that there's a service, then you'll just be coming to church, but it comes to a point where it's not just a decision every time. It is just something you automatically do. Habit is a tremendous help to us, if it's our servant and not our master.

A failure, in thinking of it particularly in a Christian work, doesn't like to work his salvation. He wants it to be an easy thing. He wants to be able to be saved and rock his way to heaven. A failure won't like to suffer any persecution. He won't want anyone to stand in his way to heaven or try to persuade him otherwise. He won't want to sacrifice time and money and his own personal desires to see the work of God go forward. He won't want to spend that time necessary to be a Christian. There are many things involved that people don't like to do that hinders them in their successful Christian life.

I want to go on to the things that a successful Christian would want to do to go on to success. II Timothy 2:15, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." It takes work to rightly divide the truth, because there is a tremendous amount of information and a tremendous amount to learn and to live by. It takes some work and some study. We have to be willing to put forth effort. We will put forth the effort to care about other people. If we don't carry a burden for other people, we won't be very successful in winning them to the Lord. We have to be willing to spend time with the Lord so we're close to Him, and have the attitude and the spiritual outlook on life that will enable us to be a good example to people. There is much that you can discuss and talk about, as far as the little things you can do every day to make a successful life.

One thing about failure: it is always a possibility through your whole life, and it's easy to do. It's easy to fail. But success is always a possibility. You can always succeed if you want to. You have to work at it. You have to want to be successful. You have to be willing to do what the Lord has laid out in His Roadmap for you to do to be successful. †

THE POETRY PAGE

SHINE JUST WHERE YOU ARE

Author Unknown

Don't waste your time in longing
For bright, impossible things;
Don't sit supinely yearning
For the swiftness of angel's wings;
Don't spurn to be a rush light
Because you are not a star,
But brighten some bit of darkness
By shining just where you are.

There is need of the tiniest candle
As well as the garish sun;
The humblest deed is ennobled
When it is worthily done;
You may never be called to brighten
The darkest region afar;
So fill, for the day, your mission
By shining where you are.

UP AND DOWN

Hope C. Oberhelman

Up and down is how life goes
With days all full of care,
But God will fill us with new hope
If we call on Him in prayer.

Up and down is how life goes;
We look to God above,
And no matter what our problems are
He will bless us with His love.

Up and down is how life goes;
We search for gentle peace,
So let us reach out to the Lord
And He will grant us sweet release.

Up and down is how life goes,
But no matter what we do,
The Lord will be there by our side
And His strength will see us through.

BEAUTIFUL THINGS TO SEE

Lula Crawford

I like to walk in the early morning
And smell the sweet, damp ground;
The robin in the apple tree
Minds not that I'm around.

I love to see the shining sun
Or even the buttercup
And thank the Lord for everything—
For the clear and shiny brook.

The beautiful flowers and waving trees
All seem to smile at me.
I thank the Lord He gave me eyes
These lovely things to see.



JESUS IS THERE

Mrs. E. E. Byrum

Never a dark night so dreary,
But Christ thy Redeemer is there,
Never a burden so heavy,
But Jesus thy Savior will share.

Never a whirlwind of sorrow
That grows to a hurricane strength,
Never a rampage of waters,
But Jesus will help thee at length.

Never Gethsemane's suff'rings
But angels will come to thy aid,
Jesus will succor, will help thee,
When thou art lone and afraid.

Deep in the dark, dreaded silence
When draped in the myst'ries of night,
God giveth strength for thy weakness,
His Word as thy shield and thy light.

IN NARROW WAYS

John Oxenham

Some lives are set in narrow ways,
By Love's wise tenderness.
They seem to suffer all their days
Life's direst storm and stress.
But God shall raise them up at length,
His purposes are sure,
He for their weakness shall give strength,
For every ill a cure. †

EMBRACE THE DOCTRINE

Message delivered 12/05/21 by Sis. Rebecca Bland



I WOULD LIKE to read Psalm 2. It is a short psalm of 12 verses, and I'd like to center my thoughts tonight around it: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

I'd especially like to focus on the last two verses: "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." I'd like to entitle my thoughts, "Embrace the Doctrine." I know that nothing I read just now says that, but hopefully it will be clear in a few minutes as to why I wanted to entitle the message, "Embrace the Doctrine."

This little Psalm, supposedly, was written by David right after he took Jerusalem away from the Jebusites and made it his capital city. He was celebrating the taking of Jerusalem, and how the Lord had given him the victory over all those enemies—the Jebusites, and the other—"sites" I call them, because there were so many of them, as they were the heathen tribes that tried to ally themselves together, and they found they couldn't fight against God. If there was someone that God had His hand on, they might as well just stop, because God was going to give His people the victory as long as they were trusting in Him. But when you read Acts 4, you'll find that the apostles realized that this Psalm, Psalm 2, was more than just about David gaining the victory over the Jebusites and taking Jerusalem for his capital, because parts of this Psalm are quoted in Acts 4.

I'd like to look at Acts 4 for just a few minutes. In Acts 4, we find that Peter and John had gone to the temple to pray, and as they were entering the temple, they saw a lame man who was begging. He was hoping that they would give him some coins—something to help him with his living. Remember what Peter said to him? "We don't have silver or gold, but what we have

we will give you. In the name of Jesus, rise up and walk." Peter took him by the hand, lifted him up, and he was healed. Do you know—that created quite a stir! And it wasn't long before Peter and John were arrested and put in prison for doing something in the name of Jesus.

If you remember, after Peter and John had been in prison overnight, they were called before the temple leaders of the Jews, and they were told that they should not preach in Jesus' name or do anything in His name anymore. But they didn't agree to that. They said, "We can only speak the things which we have seen and heard." They weren't going to stop. So after they were let go and threatened, they went and found the other believers—the other disciples, who I'm sure had been praying for them—and they all gathered together and prayed to God. Some of that prayer is recorded for us in Acts 4.

I'd like to start with the 25th verse of Acts 4: "Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? [Does that sound familiar? I just read that—almost word for word—from Psalm 2.] The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." That's a lot of people. As Bro. Greg asked this morning, "Where would *we* have stood if we had been there?"

Back to Psalm 2: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed." So this was prophecy. It wasn't just a celebration of David taking Jerusalem from the Jebusites. It was prophecy, and we can see that because it is quoted by the apostles and clearly outlined by them as prophecy about Jesus' coming: "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." Knowing that this is a psalm of prophecy makes you want to look at it just a little deeper. All the Psalms are in one big book, but some of them have a depth that you don't actually see at first reading, and I think this might be one of them.

I was reading a little bit from Adam Clarke ... You know, he has been quoted in church many times, "Adam Clarke says ..." So not too long ago, I was substituting for one of the Sunday school teachers, and I said to the students, "If a little child asked you, 'Who is Adam Clarke, anyway?' ... and one of the students said, 'Well, I just asked my dad that recently.'" So, Children, when we say, "I was reading Adam Clarke," we're talking

about a very devout man who lived in England in the early 1800's. He gave his life over to studying the Bible, but not just in the English language. He made sure he learned Hebrew, Latin, Greek, and other languages so that he could read the Bible in its older forms and understand how some of those words came to be translated into the English. We know that some of the English words that we use today aren't even used the same way that they were used a couple of hundred years ago. So having a deeper understanding of those words—beautiful words of life—whether they were in Latin, or Greek, or in Hebrew, that was the important life work for Adam Clarke. He didn't pretend to be the Bible, but there was a lot of wisdom that we can gain from the words that he wrote.

I was reading Adam Clarke, where he wrote about the parts of this Psalm (Psalm 2) and how the speakers of the verses keep changing from one person to another. For example: in verse 6, God is speaking: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." And then the verse that comes right after that, the 7th verse, Jesus is answering: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." And then, God speaks again in the next two verses: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Was that what God was sending Jesus to earth to do? Yes.

We read in Daniel 2:44 a really thrilling scripture. I know it's familiar to us all. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Now was Jesus going around with swords and spears and hitting people and banging on buildings? "... Break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms," is not referring to earthly buildings, not people, but false systems of worship—systems that people had made for themselves to worship the gods they created. Sometimes they even claimed to worship God, Himself, but there was a false system among the Jewish people who claimed to know the one true God. They weren't worshipping Him in Spirit and in truth, and Jesus came to destroy that false system of worship.

I think of other verses in Luke, chapter 20 that remind me a lot of the verse in Daniel that we just looked at ... verses that are talking about Jesus. Reading verses 17 and 18: "And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." I want to fall on that Stone. I'll be broken. I will let Jesus do whatever He wants to do with my life. I don't want Him to fall on me. I want Him to be pleased with my life. I want to fall on Him for His mercy. I want to understand and obey His words. I don't want to rebel against Him and have that mighty power falling on me in a destructive way because I'm not following Him.

Adam Clarke breaks Psalm 2 into three parts. The first part is about the enemies of Christ, and then the second part is about Christ, Himself, and what He came to the earth to do, and then part three (verses 10, 11, and 12) is an exhortation. Jesus was sent to the earth. God did His part. Now what is our part? What should we do with this knowledge that God sent His only begotten Son to the earth to destroy false systems of worship and to teach people how to worship God in Spirit and in truth? What should we do with that knowledge? And we read: "Kiss the Son." Adam Clarke felt like it was a little bit strange that the English translators used the only version that has those words—the *Syriac* version. All the other versions, including the *Septuagint*, which was the old translation of the Old Testament in Greek, and was written about 200 years before Jesus was born—because Greek was such a widely used language—used slightly different words.

(Sometimes I've wondered, *what language did Jesus speak?* After reading about it, I know that the easy answer is that He spoke Aramaic at home and with His close friends. But when you were out there in public, you had to pretty much understand Greek. That was the way business was conducted. I don't think Matthew, the tax-collector, could have gotten along if he didn't know Greek. The Greek version of the Old Testament had been around for several hundred years by the time Jesus was born).

Well, I thought it was interesting to look at the *Septuagint*—the Greek version of this verse—where it has been translated into English from the *Syriac*: "Kiss the Son." "Son" is capitalized there, so we know it's talking about Jesus. The Greek word doesn't translate as "Son" but "purity"—as in the pure Doctrine; and that's the same as the Son, isn't it? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). But that little other thinking, just that little bit of difference, maybe helps us to understand a little bit more the words, "Kiss the Son." When you kiss your little child, you don't just throw a kiss. You usually hug them and then you kiss them, right? In the *Septuagint*, it reads more like, "Embrace the pure doctrine." That's why I wanted to call these thoughts tonight, "Embrace the Doctrine," because that's what it's really saying. It's not a wrong translation that we have, but I think this phrase adds a little bit to the understanding of it. That's what we're asked to do. Now that we know Jesus was sent to the earth out of the Father's love for us, what is our part? What can we do? That's the exhortation in Psalm 2: "Embrace the Doctrine."

Think again about Bro. Greg's message this morning about the people that were on the earth when Jesus came. We know about the shepherds. They knew Jesus was Christ the Lord, because the angels told them, and they went running to see Him. They didn't know what He was going to teach them. They didn't know where His life would lead Him. Right then, it was enough for them to know "He's Christ the Lord! We're going to go and see Him." I believe they took Him into their hearts as much as they knew how. They hadn't heard His doctrine yet, but they wanted to worship Him, because He was Christ the Lord.

The wise men, when they were able to reach where Jesus was, knew He was the King of the Jews. They said to Herod, "Where is He?" I think they fully expected to find Him in Herod's palace. "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? We have seen His star in the east, and we've come to see the Lord." *We've come* doesn't begin to cover all the trouble they had taken to get there. "We have come to worship Him." They didn't know what His doctrine was going to be, but they wanted to see Him. They wanted to give Him what they could. They wanted to honor Him, because they knew a little bit about Him.

But not everyone else wanted to worship Him. Jesus said in Matthew 11, verse 6, "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." What *does* that tell you? People were offended. "Blessed are you if you're not offended in me." In that sense, *not offended*, in the original translation means, "doesn't stumble." "When you meet Me, if you run into my doctrine and stumble over it and refuse to accept it, you're offended." Jesus said, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me," knowing that the majority of people would be offended in Him.

I'd like to read two verses in John 6. Verses 60 and 66: "Many therefore of his disciples [not just the twelve; He had more than those twelve. Those were the ones He had personally called that remained close to Him, but He had many other disciples that followed Him and tried to understand for at least a while what His doctrine was.], when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" Well, they had just heard it, but they didn't understand and accept it. "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." They were offended, and they weren't blessed. "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

"Embrace the Doctrine." What is doctrine? The word *doctrine* comes from a Latin word that means "to teach." So a doctrine is a teaching. Jesus' doctrines were His teachings. It's simple as that. I'm going to only read a few of the scriptures from the New Testament that mention Jesus' doctrine. One of those is in Mark 1:22, where it says, "And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." I can picture a scribe with a scroll in one hand, reading and telling the people, "Now, you know it says this. This means this." Not Jesus. He didn't walk around with scrolls doing that. He looked right at the people, and He told them what they needed to know. He had authority. His authority was from God. His doctrine was *from* God and *of* God. I'd like to read verse 16 of John 7: "Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." That's talking about God. Jesus came to bring God's Word to man.

In I Timothy 6:3—I'll read just a portion of what Paul wrote: "... even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness." Doctrine is the teaching of godliness. That's what the doctrine is that we are asked in the 2nd Psalm to embrace. Embrace those teachings. Embrace what came from God, through His Son Jesus, when He came here to earth. We cannot love Christ without loving His teachings. "In the beginning was the Word." He is the Word. He and His teachings are one. We can't love Him and

ignore His teachings. It's not possible. And the doctrine is the pattern for our lives. II Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." That's the doctrine. It's our instruction and pattern. It's the Word of God. It's Jesus, Himself.

Titus 2:7, "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity." That was Jesus. That *is* Jesus. Uncorruptness. Not one evil thing in Him, not one sin, not one bad thing. Uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. There was never anyone more sincere than Jesus. But not everyone followed Him. The rich young ruler wanted to find out about the doctrine, but then he couldn't handle what he was asked to do. In rejecting the doctrine, he rejected Jesus, because they are one.

I'd like to repeat those two verses again at the end of the 2nd Psalm. "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son [or Embrace the Doctrine], lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Jesus said, "Blessed are you if you're not offended in me." If you're offended in Him, you can't put your trust in Him, and you're not blessed.

This time of year I see lots of evidence that people are thinking about the baby Jesus and about how He came to earth. You've seen a manger before, I'm sure. They're all around in people's houses. It's a special time of year. When I was little, my mom would take out a little cardboard set that was probably the best we could afford, but it didn't matter to us. It was that time of year we could think about baby Jesus again, and Mom would go to the closet and get the red box down. Then we would all gather around, and she would put the little cardboard stable up, the little shepherds, and the wise men (even though they came later, because we wanted to think about them, too). The little shepherd boy with his lamb ... but my mom saved the best for last. We waited. She put the angel on the top, and then she went to the box and got the very last pieces—Mary, Joseph, and the little Baby.

I don't know about your house, but at my house, the little baby Jesus caught our eyes. We would run up to the manger. Mom put a little light behind it, and in the dark the little light behind the manger would glow. We would go up and take the little Baby out and kiss Him.

We used to sing this little song. Maybe you've heard it—

*Little Baby in a manger, I love you,
Lying there to earth a stranger, I love you;
Wise men saw the star and answered, "I love you,"
Shepherds heard the angels singing, "I love you."*

We would sing that with sincerity. But sometimes there's a little disconnect between, "I love the little Baby," and "I love that He came for me." I used to think to myself, *Oh, if I just could have been there! I would have knelt down there and worshiped the little Baby.*

I can't kneel at the manger, but I can do something. I can embrace the doctrine that He is, and that He came to bring. That's what He wants me to do. That's what His Father, God, sent Him to earth for. That's what He

wants me to do. He knows I can't go and kneel down beside the physical manger, but I can embrace the doctrine—what He came to earth to bring. I can sing—

*I will follow thee, my Savior,
Wheresoe'er my lot may be;
Where thou goest I will follow,
Yes, my Lord, I'll follow Thee.*

*I will follow thee, my Savior,
Thou didst shed thy blood for me;
And tho' all men should forsake thee,
By thy grace I'll follow Thee.*

I've seen a whole lot of paintings, stained glass pictures, nativity scenes that cost hundreds and even thousands of dollars, but if we don't embrace the gospel that Jesus brought, we don't have anything to do with Him, and His coming means nothing to us. God knows we can't kneel down at the physical manger, but we can embrace the gospel—embrace the doctrine—because that's what God sent Jesus here to bring us.

The Lord bless and help us to take His doctrine close to our hearts. Never turn our backs on it. Follow Him to the ends of the earth, wherever He calls us. †

SHADOWS OF GOOD THINGS

By the late Russell R. Byrum

(Part VI)

THE TABERNACLE AND ITS FURNITURE

(Exodus 25-27, 30, 35-38, 40)

The Sanctuary

(Exodus 26:1-37; 8-38)

THE EXACT dimensions of the tabernacle proper are not given, but it may be readily calculated from the size and number of the boards and the curtains. It was thirty cubits, or forty-five feet, long by ten cubits, or fifteen feet, wide and as high as it was wide. It was divided into two rooms by the veil. The first room, or holy place, was twenty cubits, or thirty feet long and the second room or holiest place, was ten cubits, or fifteen feet, long, making the latter room a perfect cube.

Boards and Bars—The framework was of boards of shittim wood one and one half cubits, or twenty-seven inches wide and ten cubits, or fifteen feet, long. These stood on end, edge to edge, twenty on each side and six at the rear, besides two corner boards. These boards were overlaid with gold inside and outside and set in sockets of silver with two sockets under each board and two tenons on the bottom of each board running down into these two sockets. To hold the boards in position, five bars of shittim wood overlaid with gold were provided for each of the two sides and as many for the rear. Rings were made on each of the boards, and through these four of the bars were passed. The fifth bar, “the middle bar in the midst of the boards, shall reach from end to end”; and “he made the middle bar to shoot through the boards from the one end to the other.” It

seems to have been mortised through all the boards from edge to edge.

Typical Significance of the Boards and Bars—As we have already shown the sanctuary was typical of the church as God's dwelling-place, so it is proper to interpret the typical meaning of the various parts in harmony with that of the whole. It is not unreasonable to believe that the individual parts that made up the Mosaic tabernacle were typical of the individual parts that compose the church of the New Testament. “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (I Corinthians 12:27). “But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him” (verse 18). “The church, which is his body” (Ephesians 1:22, 23). From these texts as well as from the meaning of the original term for church it is certain that the church is composed of all the truly converted people. Therefore the individual board in the tabernacle typified the individual Christian, as collectively that house typified God's present house, “whose house are we” (Hebrews 3:6).

That this interpretation is correct is evident from various texts that speak very definitely on the subject. “In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:21, 22). This represents Christians as being “fitly framed together” as were the boards composing God's ancient house. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house” (I Peter 2:5). Here the same idea is set forth although the figure of stones is used instead of boards, probably referring to Solomon's temple.

That which the bars are said to typify must also be in harmony with the antitype of the tabernacle as a whole and the other parts with which they are related. The detailed description given of these bars and their important function in the tabernacle are both good reasons for our expecting to find something analogous to them in the antitypical sanctuary. What, then, unifies and relates to each other the members of God's spiritual house as the bars held together and solidified in one the boards of that ancient house? Jesus prayed in that notable prayer recorded by John as follows: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through thy word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20, 21). That the unity of Christians is important enough to be typified in the tabernacle is evident from this fact stated by Jesus that it should be an evidence to the world of His divinity. Also on such an occasion with the gloom of Gethsemane already gathering about Him and the horrors of Calvary immediately before Him, we cannot think of Jesus praying about unimportant things.

Let us look in Paul's great unity chapter, the fourth of Ephesians, for the unifying agents of God's church typified by the golden bars of the tabernacle. “Endeavoring to keep the *unity of the Spirit* in the bond of peace” (verse 3). “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and

teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the *unity of the faith*, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (verses 11-13). Here we have two kinds of unity, a “unity of the Spirit” of God, and a “unity of the faith.” So likewise we have one interior and four exterior bars for the boards of the tabernacle. Probably the number of boards and bars have no typical meaning, but are such as its physical construction required.

As that golden bar passed through the midst of the boards uniting them together from within, so the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all His people makes them one in a very real sense. The saved in Christ not only have kindred spirits, they not only have common aspirations and desires, but they all have one Spirit, the Spirit of God in them.

This unity of the Spirit is beautifully set forth by Paul in the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians under the figure of the human body as representative of the body of Christ, the church. As the hands, the feet, and every part of the human body cooperate under the direction of the one indwelling and animating human spirit, so the members of the church of Christ, in each of whom His Spirit dwells and moves, all work together in unity and harmony.

This indwelling of the one Spirit in all the members is the ground of the holy fellowship that normally exists among God’s saints, and which is so blessed that even the hardened sinner looking on is convinced that they have something he does not possess. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). They “were of one heart and of one soul” (Acts 4:32). “There is one body” (Ephesians 4:4). It is also the basis of the true organization and government of God’s church. During the long ages of apostasy this unity of Christians by the rule of the indwelling Spirit was practically lost, but the time has come when devout hearts everywhere are seeking for that oneness which characterized the early church, and Christian unity, the oneness in the body of Christ, is again becoming a practical reality.

But let us again notice that unity of the faith symbolized by the four exterior golden bars. An invisible, interior unity is maintained by the inner bar, but the other bars are needed for outward unity. This is to result from the labors of the various classes of ministers mentioned in Ephesians 4:11. By their faithful preaching of the Word of God, their hearers will attain to this unity. Probably we are not to understand an absolute unity of comprehension of the details of religious truth or the interpretation of every portion of Scripture, but rather a unity of comprehension of those fundamental and practical truths that are necessary to the perfecting in Christian experience and to the bringing to the “measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” What we know we know alike.

Typical Meaning of the Silver Sockets—The Scriptures speak quite clearly concerning the meaning of the silver sockets. In Exodus 38:25-28 we are told that these

were made from the silver half-shekels which the men twenty years old and upward gave when they were numbered, as a ransom for their souls that they be not stricken with plague. In chapter 30:11-16 it is called “atonement money.” Each man must give this exact amount, which was equal to about sixty-two cents. The rich must not give more nor the poor less, signifying that God, not men, must determine the necessary atonement for sin. God’s church, His redeemed people, rest on the atonement of Christ. His life’s blood is the ransom price of every member of God’s spiritual house, who were represented by the boards that rested upon the costly silver sockets of atonement money. Probably the apostle had this very atonement silver in mind when he wrote, “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ” (I Peter 1:18, 19).

The Curtains—Four coverings were placed over the framework of boards. An inner covering of ten magnificent curtains four by twenty-eight cubits, of fine linen (with cherubim in the royal colors blue, purple, and scarlet inwrought), and fastened together at the sides, covered the walls and ceiling inside. Over this and covering the frame work outside were eleven curtains of goats’ hair, four by thirty cubits, and fastened together at the sides. The length of one of these curtains was exactly enough to reach across the top and down each side of the tabernacle outside. The inside curtains seem to have been hung cross-wise of the tabernacle in the same manner. Over the curtains of goats’ hair was spread a covering of rams’ skins dyed red, and over this one of badger’s skins, or, as the Revised translates it, of seals’ skins.

Typical Meaning of the Curtains—These beautiful curtains of fine white linen inwrought with heavenly figures in kingly colors of blue, purple, and scarlet doubtless contain a lesson for us in the “true tabernacle.” This fine white linen was a covering for the gold-covered boards, which gold symbolized the glory of the Lord. This clothing for the boards was probably in the Revelator’s mind when he said of the church, “To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints” (Revelation 19:8). Divine righteousness, the righteousness of Christ, is the covering of every member in God’s church. The royal colors blue, purple, and scarlet seem to signify the exalted honor which is the portion of those in God’s church. These are a “royal priesthood” (I Peter 2:9) and, as they exclaim in Revelation 5:9, 10, “Thou ... hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” “And hath made us kings and priests unto God” (Revelation 1:6). “They ... reign in life” (Romans 5:17). The cherubs or angelic figures are characteristic of God’s presence throughout the Bible. They appear in Isaiah’s vision (Isaiah 6:2), and the golden cherubim were on the mercy-seat nearest to God’s presence. On the curtains and the veil they doubtless signify the heavenliness of the condition of those in God’s house today. God’s people now “sit together in heavenly places” (Ephesians 2:6). They have come “to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born” (Hebrews 12:22, 23). †

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



A DANGEROUS SLEEP

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

“Have you finished all of your homework?” my mother asked. She looked up at the clock above the kitchen stove, and my eyes followed hers. It was almost ten o’clock—my bedtime.

“No,” I told her. “I still have to study for my biology test. I’m not ready, and the test is tomorrow.”

“Well, don’t stay up too late,” my mother said. “You might be in high school, but you still need to go to bed at a decent hour. You can’t think very well during a test if you’re sleepy, no matter how much you’ve studied.”

I knew she was right. I was tired, and I didn’t feel like staying up late. As my mother turned out the kitchen light, I slipped down the stairs to my bedroom in the basement.

Our family had grown to the point where we had run out of upstairs bedrooms. My mother had fixed a curtained enclosure for me in one corner of the basement. I liked my new bedroom. It had plenty of storage space, and the privacy made me feel grown up and special.

With outstretched hands, I felt my way down the dark basement stairs to my bedroom, careful not to crash into anything and wake up my grandmother who occupied her own curtained area in another corner of the basement. There were several overhead electric bulbs, but they were all controlled by a switch at the top of the basement stairs. I knew I wouldn’t want to go all the way up the stairs to turn out the lights when I was finished studying. I wasn’t worried about seeing well enough to study. I could use the flashlight I kept on my dresser.

For ten or fifteen minutes, I read over my biology notes. There was a long list of vocabulary terms. I wondered if I would ever be able to remember all those words and definitions. After the page of vocabulary words, there were several pages of facts and explanations.

Suddenly, my flashlight began to flicker and grow dim. *Oh no!* I thought. *I can’t lose the light now! I have another page to study!* As I shook the flashlight, hoping to coax a little more power out of the batteries, I remembered the candle on the headboard behind my bed. It was a short, red pillar candle, and it sat in a ring of plastic flowers. My mother had let me use the candle to decorate my room. I had lit the candle several times before, but had only let it burn for a few minutes each time. It was so pretty, I wanted to save it.

If I light the candle, I can study for a little while longer; I decided. I’ll be very careful, and I won’t let it burn too long. After all, I have only one more page of notes to study. In the dim light of the dying flashlight,

I struck a match and lit the candle. I propped myself up on a pillow, pulled the covers up around my chin, and began to study the final page of my biology notes in the flickering candlelight.

After a few minutes, I noticed that the words on the page had begun to swim in front of my eyes. I shook my head to clear my vision. I was getting sleepier by the second. *Almost finished!* I said to myself. *I only need to stay awake for five more minutes.* A moment later, my head fell forward and then snapped back as I awoke. I shook my head again. *I am so sleepy!* I thought groggily.

I awoke in the early morning when the first light of dawn shone in through the small basement window above my bed. My head had slipped off the pillow, and my biology notes were folded and bent under my cheek. I sat up, confused and disoriented. Suddenly I remembered the candle. *Is it still burning?* I wondered, turning my head swiftly in alarm. The candle still flickered, but the flame had reached the bottom of the wax pillar. With silent purpose, it had begun to gnaw its way down into the wooden surface of the headboard. I jumped out of bed and hastily blew out the flame. I grabbed the candle and plastic centerpiece, both of which had melted into the headboard. Ripping them from the wooden surface, I surveyed the damage—a charred and blackened spot in the center of the white headboard.

My legs turned to jelly, and I sank down onto my bed. I could have burned down our house! The realization horrified me even more than the knowledge that I would have to tell my parents what I had done. Slowly I made my way up the basement stairs to find my mother.

“What were you thinking?” my mother asked when I came to the end of my frightening story. Her eyes were wide and disbelieving.

“I don’t know,” I mumbled. “I didn’t think I was going to fall asleep. I’m sorry.”

“You certainly should be sorry!” she said. “And there won’t be any more candles in that room for a long time—if ever!”

A few days later, we painted over the blackened wood in the center of the headboard, but the charred indentation was always there as a silent reminder of the tragedy that could have been.

So often since that day, I have thanked God for sparing me and my family from losing our home—and perhaps our lives—through my carelessness.

This month’s wise saying comes from Proverbs 22:3, which says, “A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.” The word *prudent* means “wise” or “showing good judgment.” I certainly did not show good judgment when I decided to light a candle that sat on a wooden headboard, especially when I was about to fall asleep.

Our proverb tells us that a wise person will avoid anything that could bring evil upon himself. The second part of the verse describes what “simple” or “foolish” people do. They keep on going, even when they know there is evil up ahead. As a result, they are punished.

What does it mean to “keep on going” in spite of the evil ahead? It means to disregard the advice of those who watch for your soul. It means to ignore what your

Christian parents and ministers tell you about the right way to live. It means to pay no attention to the commandments of God that you read in the Bible.

People who do not follow good advice will not experience the joy and success that are promised to those who fear and serve the Lord. We can avoid this punishment if we show good judgment and follow the teachings of those who show us how to live righteously.

Activity

Here are some more wise sayings from the book of Proverbs about those who behave **prudently** (wisely). See if you can guess the word that belongs in each blank. Then check your answers with the scripture location that follows each verse.

1. "Every **prudent** man dealeth with ____: but a fool layeth open his ____" (Proverbs 13:16).
2. "The simple inherit ____: but the **prudent** are crowned with ____" (Proverbs 14:18).
3. "A fool despiseth his father's ____: but he that regardeth ____ is **prudent**" (Proverbs 15:5).
4. "The ____ in heart shall be called **prudent**: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth ____" (Proverbs 16:21).
5. "The heart of the **prudent** getteth ____; and the ear of the ____ seeketh knowledge" (Proverbs 18:15).

Answer to Last Month's Activity

"Omniscience" is a word that describes God's ability to see and know everything. †

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

FAITH AND MIRACLES CHRIST'S POWER OVER THE ELEMENTS

Scriptures: Matthew 14:23-33.

Matthew 14:23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

Memory Verse: And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.—Matthew 28:18.

Aim: To show the miraculous power of God over the elements.

INTRODUCTION

IN GIVING the last commission Jesus made it plain that signs and wonders would follow the preaching of the Word of God. Therefore, if signs and wonders are not following the preaching of the Word, we may be sure that there is something wrong. Signs and wonders are of great value in furthering the cause of Christ. As in our lesson today, when the disciples saw the Lord walking upon the water, they were assured that He was the Son of God. In these last days there is a need that we seek to let the gospel have its full sway with all the signs and wonders that God may desire to perform, for our generation is drunken on the marvelous material creation that has been given unto us.

MEDITATIONS

OBTAINING POWER—Matthew 14:23—There alone—Christ was divine, yet He denied His heavenly glory and became subject to the limitations of the flesh. To have power as a man it was necessary that He pray. We find Him frequently resorting to prayer and continuing on even through the night. There never arose an emergency in the life of Christ for which He was not prepared, He having gotten the victory previously in prayer. It was the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane that made Him face the cross with victory. One reason for the lack of power among Christians today is the lack of prayer.

THE ELEMENTS OPPOSE MAN—Matthew 14:24—Wind was contrary—For the most part, the manifestation of the forces of nature in the form of waves, winds and storms is the result of the operation of natural laws. However, sometimes the great Author of nature sees fit to intervene for the sake of a praying saint or for His own pleasure and cause it to rain or not to rain as He sees fit. So it was in the days of Elijah when he prayed that it would not rain, and the heavens withheld their rain for a period of three and one-half years. He prayed again and the heavens gave rain. Man has struggled in his helplessness against the bitter cold and scorching heat, the mighty waves of the ocean, sometimes losing and sometimes winning. When he sees that he is losing, it is then usually, that he calls on God. If he has been faithful and walking in the truth, he will have confidence that God will help him; if he has been in rebellion, he will not have faith to that end.

PRAYED UP—Matthew 14:25—Walking on the sea—It is hard for a rebellious soul to believe an unnatural occurrence; but the man who knows God finds it easy to believe, for he expects God to be doing things that are unnatural. Oh, that God would give His people a keener understanding of His miraculous power! If we do not expect the miraculous, we shall see nothing but the commonplace. Then, too, it is well to remember that sometimes God works miracles when it looks as if it is only the forces of nature at work. It is easy for an

unbeliever to say, when God sends rain in answer to prayer, "It was only nature; it would have rained anyhow." Or when the prayer of faith saves the sick, he may say, "They would have recovered anyhow." But walking on the sea was something that could not be turned aside by saying, "It would have happened anyway."

HUMANITY UNSTABLE—Matthew 14:26—Were troubled—Men who are so occupied by the material things of this short life have very little time to explore the spiritual realm, and any manifestation of the great spiritual realm will cause them concern because they are not acquainted with it. If we are expecting manifestations from the spirit world, we will not be surprised when we see them. Through experience with God we learn to trust Him, and sudden emergencies will not upset us. The fear of the disciples was great because they had not seen anything like this before. For all they knew, there was more danger from this happening than from the waves that were tossing all around them. When children or grown-ups get into a place where they know nothing to do or there is nothing they can do, they will cry out. This is just a natural reaction. Perhaps a loud cry will bring help from somewhere.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE—Matthew 14:27—Be not afraid—The words of Jesus brought assurance, for it was a voice that had power to comfort. Though Jesus is not in the earth today in body, yet He is here in the Spirit, and His voice is as assuring and as comforting today to the troubled soul as it was when He walked the shores of Galilee. Today there is much trouble in the land. Christianity has many foes. We as Christians must stand firm at our posts of duty not fearing the roar of the lion or the threat of civil powers. Jesus is always present to comfort, if we trust Him. We should be encouraged when we know that He who walked upon the water is with us.

IMPETUOUS DECISION—Matthew 14:28—Bid me come—Most of us desire to see before we believe. Such was the case with Peter. He knew Jesus' voice, and addressed Him as Lord, but still he was not ready to believe fully until he had further proof. Doubting Thomas desired more proof, but Jesus reprimanded him mildly by saying, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." By nature, Peter was impulsive, but had he stopped to weigh the matter more carefully, he possibly would not have suggested such action.

MAKING A GOOD START—Matthew 14:29—Walked on the water—Peter made a good start. He walked some on the water, which no other man but Christ ever did, as far as we have record. But his faith took in nothing but smooth water. Just as soon as the waves reached him he wavered. So it is in life. Smooth sailing does not bother the average Christian, but it is when the trials and the storms of life come that difficulty is encountered and faith fails. It was good that Peter was going toward Jesus and not away from Him.

LOSING FAITH—Matthew 14:30—Wind boisterous—The hollow howl of the wind and the boister-

ous foaming of the waves engaged the attention of Peter to the point where he lost sight of the Master. He began to sink immediately. In this predicament there remained but one thing to do and that was to cry out. He was calling on the right One to save him. The same thing will happen to any man that loses sight of the power of God by being moved by what his eyes may see around him or by what he may feel. If we find ourselves in that place, there is only one thing to do and that is to do as Peter did. Call on the Lord. If we mean it with all our hearts, God will always hear us.

JESUS ANSWERS—Matthew 14:31—O thou of little faith—Jesus answered at once, but with a gentle rebuke. Little faith is evidence of little acquaintance with God. He that made the heavens and the earth by speaking the word is greatly reproached when we, by the way we act, tell the world that God is a little God or that God does not mean what He says in the Word of God. He assures us that if we ask in faith nothing by any means shall be impossible to us. God is no respecter of persons, so we all may do great things in the name of the Lord if we dare to believe Him.

CONTROLLING THE ELEMENTS—Matthew 14:32—The wind ceased—On another occasion (Mark 4:39) Christ rebuked the wind and said unto the sea, "Peace, be still." Then the disciples said, "What manner of man is this that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

RECOGNIZING DEITY—Matthew 14:33—Worshiped him—His demonstrations of power here convinced His onlookers that this man was more than man; He was God and deserved to be worshiped. He has gone to be with His Father that He may intercede for mankind, and now He has left to us the work of convincing the world of His deity and gospel plan. He promised us, in the last commission, that signs and wonders should follow the preaching of the Word of God. This is for the purpose that they who see the signs and wonders may see that God is in that people of a truth, and as a result, they will worship God.

CONCLUSION

God said in His Word that it pleased Him through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. All preaching is committed to men themselves, so we need never expect that God will dispatch an angel to earth to do the work. If we are to do the preaching in the effort to get men to turn from sin to God, it is needful that we have some signs and wonders to follow the preaching, since we ourselves are nothing, that men be convinced of the truth of the Word of God. In *The Way of Truth* publishing work and in the local congregation of the Church of God, we have seen the invisible hand of God move in our behalf many times. It is indeed a very great encouragement when the Lord sets aside the laws of nature and moves out of the way the mountains that hinder the progress of His work. There needs to be greater visitations of the power of God, and we are looking forward to them.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Why was it necessary for Jesus to go aside in a mountain alone and pray?

2. What can man do when the elements get too strong for him?
3. What is the value of signs and wonders following the preaching of the Word?
4. Why were the disciples afraid when they saw Jesus walking on the water?
5. Why did Peter so suddenly ask Jesus to command him to come walking to Him on the water?
6. What caused Peter to fail after he made a good start?
7. If you would have been in Peter's place when Jesus said, "Why did you doubt?" what would have been your answer?
8. What do you think caused the wind to cease? †

THE REAL "REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY"

By Bro. Paul Fausnight

Replace resurrection with **RAPTURE**
 Replace one second coming with **TWO**
 Replace one plan of redemption with **TWO**
 Replace living, spiritual temple with **PHYSICAL**
 Replace current reign of Christ in spiritual Zion, God, church, with **KING-ON-HOLD**
 Replace centrality of Jesus Christ with **CENTRALITY OF 'ISRAEL'**
DISPENSATIONALISM IS THE REAL REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY!

IT IS THE Bible which is "Left Behind"! The word *rapture* does not belong in Christian teaching; it is a total fiction from the last couple centuries. There is no time remaining after Jesus returns—and He only returns **once**, not twice. Read Jesus' own words in Matthew 13's parables, where, over and over, He says that the evil/wicked shall be removed **FROM AMONG THE RIGHTEOUS** at His coming, which will be **AT THE END OF THE WORLD**. And, until then, Jesus says "both the wicked and the righteous shall dwell together." Read again what Jesus says in John 6—where **FIVE TIMES** in just 15 verses (John 6:40-54), Jesus says of those who believe and obey Him, "I will **RAISE HIM UP ON THE LAST DAY**." There is no Rapture in scripture anywhere. But there is the second coming of Christ on the day when the entire universe and earth are dissolved in fire and all the dead are raised and judged before Him, time having ended and endless eternity arrived in heaven or hell. It is our responsibility to proclaim the **TRUE GOSPEL**, not a fictional and nonsensical, man-invented make-believe, which sells books and makes entertainment as movies.

False teachers have substituted a "rapture" for the day of resurrection and the second coming and judgment. They have substituted one coming with two returns of Christ. They have substituted one plan of redemption with two (putting Christ in an earthly reign out of Jerusalem and a restored earthly temple). They

have replaced the living, spiritual temple (which is God's true church in His kingdom right here and now) with a physical temple, and a second chance for salvation after His coming. They have replaced the current, present-day reign of Christ in spiritual Zion—God's church—with "King-on-hold" yet future, while we who are in that "kingdom not of this world" have Him reigning in our hearts today. They have replaced the centrality of Jesus Christ with central focus on a literal, earthly "Israel"—yet they accuse the ones who know better from the plain New Testament teachings of having "replacement theology." This is the same deceiving spirit that Jesus fought in His day, when the "spiritual teachers" rejected Him, wanting an earthly Messiah who would meet their carnal desires, rather than bring deliverance from the power of sin and Satan. This dispensationalist doctrine is heresy, which itself "leaves the Bible behind"! It contradicts the plain teaching of Jesus Christ and His apostles, and those who teach it will face the Judge in His splendor and have to answer for it before Him to whom we all must give accounting.

There will be no so-called Rapture. There will be the second coming of Christ, which will be far different from Rapture fiction/lies with pictures of worshipers rising up from church pews while shedding their clothes on the floor. He will come at any moment, and the New Testament tells us that every eye will see Him, the earth and heavens will dissolve in fire, the dead will all be raised, and all mankind will be brought before Him in judgment. The meanings in Revelation are spiritual, not meant to be taken literally, which would be foolishness. Those spiritual meanings are taught in the epistles and understood by the spiritually-minded through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said in Matthew 13 that "both the wicked and the righteous will dwell together until the world ends and that the angels will remove first the wicked from among the righteous"—nothing like the "Rapture" fiction!

The scriptures fit together and have to be considered together. Only after the resurrection/judgment on the last day (as Jesus calls it several times in John 6) are we taken up with Christ to forevermore be with the Lord in His Father's kingdom.

Anyone who disagrees with this had better lay aside his notions from man-teachings and go to the New Testament where Christ and His apostles make it very plain that the above is the truth of what will happen. Our task is to "be always ready, for [Jesus] will come at a time when we are least expecting him." And, to share the real gospel, not the stuff of fables invented in recent centuries by deceiving false teachers!

"Rapture" is pure fiction. What is coming and certain is that judgment day comes at the resurrection of the dead on the last day, when Jesus suddenly returns. That is in the Bible. "Rapture" just isn't! That is just a demonic and man-invented doctrine which sold a bunch of books and drew a following after its false teachers. We are "caught up to be with the Lord forever" after the judgment. Read the New Testament and put all the apostolic statements together instead of following fiction! There'll be no second chance for sinners to repent; Jesus only returns **ONCE**!

Truth matters! We can be mistaken about other things, even politics, but when we deal with biblical truth and salvation, we must get it absolutely right; there is no room for error! Real church growth is not measured by packing the pews or number of baptisms, but by conformity to the truth in preaching and living the pure gospel without contamination of man-doctrines. Love is not content to ignore those caught up in biblical error, but seeks to share truth in a loving spirit of humility.

Jesus, in Matthew 13, says: “Let the wheat and the weeds both grow together until harvest. Then I will tell the harvest workers to pull up the weeds first, tie them in bundles and burn them, and then to gather in the wheat and put it in my barn. The field is the world; the good seed are the people who belong to the kingdom; the weeds are the people who belong to the evil one; and the enemy who sowed the weeds is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the harvest workers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered up and burned in the fire, so the same thing will happen at the end of the age. It will be like this at the end of the world: the angels will go out and gather up the evil people from among the good and will throw them into the fiery furnace, where they will cry and gnash their teeth.”

This “Rapture” teaching that leaves the Bible behind, so common among evangelical denominations today, fails to recognize that Jesus Christ came to bring the kingdom of heaven as a spiritual kingdom here and now among all who receive and truly follow His Son. All the promises of the kingdom of Israel are now fulfilled in Christ—not at some future time in a millennial age to come. The epistles teach us that God is no respecter of persons, that the true Israel is not a political nation nor an ethnic group (which physical Jewry does not constitute, anyway), but that in the sight of God, the true Jew, the true member of Israel, is only that one who, like Abraham, receives in faith the Anointed One, Jesus, and follows Him. Many sectarian doctrines have arisen over centuries which have influenced Christian teaching into error.

Wikipedia: “John Nelson Darby first proposed and popularized the pre-tribulation rapture in 1827. Popular books also contributed to acceptance of the pre-tribulation rapture, including William Eugene Blackstone’s book, *Jesus is Coming*, published in 1878 and which sold more than 1.3 million copies and the *Scofield Reference Bible*, published in 1909 and 1919 and revised in 1967.

“During the 1970’s, belief in the rapture became popular in wider circles, in part due to the books of Hal Lindsey, including *The Late Great Planet Earth*, which has reportedly sold between 15 million and 35 million copies, and the movie ‘A Thief in the Night,’ which based its title on the scriptural reference I Thessalonians 5:2, Lindsey proclaimed that the rapture was imminent, based on world conditions at the time. The Cold War figured prominently in his predictions of impending Armageddon. Other aspects of 1970’s global politics were seen as having been predicted in the Bible. Lindsey suggested, for example, that the seven-headed beast with ten horns, cited in the book of Revelation, was the

March 2022

European Economic Community, a forebear of the European Union, which between 1981 and 1986 had ten member states; it now has 27 member states.

“In 1995, the doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture was further popularized by Tim LaHaye’s Left Behind series of books, which sold tens of millions of copies and were made into several movies.

“Some notable predictions of the date of the rapture include the following:

1844: William Miller predicted that Christ would return between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844, then revised his prediction, claiming to have miscalculated Scripture, to October 22, 1844. The realization that the predictions were incorrect resulted in a Great Disappointment. Miller’s theology gave rise to the Adventist movement. The Baha’is believe that Christ did return as Miller predicted in 1844, with the advent of the Báb, and numerous Miller-like prophetic predictions from many religions are given in William Sears’s book, *Thief in The Night*.

1914, 1918, and 1925: Various dates predicted for the rapture by the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

1981: Chuck Smith predicted that Jesus would probably return by 1981.

1988: Publication of *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Is in 1988*, by Edgar C. Whisenant.

1989: Publication of *The Final Shout: Rapture Report 1989*, by Edgar Whisenant. This author made further predictions of the rapture for 1992, 1995, and other years.

1992: A Korean group, the Mission for the Coming Days, predicted that the rapture would occur on October 28, 1992.

1993: Multiple predictions were given for 1993, seven years before the year 2000; the rapture would have to start to allow for seven years of the tribulation before the return in 2000.

1994: Pastor John Hinkle of Christ Church in Los Angeles predicted that the rapture would occur on June 9, 1994. Radio evangelist Harold Camping predicted September 6, 1994.

2011: Harold Camping’s revised prediction had May 21, 2011 as the date of the rapture. After this prediction proved inaccurate, he claimed that a non-visible ‘spiritual judgment’ had taken place, and that the physical rapture would occur on October 21, 2011. The physical rapture prediction also proved inaccurate.”—end of quoting from *Wikipedia*.

Protestants/Evangelicals should be mightily embarrassed by such “rapture” teachings as have abounded since the early 1800’s! The notion of a “Rapture” can be barely detected historically before then—and this fiction was not at all believed by the early Christian church. It is basically a heresy popularized during the past two centuries, although some of its roots go back much further.

There is no scripture that backs up the popular fictional notions about a so-called Rapture. The epistles and Jesus Himself make it plain that every eye shall see His returning. As for being caught up to be with the Lord, that happens on the *last day*, when Jesus returns at the resurrection and judgment, when the

wicked are taken away and those declared righteous are taken up to forever be with God.

As to Revelation, it is a book of symbolism, just as John mentions at the outset when he says: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." The symbols (numbers, events, and characters) are only that: symbolic, and not to be taken in literal interpretation, for that would be to fail entirely in comprehending the message.

Numbers like 1000, 7, 12, 12x12x1000 (144,000) all merely reflect the idea of totality, completeness, or fullness, whether of character or of time ... and such language is not found only in Revelation (or latter Daniel), but even in such passages as, the cattle on a thousand hills belong to the Lord.

The apostles in their letters reflect the clear teaching of our Lord: that He returns suddenly, when least expected, and every eye shall behold his coming: the wicked in terror and the righteous with gladness. Christ brings with Him from paradise the souls of those who had previously died; the dead all are raised, and all appear before Christ to be judged by Him. Immediately, then, the wicked are sent to their eternal doom and shame; the righteous are caught up, transformed into the glorious spiritual bodies that bear the likeness of the Son of God, to dwell eternally in the heavenly kingdom in the presence of the Divine Majesty. The Lord does not sneak in first to kidnap His bride, while the earth goes through a so-called Great Tribulation of seven years. Nor does He return to earth to rule out of Jerusalem for 1,000 years, while the Jews all come to conversion. That contradicts many verses in which Jesus teaches His is not an earthly kingdom, that He comes without being expected (no 1007-year prior warning!)—and that Zion is not a community of Jews in Jerusalem, Israel, or anywhere else—but rather, the true Zion which inherits all the promises of God is the believing assembly of all those in heaven and earth who are true descendants of the faith which Abraham demonstrated, all those who truly receive and obey Jesus as both Savior and Lord. You will not get solid truth from such pretenders of prophetic insight as are found in the pulpits of such as John Hagee.

Matthew 13:29, 30: "The harvest is the end of the world, and the harvesters are the angels." "Allow both to grow together until the time of harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, first gather up the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them up: but gather the wheat into my barn."

Verses 49 and 50: "So it will be at the end of the age: the angels will come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, And will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"Rapture" of the righteous first, and all wicked *left behind*? No way, according to Jesus! †

BE READY WHEN HE COMES!

UNTIL THEN

By the late Bro. Hoyt Matthews

HEBREWS 9:27 says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." This verse is not at all implying that God has preordained a date and time that each individual shall die. Nevertheless, it is ordained of God that men leave the earthly scene and go to their long home. Some will leave because of bodily affliction. Some will go because of accidental death.

The Scriptures state, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (I Corinthians 3:16, 17). What these verses are saying is, God has instituted laws of nature concerning the body. When we violate these laws, nature takes its course and sets about to destroy the body. However, God has declared, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" (Ezekiel 18:23). But for the righteous, the apostle Paul has said, "... to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Philippians 1:23).

The following is based upon the song, "Until Then," written by Stuart Hamblen:

*1. My heart can sing when I pause to remember,
A heartache here is but a stepping stone;
Along a trail that's winding always upwards,
This troubled world is not my final home.*

Chorus:
*But until then my heart will go on singing,
Until then with joy I'll carry on,
Until the day my eyes behold the city,
Until the day God calls me home.*

*2. The things of earth will dim and lose their value
If we recall they're borrowed for a while;
And things of earth that cause the heart to tremble,
Remembered there will only bring a smile.*

*3. This weary world with all its toil and struggle
May take its toil of misery and strife;
The soul of man is like a waiting falcon,
When its released its destined for the skies.*

We must live for Christ daily so we can meet Him one day—

But until then—"Thou shalt be first, before all else thyself shalt be, In all my ways, through all my days, Thou shalt be first of all to me."

But until then—"All glory to my Savior's name! To do thy will my highest aim; Thy favor's more than earthly fame, Thy smile is my constant light."

But until then—"I will praise him hallelujah! I will praise him more and more: If I had ten thousand lives in which to praise him, I could not enough my blessed Lord adore."

But until then—"I cannot be idle, no time for repose, My resting shall be over there, Where all of the faithful in heaven above, A crown of bright glory shall wear."

But until then—"Let us labor for the Master from the dawn till setting sun, Let us talk of all His wondrous love and care; Then when all of life is over, and our work on earth is done, And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there."

But until then—"Let us then be true and faithful, Trusting, serving every day; Just one glimpse of him in glory will the toils of life repay."

But until then—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

But until then—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

But until then—"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."

But until then—"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

But until then—"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands."

But until then—"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

But until then—"Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

But until then—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."

But until then—"Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

But until then—"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

But until then—"That thou mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and [having] a good conscience."

We therefore will be able to say as the apostle Paul: "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."

Is not this life only a place of preparation for the life beyond the tomb? This life is only as a vapor that appeareth for a while and then vanisheth away.

But what is heaven? What is it all about? Heaven is a dwelling place. God the Father dwells there, and for God to dwell there, it would necessarily be an eternal dwelling place. All of heaven's dwellers are spirit beings. This includes Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Heaven's angels are spirit beings. They only take on human form when Father sends them on an errand to the earth where humans dwell. All departed saints of God are spirit beings. Their corruptible bodies will remain in the tomb till the trumpet shall sound on the last day. They then will be changed to incorruptible bodies.

The Scriptures do not go into great detail in describing heaven, doubtless because of the inability of the finite mind to comprehend the things of eternal moment.

Quoting from his book entitled, *The Revelation Explained*, the late F. G. Smith wrote:

"But the final reward and eternal home of God's people after the judgment has in no instance been fully described. That glorious event of the future was briefly alluded to when 'a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb.' It was said of them, 'They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'"

Heaven is a forgetful dwelling place, for Isaiah declared, "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isaiah 65:17). But this we do know: "When he [Christ] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

When all of life is over, let us go to our reward and gather around that great white throne with hearts of adoration to the Lord of lords, and the King of kings.†

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COMING MEETINGS

2022 HONDURAS CONVENTION

Sandy Bay, Roatan, Honduras

March 15-20, 2022, Lord willing

Sis. Siggie James, Host Pastor



2022 INTERNATIONAL

CHURCH OF GOD CONVENTION

12819 Point Salem Rd.

Hagerstown, Maryland U.S.A.

June 28-July 3, 2022, Lord willing

Bro. Gregory E. Tyler, Host Pastor



REVIVAL SERVICES

Hagerstown, Maryland

April 27-May 1 (AM), 2022, Lord willing

Bro. David Goble, Evangelist

Bro. G. E. Tyler, Pastor