

The Way of Truth

Vol. 80

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

No. 10

October 2022



**"The Doctrine
of the Blood"**

Message begins on page 12

IN THE CROSS, FOR THE CROSS, BY THE CROSS, THROUGH THE CROSS

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."—Galatians 6:14.

PAUL THE APOSTLE realized the significance of the cross. He emphasized it again and again. As beautiful the story is of Jesus coming to earth in the form of man, who was born of a virgin at the heralding of angels, Paul did not say, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the manger of our Lord Jesus Christ." It was the cross that was all important!

The cross consisted of a perpendicular stake with a crossbeam either at the top of the stake or shortly below the top. The height of the stake was usually little more than the height of a man. A block or a pin was sometimes driven into the stake to serve as a seat for the condemned person, giving partial support to his body. Sometimes also a step for the feet was fixed to the stake.

Victims of crucifixion did not usually die for 2 or 3 days. But this was determined by the presence or absence of the seat and the footrest, for a person suspended by his hands lost blood pressure quickly, and the pulse rate was increased. Usually the victim had been severely scourged before crucifixion took place. Total collapse through insufficient blood circulation to the brain and the heart would follow shortly.

If the victim could ease his body by supporting himself with the seat and footrest, the blood could be returned to some degree of circulation in the upper part of his body.

To fix the hands to the crossbeam either cords or nails and cords were used; sometimes the feet were nailed also. When it was desired to bring the torture to an end, the victim's legs were broken below the knees with a club. It was then no longer possible for him to ease his weight, and the loss of blood circulation was accentuated.

Coronary insufficiency followed shortly. The victim's offense was usually published by a crier who preceded him to the place of execution. Sometimes it was written on a tablet which was carried by the condemned man himself.

Jesus was nailed to the old rugged cross for the sins of the world. He was innocent. He came to this world for that purpose. The cross became an emblem of suffering and shame, an emblem of Christianity—not as jewelry to be worn, but as suffering to be borne because of following Christ's example.

As you travel down Interstate 77 through West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina, you cannot help but notice the message of the three silent crosses. Those crosses call to mind a sermon by Myron J. Taylor titled "A Hill With Three Crosses." He said that one cross portrays a thief dying IN sin, and the other a thief dying TO sin. But the center cross speaks of the redeemer dying FOR sin. It divides all humanity into one of two cate-

gories—those who reject Christ and die in sin, and those who receive Christ and can die to sin.

The cross means something to the Christian!

IN the cross I see forgiveness.—Colossians 2:14, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." The words of that old hymn by Mr. Spafford comes to mind: "My sin—O the bliss of this glorious thought! My sin, not in part but the whole, Is nailed to His cross and I bear it no more!" There is forgiveness in the cross of Christ.

Paul told the Philippians in chapter 2, verses 5-8, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

I had sinned against God! But Jesus died on the cross to save me. I cherish that old rugged cross.

FOR the cross I found something worth living ... something more than my yesterdays. John 19:17 says, "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha." He bore His cross and proclaimed, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Must Jesus bear the cross alone? No, there is a cross for us to bear, and it is a privilege to do so! It gives life purpose. If we are not willing to live for the cross we are not worthy of Him. Matthew 10:38 states plainly, "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

Simon the Cyrenian literally bore Christ's cross (Matthew 27:32), but we must bear the cross symbolically. The rich young ruler was given the opportunity. In Mark 10, Christ was offering real purpose and meaning to his life. The Bible says, "Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."

Many refuse to live for the cross. Paul told the Galatian church, "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ" (Galatians 6:12).

BY the cross I see victory. From Ephesians 2:13-17 we read, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might

ABOUT THE COVER

The reality of Christ's suffering on the old rugged cross, and the blood He shed is still as powerful today as ever. The modern religious thinking is to minimize or completely ignore the blood as an important part of the gospel message. But the blood is an essential part of Christian doctrine today!

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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No. 10

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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reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh." There is power in the blood that was shed on the cross of Calvary.

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—I Corinthians 15:57. The cross offers victory over sin, victory over death, and victory over hell. By the cross we have victory over the world. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4).

*There's power in the blood to save from sin,
To bring the peace of God where guilt hath been;
A new and happy life will then begin,
There's power in the blood of Jesus.*

Laboring for the cross brings victory. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."—I Corinthians 15:58. By the cross I see victory!

THROUGH the cross I see heaven. To the Colossians Paul wrote, "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Colossians 1:20).

The doors of heaven are open because Jesus endured the cross. It is through His sacrifice any one of us can make it to heaven. Hebrews 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

To many, the cross of Christ is without value. But to me, as it was to Paul, the cross it is the power of God. Let us not neglect to emphasize the cross of Christ—in our preaching and in our living.

"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."—I Corinthians 1:17, 18.

*On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suff'ring and shame;
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.*

*So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it some day for a crown.*

*In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,
A wondrous beauty I see;
For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died,
To pardon and sanctify me.*

*To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;
Then He'll call me someday to my home far away,
Where His glory forever I'll share.*

—George Bennard

God bless you as you peruse this month's issue. †

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

QUESTION: Does the word *Babylon* mean the different denominations, or does it mean the world? If it means the denominations, where in the Bible does it say so?

ANSWER: There are two Babylons spoken of in the Bible—literal Babylon and spiritual (Mystery) Babylon. One is symbolic of the other. We will explain both of them. The literal meaning of Babel or Babylon is “confusion.” Literal Babylon was properly the capital city of the country, which is called in Genesis Shinar, and in the latter books Chaldea, or the land of the Chaldeans. It was built in 2600 B.C. In Nebuchadnezzar’s time it had become a mighty city, fourteen miles square, with high walls surrounding. Thither the Jews were taken captive from Jerusalem, and remained until the city was captured by the Medes and Persians under Cyrus, who allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem. After the death of Alexander the Great, the seat of government was removed to Antioch, and thus marked the decline of the literal city of Babylon.

Babylon was therefore antagonistic to Jerusalem. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others of the Old Testament prophets, prophesied of the judgments that should come upon Babylon, resulting in its downfall. These prophesies have all been fulfilled; the great city has long since been nothing but heaps, the Arab refusing to pitch his tent there, and the shepherd to fold his sheep.

The Bible abounds in symbols and types. Many literal things of the Old Testament were adopted as symbols of something in the New Testament. As Jerusalem, the city of the Jews, so beautifully typified the New Testament church (Hebrews 12:22, 23), which is spiritual, so Babylon symbolized a great spiritual principle that was to be antagonistic to the church, or people of God. As Jerusalem had a religious symbolism, so Babylon should symbolize some religious power. As the people of Jerusalem were captives for a time in the city of Babylon, so a beautiful symbolism represents God’s people, the church, captive in spiritual Babylon. As the time came for the Jews to be delivered, and return to Jerusalem, so the time comes and the way opens for God’s people to be delivered from their spiritual captors of New Testament times. Many references by the prophets to literal Babylon had also a symbolic meaning, referring to the spiritual Babylon.

But what is this spiritual Babylon of the book of Revelation? Is it possible that some will say it simply means the same old ancient city, and deny that there

is any symbolism about it? I am sure that no Bible student, who is also acquainted with the history of ancient Babylon, will do this if he be honest. And the Babylon of the Revelations cannot mean the world; for the two symbolisms of Jerusalem and Babylon are religious parallel. The unprofessing world has never had the record of having in it “the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth” (Revelation 18:24). Besides, there is no sense in which God’s people have been captives to the unprofessing world, from which He desires them to come out. Spiritual Babylon cannot, therefore, have reference to the world. The Babylon of the Revelation relates to something that was to exist subsequent to the time John saw the vision (see Revelation 4:1), and therefore could not possibly mean the same old ancient city.

It has come to be generally admitted by Protestant scholars that Babylon of the Revelation (Mystery Babylon) means Rome, and in this they are not mistaken. To compare the historical record of Romanism with the description of Mystery Babylon, it is too plain to be misunderstood. Romanism exactly fills the bill so far as it goes; but Rome is not all there is of Babylon. Was not Babylon to have daughters? Her name in full is “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” Then, if Babylon means spiritual Rome, or the Roman Catholic religion, would not her offspring represent the Protestant sectarian institutions with their abominations? Is it not even natural for them to acknowledge themselves daughters of the Roman and speak of the Catholic as the “Mother Church”? Yea, it is true. Who with spiritual eye can fail to see that this Mystery Babylon is the religious confusion in which God’s children have been captivated? The light of our King Cyrus (Christ) has broken through Babylon’s walls of ignorance and darkness, and God’s people are now escaping on the highway of truth, and returning “to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.” Hallelujah!

In addition to what we have said, we will here quote from the *Critical Commentary*, by Jameson-Fausset Brown, from their comments on Revelation 18:4 ...

“The harlot is not Rome alone (though she is pre-eminently so), but every church that has not Christ’s mind and Spirit. False Christendom divided into very many sects, is truly Babylon, i.e. confusion. ... Corrupt, lifeless Christendom is the harlot, whose great aim is the pleasure of the flesh, and which is governed by the spirit of nature and the world.”

QUESTION: Is there any scripture to support the idea of individuals being anointed “for” someone else to be healed?

ANSWER: No! When asked to do so, I have refused. We do have the example of them taking pieces of cloth from Paul to lay on people to be healed: Acts 19:11, 12, “And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.” †

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



A CALL FROM THE GRASS

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

"I hear a rooster crowing!" said Annie. I looked down to see my four-year-old-sister standing beside me. Annie was fascinated by chickens. She enjoyed watching them peck at their food, or dust themselves in the chicken yard, or fly up to their nest boxes in the chicken house to lay eggs.

Annie knew that roosters usually crow in the early morning, and so she was surprised to hear one crowing in the middle of the afternoon. To add to the mystery, the crowing was coming from the opposite direction of the chicken house.

"I hear a rooster crowing over there," Annie said, pointing toward our backyard.

"Maybe he got out," I said. "Let me get these jars of peaches out of the pressure cooker, and then I'll go with you to look."

One by one, I lifted the hot jars of peaches out of the cooker and set them on racks on the kitchen counter to cool. As soon as I had placed the last jar on the rack, Annie tugged at my skirt. "Can you come now?" she asked.

I took Annie's hand, and we walked out onto the back porch. To our surprise, we found that the sound was coming from the place where my mother sat with two of my other sisters, Twila and Wilma, peeling more peaches to be canned. There were no chickens to be seen, but my mother had both of her hands to her mouth, and my sisters were laughing.

Just then we heard the rooster crow again. The sound was coming from my mother's mouth. I looked down at Annie. "It's Mommy!" I said. "Mommy's making the sound of a rooster crowing!"

Annie ran to my mother's side. "Do it again!" she cried. "Do it again!"

My mother leaned down and pulled a long blade of grass from the ground. She placed it edgewise and stretched it tightly between the thumbs of both hands. Then she brought her hands to her mouth, and blew across the blade of grass. A sound like the crowing of a rooster came from the blade of grass in her hands.

"I want to do it! I want to do it!" Annie shouted. She plopped down beside my mother and pulled up a handful of grass. She pressed the grass to her mouth, covered it with her hands, and blew hard. Blades of grass went flying everywhere.

"You just need one nice-sized blade of grass," explained my mother. "Here. I'll show you." Patiently, she demonstrated again the way she had made the crowing sound. Then she positioned another blade of grass carefully between Annie's thumbs. But try as she

might, my little sister was not able to coax a single sound from the grass.

Annie looked up at me. "Can you help me?" she asked.

I shook my head. "I don't know how," I said. "Mommy showed me, too, a long time ago. But I have never been able to get it to work."

"I can do it!" said my twelve-year-old sister, Wilma. She picked up a blade of grass and began making her own rooster sounds.

Annie looked at Twila, my fourteen-year-old sister. "Can you do it?" she asked. "Can you make the grass crow?"

Twila shook her head. "No," she said, "I've tried and tried, but I've never been able to do it."

Many times since that day, I've tried to make crowing sounds come from a blade of grass. But I have never been successful. Nearly all of my younger sisters learned the trick, but the skill has eluded Twila, Annie, and me. We may never learn to do it.

This simple story makes me think about the ways in which we are all different. You have probably noticed that your siblings and your friends have talents that you may not possess. On the other hand, you may be able to do things that they cannot do.

Some children have great musical abilities, some are artistic, and some are athletic. Some are good writers, and others can easily solve difficult math problems. These abilities are all gifts. James 1:17a tells us that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." God is the Father of lights. Our talents and abilities come from Him.

You may look at others and wonder why you do not have the gifts or talents they were given. But you can be sure that you have your own gifts. God does not leave anyone out.

This month's wise saying comes from Proverbs 17:8, which says, "A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth."

Precious stones are cut by skilled craftspeople so that each little flat area, or facet, reflects light whenever the stone is turned. This causes the stone to sparkle. That is the job of a precious stone—to sparkle and be beautiful.

Our gifts, or talents, are like precious stones. If we allow ourselves to reflect Jesus' light, He will help us sparkle in His kingdom. The light from the gifts and talents He has given us can shine into this dark world, making sad hearts glad.

Remember, God has given each one of us talents and gifts. He wants us to use them for His glory.

Activity

Here is a short story about a woman who used her talents for God's glory. See if you can fill in the blanks to make the story complete. (HINT: The story is found in Acts 9.)

There was a woman whose name was _____. Some people called her Dorcas. She lived in the city of _____.

She was very good at ____, and she gave away many of the things she made to people who were ____.

One day, Dorcas became so sick that she _____. Her friends were very _____. They took her upstairs and laid her in a _____. They _____ as they said their goodbyes.

Two men were sent to _____, a nearby town where Peter was staying. They asked him to come to _____ at once.

When Peter arrived at Dorcas' house, the people showed him the _____ and _____ Dorcas had made for them while she was _____.

Peter asked everyone to leave the _____, and then he kneeled down and _____. After he had finished talking to God, Peter turned to Dorcas' body and said, "_____, _____!"

Dorcas opened her _____, and when she saw Peter, she _____.

News of this _____ was spread throughout all _____, and many people _____ on the Lord.

Answers to Last Month's Activity

1. "Remove far from me **vanity** and lies" (Proverbs 30:8).

2. "Turn away mine eyes from beholding **vanity**" (Psalm 119:37).

3. "Man is like to **vanity**: his days are as a shadow that passeth away" (Psalm 144:4).

4. "Surely God will not hear **vanity**, neither will the Almighty regard it" (Job 35:13).

5. "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man that they are **vanity**" (Psalm 94:11). †

A QUESTION UNANSWERED

By the late S. W. Parrish

"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?" (Matthew 16:26).

CHRIST asked this question nearly two thousand years ago, and no man has been able with all his wisdom to answer it; and the sad thing is that it will never be answered. Just suppose one man should be able to gain the whole world, had it all in his possession, a title to everything, and he lived to be as old as the oldest man that ever lived—just as sure as he lived he would have to die. Let's be honest and reason concerning this matter a little. This man comes down to death. He says to the doctor (and maybe the greatest doctor on the earth, for he would be able to employ the very best there was), "Doctor, I am dying, set your price and save my life. It does not matter about the cost. I will pay it." What would be the doctor's answer? We all know: "Though you would give me everything you possess, I cannot save your life." Then he turns to the monster, death, "Death, set your price. Go away and leave me, and let me live." Death's cold answer would be, "I cannot use your possessions. I have no use for them. You will have to go."

After everything else has failed, the dying man turns to the Creator of all the riches he owns, "Great Master, I will give all that I possess if you will spare my life and let me live." The answer thunders back from heaven, "I have created all these things you claim to possess. They are mine. No! you are doomed to die." Now whose will all these things be? He sees he has come to the end. He must die. He approaches the Lord again, "Lord, if I must die, here is all that I have—save my soul, and it all shall be yours." The answer echoes back from Him who sits on the throne, "Christ is the Savior of the world. There is none other name under heaven whereby you must be saved." All of this man's riches would not purchase redemption for his soul. So what will it profit if we gain the whole world and lose our soul?

Christ did not consider earthly values worth as much as the soul of the man in the tombs when He went into the country of the Gadarenes, and came in contact with the man possessed with a legion of devils. The devils requested that they be allowed to enter into the swine that were feeding on the mountain, about two thousand in number. He granted this request, and the swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were destroyed. The Lord valued the man's soul as worth more than two thousand swine.

Dear Sinner, would it not be wisdom and also reasonable to stop and compare eternal values with earthly values? It's nice to have of this world's goods and enjoy this world's pleasures; but what will they be worth when we come to the end of the way, or when the elements are melting with fervent heat and this old world is being burned up and all the works that are therein?

Dear Sinner, we may imagine what it is going to be like to be lost, and we can come to a conclusion of maybe how it is going to be, but there is no one who knows altogether just what it will be. Only that soul that is in the dark regions of despair, and there are none of them that are coming back to tell us about it, or to warn us to stay away from that place of torment. When we come to die the question will still be unanswered, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

There was no man found in heaven, or in the earth, neither under the earth, who was able to redeem the lost world. There was nothing valuable enough or no man pure enough to offer a proper sacrifice for lost men. John the Revelator said, "He wept much when he thought there was no Savior," but one told him to weep not. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to offer the much needed sacrifice for the lost world. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

My Dear Friend, we cannot purchase salvation with this world's goods. We cannot obtain it with good works. Jesus Christ has paid the price. Man could not pay it. He has redeemed us by His blood. "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?" Christ can and will save to the uttermost all who will come to Him. Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He is the Savior of the world. Prepare to meet thy God! †

SUFFICIENT GRACE

2022 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Doug Koerner

I THANK GOD for His goodness and for salvation. I thank Him for saving me and giving me the great hope of one day making heaven my home.

We ask you to open up your Bibles to Romans, chapter 5. Of course, Romans, chapter 5, verses 1 and 2, are a part of our theme of the convention: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

The theme that Bro. Greg chose was, "The Amazing Grace of Our Amazing God." The word *amazing* was used twice in the theme. I thought about the word *amazing*. Many times when we think about the word *grace*, we just use that word alone. Mostly, we don't tie other words with it unless we're thinking of the song "Amazing Grace." I thought about amazing grace this afternoon. The word *amazing* means "causing great surprise or wonder or astonishment."

We live in a dark world today, a world that is pressing down on us. There are very little moral standards, even among good people. There's very little holiness whatsoever, even among the churches. It affects us. I always mention how we're affected by the world. It's not like it once was. Saints of God, if we want to see the Lord's face one day, we have to be steadfast and established in the things of God. Stand firm.

As I looked at the song "Amazing Grace," I decided to use the third verse this evening to work with my message. The third verse says—

*Thro' many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.*

From the time you got saved, to this day, the grace of God has saved you, kept you, and the grace of God will help you to win your battles. The songwriter of "Amazing Grace," John Newton, is saying that God's grace is helping us to win our battles. God's grace is what has helped us to win from the beginning till now, and Newton is also saying that it is God's grace that will continue to help us to make heaven our home.

I want to do my best to relate some thoughts to you. To have God's amazing grace, we have to have an understanding and a vision of it. I'm going to use the second verse in Romans 5: "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." I want to use the phrase, "... by faith into this grace wherein we stand." What are you standing on this evening? What are you standing on from day to day? What are you holding confidence in from day to day? By faith into His grace is what we stand on. A part of the second verse of our theme in II Peter 3:18 says, "But grow in grace." We're

going to talk about that a little later, so the two thoughts that I want to look at are, *grace is where we need to stand and we need to grow in grace*. So verse two in Romans 5 says, "... grace wherein we stand."

Through faith we have access to grace. Through faith we believe that God is going to give us that grace to stand. When we first get saved, the Bible tells us we're like children. Not one soul that as ever lived went from being spiritually a child to an adult immediately. It's a process. One of the things that God does in that process is that He gives us grace to go through our battles. We have to trust in Him. We have to trust in His grace. We have to continue in His grace. If we stay faithful as we get older, we can stand on the grace of God. We can have confidence in the grace of God.

In all of our lives, whether you're women with cooking, or men on the job, we learn to do things. If you ladies made a cake, and the first time it didn't turn out too well, you had to work at it again. Sometimes it might take four or five times before you perfect it for everybody to enjoy it. It's the same way on a job. You work at it until you get good at it to be profitable with what you're doing. Well, it's the same way in living for God. It takes some work. By God's grace, we grow and become confident in the things of God. So after we get saved, we need to learn that we grow in grace. We need to learn that we trust in God's grace. We need to learn that we believe in God's grace, and we need to learn to live in the grace of God. These are things we need to do.

Let's go to II Corinthians. I'll give you my main thought here for this evening. II Corinthians, chapter 12, starting at verse 7. This is Paul speaking. You know the story pretty well, I'm certain. "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." So we see here that Paul had been praying. He mentioned that he had a thorn in the flesh. Many times I think of our own lives. We have our battles from day to day. But from time to time, there are some battles that we struggle with every single day of our lives. Maybe they don't just disappear. Some are easier to overcome. Some battles just stay with us. This is something Paul was saying to the Lord: "Lord, I have a thorn in the flesh." He prayed three times. We don't know how much time Paul took to pray. I believe he prayed, and as time went on, he prayed again and again, but he prayed three times asking the Lord to remove this thorn. In verse 9, this was God's answer to him: "My grace is sufficient for thee." That's what I want to look at this evening. I've entitled my message, "Sufficient Grace."



As I mentioned, Paul was having an issue. He talked to the Lord about this, and the Lord said to him, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” The word *sufficient* means “enough; adequate.” I jump ahead sometimes with my thoughts when I don’t want to, but I will this time. A lot of times we pray, “Lord, give me more grace.” God answers, “You don’t need anymore grace. My grace that I give to you is sufficient.” We’ll get into that a little bit later, but He told Paul here, “Paul, my grace is sufficient for you for whatever your battles may be.”

I mentioned a minute ago that many times we pray during our battles, “Lord, give me more grace.” If we ever do that from here on out, don’t feel bad about it, because we probably will. We pray, “I’m in a place, Lord, that I need more grace. Lord, give me more grace.” But my desire for us this evening is to understand God’s amazing grace. When He gives us grace, He gives us the *perfect* grace that we need. He gives us the grace every single day to fight the enemy so that we can be successful Christians. I want us to understand this and stand on it. We’re going to go into battles, trials, and other situations, and the devil will always battle us. He’ll say, “Well, you don’t have what you need. You need more help from God. You need more of this and more of that,” but God says, “I’ll give you sufficient grace.” We don’t need one ounce more of grace. Every day God supplies sufficient grace. I want that to sink into your mind. God is a perfect God. He’s an amazing God. He doesn’t falter.

You know, we measure things in the world. I deal with parameters on my job. If there’s a clutch pack, or something else, we look at the parameter. The parameter might be 14 to 18 pounds of pressure, and we put a gauge on it. We look at that parameter and it might be 14.2, a little bit on the low side, or it might be 17.9, a little bit on the high side. We like it to be in the middle. God doesn’t deal with parameters. God has a perfect set amount of grace. He doesn’t sit and scratch His head and wonder *how much grace do they need today?* He doesn’t measure it out. He supplies the grace that we need every single day for every single battle that we’re going to go through. He knows all that we’ll go through today. He says, “I’m going to give you the perfect amount of grace for today.” Trust in that—stand on that.

In our lives, we condition ourselves to think certain ways. Bro. Goble made the comment the same way. He said, “We’re human.” We do things in life. In life, we add more to whatever we do. Everyone here that has traveled, whether by car, plane, etc., you got a suitcase out a couple days before you traveled. You started putting things in there that were essential, the main things that you needed. You’ve put everything in the suitcase, and the suitcase is full. You say, “Well, I can take this, too,” and you take another suitcase out and start filling it. If you came here for three or four days, how many of you brought just that many articles of clothing? “I’m going to be there for four days so I brought four articles of clothing,” or did you bring extra? Did you bring extra in case something happens? “I need an extra set.” Some people may bring eight sets of articles of clothing to do for four days. Some people may or may not, but what I’m saying is, we train ourselves to say that we don’t

have enough of whatever it is. People bring casual shoes, dress shoes, tennis shoes, and maybe work shoes. “I have to bring extra just in case,” and we train ourselves that way.

There’s not one of us in here that’s ever prepared a Thanksgiving dinner, and after the meal it looked like the table hadn’t been touched. We have more than enough to eat for days. We accustom ourselves in whatever we do. There’s a saying we used to have years ago: “You brought everything but the kitchen sink.” That’s what people do. That’s what we get used to doing. Bro. Goble mentioned this morning that we get that way in the human, but we have to remember from time to time that God is not human. He’s divine, He’s perfect, He’s amazing! He doesn’t have to think, *Well, I’m going to give you this much grace, but you might run into something so I’ll have to set some aside for you.* No, He knows exactly how much grace you need today to be victorious over the enemy. But sometimes we start saying to God, “I need more.” God says, “I’ll supply what you need.” He told that to Paul. God said, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” Rest in that, trust in that, have confidence in that!

We need to learn to trust in God’s grace. In whatever battles, in whatever trials, in whatever storms of life, try to remember that God’s grace is sufficient for you today. God’s grace is able to help you to sustain your salvation today. You see, sometimes we try to live tomorrow or next week or we think about last week. We try to live something else. “Lord, I want more grace for tomorrow.” God says, “No, you need to live today.” When God wakes us up tomorrow, He’ll supply us grace tomorrow.

As mentioned in II Peter 3:18, we need to grow in grace. I want to reference the thought of growing and trusting in God’s grace. For little babes in Christ, there’s some dangerous ground, and they can be easily swept away. But God’s grace supplies and helps them. They grow in God’s grace, trusting in God’s grace. “God helped me yesterday. He took me through some battles.” Even as a little child or an adult that’s a babe in Christ, God helps them through their battles.

Let’s go back to Romans, chapter 5. We read verses 1 and 2, but I’ll read verse 2 again, and I will read verse 3 also: “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also ...” That’s not natural. No one glories in tribulations, but we have to understand growing in God’s grace and understanding God’s grace. Growing in it, we glory in tribulations. Peter continues saying “... knowing that tribulation worketh patience.” Patient in God’s grace, patient in trusting God, patient in believing that God will see us through in whatever we need to go through.

James 1:2 says, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.” There’s no joy in the battles, in the trials, and in the tribulations. But where the joy is, where the blessing is, is when God reveals Himself to you and gives you the grace to go through those tough times. When we seem like we’re down, when we’re at the end of our rope, so to speak, God lifts us up. That’s the joy in the tribulations. “But we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh

patience” (Romans 5:3). We can glory because we know that the grace of God is going to be an encouragement to us.

Let’s go back to II Peter, chapter 3, verse 18. I’ll just use the first couple words in this verse: “But grow in grace.” As I mentioned a little earlier, we can misinterpret *growing in grace* for *we need more grace*. I want to try to encourage us. We pray many times, “Lord, give me grace; Lord, I’m having a battle; I need extra grace,” but we misinterpret *growing in grace* and saying, “Lord, I need more grace.” I want us to understand what that means when we’re saying, “Lord, I need more grace.” I mentioned that a little earlier. What we’re saying is that God didn’t measure the grace out properly. “Lord, I need more grace.” God told Paul, “Paul, my grace is sufficient for thee.” If Paul would have said, “No, Lord, it’s not sufficient, I need this answer,” then what was he saying? He was saying, in effect, “Lord, you didn’t measure it out correctly.” So my thought to help you this evening is to be confident in the things of God and in the amazing grace of God. Have trust and faith in that, because we are living in a world that is going against us strongly. We’re living in times where people have no care for the things of God, no concern for the church, and no concern for the Word of God. Nothing! You work with people, I work with them, and it can affect us, but we need to keep ourselves encouraged in knowing that God’s grace is perfect.

David said, “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.” When I awake in the mornings, I sit on the side of the bed for a few minutes. I just sit there for a moment before I get up and go on. Follow my thought with this. Whether you’re saved or unsaved here tonight, when you awake, God already has the day prepared for you. “I have a table spread before you.” I like to be encouraged that God is never somewhere else. He’s not saying, “Wait a minute, I’ll be with you in a minute.” God is there very moment of our day. When we wake up, He has a table prepared for us. “I have grace for you today. I have everything you need for today.” Now if you’re not saved, you might just go on and disregard that. The Bible says, “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Every day God offers you His grace to be saved. If you’re not saved, God offers you grace every single day to be saved. All you need to do is to accept it. Accept the grace of God. Accept the salvation of Christ.

Do you remember the story of Elijah? There was a famine in the land, and God had sent him to a widow woman to feed him physically. God commanded her to do so. I want to connect this thought with grace: When Elijah got there, the widow was picking up some sticks. He said to her, “What are you doing?” She said, “I’m gathering a couple of sticks. I’m going to make a fire. I have a handful of meal and a little bit of oil. I’m going to make a cake for my son and me. That’s all I have. We’ll eat it; then we’re going to die.”

When I think about that story, the days she went to that barrel of meal, she had some. She had a little bit for each day, realizing each day it wouldn’t last long. Elijah said to her, “Go ahead and make the cake, but make me one first, and then one for thee and thy son.”

She emptied the barrel and made the cake. There was nothing left in that barrel. She made the cake and gave it to Elijah. Why go back to the barrel? When the widow woman opened the barrel, it was just enough for her and her son for each day until the famine was over. God took care of them.

Here’s how we would like to think. We would like to think if we went to the barrel we’d lift the lid, and the grain would just fall all over the barrel. It wasn’t like that in our story. We would like to say, “Lord, give us a whole barrel of grace.” God says, “No, because if I do that, you’ll get overconfident. I want you to trust in my grace.” Saints of God, every day when you get up, you may think there’s not enough grain, spiritually speaking, in your barrel. There’s not enough grace to sustain you for the day. God says, “There’s the perfect amount in there for you today.” Keep that in your mind.

When we’re going through battles and trials, every single day God gives us the perfect amount of grace to win the victories through the day. The perfect amount! He never comes up short. He never comes up just shy a little bit, or He never gives us too much. He gives us just the right amount. God gives us amazing, sufficient grace. Our humanity wants more. We think we need more. Whatever we do in life, we always think we need more. My dad would drop my mom off at the grocery store. She would say, “All I need to do is to go in and get some milk,” and she would come out with three bags. We have a mindset that we need more, but God says, “No, I’m perfect. I’m an amazing God. I can sustain you with what grace you need today.” Don’t get discouraged. As the day goes on, and you get into battles and trials, and you feel weary, God says, “I’m taking care of you with sufficient grace.”

God knows exactly how much grace we need to receive new life. As a babe in Christ, you might not know anything much about the Bible, and most of us no doubt were that way, unless we were brought up in church and taught about the Bible. Even in that, we didn’t know a lot of things.

As ministers, we may see a brother that has been saved for six months, and someone might say, “Well, he should be measured up to this point,” but maybe God knows why and hasn’t given him the grace to measure up to the next step. I’ve always heard years ago: “Children shouldn’t raise children,” meaning the church doesn’t need to be telling other saints how to live. It’s the pastor’s job, the minister’s job, and God’s job.

As the Word of God goes forth, and as time goes on, God will give you the grace to understand sanctification. I remember when I first got saved. We were at church one day, and my aunt turned around and asked me, “Do you know what the word *carnality* means?” “No, I don’t know what it means.” She never said another word. Later on, I found out what sanctification was. You could ask someone that just got saved, “Do you know what it means to be sanctified?” and he may not understand, but God will give him the grace when it’s time to understand it, and he will accept it. God will give the grace to understand holiness and baptism.

I’ve always said at home that when I first got saved, the battles I had then don’t exist today. But the battles I have today didn’t exist then. As we saints get older,

and go through different phases, God will give us the grace. He gives grace when you're young to deal with all the peer pressures, and He'll give you the grace as you get older. He'll give us that sustaining, amazing grace to be blessed. I hope you can be encouraged by that.

Romans 5:2, "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Stand on the promises of God. Stand on the promise that God's grace is sufficient for us today, no matter what the enemy says. Faith comes into play when we don't understand some things. We don't understand God's vision of everything. He is above our ways, but by faith and trust and believing in God, He's directing our path for our benefit.

Do you understand God's sufficient grace? "God, when you wake me up in the morning, you're going to supply me with grace for the day." In camp meeting, we might not think it too difficult, but when we get home, and get back into the daily routine, we need to say, "Lord, help me to stand in the grace you're going to supply me today."

May the Lord bless you. †

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

FAITH AND MIRACLES

MIRACLES IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER

Scriptures: Mark 16:14-20; James 5:16; Ephesians 6:10; 2:20.

Mark 16:14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

Memory Verse: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.—John 14:12.

Aim: To show that the normal Christian should witness some miracles in his life.

INTRODUCTION

IN A WORLD where there is such a wicked force at work as is found in Satan, there is need of signs and wonders. Thousands upon thousands of people are working hand in hand with Satan, thinking it is the proper way. The millions of heathens, or pagan, who are totally given over to devil worship are hopelessly lost if we cannot, by the convincing power of signs and wonders worked by the grace of our eternal God through the instrumentality of believers, show them the truth. In our own land millions are deceived by the formalities of our present-day Christianity; they have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. Miracles wrought in the lives of believers are certain to have a convincing effect upon the lives of this class of people.

MEDITATIONS

UNBELIEF DESERVES REPROOF—Mark 16:14—Upbraided them—Christ had told His followers that He would be raised from the dead, but it did not seem to make any impression. They were shocked by the fact that He submitted of His free will to the indignities of the cross. They were offended because of this, but the divine will called for this, and there was no way around it. We, too, will suffer some things that will offend, but he who suffers for the Christ's cause gains the day.

THE GREAT COMMISSION—Mark 16:15—Go ye—The command is as urgent today as it ever was. The forces of sin are raging, and Satan has a mighty hold; but we are encouraged by the fact that where sin did abound, grace did much more abound. There is no sin so deep and no enemy so powerful that the gospel of Christ cannot win.

CONDITIONS OF SALVATION—Mark 16:16—Believeth—Water has no cleansing power over sin; baptism is only an answer of a good conscience toward God (I Peter 3:21). Salvation is entirely dependent upon the belief in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Eternal damnation is decreed to the man who will not believe.

RESULT OF BELIEVING—Mark 16:17—Signs shall follow—Jesus declared that He would give His followers power over all the power of the enemy. So no devil can successfully resist the man who is a true believer in Jesus Christ. For the sake of spreading the gospel to foreign lands, the Holy Ghost will give the believer power to speak with a new tongue, and the word tongue, properly interpreted, means "language." This is not an evidence of Holy Ghost baptism, nor is it a language that no one understands, as taught by the modern Pentecostal movements. It is the power to speak a language that is unknown to the speaker for the express purpose of telling the story of Jesus. **Verse 18—Take up serpents**—A good example of this is the experience of Paul when a serpent fastened itself upon him as he laid the sticks on the fire. Paul did not take the snake up and handle it, but shook it off into the

fire. He was actually bitten, but through faith in Jesus Christ it did not hurt. The same holds true in the event that we accidentally drink something that is poisonous; by faith in the name of Jesus, no harm will result. The believer shall lay his hands upon sick bodies, and by faith in the same name, health shall be the result.

ANOTHER MIRACLE—Mark 16:19—Received up—While they looked, Jesus was taken out of their sight, quite contrary to the course of natural life. But can we not expect the supernatural in the life of Christ and likewise in the lives of those who believe on Him? Christ is now at the right hand of God, interceding for the men of the earth.

STARTING TO WORK—Mark 16:20—Lord working with them—No soldier of the cross ever enters battle alone. He always has the presence of Christ with him in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is sent to do the will of Christ. Miracles must be performed in many cases to straighten out the messes that Satan has gotten people into. He who catches the full significance of the message of Christ, first of all receives the benefit of the miracle-working power in his life, which restores him to normal living; and from then on there will “flow from his belly rivers of living waters” in the form of miraculous events wrought in the lives of others.

A DIVINE COMMAND—Ephesians 6:10—Power of his might—The unlimited power of almighty God is at the disposal of the man who is walking in the light of God’s holy truth with the one purpose in mind of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth, according to the plan and will of God. Mountains will not stand in his way. Neither waves, winds nor personalities can stop his forward march. This is the dynamic gospel of Him who once was dead; but, behold, He is alive forevermore! God does not expect His people to be powerless.

A STRONG BUILDING—Ephesians 2:20—Are built—To be built into a building is to become a part of it. So if the Christian of today is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Cornerstone, then he is well-blended with real harmony into that building. There can be no other building erected like it. Some may have a similar appearance, but he who is versed in religious architecture will easily tell the difference. Many today have no understanding of the great architecture of Jesus Christ, and, as a result, there are religious buildings being erected that causes many to be deceived.

CONCLUSION

We are rapidly moving into the end of time, and the opportunity to do things for God will soon be over. Satan knows that his time is short, and he is working with a vengeance and a thoroughness that is astonishing. Can we who love the cause of Christ and the souls of men be any less interested or determined in the great work of the gospel and the salvation of souls? Most certainly not! We have the wonderful promise of the greatest Leader and Captain who ever existed, that He will go with us, yes, even to the end of the world.

October 2022

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Why do we need signs following the preaching of the gospel?
2. Can a man become a Christian without a miracle being worked in his heart?
3. Why were the disciples offended in Christ when He was crucified?
4. What are the conditions of salvation?
5. Name the signs that shall follow the preaching of the Word.
6. Give an instance wherein a miracle or sign was the result of your Christian experience. †

SHADOWS OF GOOD THINGS

By the late Russell R. Byrum

(Part XIII)

THE OFFERINGS AT THE ALTAR

(Leviticus 1-7)

SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS did not have their origin with the Mosaic law. It merely directed specifically how such offerings should be made by those under it. Like the altar on which they were offered, they date from the earliest dawn of human history, and have characterized religion in almost all ages and countries.

Cain and Abel, Noah and Abraham offered sacrifices. The priests of Baal did likewise in the days of Elijah, and the devotees of the ancient fire-god Moloch placed their infant children in the extended hands of the great brass image of their god to be burned to death by the flames of a roaring fire kindled on the altar beneath, while the cries of the little victims were drowned by the beating of the drums and the blowing of trumpets. Human sacrifice has been common in different heathen religions. At one time the bloody goddess Kali of India was worshiped by the sacrifice of many thousands of human lives each year. When Europeans first visited Mexico, the Mexican Indians offered human sacrifice by placing the living victim on the altar before the idol, cutting a slit in his left side, pulling the heart out and pressing it against the idol.

How men first got the idea of offering sacrifices we cannot be certain. If it was originally by a direct injunction of God, as some suppose, it must still be allowed that a deep need of man’s nature has impelled him to continue the practice. Serious-minded men in all places and times have had a tendency to worship a higher being. A bent to religion is deeply implanted in human nature. Also, as at present, constituted men feel estranged from God by sin. They therefore seek by these sacrifices to obtain favor with Him.

Sacrifices by Blood

At first thought it seems strange that the kind Creator should appoint such rites that His holy sanctuary should have the appearance of a solemn slaughterhouse. But such must have been the general aspect around that ancient altar of Jehovah. The grand reason for such an arrangement was that “without shedding

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of blood is no remission,” as a New Testament writer has put it. And unless sins were remitted, the Holy Lord could not associate Himself with a sinful people. God’s holiness and man’s sin lie at the bottom of all that ancient blood shedding on God’s altar.

But why must blood be shed? Would not a live lamb placed upon God’s altar answer as well? Or why might not the agriculturist bring an offering of the fruits of the field, as did Cain, and be accepted of God? The answer to these questions is quite clearly given in Leviticus 17:11, where the eating of blood is forbidden and the reason is given why it must not be eaten: “For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” The full force and exact meaning of this text is often missed because of the last three words, “for the soul.” According to Fairbairn the Hebrew preposition here translated “for” is much better rendered as in the American Standard Version, where the last clause reads, “for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life [soul, margin].” The reason, then, why the blood is appointed to atone for the soul of the guilty is because of the life of the animal that resides in the blood, as is brought out in the first clause of the verse.

Moses told us more than three millenniums ago a truth which by modern science has not been discovered and announced until in recent years—that the physical seat of animal life is in the blood. Harvey, the discoverer of blood circulation, says of the blood, “It is the fountain of life, the first to live, the last to die, and the primary seat of the animal soul.” Now, the sinner had forfeited his life by sin, for “the wages of sin is death.” Justice demanded that the penalty be paid. But God, desiring to forgive the sinner, made an arrangement so that His holiness could be maintained and His good law respected by the sacrificing of another life, one that had not been forfeited, instead of the life of the sinner so the sinner might go free. Therefore the blood, the physical seat of life, is chosen as the most appropriate symbol of that intangible life that must be laid upon the altar of God to cover from His holy eyes the guilt of the sinner.

Inefficiency of Animal Sacrifices

Because the souls of those dumb animals sacrificed for sin were unforfeited or unstained by guilt they were in this particular a fit substitute for men, but in almost every other point they lacked the requisite qualities to atone for sin. “It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4). The penalty for sin is represented as being infinite—everlasting. Then how could the suffering of mere physical death by a finite creature be a proper substitute for that penalty? Especially is this not possible when we consider that those creatures, unlike the sinner, were irrational and non-moral, and so incapable of sin or holiness. Also they could not constitute a proper sacrifice for sin because their offering was unlike the sin to be atoned for—by voluntary choice. They suffered, not willingly, but by the hand of another. The priest and the offering were divided, which cannot be true in a proper atonement for sin. Passing by the question of whether the suffering of atonement must equal in extent

the suffering of the sinner, it is clear that the putting to death of an irrational animal was insufficient to represent to men the extreme sinfulness of sin, and the awful holiness of God and of His commandment that has been violated.

A nobler sacrifice must be sought. These might serve as a temporary basis for the pardon for sin, but even as such only on the ground of an adequate sacrifice being provided in God’s plan. Those animal sacrifices had no intrinsic value in themselves, but only as they represented the true sacrifice, much as paper money—a one-dollar silver certificate—has value only because of the silver dollar that is deposited in the treasury of the government issuing it. The silver dollar has intrinsic value, the paper dollar merely representative value.

But we need not therefore conclude that the Israelite must have clearly comprehended the nature of the true atonement to be accepted by his animal sacrifice, as one need not understand the nature of the value of paper money to be benefitted by it, or as one today need not comprehend the philosophy of Christ’s atonement in order to be saved. Doubtless it was enough that he should have faith in the mercy of God according to the plan by which He had chosen to show His mercy. However, it is very probable that the more spiritual-minded of the Israelites saw dimly the real sacrifice for sin, the Lamb of God, in the distant future, that was foreshadowed by the lamb they offered.

The Antitypical Sacrifice for Sin

It scarcely needs to be stated here that Christ in His sacrificial death is the true atonement for man’s sin and the antitype of all those Levitical offerings. He is “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). We are redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (I Peter 1:19). “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Hebrews 9:14). Each of the various kinds of bloody sacrifices points to Him and represents different aspects of His sacrifice, as the different parts of the tabernacle were needed to symbolize various phases of His saving work, or elaborate priestly attire and services were required to show Him as mediator in various ways.

Only Christ could be fit sacrifice for sin. When the sad news reached heaven that the two holy beings whom God had created and placed on probation in the Garden of Eden had broken the divine commandment and must be forever banished from Himself, God began at once to seek for their recovery. In the fifth chapter of Revelation He is described as sitting upon His throne with a book in His hand sealed with seven seals. This book, which symbolized the plan of salvation, “no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open.” Then it was said, “The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” No man nor any angel was qualified to save a world of sinners. Only He who is infinite, who could combine in His own person divinity and humanity, who could make an infinite sacrifice could redeem sinful men.

THE POETRY PAGE

MY PRECIOUS SECRET

Jennie Mast

I've a secret in my bosom
That the world can never know,
In each trial reassuring,
As the moments onward go.
Only those who do His will
Can its priceless value tell.

Round me sweep the waves of sorrow,
And their surgings press the soul;
With this secret still before me,
Tempests rise and billows roll.
Secret of undying love
Lifts my heart to worlds above.

At our comrades' fading sunset,
When their spirits pass away,
But for this most precious secret,
Here my soul could scarcely stay.
In accents sweet I then can hear,
"He thy mansion will prepare."

Fade life's transient dream of splendor,
Let my soul in Him confide;
For I know no hand can sever
If this secret in me 'bide.
Keep my heart and I shall be
"Thine through all eternity."

FAITH

Hope C. Oberhelman

Faith is holding on to life,
When all around is pain;
Faith is seeing rainbows
When the sky is full of rain ...

Faith is reaching out to God
When you are filled with fear;
Faith is taking someone's hand,
And feeling God is near ...

Faith is walking in the dark,
And looking for the light—
Faith is knowing God is love,
And trusting in His might ...

Faith is showing you believe,
And that you truly care;
Faith is searching for the Lord,
And finding Him in prayer! †

He it was who laid aside His royal robes and kingly crown, stepped down from His exalted throne before which cherubim and seraphim bowed in adoration and worship, and came from that world of bliss to this world of sin, sorrow, and death. Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich. He "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

Classes and Quality of Sacrifices

The Levitical sacrifices, excluding those of a special nature such as the Passover, were of five kinds, which are Scripturally divided into two main classes:

Sweet-savor Offerings:—Burnt, Meat, and Peace.

Sin-Offerings:—Sin, Trespass.

The main idea of the sweet-savor offerings was acceptance and worship. The latter class had for its primary purpose the expiation of sin. In the detailed description of all these sacrifices in Leviticus 1-7 the sweet-savor sacrifices are described before the sin-offerings, but in practice the sin-offering, came first and the worship-offerings afterward as in the consecration of the priests. (See also II Chronicles 29.) Worship cannot be acceptable until atonement is made for sin.

The offerings consisted of animal and of vegetable offerings, although the vegetable sacrifices were never offered except in connection with a bloody offering or as its substitute. The bloody offerings were bullocks, sheep, goats, turtle-doves, and pigeons, the fowls being acceptable from those too poor to provide a more expensive sacrifice (Leviticus 5:7). The vegetable sacrifices were fine flour, oil, unleavened bread, cakes, wafers, or green ears of corn. No leaven was to be burnt upon God's altar because its decayed condition was symbolic of sin. Also no honey was to be offered there. But salt must accompany every sacrifice (Leviticus 2:13). Also frankincense was offered with the meat-offering.

The animals brought for the "bread of God" must be the best of their kind. They must be without physical blemish, because they were typical of Him who had no blemish of sin. The prophet Malachi severely reproved and pronounced a curse on the Jews of his time who brought the torn, the lame, the sick, and the blind. As was stated in our consideration of the nature of types, an unholy thing cannot typify a holy thing. An essential quality of the true Sin-offering was that He Himself should be sinless, that His own life should not have been forfeited by sin. The typical sin-offering must be like Him "who was a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:19). He "offered himself without spot to God" (Hebrews 9:14). Both priest and offering in the type must be physically perfect properly to represent Him who was combined Priest and Offering—the sinless Son of God. †

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE

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The Doctrine of the Blood

2022 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. John Romero



LET US TURN in our Bibles to Exodus, chapter 12. Let us begin with verse 7: “And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord’s passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”

Most of you recognize that passage in Exodus concerning the final setting free of the people of God who had been in Egypt for hundreds of years. They were captives in slavery and in bondage to the Egyptians, so God used Moses at that time to deliver His people and bring them back to the Promised Land. Of course, you know, God had sent forth His plagues. Finally, before the tenth plague, God told Moses to tell the people to get a lamb without blemish and to take that the lamb on a certain night, slay it, put the blood on the doorposts and on the top of the door. God said He would send His death angel over the land that night, and the only people who would be spared would be those who had the blood applied on the doorposts of their houses. God said, “I will pass through the land of Egypt this night.” In verse 13 of Exodus 12, God said, “And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you.” It was the blood that saved them that night. God was only looking for the blood. Nothing else. “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.” Most of us recognize the type that God was talking about spiritually. It was literal blood on literal doors, but we know that God was talking here and giving us a beautiful type of the blood of Christ.

I want to lay down a little foundation for the message this morning, so let us go to John 1:35, 36: “Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!” John recognized Him there when he first saw Him, not just as a Lamb among the flock, but the sacrificial Lamb that was to be sacrificed, even as they sacrificed those lambs at the time of the Passover. Revelation 5:6, “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of

the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.” Here, John saw the symbolic Lamb. He called Him “a Lamb as it had been slain,” the Lamb that came to shed His blood for the sins of mankind. Let’s look at I Peter, chapter 1. These are all good scriptures that describe what we’re going to talk about. I Peter 1:18, 19: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” So Peter said, “Listen, you weren’t redeemed with material things as silver and gold, or by some tradition, but if you’re saved (redeemed, forgiven of your sins), it is by only one thing, and that is by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

Certainly, Christ came and lived a sinless life, a holy life, and at the end of His life, He was slain on a cross, and His blood was shed for the sins of the world. He came into this world a perfect sacrifice to give His life’s blood on the cross for man’s sins. As far as salvation is concerned, and the plan of God, the single most important aspect is the blood. God used it to free His people from Egypt. God used it through animal sacrifice in the Old Testament to atone for the sins of those people, and God used it when He sent forth His only begotten Son into this world as a sacrifice for all the sins of mankind. There is a need for us to understand why God used blood; not only as we read it there in Exodus on the night of the Passover, not only as He used it all through the Old Testament from the beginning of Moses where God gave him the plan, and they built the tabernacle, instituted a system of animal sacrifice, but especially in the New Testament, the time where you and I live concerning the plan of salvation. We now have that thought in our mind concerning the importance of the blood.

II John, verses 9, 10: “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.” The doctrine of Christ is essential. It is all important. We’re going to combine these two thoughts together and talk to you about “The Doctrine of the Blood.”

When we speak about doctrine, we’re not talking about these little things that float around the edges, different ideas and perceptions about things, but we’re talking about the fundamental teachings which are in accordance with the plan of salvation. The fundamen-

tal teachings which are in accordance with God's plan. In that plan, it is the sending forth of His Son as the Lamb of God and the shedding of His blood. So God had a specific intention in every occasion that He required the use of blood.

Why blood? Leviticus 17:10, 11: "And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." It is the blood. "I require blood," because when the people sinned, God wanted His people to understand that sin is a serious matter with Him. You cannot do just any little old thing to make an atonement to get rid of sin. God said, "I require you to bring me an animal, a lamb without blemish. Bring me the best one you have. Bring it to the priest, and he will help you. You will sacrifice that animal, because I am requiring a life to make an atonement for sin, for the life of the flesh is in the blood." So when that blood was shed at the Passover, and all those times during the Old Testament, God was trying to help them to understand that when you sin, it's going to cost you something. He said, "I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement." He meant to make things right, to pay a sufficient price so that He could forgive those sins from off your record. So God had a means of atonement for the people of the Old Covenant and that means was through the blood sacrifice of animals. The life of the flesh is in the blood, and there was that power, even in those animal sacrifices under that dispensation for men and women to make an atonement for their sins.

At the brazen altar, in front of the tabernacle, was where the people brought their animals and killed them. The priests didn't kill them. The person that brought that animal, he slit the throat of that animal and got the blood. After the killing of the animal, the priests offered the fat and took the blood, put it on the horns of the altar and poured it down, and then they put that sacrifice on there. This was done over and over again. Almost every day. I'm not exactly sure if they did it on the Sabbath day. I don't believe they ever stopped and said, "Well, let's clean this up." They just put the blood on, put the blood on, and put the blood on. I want you to get a picture of a bloody mess; a reminder. Every time people went to that altar, blood was already there. Some people get a little squeamish from just a little drop of blood. They brought their animal to that bloody altar, and they put more blood on it. They sacrificed and sacrificed and sacrificed. Again, as I said, sin was serious business with God.

God has always had a better plan for the salvation of man. Better than the sacrifice of bulls and goats which the book of Hebrews says "could never take away sin." There was the remembrance made every year, so they had to bring that animal sacrifice time and time again. Just to make sure everybody's sins were covered, they had the day of atonement. The high priest brought in the blood. We'll get to that in a minute. He made an atonement, first of all, for the sins of his own house.

Then he made a sacrifice for the sins of all the people for the whole past year to make sure everything was clear and atoned for, because God was serious about this sin situation. God made a plan to restore man back to his righteous place. God had a plan.

Let us look at Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 22-24: "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." So the plan of God was to restore man to his original image. That's the plan of salvation. It is not just to make man a little religious, or less sinful, or a little holy. The plan of God was to restore mankind to his original state (condition) with God. "That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." We could spend some more time on that, but the point is this: The plan of salvation and the doctrine of the blood and the purpose of the blood of Christ working in man's heart was to restore man back to a state of righteousness and true holiness. A life without sin, a pure life, and a holy life. This is what the doctrine of the blood and the plan of salvation were intended to do according to God's plan. God had a plan in mind just like He said there on that night in Exodus. He said, "When I see the blood. I need to see something. I want to see what the blood does." He looked at it literally back then. He's looking at it a little differently today. "You say you're a Christian. You say you have truth. I want to see the work of the blood. That's what I want to see." This plan of salvation is the only way by which God brings man back into the image in which He made him—holy in His own image. It is the blood which is the essence, the core, the true power which makes salvation work.

We have to get the doctrine of the blood right, for it was, and is, the blood of Christ that was shed to give man his full and free salvation. We're talking about the blood of Christ. We're talking about the blood that He shed on the cross and gave of His own free volition. God said, "I'm using this blood to bring man back into a right relationship with me." So we can't get it wrong. We can't dispel it or just say, "Well, we don't need this part or that part of it." No, we must now understand and receive and live the doctrine of the blood. We have to get this right.

Let us look at Revelation 1:5. The Word of God says, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Thank God for that! He washed our sins from us in His own blood. We came to the Lord, and we were convicted. We knew we were in sin and lived a life of sin and needed help. We needed forgiveness. Thank God, there is still room at the cross for you. We came to the foot of the cross and asked God to forgive us. Thank God, He washed us from our sins in His own blood.

I John, chapter 1, verses 6, 7: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But 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." If you walk in the light, the Light will lead you to the blood. The Light will lead you to the cross. The Light will lead you to the fullness of salvation. Salvation has been in the plan of God to do for us. It is the blood of Christ that forgives man from all his committed sins. Isn't that good?

Let's get this straight right here: Up to the point where you come to Christ, and ask Him to forgive you of your sins, He will forgive you of all your sins of the past, not of the future. That's false doctrine; that's false teaching. When you come to Christ, are all your sins forgiven for all your whole life? No, all your sins of the past. If you go out and commit new sins, you have to ask for forgiveness again. Thank God, we can come to the place in true repentance where we, with all our hearts, repent of our sins, and turn our backs on sin and ask God to forgive us by His blood, we never have to go back to any of those sins again. What can wash my sins away? There's power in the blood today, I see! There is a Fountain filled with blood! There is pow'r, pow'r, wonder-working power! Right? We love to recognize and sing about the blood of Christ. Surely, there is no power like it. It is this blood that justifies us, and it is the same blood that sanctifies us.

Hebrews, chapter 13, verses 9-12: "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." So basically, the writer is saying, "Listen, Jesus didn't make His sacrifice in the city. He didn't make it in the temple, because His sacrifice was not a Jewish thing. It was not an Old Covenant thing. It was not a Moses thing. It was something for all the people, so it was done outside the gate. It was done on Golgotha for all of mankind." But here's the point here: *Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood.* As far as I know and understand in the Word of God, the only people who can be sanctified are saved people, justified people. How did Jesus sanctify them? With His own blood. So we are justified by the blood, but thank God, we are also sanctified by the blood of Christ. All the people that Jesus sanctified are sanctified, not just by blood, but by His own blood.

We hear of the word *sanctification*. Thank God, I believe we have the experience and understand it, but I'm just here to reemphasize some things for us this morning. We believe in sanctification. We believe it to be a second experience—a second work of grace, a cleansing, and a purging of our carnal nature. Sanctification is not an ongoing or progressive experience.

I Corinthians 1:2, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified [not being sanctified, not getting sanctified. According to Paul, the real saints there were a people that were saved and sanctified. Maybe there were some that weren't, but the general group of saints that Paul was writing to, he said to them *that are sanctified.*] in Christ Jesus,

called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours."

Turn to Jude 1, verse 1. I want to show you something in the Word of God, because there is that thought, that teaching that sanctification is somehow an ongoing teaching that you get better little by little, and you get purified little by little. I don't find such in the Scriptures. "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that *are sanctified* [past tense; past experience. They got saved and came to the understanding that they needed to get more from God, so they got sanctified. That was a natural progression for men and women when they came into this great salvation.] by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."

When Paul was leaving the Ephesian church, he told them in Acts, chapter 20, verses 31 and 32, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." I don't find anywhere in the Scriptures where sanctification is a progressive experience. It is a definite second work of grace that takes place in the heart of all believers. That is why Jesus told the disciples after He was resurrected and ascended up to His Father, "Don't go and preach anywhere. You need to go to Jerusalem and tarry and wait until you are endued with power from on high, and then you can go out and be witnesses for me." There was something lacking. There was something yet that they needed in their personal experience, and so that's why He told them to tarry at Jerusalem until they received that second definite experience. In the upper room on the day of Pentecost, the 120 were filled with the Holy Spirit. They went forth and spoke the Word of God with power and anointing. Thank God there are biblical truths here and in other places in the Word of God that we can see that there is this second work of grace.

Romans, chapter 12, verse 1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren [You know who Paul is talking to.], by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice [put your body on the altar], holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Why? Verse 2: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind [Paul was talking to saved people. You need more from God. You need your mind renewed. You need to make sure that there's nothing in you that's going to conform to this world, so you can go out with the fullness of this experience.], that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

We're talking about the doctrine of the blood. We want to show you that the experience of sanctification is reinforced all through the Word of God. I Thessalonians 4:3, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." There were some places in the early church where fornication was going on. The Gentile church was being pressured to get circumcised. "No," they told them, "don't eat meat offered unto idols, and don't be fornicating." That's how base they were when they came into

the church. So Paul said, "Listen, you need to be sanctified." Verse 4: "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour." Paul wasn't telling them to stop fornicating a little bit at a time. He said, "Get a full experience so you can have control of yourselves, so you can live for God, so you can know how you can possess your vessel in sanctification and honor." He was talking about a definite experience, and he called it sanctification.

I Corinthians 3:1-4: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" We find that Paul saw that there were some brethren that he could not speak to as sanctified or spiritual. He said, "I have to label you as carnal." That was the state they were in. They were saved, but they were not spiritual. They were manifesting their carnality in envying and strife and in divisions. In a footnote, factions. Be careful. Carnality will take people. People that are carnal will just divide into little factions (cliques). "We have our little favorite saints we like to hang out with, but we don't really care for the rest of you." What else made them carnal? They were men followers. Some were following Apollos. Paul said, "Listen, the only way you can follow men is, if you follow them as they follow Christ. You don't follow men just for the sake of following men, so you are carnal. You have envy, you have strife and divisions." God had a cure for carnality.

The biggest need in the church today is for men and women to get fully sanctified. It will take away all the envy, all the strife, all the divisions, and all the factions. It will make us what the blood intended to make us: saved, sanctified, unified! That is what the work of the blood does.

I have some more scriptures. Hebrews 10:26-29: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing." It's the blood that sanctifies us. It's the blood that sets us apart. It's the blood that purifies us. It's the blood that purges that carnal nature out of man. I know it doesn't specifically say it, but on the day of Pentecost that's exactly what happened to those 120 in the upper room. Christ said, in effect, "You're not ready to go out, Peter, because I don't want you pulling your sword out to cut people's ears off when things get tough. Come on, Brethren, I want you to get sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit. I want that carnal nature gone. I don't want you at the back asking, 'Who's going to be the greatest?'" "I'm greater." "No, I'm better." All that carnality has to be gone.

Let's go to Acts 15. This is a whole chapter concerning the controversy of the early church wherein some of the Jewish Christians were wanting all of the people of God to be circumcised. There were Jews and Gentiles to be circumcised. In the middle of the controversy, Peter stood up and said in verses 7, 8, "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us." What happened when God gave them the Holy Ghost? Verse 9: "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." So when He gave them the Holy Ghost in the same experience, He purified their hearts. From what? That old carnal nature.

Let's go to Hebrews. Hebrews 9:6-9: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience."

In the first room, the priests went commonly. Different priests. They had the candlestick, the little altar of incense, and the table of shewbread. They went in daily, weekly, and they accomplished the service, but into the second room God said He would abide with His people. He said that the only person that is allowed here is the high priest, and he could only come once a year, and when he comes in, he's to take off that all those jewels, those precious stones, and all those things that represented Christ to the people while he was amongst them. He said, "You need to take all those off and put on that common white linen, because you're a nobody when you come into God's presence. When you come, you better come with blood."

Do you know what the writer of Hebrews says by, "The Holy Ghost this signifying"? He's talking about our Holy Ghost experience. He said, "Just like Christ, the clean for the unclean, He died that He might bring us into the presence of God." That's why on the day that Christ died, at the time His life was taken from Him, the veil in the temple was torn in two by the mighty hand of God.

We need to pay attention to the Word of God, because He puts things in there He wants us to notice. "Into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood," and then he talked about the Holy Ghost experience. So there was blood in that experience. There was blood applied on the day of Pentecost, there was blood applied when Peter worked with Cornelius and his people. "God purified our hearts. We were already saved." What did He purify us from? Our old carnality. He sanctified us, set us apart, made us holy, and purged us.

John 15:1, 2: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not

fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." This doctrine of the blood and the doctrine of two works of grace are all over the Word of God for us to see. Thank God, the high priest went in with blood, and so did Christ bring us into the presence of God, that hereto forbidden place. It was forbidden. That second room was a forbidden place. Only the high priest could go there. Thank God, Jesus took us there. How did He do it? By the blood that saved us and sanctified us. Put off the old man, put on the new man.

Let me say this while I'm here: Salvation is shown to us in the Word of God in different ways. Let me give you an example. Paul said in Romans 7, "I'm under the law. I need to get saved. I'm a wretched man. I'm miserable. Who shall deliver me from this situation?" In chapter 8, he said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." If you read chapter 8, Paul is talking about full salvation. He said, "Listen, I got saved and sanctified." He didn't stop to explain when he got forgiveness for his sins and when he got sanctified. He said, "When we get saved, and if we serve Him with all our hearts, He will lead us right into a sanctified life." Let me say this also: People don't need to understand all that was explained here this morning. Thank God it's in the Word of God for us. I've heard of people getting sanctified that knew nothing about the blood, or even what the word *sanctification* meant. All they knew is that they had a deep need. They said, "Lord, give me what I need."

"When I see the blood." What does God have the right to see? I believe He has the right to see the work of the blood. You say, "I'm saved and sanctified." Let's see it. Young People, let's see it. God says, "I have the right to see it." He did on that night. He said, "When I see the blood, I'll know to pass over you."

God sent His Son. He came and shed His blood. He suffered on the cross, the most cruel kind of suffering known to man in that time. That was the Roman way. They crucified Him and let Him slowly bleed to death on the cross. That's how Jesus gave His life and shed His blood.

We better get the teaching of the blood right. We are sanctified by the blood. We are purged of the old carnal nature by the blood. Are you sanctified? Do you want to serve God with all your heart? Well, you don't get it all in one work. Don't get saved and then struggle and struggle. Take that old carnal man and put him on the altar, and God will sanctify you, fill you with His Spirit, and you can serve Him in a way that God intended for a witness for Him.

God bless you. †

RADIO STATION VIA THE INTERNET

We are happy to announce that we now have a site streaming Church of God music and messages 24/7 recorded during our services. It can be found by going to

wayoftruth.org and clicking on:

Way of Truth Internet Radio



Dear Young People,

Humility is so important as a foundation for being comfortable with the thought of being a servant. As Jesus said in Matthew 20:26-28, "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be

chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Truly, following the teachings of Jesus would do away with the problems that we have in getting along with and working with each other. The world and the church need to relearn these beautiful truths. Living this way is a beautiful example to others of the power of Christianity.

Blessings,
Bro. Doug

SERVANTHOOD

By Sis. Jessica Swain

SERVANTHOOD is a beautiful and illustrative way of showing Jesus to others. Throughout the Bible there are many examples of those who served others. In the book of Luke there is the story of the good Samaritan. A man was traveling to Jericho and fell among thieves. They took his clothes and left him half dead. A priest walked by and saw him but passed on. Then a Levite came along, but he also hurried on without caring. Finally, a Samaritan saw him and had compassion on him. The Samaritan bound his wounds and took him to an inn and took care of him. After telling this story, Jesus asked the Pharisee, "Which of the three people was neighbor to the man that fell among the thieves?" The Pharisee answered, "He that fell among the thieves." Jesus said to the Pharisee, "Go, and do thou likewise."



By telling this parable Jesus was giving us a model. We need to be like the Samaritan and take time for the needs of others. Many times we are tempted to neglect other people. We think to ourselves, *I will do it another time, I'm really busy right now, or I have enough of my own problems.* This was not the attitude of the Samaritan. Regardless of where he was going or what he was doing, he took time to care for the man that was lying helplessly in the road. This kind of love and compassion for others is a beautiful example of Christianity.

Another example of servanthood is in Luke 7, "And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and

began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment." This woman humbly served Jesus, wiping His lowly feet with her hair and anointing Him with her most precious treasure. The Pharisee condemned her because she was a sinner, but because she wanted to serve Jesus her sins were forgiven.

While the woman and the Samaritan are good "role models" of servitude, Jesus is our ultimate model. He healed the sick, fed the multitudes, raised the dead, and did many other kind and humble deeds during His time on Earth. Most of His life recorded in the Bible was spent serving others. Even at the end, He gave the ultimate sacrifice of His life so that each of us could be saved. Mark 10:45 says: "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." This thought of ministering to others is an essential part of a Christian's life. There are so many people in the world that need help. A good place to start is by helping your family and friends. Ask if there is anything you can do to help, or if you see a need just do it without being asked. Pray and ask God each day to guide you, to help you see the needs of others and to have compassion. "Go as far as you can see, then you will see further."

I want to encourage each of us to be active in seeing the needs of others and in sharing their burdens. Even if you are unable to do anything, you can pray for them and ask God to send them the help they need. Whatever we do, we need to do it from our hearts and understand that we are doing it for God. We are His emissaries, and He wants us to draw men to Him by showing love and compassion and by being a light in this world of darkness. Colossians 3:23, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." †

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Stand in the Gap

Message by Bro. Tom Harris

delivered 7/24/22

IT IS A GOOD thing to be a Christian. We're able to say every day is a good day, because as Christians, we always have the Lord on our side.



I've been struck lately thinking about how wonderful it is that God is able to meet the needs that we have here in this congregation, and all the congregations that our visitors went home to. We're no unique congregation in that we have many needs, and yet all of our visitors who came to our camp meeting and have gone back to their home congregations also have great needs. It's just a thrilling thing for me to think and realize that God is able to take care of the needs that we have here, and yet He's gone with all the other saints we had as visitors, and He's able to meet their needs in their congregations. That's been an encouragement to me.

I want to take a brief minute before I get into the message to remember Bro. Junior Trisler. I think it's appropriate to do right now, because I thought of this message in thinking about him. I remember Bro. Junior coming to our camp meetings. I always thought that there was something so special about him. I remember seeing him up here on the platform, even when he was 80 years old, going back and forth across the pulpit and jumping up and down while he was preaching. He could really preach. But what stood out to me the most about Bro. Junior was when we would have the altar calls. He would plead with people to come to the altar. Even as a young child, I could feel the Spirit of God coming and talking to hearts. As a young child, I had a list of family members that I would spend time praying for. I would go down my list in my prayers and pray for my family members that I knew needed to be saved. I would always think that if they could just come and hear Bro. Junior speak and stay long enough that they could hear him pause the altar call and plead with souls, then they couldn't help but get saved. I appreciated Bro. Junior very much.

As I was praying for the saints in Jonesville and the hole that's left there right now, I was praying that God would help us to stand in the gap. Now this is the thought that's been very real to me lately: stand in the gap.

There is a great need for us as Christians to stand in the gap. When I talk about the gap, I'm talking about the gap that exists between God and men. Just because Bro. Junior is no longer with us isn't the only reason that we need to stand in the gap. We need to stand in the gap at all times, but I've especially been thinking of that thought *stand in the gap* in thinking of Bro. Junior's passing.

I want us to turn to Ezekiel for a text of scripture. I want to entitle my thoughts simply, "Stand in the Gap." The aim this evening is to encourage and inspire us to continue standing in the gap. Ezekiel, chapter 13, verses 1-6: "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The Lord saith: and the Lord hath not sent them: and they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word."

Let's turn to Ezekiel 22:25-30: "There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof. Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and *stand in the gap* before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none."

As I said earlier, it's the desire of my heart to inspire us to continue standing in the gap. I have very few notes before me. I sometimes do that intentionally, because it's my desire that the Lord would speak through me that I might have a bit more liberty. Bro. Paul Wilson said one time, "Sometimes we as speakers might wish that we could have as many thoughts whenever we're studying for messages as when we get up to bring the message." But by the Lord's help, I'll endeavor to give what He has laid on my heart.

There is a great gap between people and the Lord today. What I want to do this evening is to think about this gap from three different perspectives that exist between people. I want us to look at it as it was in the day of Ezekiel. The priests of that day were very wicked and evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord was very displeased. I want us to think about the background there just a little bit. Next, I want us to think about the ministry today that we know, and the part the ministry has in standing in the gap. Then I want us to think about you and me—the everyday Christians—the laity, as it were, and the responsibility that we have to stand in the gap. You know, the everyday Christian has

just as much responsibility to stand in the gap as the ministry does.

Let's think about the priests and the children of Israel in Ezekiel's day. The priests in the Old Testament had a whole lot of responsibilities. They had sort of a job to stand as a bridge between people of the Old Testament and God. We talked in Sunday school a lot today about the sacrificial work the priests had. The priests had a lot to do with keeping the fires in the altars going and tending to the things of the tabernacle and ministering before God and the people.

One of the priest's main responsibilities in the day of Ezekiel was to look out for the spiritual well-being of the children of Israel. The children of Israel didn't have the Bible in the same format like we have it. They relied on the priests to lead them and to guide them in the way in which they should go. It was the job of the priests to lead the people and to counsel them. It was the job of the priests to rebuke evil, to exhort to righteousness, and to look and say, "Children of Israel, you need to stay away from this. We're going to go this way, because this is the strait and narrow path that the Lord wants us to take." And the priests of Ezekiel's time were failing miserably to do that. If their job was to rebuke evil and to exhort to righteousness, they should have been making a clear distinction of what was evil and what was righteous. But we read in the twenty-sixth verse of the twenty-second chapter of Ezekiel: "Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them." That's interesting. As I read that, I thought about how much we can apply that today to a lot of ministers, prophets, and teachers who make no difference between the clean and the unclean. We'll get into that in the message.

The priests in Ezekiel's day were failing to stand in the gap. They were failing to connect people to God. Again, it was the job of the priests to lead the people in the way that they should go and to be that connection between the people and God. They were to stand in that separation between man and God. That was a grave responsibility. It was something that God needed the priests to do. He needed them to make up the hedge around the people.

We read in the thirtieth verse of Ezekiel 22 that God sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge. The priests were to give due diligence to build up that hedge of protection around Israel. You might wonder what that hedge of protection is, but we'll go to Isaiah, chapter 5, and read about that. The hedge that existed around the children of Israel was a hedge of goodness and blessing. Whenever the children of Israel were living righteously and obeying the commandments of God, they were given protection against their enemy. They were given prosperity in the land in which they went. They were given peace.

We can turn to Isaiah, chapter 5, verses 1-7, and we'll read a little about this protective hedge that the Lord had around the house of Israel: "Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his

vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes [In other words, the Lord made this place very beautiful. He took care to make this vineyard beautiful.], and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. [The Lord asked] What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof [This was a place Israel found themselves in. In disobeying the Lord, He took away the hedge of protection from about them.], and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." So we can see that whenever that hedge of protection was removed from the children of Israel, they were in a very undesirable place.

My premise in talking about this, to a large extent, is that this was the fault of the priests, and there was a lack of people standing in the gap. There was a lack and the fault of the priests to lead the people righteously and to stand in the gap and build that protective barrier around the children of Israel. That hedge of protection was made by obedience to God and walking in the paths of righteousness in which He directed them and desired them to go.

Let's think about the ministry today. Let's think about what it means for the ministry of the Church of God to stand in the gap between God and the people. I'm thankful for the ministry of the Church of God. They have a great responsibility. It's the responsibility of the ministry to preach the Word of God. We read in I Corinthians 1:21, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." That's what God desires His ministry to do. Their job is to preach the Word of God, to be instant in season and out of season.

The ministry stands in the gap between two types of people. They stand in the gap between the *saints*, and also between the *sinner*s. Now the ministry stands in the gap between God and the saints in that it is the ministry's job and responsibility to warn the people. That's a grave responsibility. The office of a minister isn't something that's necessarily to be a greatly desirable thing. James warns people of this in the second chapter of James. I don't remember exactly how it's worded, but the gist of it is, you shouldn't necessarily desire this work and try to force yourself into this work of the minister, because as such, you'll face a greater level of judgment, and potentially a greater level of condemnation. So it is a great responsibility for the

ministry to look after the souls of men, and warn us as saints, specifically.

The ministry watches for our souls. We read about this in Hebrews, chapter 13, verse 17: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." Obey them that have the rule over you. Do you know it is also the responsibility of the minister today as much as it was the responsibility of the priests in the days of Ezekiel to speak on the behalf of the Lord?

I was listening to one of *The Way of Truth* radio broadcasts from the early 2000s, and Bro. Alvin usually gives a short message on that broadcast. Occasionally, he would have a substitute speaker. While I was doing some maintenance work at the church dorms, I was listening, and Bro. Greg came on to bring the message. I heard Bro. Greg pray before he brought the message. He said, "Lord, it's a serious thing, it's a great responsibility to speak on your behalf." That's a great and serious responsibility. That's a humbling thing, and a great responsibility, but it is the job of the ministry to speak on God's behalf, to exhort, to inspire, and to instruct in the ways of righteousness.

It is the job of the ministry to exhort souls to righteousness and to warn them from veering a little bit too far away from Christianity or getting out of line. You might ask, "Well, why is it the job of anyone to tell me what line I should be walking?" Well, that is just the way God has set it up to be. We read that God has set the members in the body as it has pleased Him. He sets up ministers, pastors, and teachers as it pleases Him. You know, gone are the days that God speaks to people as He spoke to Moses. God doesn't necessarily walk up behind anyone and tap them on the shoulder and say, "You're going a little bit too far from the strait and narrow way. I need you to move into the center," but He works through ministers and teachers. As I was thinking about this, I thought, because the ministry has such a great responsibility in standing in that gap and instructing the people, it is so important that we support the ministry that we have, especially when we know that they're serving God and giving Him His due place in their leadership.

There are many, many false ministers. I don't think that's a shock to any of us. But again, I think the parallel between what we read in Ezekiel, chapter 22, verse 26, and what we see happening today is just outstanding. Basically, in Ezekiel 13, the priests of Ezekiel's day were saying, "The Lord said to do this," and the Lord said, "I'm against you because I haven't actually said this." But the priests were going around and saying, "This is the way. The Lord has told me that this is the way," when the Lord had actually not spoken that way unto them. There are many people that say that today. There are many proclaimed ministers of God who get up and say, "The Lord is okay with this and okay with that," saying in essence, "God said this." But God is against that, because He has not said many of the false doctrines that we hear about today.

The Lord is against them that are false prophets. We read about this specifically in Ezekiel 13:8. It says,

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because ye have spoken vanity [speaking of false preachers, priests, and prophets], and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord God."

It is really a terrible thing when you consider some of the faulty doctrines (deceptions) that are being taught to people. There are verses in II Peter, chapter 2, that I think about relatively often. II Peter 2:1, 2: "But there were false prophets also among the people [Peter speaking], even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." That's a terrible thing.

It is a sad thing to see false preachers today being so hypocritical. That is something we see a lot of. We see a lot of preachers who preach godliness and preach supposed righteousness, and yet we see them turning around and living lives that don't exemplify that godliness and that righteousness. I think it very much widens that gap between God and people. If I am a sinner, if I have a desire to know God, and if I see and hear a false preacher or prophet preach a gospel message of salvation and righteousness, and then I see them turn around and live a life that has no more power than the life I've been living, I just think that's super hypocritical. I just don't need their religious baggage, because there are many preachers who preach God, and yet they behave no differently than I do, so they're no better than I am anyway. Can you see how that would greatly separate people from God, that gap that ministers are called to bridge between people? So many false preachers serve only to widen that gap.

Now the duty of the true ministers of God is to diligently establish that hedge around the people and to bridge the gap between God and men. God has a great hedge to be established around people—a *hedge of protection*.

There's a hedge that exists around the people of God—the Church of God—a *hedge of peace* between us and the chaos that exist in the world.

There's a *hedge of power* that exists around us as individuals and around the church. Power to overcome Satan, power to live holy lives; but this hedge that exists around us, the spiritual Church of God today, is a wonderful thing. There are so many benefits that come with that hedge of protection that the ministry is supposed to diligently endeavor to fortify.

We have a *hedge of reason* about us. I look at the news today and it seems as though some people have almost lost their ability to reason. Sometimes I just wonder where people's common sense has gone. But with that hedge of protection that we're able to have with God, we have the ability to reason. We have that ability to see things clearly, because God has told us He has given us that spirit of power and love and also of a sound mind. A sound mind is something so many people don't have today, but that's what comes with that hedge of protection that God wants to build around people.

We have a *hedge of promise*. I think Bro. Greg has mentioned that there are 5,000 promises in the Bible. We have a hedge of promise that we can trust in.

I think that we have a *hedge of appreciation* around us. This hedge that God gives us allows us to appreciate things. Bro. Greg mentioned the James Webb Space Telescope this morning. I have been following the launch of the James Webb Space Telescope. From an engineering perspective, I was very interested in it. I followed its flight out to a million miles in space where it is now. I saw the vastness of space and the pictures it has taken. It blows my mind to think that God created all of these things. God created wonderful order in the world today. He could have stopped there, but when we see so far away and see things behaving in an ordered way, it is just a wonderful thing. As Christians, with God's hedge of protection around us of clarity, of thought, and mind and reason, we're able to appreciate the world in which we live. So many people go through life not being able to stop and smell the roses, as it were. They're just not appreciating the world that we live in.

Let's think about God's ministry as they stand in the gap for sinners. The Word of God tells us that the ministers are to preach the gospel message to the unsaved. Do you know that Satan has a hedge around people as well? It is the job of the ministry to try to make people be able to see that hedge that Satan puts around people.

Satan has a hedge around people of distortion and dimness from the reality of life. Turn with me to II Corinthians, chapter 4, verse 4: "In whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not [Satan is trying to blind people that don't even yet believe.], lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Satan is blinding people to the reality of life. He's blinding them with the hedge he has built around them. It is the job of the ministry, and the job of us (I'll get to that in a couple of minutes.) as saints of God to try to bridge that gap between God and people.

What does God want to do for us? He wants to give us life. I Peter 2:9, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness [the blinding hedge of Satan] into his marvellous light." Thank the Lord for that.

Let us talk a little bit about the job that we as Christians, in general, have of bridging that gap between people. We talked about the priests in Ezekiel's time and how they were failing to do that, and how the ministry of the Church of God today has a great responsibility in also bridging that gap between God and men. Standing in the gap. But you know, we as Christians are not called to just be warm bodies and warm the benches, as it were, and just sit under the sound of the gospel message, and then just absorb it all and do nothing with it. Right? We are also given a great responsibility.

We, as the children of God, the saints of God, have been made priests. We have been made kings and priests with God. When we think about that, what was special about the priests in the day of Ezekiel's time? The thing that was special was that they were able to have a much closer relationship with God than the average Israelite. The priests were able to enter into the sanctuary and enter into the Holy of Holies. They were able to have a much stronger connection with God.

Go to Revelation, chapter 1, verses 4-6: “John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” We are kings and priests. As a spiritual priest and a spiritual king in the house of God, we have that blessing of a close relationship and walk with God, but with that blessing also comes a good bit of responsibility for you and me, the everyday Christian, as it were, to also bridge the gap, to stand in the gap between God and men. That’s the responsibility that we have.

We read in I Corinthians 6:19 that we are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells within us. With the Spirit of God dwelling within us, we’re given great power. It’s up to us to tap into that power, to bridge that gap between God and men.

Whenever Jesus was on Earth and before going back into heaven, He gave the great commission. He didn’t just call the 12 disciples individually into a separate room and tell each one that this is your job to spread the gospel, but He gave that to all of those that were gathered round about Him. He told them they have the commission to preach the gospel and to stand in the gap.

There are gaps to be filled. I have gaps that I see every day. You don’t have to look around too far before you see many, many gaps between God and people. Your job and my job is to just point them to God. It’s our job to establish relationships with people, to live holy lives before them so that when we get that opportunity to point them to God, we have a holy life that is able to back that up. I see people that are living miserable lives. It’s unfortunate, because I see people that go to church and are active in church, but unfortunately they are in false religion. My heart goes out to them, because they say all the things they do for the church, but I see that they’re miserable, and I wonder, “Lord, how can I stand in the gap for these people?” Sometimes that might be a difficult scenario, but the best thing we can do is to make sure that we live holy lives before them, so that when we get an opportunity to try to connect them to God in a greater way, they can say, “Yes, your words have some credibility about them, because I’ve seen your life.” We have the responsibility to bridge the gap, at least, by just living holy lives before people, to be witnesses for righteousness, and to make the way of God attractive to people. If we make the way of God attractive to people, that goes a long way in bridging the gap between God and men, because people can see that we have something that they want.

I don’t want to live my life in such a way that someone might look at me and say, “Well, if that’s Christianity, I don’t want anything to do with it, because you’re just as bad as I am, and I don’t need your religious baggage.” We don’t live in a way that would dissuade people and cause them to speak evilly of the way of truth. Let’s live holy lives before people.

In conclusion, I do greatly desire that God would show me more gaps that I might be able to fill—gaps between people and God that I can stand in the gap for. The minister can’t be everywhere, but we all have our sphere of influence, if you will, and we have a responsibility to stand in that gap, and to do the work of the Lord.

I ask that you all will pray for me that I will find gaps, and I’ll pray for you that you might find gaps to connect people to God. Do you know that the great apostle Paul asked the Colossian church to pray for him that he would find gaps? We read in Colossians 4:3, 4: “Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.” Paul’s prayer was that the church he was ministering to would pray for him that he might have wisdom and be able to stand in the gap as he ought to, to have windows of opportunity. That’s my prayer for myself and for all of us as saints, that we might be able to stand in the gap between God and men and work for God the way He desires for us to work for Him.

I trust these few thoughts have been a blessing. May God help us all. ✚

RADIO LOG

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Alvin A. Craig, Radio Minister

(Aired on Sundays unless otherwise noted.)

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PHILIPPINE CONVENTION

Paniqui, Tarlac

December 26-30, 2022, Lord willing

Bro. Rey Fabian, Host Pastor

REVIVAL SERVICES

ESSEX, MARYLAND

October 4-9, 2022, Lord willing

Bro. Eric Jones, Evangelist

Bro. Doug Koerner, Pastor

HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

October 28-30, 2022, Lord willing

Bro. Duane Jeffries, Evangelist

Bro. Greg Tyler, Pastor

Please pray for the success of these meetings.

2022 HAGERSTOWN CONVENTION CD'S

We are making available CD's of the wonderful services of the 2022 Convention. These may be purchased for \$3.00 each. The complete set of all services plus five musical CD's are only \$50.00.

Please include number and title of those you would like. Send check or postal money order to: **The Way of Truth, CD Ministry, P. O. Box 88, Hagerstown, MD 21741 U.S.A.**

- ___ #1363 Let Brotherly Love Continue—G. E. Tyler
- ___ #1364 The Heart Established by Grace—Tim Crooks
- ___ #1365 Does God's Grace Inconvenience You?—Harley McClung
- ___ #1366 The Ram in the Thicket—David Goble
- ___ #1367 What Is Consecration?—Various Young Speakers
- ___ #1368 Sufficient Grace—Doug Koerner
- ___ #1369 The Doctrine of the Blood—John Romero
- ___ #1370 The Amazing Grace of Our Amazing God—Franklyn Bascoe
- ___ #1371 Compassion—Doug Shenberger
- ___ #1372 Jesus, the Only Hope—David Shaw
- ___ #1373 A Few Service Songs—Young People
- ___ #1374 Is Heaven for You?—Mick Akers
- ___ #1375 Overwhelming Power and Overwhelming Love—David Goble
- ___ #1376 Show the House to the House—Paul Wilson
- ___ #1377 Fall on the Stone—Terry Deville
- ___ #1378 Grace and Truth—Harley McClung
- ___ #1379 Jamaican Church History
- ___ #1380 To What Have We Come?—John Romero

- ___ #296 Convention Singing #1
- ___ #297 Convention Singing #2
- ___ #298 Convention Singing #3
- ___ #299 Convention Singing #4
- ___ #300 Convention Singing #5

**"The Amazing Grace
of Our Amazing God"**