

The Way of Truth

Vol. 81

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

No. 4

May 2023



**HAPPY
MOTHER'S
DAY**

A WOMAN'S PLACE IN GOD'S PLAN

MY DAUGHTER, Melody, recently asked me to send her some scriptures showing the fact that God can use a woman as well as a man in the operation of the gospel. She was discussing the subject with an acquaintance who believed that the Lord could not and would not use women as preachers. This is a misunderstanding of Bible passages which I will refer to later in this editorial.

First, let me state that motherhood is of vital importance and is the highest calling a woman could ever receive. Consider the origin of the woman as recorded in Genesis 1:26, 27: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

In Genesis 2:18 we read, "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." The helpmeet or partner in life that the Lord created for Adam was female! Our Creator never ordained a man-man or woman-woman sexual relationship, no matter what society says. Genesis 2:23, 24 states, "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Therefore, the woman's primary place in God's plan is that of wife and mother. So much is required of married women. Ephesians 5:22: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." Ephesians 5:33: "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." Colossians 3:18: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." I Peter 3:1: "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives." I Peter 3:6: "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement."

The Bible has instructions for mothers. Titus 2:4, 5: "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." This scripture is not to be misunderstood. The virtuous woman described in Proverbs 31 was very conscientious in earning extra money to supplement the family's income while not neglecting her responsibilities in the home. Verse 24 says, "She maketh fine linen, and selleth it."

A woman shares equally with the man in the plan of salvation! Galatians 3:28 says, "There is neither Jew

nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Acts 8:12 says, "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Verse 17 says, "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

Joel prophesied in 2:28: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." *Your daughters shall prophesy.*

In the upper room were gathered on the great day of Pentecost both men and women! Acts 1:14, 15: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty."

The gifts of the Spirit are not for men alone! Women are equal members in the one body of Christ.

So, biblically, what is women's place in the work of the gospel? It is true that the twelve disciples were all men. In general, office qualifications are spelled out for men. But if God calls a woman to a high calling, that is His business, and the church is obligated to respect that calling and allow for the exercise of her gift.

In the Old Testament, God used Deborah as a judge over Israel. Some people would declare that to be wrong, but who can question what God does?

Also, Queen Esther was an instrument in God's hand in delivering the people of God from massacre.

In the New Testament, Paul spoke of women praying and prophesying. In I Corinthians 11:5 we read, "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven." Women were free not only to pray, but also to prophesy.

According to Luke 2:36, Anna was a prophetess: "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity." And Verse 38 says, "And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."

Lydia had a vision in Acts 16:40: "And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed." She was instrumental in the establishment of the church of God at Philippi.

The Bible also speaks of Philip's daughters in Acts 21:9: "And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy."

Phoebe was a servant of the church—the Bible says so in Romans 16:1, 2: "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of

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many, and of myself also." The apostle Paul then mentions in verse 3: "Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus."

In Philippians 4:3, we see that Paul did not deny women their active labors in the Lord! "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life."

Now, let us look at some misunderstandings and misuses of scripture towards women. One such is that women keep silence in the church. This would mean women could not sing or pray or anything—that is ridiculous! We need to properly interpret the Scriptures. Women are not second-class citizens!

What about this? "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law" (I Corinthians 14:34).

Adam Clarke's Commentary—I Corinthians 14:34: "Let your women keep silence in the churches." This was a Jewish ordinance; women were not permitted to teach in the assemblies, or even to ask questions. The rabbins taught that "a woman should know nothing but the use of her distaff," and "Let the words of the law be burned, rather than that they should be delivered to women." This was their condition till the time of the Gospel, when, according to the prediction of Joel, the Spirit of God was to be poured out on the women as well as the men, that they might prophesy, i.e. teach. And that they did prophesy or teach is evident from what the apostle says in I Corinthians 11:5, where he lays down rules to regulate this part of their conduct while ministering in the church. But does not what the apostle says here contradict that statement, and show that the words in chapter 11 should be understood in another sense? For, here it is expressly said that they should keep silence in the church; for it was not permitted to a

woman to speak. Both places seem perfectly consistent. It is evident from the context that the apostle refers here to asking questions, and what we call dictating in the assemblies. It was permitted to any man to ask questions, to object, altercate, attempt to refute, etc., in the synagogue; but this liberty was not allowed to any woman. St. Paul confirms this in reference also to the Christian Church; he orders them to keep silence; and, if they wished to learn any thing, let them inquire of their husbands at home; because it was perfectly indecorous for women to be contending with men in public assemblies, on points of doctrine, cases of conscience, etc. But this by no means intimated that when a woman received any particular influence from God to enable her to teach, that she was not to obey that influence; on the contrary, she was to obey it, and the apostle lays down directions in chapter 11 for regulating her personal appearance when thus employed. All that the apostle opposes here is their questioning, finding fault, disputing, etc., in the Christian Church, as the Jewish men were permitted to do in their synagogues; together with the attempts to usurp any authority over the man, by setting up their judgment in opposition to them; for the apostle has in view, especially, acts of disobedience, arrogance, etc., of which no woman would be guilty who was under the influence of the Spirit of God.

True Christianity allows women to be involved in the spiritual work of the church. So whether through motherhood or through spiritual labor in God's vineyard, women deserve our respect and appreciation. †

"A mother's prayers, silent and gentle, can never miss the road to the throne of all bounty."

—Henry Ward Beecher.

"My mother was my first preacher as well as my first teacher."—Lyman Abbot.

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THE POETRY PAGE

"Mother is the heartbeat in the home; and without her, there seems to be no heartthrob."

—Leroy Brownlow.

MOTHER'S DAY

Nick Kenny

I often like to close my eyes
And dream of days I miss—
When childhood tears were changed to smiles
By Mother's tender kiss.

I see her in her garden place,
So gentle and so fair;
Of all the roses shining bright
She was the sweetest there!

If I could be a child again,
So safe from all alarms,
How I would hasten down the lane
That ends in Mother's arms!

TOUCH OF THE MASTER

Dorothy Frank Ferguson

God searched the depths of the ocean,
The cavernous realms of the sea,
Magnificent splendor of heaven
And nature's artistry—

Seeking the fairest creations,
Weaving them into one,
For with this perfect formula,
The fabric called mother is spun.

The laughter of a springtime breeze
Skipping across the hills,
The symphony of a nightingale
Serenading the daffodils.

He blended perfume from the lilacs
Kissed by the morning dew,
A patch from a fluffy cotton cloud
Floating in heavenly blue.

He added the smile of an angel,
The joy of a helping hand,
The song of frolicky ocean waves
Gently washing upon the sand—

For the precious jewel of a mother
Is God's miraculous key
By which the touch of the Master shines
On—through eternity!

A MOTHER MUST KNOW EVERYTHING

Nadine Brothers Lybarger

A mother must know everything ...
That is, just about!
How to bind a small bird's wing,
And get a splinter out.

How to mend a broken toy,
To soothe an injured knee;
To patch a little broken heart,
Mother's happy destiny.

She has to know the answers to
A million "whos" and "whats,"
A lot of "wheres" and "whys,"
Of questioning little tots.

When children air their troubles
And see things through their eyes ...
It means she must be both naive
And very, very wise.

She must know how to maintain calm
When the children shout,
A mother must know everything ...
That is, just about!

MOTHER

J. Evans Anderson

Just to let you know we love you
These few lines we now set forth,
We appreciate your kindness,
All your love and sterling worth.

All the worries we have caused you,
All the anxious moments, dear,
We do ask your sweet forgiveness
While we're gathered 'round you here.

May you understand the fullness,
Of the love we hold for you,
You're the dearest, sweetest mother,
And the loveliest, it's true.

May God's goodness ever bless you
As it has in days gone by,
This our wish for you we're holding
Knowing He will sure comply.

If there are times when you feel lonely,
Just remember, mother dear,
We, your children, love you dearly—
Just as sure as God is near. †

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

THREE MOTHERS

RADIO MESSAGE BY THE LATE BRO. ALVIN CRAIG

(AIRED 5/14/2000)

"The Hand That Rocks the Cradle Rules the World"

By William Ross Wallace

*Blessings on the hand of women!
Angels guard its strength and grace.
In the palace, cottage, hovel,
Oh, no matter where the place;
Would that never storms assailed it,
Rainbows ever gently curled,
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.*

*Infancy's the tender fountain,
Power may with beauty flow,
Mothers first to guide the streamlets,
From them souls unresting grow—
Grow on for the good or evil,
Sunshine streamed or evil hurled,
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.*

*Woman, how divine your mission,
Here upon our natal sod;
Keep—oh, keep the young heart open
Always to the breath of God!
All true trophies of the ages
Are from mother-love impearled,
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.*

*Blessings on the hand of women!
Fathers, sons, and daughters cry,
And the sacred song is mingled
With the worship in the sky—
Mingles where no tempest darkens,
Rainbows evermore are hurled;
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.*

I THINK having a Mother's Day is a very fitting thing. I think our mothers are certainly worthy of special attention and love and appreciation, but it should not be limited to just one day. Mothers are to be appreciated at all times. Mothers fill such an important place in our homes and in our lives. I realize that not all of the responsibility, as far as rearing children and conducting the home is concerned, rests upon the mother. Of course, the husband, the father, has a very important place to fill, too, but since this is the time when we honor mothers, we want to speak particularly in reference to them.

Now as we study the Old Testament, we see that some mothers were not the kind of mothers they should have been. They yielded evil influences, and they had

evil influences on others, and it brought great ruin to the little nation of Israel. But I want to speak particularly at this time in reference to some mothers who were indeed beautiful examples of what mothers should be.

First of all, this mother that I speak of is Hannah. Hannah was one of Elkanah's wives. Elkanah had two wives, and Hannah was one of the two. The other wife was able to bear children, but Hannah was barren. According to the Scriptures, the other wife provoked her, or made it very unhappy for her. This is found in I Samuel 1:6. We read in verse 5, "But unto Hannah he [speaking about her husband, Elkanah] gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the Lord had shut up her womb." Elkanah especially tried to comfort her and show love and affection to her to try to make up for the lack of having children. Hannah appreciated the love of her husband. She knew that he loved and appreciated her, but that still did not satisfy her heart. Hannah still had a desire to have children.

Hannah and her husband went up to Shiloh as they did from year to year. While she was there at Shiloh, we read in I Samuel 1:9-18, these words: "So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth [saw her lips moving]. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad."

After they had returned home, in the due course of time, Hannah was with child. She brought forth her firstborn child there at home. Hannah kept her promise to the Lord. We read in I Samuel 2:11: "And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest." So they took their child, when he was old enough, back to Shiloh and left him there with the priest Eli. Then Elkanah and his wife returned home, leaving their child, Samuel, to minister in the work of the Lord there at Shiloh. We read in I Samuel 3, beginning with verse 19, in regard to this matter: "And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord.

And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord.”

We find that the man Samuel was one of the greatest prophets of Old Testament Israel. He was a man of God. He walked with God. He stood against evil. When it came to King Saul, or whoever it might have been, Samuel stood against sin. He stood against wickedness and evil. He cried out against Israel in their departing from the Lord, and he endeavored to bring them back to God and to the true worship of God.

In Samuel's later years, the children of Israel demanded a king. This grieved Samuel greatly. He told them the evil that would come upon them if they insisted on a king. Nevertheless, they continued to insist, and the Lord told Samuel to give them the desire of their heart, to listen to what they were saying, for the Lord said to Samuel, “They have not rejected you from ruling over the people, but they have rejected Me from ruling over them.” How sad to think that people would reject the rule of almighty God and choose the rule of a man! Of course, it worked havoc in the land just as Samuel had warned them, but Samuel remained true to God all through his life. He did not depart from the Lord or the Lord's commands.

We read in I Samuel 12, beginning with verse 3, “Behold, here I am [Samuel is speaking.]: witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand. And he said unto them, The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.”

This great man of God was born and ruled as a prophet in Israel because his mother desired a son. She cried unto the Lord, and in her cry to the Lord, she made the vow that she would lend him back to the Lord as long as he lived. What a blessing this mother was to the nation of Israel in crying unto the Lord and receiving from Him this man child who became Samuel the prophet of the Lord, a faithful servant of almighty God!

Now, in the New Testament, we have a beautiful example of a mother and her consecration. Of course, I speak of Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus, the mother of our Savior. In Luke 1, beginning with verse 26, we read, “And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be

called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.”

In these few words spoken by Mary, in the thirty-eighth verse, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word,” we find one of the greatest demonstrations of consecration that you will find in all the Bible. Yes, you'll find here in these few words a heart that loved God, a heart that was dedicated to God, a heart that was willing to bear shame and reproach for God, for it was not a little thing that she was called upon to do. It was not a little consecration that Mary expressed in these words. To me, it was a great consecration. Even yet today, she is not recognized by some as the holy woman that she was. Now, I am not suggesting that she is the fourth person in the Godhead, or that she is to be looked upon as co-redeemer with Christ, as some people are trying to make her today. Notice in the scripture that I read that she was highly favored *among* women, not *above* women.

We are to honor and respect Mary for her consecration and her willingness to be what God would have her to be, but she is not to be set up on a pedestal and worshiped. She certainly is not the fourth person in the Godhead, and she is not co-redeemer with Christ. There is only one Redeemer. There is only one Savior. There is only one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. This beautiful woman, beautiful in character, beautiful in her dedication to God, though a young woman, was willing to bear the reproach of being accused of having this Son out of wedlock. But God knew, Mary knew, and Joseph knew, for the angel of the Lord revealed the truth to Joseph in a dream.

Mary is an example for all mothers, in that she was willing to consecrate and dedicate herself to almighty God, and there is no greater calling that anyone (mothers or anyone else) can have than to make a complete dedication and surrender of their will and their life to God. That is what is needed in our sin-cursed world today. We need mothers who are fully and completely consecrated and dedicated to the will of almighty God.

We have another outstanding Bible character in the New Testament by the name of Timothy. He, too, had a good godly mother, and also a good godly grandmother. In Paul's second letter to Timothy, chapter 1, verse 5, we read, “When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.” So Timothy had a very excellent background—a good godly mother who had unfeigned

faith in almighty God—and a good godly grandmother who also had unfeigned faith in almighty God. As a result, in part at least, we have the young man Timothy who played such an important part in working with the apostle Paul. Many times we speak of the great work that the apostle Paul did, but we should remember that Paul had some very helpful workers, and Timothy was one of them. Thank God for his godly mother and grandmother.

Again, I say, this is what is needed in our nation and world today: godly mothers who are consecrated to do the will of God and who will be godly examples in the home, in the community, and in the nation.

We pray God's blessings upon all mothers. †

2022 PHILIPPINE CONVENTION

SUBMITTED BY BRO. HARLEY MCCLUNG

WRITTEN BY SIS. GLADYS EVE D. BAGAYAN

WITH THE pandemic in our rear view mirror, maybe we can now continue our work for God in a more normal way. God blessed me/us with another opportunity to attend the 2022 Convention in the Philippine Islands. As with other conventions, God favored us with a glorious gathering and genuine Christian fellowship! With no aim to take anything away from other conventions, I must say, this one was exceptionally rich. God's Spirit anointed the singers, the testimonies, the chairpersons, and the preaching in a special way, from the beginning to the end. For all His blessings, we praise and thank Him.

It was reported that 52 precious souls were saved, thank God! I trust that they are still running the race set before them, and they will find God's grace sufficient to endure and to win the prize. Many came to the altar seeking God's help for their needs, whether it was for sanctification and a closer walk with Christ, or healing of their bodies. And I am confident that God did not send them away empty when they came in faith believing that God is, and that He's a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

May God help us all to remember what Paul said as we run this race set before us—Romans 8:16-21, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

The Filipino saints seem so sincere and determined to fight on in this good fight of faith that we as Christians are engaged in. May God continue to richly bless them and keep them in His power and grace to work

in their field of labor and in the vocation He called them to.

The following report of the December 26-30, 2022, Philippine Convention was well written and nicely done by Sis. Gladys Eve D. Bagayan. I appreciate her efforts in doing so.—Bro. Harley McClung.

The pandemic resulted in two years of virtual church services and the inability to gather in person for our annual convention. However, we finally had the chance to worship together last year. This post-convention report aims to encapsulate the essence of our gatherings and share the lessons, experiences, and insights gained with those who participated.

Monday—6:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Reynaldo Fabian. Text: I Thessalonians 5:23. *We need humility for repentance, to pray, and to give God all the glory. Holiness is impossible without it.*

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Gary Alwell. His text: I Peter 1:15, 16; Psalm 51:17, 18. *We open ourselves up to experiencing immeasurable love from God by accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. God emphasizes humility and a sincere sense of remorse and recognizes these qualities over numerous offerings or sacrifices. He desires for us to have a broken spirit and a contrite heart, as this demonstrates our steadfast devotion to Him.*

2:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Ed Coraraton. Text: Matthew 13:14, 15. *The sinful nature of this world has misled and dulled the senses of many individuals. Nonetheless, God has provided the path to redemption through His begotten son, Jesus Christ.*

7:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Harley McClung. Text: Hebrews 10:16-20. *Taking God's Word to heart involves more than just reading or studying the Bible. It consists of internalizing God's teachings, applying them to our lives, and allowing them to shape our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. As we take God's Word to heart, we can live according to His will and experience the blessings of obedience.*

Tuesday—6:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Frank Palencia. Text: Luke 12:37, 38. *We should align our utilization of technology with God's desires and strive to evangelize the lost. Only those who are devoted and vigilant will be in His presence when Jesus Christ returns.*

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Jet Batalla. Text: Ephesians 5:27; Acts 4:32. *As members of the Church of God brought together through Christ, let us work towards being impeccable and pure when He returns. We hope that upon His second coming we will all be found without fault and possessing a holiness that pleases Him.*

2:00 P.M.—Speaker: Sis. Meldy Santiago. Her text: I Thessalonians 3:12, 13. *Pursuing holiness guides us to love all individuals, even those who may be challenging to love. By living a holy life, we reflect the love and righteousness of God and embody these qualities in our own lives.*

7:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Gary Alwell. Text: Psalm 40:1-4. *God is aware of the aspirations and longings in our hearts, and when we yearn for the truth, He guides us toward it. Through a relationship with Jesus Christ, we can see the truth and experience the blessings of*

obedience to God's will. By seeking truth and surrendering our hearts to God, we can experience the peace and fulfillment that come from living by His will.

Wednesday—6:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Luis Gamboa. Text: John 14:3. *We must guard our salvation with diligence until the second coming of Christ. He will bring those who remain steadfast in the old-fashioned faith and obey God's Word to the heavenly abode He has prepared for us; that requires a consistent effort.*

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Sis. Rose Marzan. Her text: II Peter 3:14; Psalm 27:14. *The Word of God is not exclusive, but for all, regardless of their background or circumstances. God's love is for all people, and His desire is for all to repent and serve Him.*

2:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Bernard Neri. His text was I Corinthians 3:9; II Corinthians 6:1. *The privilege of serving as one of God's laborers is unparalleled and incomparable to any title or position in this world. It is the highest calling and the noblest pursuit for us all.*

7:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Harley McClung. Text: Matthew 16:24-26. *The Lord's path surpasses human understanding, and it is crucial to submit to His guidance to preserve one's eternal being. To put it more explicitly, if anyone fails to surrender their will to Him, they risk losing their soul.*

Thursday—6:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Arnold Ordonio. Text: I Thessalonians 5:23. *We should put forth our most excellent effort in serving the Master and preserving the authenticity of His teachings. It involves not only following His principles, but also ensuring that future generations have access to the accurate interpretation of His doctrine.*

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Antonio Dumrique. Text: I Thessalonians 5:23. *The Lord holds us in high esteem and values our lives so greatly that He made the ultimate sacrifice by offering His own life for us. This selfless act demonstrates the depth of His love and the extent He was willing to go to secure our salvation. It is a constant reminder of the Lord's profound care for us.*

2:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Greg Escullar. His text: I Timothy 2:4. *God desires for all people to be saved and to come to a complete understanding of the truth. Therefore, we must put off the corrupt nature of man and live a new life in Christ.*

7:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. David Goble. Text: Matthew 14:22-33. *It is a transformative process when God allows us to be heartbroken. Through this experience, He can renew and remake our hearts, giving us a fresh start. Lamentably, not all individuals who have experienced salvation lead a holy life. Becoming sanctified requires more than just a one-time spiritual awakening. It necessitates a constant filling of the power of the Holy Spirit, empowering us to live a holy life and effectively share the gospel with the world.*

Friday—6:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Rogelio Eupenia. Text: I Timothy 2:3, 4. *Our existence has two distinct chapters: our sojourn on Earth as servants of the Lord and our everlasting life hereafter with Him. However, we must remember that we cannot skip the first chapter and jump straight to the final chapter. We must go through the proper process, which includes living a life*

of faith and obedience, following God's will, and preparing for our eternal home in heaven.

10:00 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. David Goble. Text: Luke 5:33-39; II Corinthians 5:14-21. *A true Christian life is often compared to the transformative journey of a butterfly, starting as a tiny, humble caterpillar and eventually emerging as a beautiful, radiant creature with wings. On the other hand, a pretentious Christian life is like that of a frog, appearing to be a part of the transformation while lacking any real growth or change. The frog may jump and make noise, but it never truly transforms into a magnificent creature. In the same way, a false Christian may put on a show of religiosity. However, they never genuinely undergo the spiritual transformation that comes with a genuine relationship with Christ.*

2:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Rudy Delos Reyes. Text: Titus 2:13. *All the hardships, trials, and struggles we endure in this life will pale in comparison to the reward of finally gazing upon the face of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, experiencing the full measure of His love, grace, and glory.*

7:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Harley McClung. Text: Isaiah 55:6, 7. *Life is unpredictable and uncertain, but it encourages individuals not to use this to scare others. Understanding the inevitability of endings can help us to appreciate and make the most of the moments we have while also preparing us for the future. It is vital to seek a relationship with God while still having the opportunity, as it may not always be available. By striving to be what God wants us to be and do what God wants us to do, we may find greater purpose, fulfillment, and peace in our lives now and in the future.*

I'll close Sis. Gladys Eve D. Bagayan's report with this:

As with all conventions, there was so much work that went into planning: the transportation, the places for so many people to stay, the meals to prepare and, of course, the services. Those who were responsible and carried out all those duties are to be commended for a job well done. I am sure God has and will richly bless everyone who dedicated and sacrificed their time and efforts to do the will of God pertaining to this convention.—Bro. Harley McClung. †

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"HE CALLETH FOR THEE"

Message by Bro. Thomas Harris, delivered 03/19/23



WE ARE GOING to start with a story this morning. This is a story that happened during the days of Jesus. It's told to us in three of the four Gospels. I'm not going to tell you what it is right away, but you'll probably guess when we get part way through it. This is a story of a blind man. We don't read the entire account of his situation, but we do know that he was blind. This blind man was a beggar.

I don't know what it's like to be blind, but I can say though, if I had to pick a time in which I had to be blind, I think I would rather be blind in today's day and age with all the conveniences and opportunities that we have today as opposed to being blind in the time of Jesus. Today, there are a lot of conveniences that make blindness something that doesn't automatically reduce someone to the status of a beggar. Right? I imagine that in the ancient days of Jesus that all blind people weren't necessarily reduced to a status of a beggar. There were perhaps some people who were blind that may be were storytellers, or musicians, or singers. They might have had some way of making a living for themselves. But we read of a particular man who was blind, and he didn't fall into any of those categories.

This man was blind, and he was a beggar. Whenever I picture that, I don't picture this a very desirable situation: to be blind, and to be not only blind, but to have no means of support. He was blind, and he was reduced to begging. We don't know his entire story, but I gather from the context from which this story is portrayed to us, that this man was likely not always blind. There is one instance in the Bible where we read of a man who was blind from birth, but we don't read that this particular man was blind from birth. We just read that he was blind, and that he was a beggar.

This particular man must have had some friends. He must have had some friends who took it upon themselves to lead him to a very desirable location where he could spend his time begging and asking for help. Particularly, they took him to the gates of a city. They took him to the gates of the city of Jericho. Perhaps this man was a single man. Maybe he was a successful, single man who was then smitten with the affliction of blindness and that's why he was reduced to the status of a beggar, or maybe he had a family and he resorted to begging, because he couldn't think of any other way to support his family. We don't really know, but we do know that he would beg, and he would beg at the gates of the city of Jericho. So he was in a place where there was a lot of foot traffic. Right? He didn't ask his friend or a family member to go place him in a back alley somewhere so that he could ask for help. No, he wanted to be in a high-traffic area so that he could get help. He was begging for help.

One day this particular man heard of another Man. He heard of a Man named Jesus. I imagine as this blind man was sitting on the side of the road next to the gates

of the city, that he heard a lot of the talk of the passers-by. I imagine that word got to him that there was a man who was going around having great power. He had power to do things like heal sicknesses. I'm sure that he also heard that this Man was not only healing normal sicknesses, but healing things that no one else could heal. He was healing things like blindness. I imagine that this blind man thought, *Oh, man, if that Man would come through this city, wow! If Jesus would pass by this city, wouldn't that be great? because maybe, just maybe, He would heal me of my blindness.*

We read in the accounts of the Gospels where one day this blind man was there at the gates of the city of Jericho, and he heard a great commotion. It must have been something that was really out of the ordinary, because he was at the gates of the city where there were likely vast multitudes of people passing through day and night. But there was something special that day. He heard a great commotion, and that great commotion was the crowds that were following Jesus. I don't know how he figured out that it was Jesus. I picture in my mind's eye that perhaps he was groping around, and he grabbed someone's arm or robe, and said, "Tell me, tell me, what is going on!" And they said, "Jesus is passing by!" I just picture in my mind that his face must have lit up, and he thought, *Jesus, that Man, Jesus, He's passing by.* But then, I imagine, that joy might have had some damper because he thought, *Oh, no, I'm blind. I can't see Jesus.*

This man was severely handicapped. He couldn't push through the crowds. The crowds that surrounded Jesus were thick. They were heavy crowds. This was a blind man. He couldn't hope to shoulder his way through the crowds because he couldn't even see Jesus. I figured he thought, *What am I going to do? Jesus is passing by.* So he did the only thing that he could think to do. He started calling out, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." He didn't just call the name Jesus. He called, "Jesus, thou son of David." That was an indication that this man recognized Jesus as the Messiah. It was foretold in the days of old that Jesus would be born of the lineage of David.

This blind man's name was Bartimaeus. In full acknowledgment that Jesus was the Messiah, he called out, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." He just kept saying that. He kept calling that out because he knew Jesus was passing through. He didn't know where Jesus was as He was going through the city, but he knew all he could do was to yell out, "Jesus, have mercy on me!"

Do you know what happened? The crowds around Jesus said to him, "You keep quiet. Hush up! You're causing a commotion. We want to hear what Jesus has to say. You be quiet over there." Don't disturb the peace,

as it were. Bartimaeus could have gotten discouraged when he heard those words. He could have gotten discouraged and thought, *Fine, I'll be quiet*, but he cried even louder, "Jesus! Savior! Messiah! Will you have mercy on me?" I can just see him yelling that out and waving his arms, and saying it over and over again, "Jesus! Will you have mercy on me?"

Then Bartimaeus stopped calling out. He stopped because someone told him something. I imagine that someone probably went up to him and grabbed his arm and said, "Bartimaeus, it's okay. Be of good cheer; He calleth thee." The power of that statement is something that causes my soul to shutter: "Be of good cheer; He calleth thee." Can you imagine the joy that Bartimaeus felt whenever he was out there sitting by the side of the road and someone said, "Bartimaeus, be of good cheer, He calleth thee"?

Do you know what Bartimaeus did after Jesus called him? Bartimaeus had a garment on. That only makes sense, because if he was out there in the heat of the day, begging, and he was experiencing the heat and the weather, he had a heavy garment on each day to protect himself. But when he was told to be of good cheer, and to get up because Jesus was calling him, he didn't take that garment and hand it off to someone and say, "You hold on to this in case I need to come back." He took that garment, and the Bible says, "And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus." Bartimaeus wanted to get rid of anything that was on him that would hinder him from getting to Jesus as soon as he possibly could. He wanted to get to Jesus ASAP (as soon as possible). He wanted to be there *now*. So he cast away what he had on so that he wouldn't be hindered in that rush to Jesus. Bartimaeus got to Jesus.

Jesus, as the Son of God, knew everything about blind Bartimaeus. Jesus knew exactly what had befallen him. Jesus knew everything that had happened in this man's life. What Jesus did not do was to go down a checklist and say, *Bartimaeus, I see here that you haven't been all that you should be. I see that you could have handled some things differently. I see that you should have been doing better, and therefore you are not worthy of being touched by me.* That wasn't the case.

That is the same way with all of us. Whenever we come to Jesus, He knows everything about you and me. I love this thought. It's a true thought. Jesus knows every single decision that I've made in my entire life. He's intimately familiar with everything that has happened to me to bring me to this very present moment. Right where I am. In spite of the good, in spite of the bad, He still loves me. That is the same for every single person. In spite of bad decisions or in spite of things you should have done differently, Jesus knows all of that. His response to each one of us is just as His response was to blind Bartimaeus. He didn't shame Bartimaeus for any decisions he should have made or anything he should have done differently. Jesus saw blind Bartimaeus and said to him, "What would you ask of me?" Bartimaeus said, "Lord, that I might receive my sight." Do you know what? Jesus healed Bartimaeus. We read that blind Bartimaeus then followed Jesus. He just didn't get healed and then go on his way. He followed Jesus.

I want us to think a little bit of this phrase: *Be of good cheer; get up, because He's calling thee.* Not just anyone else, but Jesus is calling thee. That same phrase applies to me. That same phrase applies to people today who need Jesus. *Be of good cheer, because He calleth thee.*

Now, I want to change gears here just a little bit. I want us to think about whether or not I am blind, whether or not you might be blind. You might think, *You know what? I think I'm pretty good. Give me about fifty years and you might have some trouble, but I can see for now that I'm pretty good.*

I want you to think about whether or not you're *spiritually blind*. Do you know it's possible to be blind spiritually? In just the same way that blind Bartimaeus was blind to the reality of the world around him, there are so many people who are spiritually blind today. To be *spiritually blind* means that you're blind to the importance of your soul, that you don't quite comprehend the importance of the soul that is within you. That's what it means to be *spiritually blind*.

We talk about "souls" a whole lot. We read that Jesus came to give rest to weary souls. In church we often talk about winning souls and witnessing to souls. What is a soul? Sometimes if you look up a word online, there are some metrics. If you're searching a particular word, they'll tell you its frequency of usage over time. It's an interesting thing, because sometimes you see words that might have been really popular back then, but then their usage over time sort of tapers off. I didn't take time to look it up, but I would venture to guess the word *soul* is something that's not talked about too much in today's age. So what is a soul? It's an interesting question.

I guess we could probably talk a lot about the soul, but to put it briefly, the soul that's within us is that bit of us where our conscience lies. It's that kind of intangible thing that is at the core fundamental level of our very being. It's that bit of us that lets us know that we're not an animal. It's that bit of us that lets us know that we are a special creation of God. We sing the song, "Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee; How great Thou art, how great Thou art!" The soul is that little bit of a person who, whenever you go outside and you look up at the stars, you feel really small. There speaks something deep inside of you that there is certainly a Creator who made you. That's the soul. The soul is that thing that God talks to. The soul is that little bit of me and that little bit of you. It is going to live on in eternity.

You know, I'm going to die. I'm not making plans to die any time soon, but I have very little doubt that I'm going to die. That's okay. The soul is never going to die. The soul is going to live on in eternity. It's that soul that is going to see God. My soul is going to see God. We're told in the Bible that if we, in our physical body were to ever see God, the glory of God would be so great that we would cease to be anything. We couldn't in our physical body really handle seeing the glory of God, but our soul will. My soul is going to see God, and your soul is going to see God. It's going to see God during the day of judgment. That being said, the day that I die is either going to be the best day of my life, or it's going to be the worse day of my life. Not because of this physical

body, but because of that soul is not going to die. It will either be the best day or the worse day. It's going to be the best day if our soul is right with God, because not only are we going to see Him whenever we're judged, but we're going to live with Him.

The Bible talks a lot about the soul of man being really important. It talks about the soul of man being important, because when we die, our soul doesn't automatically go to heaven. Surely, God created us, but our soul, when we die, isn't on an automatic return to be with God again.

At work, I have a badge that lets me into buildings, etc., that has a little return on it, and it's attached by a string. I can take that card and hold it every which way, let it go, and it goes right back to my side. If I want to open a door, I grab my badge, swipe it, let it go, and it goes straight back to my side. The soul of man is not like that. The soul of man doesn't have a string attached to it, that whenever we die, we're just going to instantly return to God. That's not the way God has created the world to be.

The Bible says that our soul is important. It is important because we can lose it. *We can lose it.* I can lose my soul. I can lose it because it doesn't automatically return to God. Jesus said, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole [entire] world, and lose his own soul?" Jesus is saying, in effect, that if I, in my physical body could conquer the world, if I have the praise and worship of mankind, if I have all the money, and all of the things I could possibly think that I might like to have, what would that even profit me, if I were to lose my own soul?

There is certainly a devil in this world. I trust we all believe that. I doesn't take a whole lot of looking to see the evil, the lack of contentment, and the terrible things that are going on in our world today. It doesn't take a whole lot of imagination to believe that there is a devil in this world. The Bible says that the devil is actively trying to blind the minds of people to the needs of their soul. The Bible says in II Corinthians 4:4: "The god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." When we think of the importance of our soul, it's really, really an important thing. It's of paramount importance that I not be spiritually blind to the state of my soul. That means I need to be *aware* of how my soul stands before God.

Now, how is it that we know if our soul is right before God? I want you to picture something with me. I want you to picture that there is a full-length mirror right here. This isn't just any kind of mirror. This is a very special kind of mirror. If I step in front of this mirror, it doesn't just show me. I don't look into it and see the reflection of myself, but I look into that mirror and see my soul. I see the way my soul is viewed by God. Would you step in front of that mirror if it were an actual mirror? Would you be willing to step in front of that mirror and see how your soul stands before God? The reality is that such a mirror does exist, and we can access that mirror by simply asking ourselves in seriousness and in honesty, "Lord, how is my soul before you?" Because if you really want to know the state of

your soul before God, He's going to tell you. If you really want to know the state of your soul before God, and if you step in front of that mirror, He's not going to cloud over that mirror. He's going to let you know how it really is.

Do you know God has a way of showing us how we stand before Him? God has a way of letting us know how we stand before Him. God can show us ways in which our soul exists before Him. Sometimes it might be through the singing of songs. If we're singing songs about the love of God and singing songs of worship and praise to God, He has a way of presenting that mirror to us and letting us know how our soul stands before Him. If we're singing those songs and thinking about the love of God, and if there's something that just feels uncomfortable, or not quite right, or we feel that there's a lacking there that we would like to have fulfilled, that's God setting that mirror in front of us and letting us know how we stand before Him. That's God setting that mirror in front of us and letting us see our soul as He sees it. God has a way of setting that mirror in front of us through the preaching of His Word.

Sometimes in church services, you feel conviction or you feel like you don't have all that you really need to have in life. Maybe you can't really put your finger on it, but you feel that there is something lacking within your soul and something lacking between you and God. What is going on there is that God is setting that mirror in front of you and showing you how you stand before Him and showing you how He sees your soul.

If this morning, or if at any time you feel that God is setting that mirror in front of you, and you see that there's something lacking, and if you see in that mirror that He is letting you know that your soul isn't right before Him, there's such a wonderful hope, because in the same way that Jesus physically told blind Bartimaeus, "Be of good cheer, get up!" He's calling you.

Whenever God sets that mirror in front of us, and we see that we might not be everything that He needs us to be to make it to heaven and spend eternity with Him, He doesn't let us just see that, and then He doesn't say *okay, I don't know what to tell you, you're not good.* That's not the case. He calls. He has called you.

If you're at a point where you recognize that your soul isn't where it needs to be, be of good cheer, because Jesus is calling you the same way He called blind Bartimaeus. But you know, in much the same way that the crowds really tried to stamp out blind Bartimaeus when he was calling out to Jesus, Satan has a way of continually trying to blind us. Even when we see our soul as it stands before God, Satan is always right there, continually trying to blind our minds, our hearts, and our thoughts to the real importance of our soul. As we see ourselves in the mirror, Satan would be right there saying, "No, you're good. You're okay. Even if you were to get your soul right, you don't have time for that" or "You have too much baggage for that." Satan is always there.

The Lord is very faithful to show us how we stand before Him, but Satan is also very faithful to continue to try to blind us. But what we really, really need to do is to take heart and take a lesson from what blind Bartimaeus did. When the crowds tried to hush him up, so it is in much the same way when Satan tries to

hush us up, or tries to tell us that it's impossible to address the state of our soul. We then need to be all the more determined to get to Jesus. We need to make sure that we don't try to keep anything in reserve.

Blind Bartimaeus' garment was probably important to him. It was probably a real big piece of his life there as a beggar. It was necessary for him. He didn't hold it in reserve, but he went to Jesus really expecting that something was going to change. Again, he didn't take that garment and bundle it under his arm and take it with him to Jesus. He didn't hand it off to someone and say, *You hold this. I might be back.* He got rid of it, and he went to Jesus just as he was.

You know, that's a real powerful way that Satan tries to blind people today and to make them think, *I need to hold something in reserve. I need to get things right myself before I can go to Jesus. I need to fix some things up over here and over there.* That's Satan trying to blind people.

As we conclude this morning, I'll ask this question: Can you see the condition of your soul before God? If you're able to see your soul in that mirror that God places before you, and it's right, that's such a wonderful thing. Satan, in his attempt and success in blinding people, not only blinds people and causes them not to consider eternity, but he also blinds people to the reality just how good life can be when their soul is right with God.

If you look into that mirror and see that you're not everything that you need to be, you need to take heart, because Jesus is calling. He calls people just as they are. Don't let Satan blind you if you know that you're not right with God. Don't let Satan blind you. He's going to try, but you need to cast away those advances from Satan. You need to come before God just as you are. The only way that you can come before God and be accepted is if you will come just the way you are. †

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



YOUR SOUL

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

"Come see what I have!" my father called out as he entered the house early one Saturday afternoon. It was lunch time, and he had come in from plowing the field to grab a bite to eat.

My father was wearing his undershirt and carrying something wrapped up in his work shirt. We crowded around to see what it was.

"Grab me a box!" he said. I ran for a box, and when I returned, he gently laid his shirt in it. Carefully he unfolded the shirt to reveal a tiny baby rabbit. It cowered in the corner of the box, trembling and squeaking in fear.

"Go get some rags from the ragbag," my father said.

My sisters and I ran to get some rags, and my father carefully removed his shirt and replaced it with the rags. The baby rabbit burrowed into the rags. *He is trying to hide from us,* we thought.

"We won't hurt you," we crooned to the baby rabbit.

"Where did you get him?" we asked our father.

"Well," he said, "my plow must have dug up a rabbit nest in the field. I don't know what happened to the mother or the other babies, but I caught this one so I could show it to you."

"Can we keep it for a pet?" we asked anxiously. We were short on pets at our house. There were barn cats that we tried to tame, but our mother didn't like them underfoot, and so we had to leave them in the barn. We'd had a puppy for a short while, but he ruined the little trees my mother had planted in the yard, and so we'd had to give him away.

"You can try to make a pet out of the baby rabbit," said Dad, "but he will probably die."

"We'll take good care of him," we told our dad. "We'll feed him and give him milk to drink."

"Well, be careful," said Dad. "If he thinks you're going to hurt him, he'll bite your fingers."

We carried the box into the living room and put it in a dark, quiet corner. Then we set about finding food for our new pet.

"Rabbits eat lettuce and carrots," said my younger sister, Wilma. She was only six years old, but she knew a lot about animals.

"May we have some lettuce for our rabbit?" I asked our mother.

"Wild rabbits don't eat lettuce—unless they get into someone's garden," said Mom. "They eat clover and things like that."

We ran out into our yard and pulled up a handful of clover leaves and blossoms and brought them to our pet rabbit. We dangled the clover in front of his face, but he paid no attention to it. We thought we might be making him nervous by watching him, and so we laid the clover at his feet and went away for a little while. When we came back, the clover leaves and blossoms were untouched and wilting.

"Maybe he wasn't weaned from his mother's milk yet," said Mom when we asked her why our rabbit wouldn't eat.

We ran to the refrigerator and poured some milk into a small lid we found in a kitchen drawer. We pushed the milk up close to the rabbit's face, but he only backed farther into the corner of the box.

"He's not used to drinking from a lid," said Mom. "He's used to drinking milk from his mother."

We thought about that for a while, and then we grabbed a rag and dipped the edge of it in the milk. We held the rag close to the baby rabbit's mouth, but he only closed his eyes and pushed himself deeper into the little nest of rags.

All day long we tried to feed the rabbit, but our efforts were in vain.

“Good night,” we said to our little pet that evening before we went to bed. “We’ll feed you again in the morning. You’ll be hungrier by then.”

But in the morning, we found the little rabbit lying lifeless and still in the corner of the box. Just as Dad had predicted, the tiny wild rabbit had not been able to survive in captivity.

We cried as we put his little body in a box and buried it in a corner of our yard. Although we’d had our little pet for less than a day, we missed him. But down in our hearts, we understood that wild creatures need to roam free, not live in a cardboard box.

God made a wonderful variety of living things for us to learn about and appreciate. But He created something in you and me that no other living creature possesses. We human beings have souls. Do you know what a “soul” is?

Your soul is that part of you that understands the difference between what is right and what is wrong. It is that little bit of you that can hear God’s voice and can answer Him. It is the part of you that can please God by making the decision to obey His commandments. It is the part of you that can receive salvation and live forever in heaven one day.

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 2:10b which says, “Knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul.”

Animals can do some very smart things. But they do not have the knowledge that human beings have. They do not know about God. They cannot choose to obey Him. But we have that privilege. We can talk to God and tell Him we love Him. We can read His Word and obey it, and then we can know down in our souls that we have pleased Him.

Long ago, a man asked Jesus, “What is the great commandment?”

Jesus said to the man, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. That is the first and great commandment.”

You can show God that you love Him with all of your soul by doing what is right out of a pure heart. If you give your life to Him, He will always be near to help you.

Activity

Here are some things the Bible tells us about our soul. See if you can match the beginning of each scripture with its ending.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ___ 1. The soul that sinneth | a. converting the soul. |
| ___ 2. The law of the Lord is perfect, | b. for they watch for your souls. |
| ___ 3. Our soul waiteth for the Lord: | c. which is able to save your souls. |
| ___ 4. Obey them that have the rule over you ... | d. it shall die. |
| ___ 5. Receive with meekness the engrafted word, | e. He is our help and our shield. |

May 2023

You can check yourself by looking up the following scripture locations:

Ezekiel 18:20

Psalm 19:7

Psalm 33:20

Hebrews 13:17

James 1:21

Answer to Last Month’s Activity

Eutychus was a young **man** who was in the **audience** when **Paul** preached a **goodbye** message at **Troas**. Eutychus sat in a **window sill**. While Paul was **preaching**, Eutychus went to **sleep**. He fell to the **ground** below and lay very **still**. He was not **breathing**, and the people exclaimed, “He is **dead!**” Paul prayed for Eutychus, and he was restored to **life**. The people were amazed and very **thankful**. †

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

GEMS FROM THE BOOK OF ROMANS

WALKING AFTER THE SPIRIT

Scriptures: Romans 8:1-8, 13, 14; Galatians 5:16, 25; I Corinthians 2:12, 14; Proverbs 3:5, 6.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Galatians 5:16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

I Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Memory Verse: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.—Romans 8:1.

Aim: To challenge the student to allow the Holy Spirit to guide his footsteps.

INTRODUCTION

“The Holy Spirit is not so commonly set forth in the Scriptures as an object of worship as is the Son, yet his worshipfulness is implied in the proofs that he is God, especially in such texts as those that warn against the danger of blaspheming him. ... Inasmuch as he is of the same substance as the Father and Son he is therefore equal with them in power and glory. But as the Son is subordinate to the Father in the mode of his subsistence and operations in the world, so is the Holy Spirit represented as subordinate to both the Father and Son.”—R. R. Byrum, *Christian Theology*.

“It means much to be led by the Holy Spirit in all things. ‘For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God’ (Romans 8:14). Not only does the Father draw us by his Spirit to the fellowship of his Son, but he also promises to be with us to the end of the world (Matthew 28:20). How much it means to always recognize and obey the voice which says, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it’; to steer clear of the gulf of fanaticism on the one hand and the rocks of formalism on the other, and take the narrow way of divine guidance.”—D. O. Teasley, *The Holy Spirit and Other Spirits*.

This lesson is on the thought of “Walking After the Spirit,” but I would like to point out that there are other spirits, many of them, and we need to be aware of them, for Jesus told us that Satan himself would appear as an angel of light to deceive the very elect if possible.

MEDITATIONS

FREE FROM CONDEMNATION—Romans 8:1—Who walk not—In chapter seven, Paul speaks of his experience as a Pharisee who was unable to do all he knew he should and was not able to keep from doing some things he knew he should not do. In such a state he cried out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (7:24). After accepting the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and being filled with the Spirit (Acts 9), he was able to say, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Your guilt of sin is gone and you are free. Then you are in a position to “walk after the Spirit” and not after the flesh.

TWO LAWS—Romans 8:2—Life and death—The law of the Spirit produces life. Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born of the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God. So it is with all mankind. The law of sin is the law of death. No one can live free from this law if he does not have Christ in his heart, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

GOD SENT HIS SON—Romans 8:3—The law could not do—The Old Covenant could not save anyone! Yes, God gave them the law to obey but again, the law could not save. There was and is no Savior but Jesus Christ. We are not to assume from the latter part of this verse that Jesus ever committed one sin, for He did not! But He did come to earth and took upon Himself a robe of flesh and faced temptations just as the rest of the family of man. By living a holy life, He showed

that it was possible for the family of man to do so by the saving grace of God. Thus He condemned sin in the flesh, regardless of what many in the religious world say.

WALK NOT AFTER THE FLESH—Romans 8:4, 5—Life and peace—The secret of being able to live free from sin is walking after the Spirit. Those who are unsaved are walking after the flesh and do mind the things of the flesh. That is their nature, and it is natural for them to do so. Those who live after the Spirit have the divine nature, and it is natural for them to live righteously.

CARNALLY MINDED—Romans 8:5-8—Cannot please God—All through the Bible two ways are presented, and you cannot walk both ways at one time. As Jesus said, “No man can serve two masters.” In these verses, Paul is dealing with these two ways. To be carnally minded and living after the flesh means death to the soul. To be carnally minded is to have a mind that is against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So those who are living to satisfy the flesh are living contrary to the law of Christ and will continue to do so until they are truly converted.

LED BY THE SPIRIT—Romans 8:13—Mortify the deeds of the body—Again, to live after the flesh is to live a sinful life, and imputed sin brings death. The prophet Ezekiel said, “When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it” (Ezekiel 33:13). But if you through the Spirit do die to the deeds of the body, you shall live. **Verse 14**—To be led by the Spirit of God is one of the greatest blessings you can know in this life! The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. He will never lead you wrong. Jesus told the disciples that when the Holy Spirit came to dwell in them, He would lead and guide them into all truth.

WALK IN THE SPIRIT—Galatians 5:16—You shall not—There are so many verses of Scripture that set forth the two ways, and all of them give us to understand that one is the way of life and the other is the way of death. One is lived in the Spirit and the other is lived in, or after, the flesh. “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other” (Galatians 5:17). “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

LIVING RIGHT—Galatians 5:25—If we live in the Spirit—“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (I Corinthians 6:19, 20). If we have the Holy Spirit in us and we keep Him in us, we will walk in the Spirit.

THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD—I Corinthians 2:12—There are many spirits—How many people realize that they are under the influence of a spirit, good or bad? There is no other way to explain the actions of people. It was an evil spirit that influenced Eve to

do what she did when she disobeyed God. The right Spirit causes you to obey.

THE THINGS OF THE SPIRIT—I Corinthians 2:14—The natural man—How many millions of people think the Bible is just another book written by a group of men? How many think it is a book full of contradictions? How many think it is the inspired Word of God? Those who make up the “natural man” class are the ones who fit in the first two, and the spiritually minded are the ones who fit in the last. If you want to know the truth, be a true disciple of Christ—See John 8:31, 32.

DIRECTED BY THE LORD—Proverbs 3:5, 6—Lean not—What a precious promise this is! However, there are conditions to be met as there with all of God’s promises. First, we must trust in the Lord with all our hearts. Secondly, we must not lean to our own understanding. Some people desire some things so much they convince themselves it is the will of God when it is not; God cannot direct such a one. In ALL thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct you.

CONCLUSION

“Divine guidance does not make us infallible, yet the Holy Spirit is an infallible guide. But we being fallible and our minds being finite, we may be mistaken in the leadings of the Holy Spirit. This should not discourage us in the least, but should only cause us to press more closely to Jesus’ side and listen more carefully to his voice.”—D. O. Teasley, *The Holy Spirit and Other Spirits*.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Who is it that walks after the Spirit? After the flesh?
2. Why could the law not save the soul?
3. What does it mean to be carnally minded?
4. What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?
5. What is the difference between the spirit of the world and the Spirit of God? †

POSTAGE RATES ON THE RISE!

We are sure that our readers know that the cost of publishing this magazine continues to rise. Postage rates have been increasing at an alarming rate. We do not charge for the magazine. We depend on the generosity of our readers to help us in our endeavor to send this gospel messenger to all the world. Please remember this ministry in your giving. May our Lord bless you abundantly as you do so.

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



Greetings!

Rejoicing in the midst of trials and tribulations is a wonderful testimony and a glory to God. Paul and Silas are a great example of the power and benefit of rejoicing in the midst of difficult times, and these types of advantages are still available for us today. May God

help us to remember those advantages and have the strength to exercise them when they’re needed!

Blessings,
Bro. Doug

REJOICING THROUGH TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

By Sis. Joley Williams
Craigsville, West Virginia

THERE IS A SONG that I just recently learned called, “Still I Will Praise You.” One of the verses reads:

*When my heart would choose a path of ease,
And my soul a joyful song to sing,
But you lead me into suffering,
And my tears become my offering.*

That song spoke to the season of life I have been going through recently.

Young adulthood is full of new experiences and new challenges. As a young adult serving God, we also must navigate the trials and attacks from Satan. Although it’s a tough part of life, it is an important one. The choices we make now will affect the rest of our lives.

There was a sermon I heard recently entitled, “Halted Between Two Opinions.” The idea of the sermon was that we must guard our hearts against being a part of the accepting and indifferent attitudes of this world, and instead be fully committed to the truth of God’s Word. As Christians, we are called to take a stand for the truth of the gospel.

Hebrews 10:23 says, “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.” It’s easy to say that we would courageously stand firm in truth, but it’s quite different to live it out in the midst of the world. Jesus told His disciples in John 15:20: “Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.” Even Jesus promised that we would be faced with persecution if we take a stand against evil.

Persecution might not look the same for all of us, either. There may be certain situations that don’t seem like a big deal to us, but they might be a big deal for



another believer. The evil we are faced with is far greater than we could imagine. I say that not to give credit to Satan, but even Paul explains that we “wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:12). The powers of darkness are wise, so we must be ready to discern those spirits and take a stand against them as young Christians.

Recently, I had just come through a trial that didn't seem very substantial. In fact, I hadn't even realized it was a trial until someone pointed it out. The victory I gained through that trial was apparently a pretty big deal, because the devil came at me with a vengeance in the days after. He attacked my emotional strength so much that all I could do was cry. In that moment, I had no motivation to praise God. I was not in a place where I could see how the trying of my faith was producing patience. I think as young people, we often get attacked in this way—emotionally. Satan preys on areas where we are weakest.

I heard that song quite awhile ago, but the lyrics didn't resonate until I was in a position where praising the Lord was difficult. We often get caught up in our own worries, which draws our attention away from God, splitting our affections between two opinions. The verse says: “When my heart would choose a path of ease, and my soul a joyful song to sing ...” Isn't it the most wonderful thing to be joyful in our service to God? Those moments of praise and spiritual ease are so rejuvenating to our soul. Those victorious moments are necessary, but so are the moments of difficulty. The rest of the verse says: “But you lead me into suffering, and my tears become my offering.” There will be times in our lives that we are led into suffering, just like Job.

Sometimes all we can do in the suffering is to offer our tears, an offering of total consecration, at the feet of Jesus. He absolutely understands what we need in the trying of our faith. His ears are open to our cries, and His arms are held out to hold us in His love. II Corinthians 12:9 says, “And he said unto me [Paul], My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” God knew that we would have trials in this life that would burden our emotional, physical, and spiritual minds, but in that He gave us the promise that we could have victory through Him. Without Him, we are simply weak, confused, and complicated. In Him, we are recipients of His strength, love and grace, which He sends us into the world to represent.

Out of the countless things I love about God is His constant reassurance. In every verse I've found about our suffering on this earth, there is a reassurance of His power. John 16:33 says, “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” He doesn't discount the struggles we will inevitably have, but He does encourage our faith in the truth that He has power over our situations. Psalm 34:19 says, “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.” Again, we see this qualification of how God's power is

bigger than our affliction, whether that is emotional, physical, or spiritual. Finally, Isaiah 43:2 says, “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” How amazing the promises of God are! Even in the most devastating and hopeless of circumstances, His power is still boundless and immeasurable!

The song, “Still I Will Praise You,” should be the creed of all God's children. Just as Job came forth as gold after he was tried, so we are able to have victory over all of our trials. God gives His people, young and old, tribulations so that our trust in Him becomes even stronger. He wants us to remember that we are weak and He is strong. Regardless of our situation, He is still sovereign and faithful. Regardless of our situation, our focus should be not on ourselves, but on His loving face. When our eyes are on Him, we can praise Him in the midst of any storm. †

SHADOWS OF GOOD THINGS

By the late Russell R. Byrum

(Part XIX)

THE SACRED SEASONS

The Feast of Tabernacles

(Leviticus 23:33-43)

THE FEAST of Tabernacles is also called “the Feast of Ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field” (Exodus 23:16). Both names are descriptive of the nature and purpose of the Feast. It was the third of the three great yearly feasts at which all male Israelites were to meet at Jerusalem. It was observed 15-22 of the seventh month, Tisri, in the autumn, beginning five days after the Day of Atonement. It was held after the corn and wine was all gathered in.

It was celebrated by the Israelites dwelling for seven days in temporary booths (Leviticus 23:42), or tabernacles, made of boughs of trees—hence the name of the feast. These booths were built on the housetops, in the open courts of the homes or of the temple, or in the streets (Nehemiah 8:16). The purpose of the booths was to remind the Israelites of their dwelling in tents during the forty years in the wilderness (Leviticus 23:43).

It was a national festival of thanksgiving for the bounteous harvest, not very different in this aspect from the thanksgiving season now observed by Americans for a similar purpose. “Because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice” (Deuteronomy 16:15). It was a time for rejoicing before the Lord (Leviticus 23:40), and of feasting (Nehemiah 8:10). Probably at this feast the second tithe for festive purposes was used in special feasting before the Lord. It was the gladdest of all the seasons of the year. A later Jewish writer has said of this feast that “he had never seen joy who saw not the joy of Tabernacles.”

A third important feature of the observance of this feast was the many sacrifices (Numbers 29:12-38). On the first day the burnt offering was to consist of thirteen bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs. The same number of rams and lambs was to be offered each day of the seven, but one less of the bullocks each day until on the seventh day but seven were to be offered. Also a kid for a sin-offering was sacrificed each day besides the regular daily burnt offering. With each animal for a burnt offering were offered large meat-offerings of flour, oil, and wine. A total of 203 animals were sacrificed during the seven days. The eighth day, which was not of this feast, and when the people ceased to dwell in booths, was to be observed as a sabbath with an offering of nine animals besides the regular daily offering. Also the whole law of God was to be read publicly at this feast each seventh year.

This feast had value to the Israelite especially in awakening in him gratitude to God for His multiplied blessings in a rich harvest and prosperity. The dwelling in booths was a memorial of the wilderness life, it is true, but the Israelites were to remember that life, not for its own sake, but that they might contrast it with their present blessings and thus more clearly recognize God's goodness. Then they dwelt in tents, in Canaan they dwelt in houses; then they had only manna, but in Canaan they had food in great variety and plenty.

The typical meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles is more difficult to determine than that of any other of the feasts. But a careful consideration of its nature and significance to the ancient people of God in the light of the general principles of typical interpretation, to which we have already referred, will doubtless assist greatly in understanding what is the good thing we now have that was foreshadowed by that feast of rejoicing. The dwelling in booths was but a means to the end of emphasizing the then present blessings of the Israelites, and therefore did not have a large place in typical significance. The ingathering of the harvest merely furnished the occasion for the feast, and was not a part of it. Therefore the typical element must consist in the rejoicing and feasting together before the Lord and in the many sacrifices offered to God.

It was a feast of communion. The people ate their good things together and offered abundantly to the Lord, of flesh, flour, oil, and wine. God had a part of their food. This is the reason why burnt and meat-offerings were to be offered so profusely at this time. During these seven days God and His people rejoiced and feasted together to typify that holy communion which now exists between God and believers, and between Christians today. To those who open the heart's door to God, He comes in to sup with them and they with Him (Revelation 3:20). This communion expressed friendship in its highest form. It is the unspeakably blessed intercourse that God always craved with His creatures, but from which He was shut away because of their sinfulness until the Day of Atonement, which then represented the glorious truth that since the atonement of Christ true communion between God and men is possible.

God considers this communion of much importance. It is the great end for which He originally created man.

It was set forth in these shadows of good things again and again. Like salvation from sin, it was typified in three of the main classes of Mosaic institutions. In the tabernacle it was set forth by the priests eating the loaves of the shewbread while the frankincense, the memorial of them, was burned upon God's golden altar. It was typified in the sacrifices by the peace-offering, a part of which was the priest's food, a part the offerer's and a part the "food of God" by being burned on the altar. It is not strange therefore that we should have it typified in this complex system of typical feasts.

As the peace-offering was principally for thanksgiving, so this communion feast was a thanksgiving feast. The attitude of heart most conducive to communion with God is that of gratitude for blessings received. Therefore let us not fail to be thankful to God for all His benefits.

Jubilee and the Sabbatical Year

(Leviticus 25)

The two longer sacred seasons of the year of jubilee and the sabbatical year are not included in the list of feasts given in Leviticus 23; but inasmuch as they were similar to the stated feasts in their nature and typical significance, we may properly consider them at this point. Because both in their appointment and nature the sabbatical and jubilee years were very closely related and jubilee was really an intensified form of the former, we give principal attention to jubilee as a type.

These unique enactments were the arrangement of a wise Providence for the protection of the Israelites from those evils of greed and oppression that have menaced society in every age and country. "Had these laws been observed, they would have made the Jewish nation the most prosperous and perfect that ever existed."—Peloubet. But the constant neglect of the sabbatical years from the very first was one of the national sins for which God punished the Jews in the Babylon's captivity—"until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths" (II Chronicles 36:21). The sabbatical year was observed, however, after the captivity, according to I Maccabees 6:49. "And he made peace with them that were in Bethsura: and they came forth out of the city, because they had no victuals, being shut up there, for it was the year of rest to the land." (Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition).

The Sabbatical Year—After Israel came into possession of Canaan, they were told to till the land six years, but in the seventh year they were to give the land rest. They were not to sow the fields nor to prune the vineyards. They might eat direct from the fields and vines that which grew of itself; and to this the poor and the stranger also had access. But they were not dependent upon this for food, for God promised to make the yield of the sixth year so abundant that it would supply their needs for the remainder of that year, all the seventh, and until the harvest of the eighth year. It was a wonderful provision in which God would intervene as He did in giving the double amount of manna on the sixth day so that the Sabbath day might be kept. All debts of Hebrews were then to be freely forgiven (Deuteronomy 15:1-11).

However, they were not to spend the year in idleness. They still had the care of their flocks and herds, also they might do their building work, repair their homes and furniture, make their clothing, and especially devote themselves to God's service and worship as was indicated by the fact that the law was to be read at the Feast of Tabernacles of this year. It was beneficial especially in giving the land a chance to become built up after the six years of cultivation. It typified soul-rest in Christ as does the seventh-day Sabbath and the rest of jubilee year.

The Jubilee Year—The year of jubilee was named from the Hebrew word meaning the joyful shout of trumpets, by which the year was announced. It was celebrated each fiftieth year. When seven sabbaths of years were completed, then the jubilee began. Seven was the perfect number, and seven times seven was the most emphatic expression of completeness. It began, not at the first of the year, but on the tenth day of the seventh month, atonement-day, in the afternoon, probably when the rites of the day were past, and was announced by the blowing of the silver trumpets of the sanctuary.

Then began the year of rest and joy. (1) The soil had rest as in the sabbatical years. God promised to make the produce of the forty-eighth year sufficient for the seventh of the seven sabbatical years, the jubilee, and for the year following until the harvest. (2) Also with the jubilee, those who had been compelled to sell their property because of poverty, or for any other reason had lost it, received it back again. All land reverted to its original owner or his heirs. It was a grand provision for the poor; and it was no injustice to the prosperous person who had temporarily gained possession, because in buying it the price of the land was much or little according as there were many or few years until the jubilee. There was no such thing as a permanent transfer of real estate except of that in walled cities not belonging to the Levites. It was a grand arrangement which tended to equalize wealth and abolish poverty. (3) It also was a time when every Hebrew slave was set free and allowed to return to his possessions and his family. At other times than this the Hebrew servant went out free after he had served six years, unless he voluntarily chose to remain with his master. But in the jubilee all alike, male and female, were freed, even though they had not served the full six years.

Typical Significance of Jubilee—Though the temporary and material benefits of the jubilee were important, yet the typical value of it was still more important. Glorious realities of present-day blessings were there depicted. As that year of jubilee began with the completion of the solemn rites of the Day of Atonement, so the true jubilee is the result of Christ's great atonement. As the sounding of the silver trumpets announced the blessings of that time, so the proclamation of the gospel of salvation is the announcement of the good things those benefits foreshadowed.

(1) Then slaves were set free to typify that glorious freedom from the burden and bondage of sin that Jesus promised: "If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Thank God, those whose lives are blighted, ruined, and made bitter with

the hard bondage of sin, may be freed, through faith in Christ, from its guilt and power. (2) Then every man received back again his lost inheritance, so in Christ we receive back that glorious inheritance of the sons of God which has been forfeited by sin. We become "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). Christ restores to us the joy and peace, the moral purity and divine presence, that Adam lost in Eden. In Christ we have eternal life and hope of resurrection of our bodies, that die because of sin. (3) Then broken families were reunited. "Ye shall return every man unto his family." So in Christ those who have been alienated by sin are made "one" as Christ and the Father are one. Their hearts are "knit together in love," and they have blessed fellowship together. (4) That was a season of rest and joy, which foreshadowed the soul-rest Jesus gives and the "joy unspeakable and full of glory" which is the portion of the saved in Christ.

The real jubilee is here. To those who will accept the blessings, they are now available. The year of jubilee was referred to in that which Isaiah predicted and which Jesus quoted as being fulfilled with his coming; "He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18, 19). †



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



QUESTION: Why did Jesus go into the temple and turn over the money tables?

ANSWER: First of all, Jesus said His Father's house was to be a house of prayer, i.e., a place of worship; but you have made it a "den of thieves." How? The people who came from afar had to get their money changed into the local currency, as the "money changers" were charging entirely too much for this service! They were, in effect, robbing the people. In addition, they had to buy their animal for sacrifice from the local people, and the animal had to be approved by the priest, so here again, the people were being "robbed" by the unreasonable price they had to pay. Jesus saw what was going on. He was angered by the greed of these people, so He made a whip, upset their tables and drove them, along with their animals, out of the temple compound.

QUESTION: John 9:31 says, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." Can you explain this to me?

ANSWER: The statement in John 9:31 was made by the man Jesus healed; therefore, we cannot say on the basis of this one verse that God does not hear the prayers of sinners, nor can we take this verse to prove it. However, there are other verses which we understand DO teach that what this man said is true. For instance, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18).

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (I Peter 3:12).

One exception to this would be, of course, is when a sinner comes to the Lord in repentance. The Lord will hear his cry and forgive his sins if he meets Bible requirements.

QUESTION: The Bible says that if someone smites you on one cheek, turn the other. Does this mean if someone does you wrong to turn and let him do it again? Does not God's Word say shun all filth and worldly things? If someone does you wrong and talks about you, should you go on and let him do it and walk along with him? Wouldn't you be classed as he is?

ANSWER: I think the simplest answer I could give you is, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21). Regardless of what others do to you, show a Christian spirit to them. This does not mean that you must do the evil things they do, or go to ungodly places with them. It simply means to live the gospel. "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Return good for evil, and when you are reviled do not retaliate. If you are only good to those who are good to you, then you are like the Pharisees.

QUESTION: Many in the religious world claim to have the Holy Spirit and their experience seems to be up and down, and they continue to speak in tongues. Can a saved person do this?

ANSWER: The experience of sanctification is termed "standing grace"—Romans 5:2. Acts 1:8 tells us the Holy Spirit gives us power to be witnesses. A Christian is to be an overcomer, and by God's grace he can, but that does not mean he won't have battles and trials, nor does it mean he will be on the mountaintop all the time.

Millions who say they have the Holy Spirit DO NOT HAVE! Talking in supposed "tongues" has nothing to do with the baptism of the Spirit. The true gift of languages is only ONE of the various gifts of the Spirit and it is a false doctrine to teach that tongues is the evidence of Holy Spirit baptism.

QUESTION: The Bible says no man shall see God and live: Exodus 33:20; Judges 13:22; and I Timothy 6:16. Why is it not so in the following verses: Genesis 32:30; Exodus 24:10; 33:11.

ANSWER: First, Judges 13:22 gives us the words of Manoah. I suppose his statement is based on Exodus 33:20. Of course, he and his wife had been visited by an angel. I Timothy 6:16 speaks of the light, splendor, and glory of heaven, and I do not question at all that no man in a physical body could live in such glory.

Now in regard to Exodus 33:20 let me point out that God spoke in reference to His face. Verse 23 does say God permitted Moses to see His "back parts; but my face shall not be seen." What about verse 11 then? Adam Clarke says, "That there was no personal appearance here we may readily conceive; and that the communications made by God to Moses were not by visions, ecstasies, dreams, inward inspirations, or the mediation of angels, is sufficiently evident: we may therefore consider the passage as implying that familiarity and confidence with which the Divine Being treated his servant and that he spake with him by articulate sounds in his own language, though no shape or similitude was then to be seen."

Now in regard to Genesis 32:30, it says in verse 24, "And there wrestled a man with him." I suppose it would be safe to say it was an angel in the form of a man. The angel came as a representative of God. He did God's bidding and, as it were, God talked to him face to face, but just as in Exodus 33:20. It would be incorrect to say that God actually appeared, as He is, to Jacob, for Jacob could not have stood such a sight.

Now we come to Exodus 24:10 and I would think this verse should be understood in the same manner as Exodus 20:18. God manifested His power in such a manner as to leave no doubt that He was the one that was leading them.

QUESTION: Would you please explain Matthew 12:20, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory"?

ANSWER: The import of this scripture, as far as we today are concerned, is that when Christ receives a soul, regardless of how weak he may be or how little he may understand the truth, as long as he meekly and humbly follows the Lord in what he does know, Christ will keep and nourish him that he may grow strong.

QUESTION: What of Judas Iscariot? Was he not received in heaven?

ANSWER: To me, it seems foolish to say that Judas went to heaven when the Bible clearly states that he "by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place" (Acts 1:25). You don't "fall" into heaven. You must "overcome" to enter heaven. Then besides this verse, we are told that he hung himself, took his own life. It would seem that only a deceived "once-saved, always saved" person could believe that Judas went to heaven!

As for your reference to Matthew 27:3, the "repenting" there was before Judas hung himself. So it is clear to see he did not repent unto salvation. That is a point people need to understand. Just because a person "repents" doesn't mean God has to save him, unless of course His Spirit has worked with him and brought him to the place where he is willing not only to repent of but also to forsake his sins. If a person has gone beyond the hope of recovery, as it seems Judas had done, he could repent a dozen times and it would do no good. We can only be saved when the Spirit leads to repentance, and remember, God said His Spirit would not always strive with man. †

Where Do You Get Your Water?

Message by Sis. Rebecca Bland, delivered 07/17/22



I WOULD LIKE to read a little bit from the second chapter of Jeremiah. Jeremiah chapter 2, beginning with verse 11: “Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” I’d like to use as a text this evening the last verse, verse 13, that I read: “For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”

The title of my thoughts might seem a little odd, but I think it is something we need to think about: “Where Do You Get Your Water?”

Think about water in the literal sense—pure water that we drink. What is the reason for it? Why do we need it? Do we need it? I think even you children could answer that question. Do we need water? Sure. What would happen to us if we don’t have water? We would die, because water does a lot of things for us. It flushes the waste out of our bodies, it regulates our body temperature, and it even helps our brains to function. People who get dehydrated get confused. They can’t think right. Water is very important for all our body systems.

Now, *living water*. We sang about it tonight. “He gives me living water, and I thirst no more.” When I would teach science at school, we talked about biotic and abiotic parts of the ecosystem, and I would ask the children for examples. Children were confused. I taught eleven-year-olds, and they often tried to put water in the list of biotic elements of the ecosystem. They thought water was alive because it moves, and it has living things in it, so it must be alive. Well, our literal water that we drink is not alive. It is not living, but there is a kind of water that’s living. It’s not the way you might think about it for science. It’s living water, because when it’s inside of us, we have life in our souls.

In Psalm 36, verse 9, the Psalmist said, “With thee is the fountain of life.” Now, you children know that there’s a fountain right out there in the hallway, because sometimes you go out and get a drink out of that fountain. But that’s not the fountain of life. A fountain is a place where water comes up and out. God is the Fountain of life. We take God into our spiritual lives, into our souls. He makes us alive in our souls, and that’s why we talk about living water.

Jesus said to the woman that He met at the well in Samaria, “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). It’s not just life in our souls right now, but eternal life forever.

In Jeremiah 17:13, the prophet speaks of the Lord, the Fountain of living waters. It’s not just in the New Testament that we read about living water. The Old Testament is also full of references about living water—water that keeps our souls alive.

I’m going to ask the children a question again: Do you know when you need water? You do? Is it hard to know when you need water? Do you have to go and ask your parents, “Do I need some water? Do you think it’s time for me to drink some water? I’m not sure, but I think it’s time for me to drink water.” Do you go to your parents and ask them those questions? No. How do you know when you need water? You know what word I’m listening for. You get *thirsty*. It’s a feeling, right? It’s a feeling that you have inside your body that tells you, “I need water.”

Do you know your soul gets thirsty, too? Do you know you need that living water in your soul? But some people get thirsty in their souls, and they don’t know what their souls need, so they go looking for something for their souls. They don’t know to go to God, or maybe they’ve been told to go to God, but they don’t believe it, and they think they can find life for their souls somewhere else.

Now, let’s think about the kind of water that we drink. We know we need water for our lives. What is the best water we can drink? I don’t know if we would all have the same opinion or not. If you have a chance to drink water, where do you go to get it? Some people said, “At the spring.” When I was a little girl and visited the Carters’ house, sometimes they would say, “We’re going to the spring, and we’re going to get us some spring water.” They would take big containers to a mountain spring and get water for the week. They must have known that spring. Not every spring is safe to get water from. But they went to the spring they knew about and got water. I can tell you, that was good water.

Some people go down in the drawers of their refrigerator and get out bottles of water.

Where do you *not* go to get water? Do you go to mud puddles after it rains? No, you don’t go to get water there, even if you are very, very thirsty. There are some places we see water where we would never want to drink that water.

Well, I don’t know if you’re aware of this or not, but you probably are. Have you heard of the town called Berkeley Springs? It’s not very far from here. Did you know that every year there’s a competition that goes on in February in Berkeley Springs? People from all over the world send samples of their water to see if they can get an award. They have their water tasted by professional water tasters. They do, and if they win an award, a lot is changed on the packaging of their bottles. They show that medal on the label. “At Berke-

ley Springs, we were awarded first, second, third, or fourth.” Even fourth, they are proud of, because this past February there were nearly 100 entries from 16 states, 3 Canadian provinces, and 18 foreign countries. This water-tasting competition in Berkeley Springs is the most prestigious in the world. Here are the categories: best municipal water, best non-carbonated water, best sparkling water, best purified drinking water.

On that list, Bro. Eddie, I did not see “best cistern water.” You grew up drinking water from a cistern, didn’t you, Bro. Eddie? Why did I ask you that? Because I knew you grew up drinking water from a cistern. When I lived in Cayman, I drank from that cistern, too, because we weren’t going to drink sea water, and the water in wells there was brackish. They didn’t have a municipal water system yet, so we drank water from the cistern in the backyard. The cistern had to be cleaned out periodically, and the things that were found! What was found in the cistern sometimes? Frogs and ants. Especially in the dry part of the year, the whole surface of the water would be covered with dead ants. We would take some containers and a little cheesecloth and we’d strain those ants out. You wouldn’t want to drink water with ants on top of it.

Cisterns are not optimum. They are not first choice, but we had to have cisterns because catching rain water was the best quality of water that we had at that time. But even today, people who are thinking of traveling to the Caribbean chat with each other online, and they ask, “Is it safe to drink the water on this island, or that island? Is it safe to drink cistern water?” People will tell them, “Well, you better boil it first.” Water is boiled, because there are things in there that need to be killed. Do you know where cistern water comes from? I’d better tell you, because some of you don’t know what cisterns are, do you? Even though we read about it in Jeremiah. It says that the people have turned their back on the springs of living waters, and they hewed [dug] out their own cisterns. People did that in Bible times because it was necessary for them in those days, just as it was for us when we lived on that island and didn’t have any other source of drinking water.

Cistern water is rain water. Picture this: The rain is coming down on everybody’s house roof. The roof has gutters, and the water comes down through the downspouts and into the cistern. It’s rain water, but it’s been through things. It didn’t just go straight out of the sky into the cistern. It got collected off the rooftops, then into the gutters, and down the downspouts into the cistern. Why would anybody want to drink out of a cistern if they didn’t have to? If there was a nice, pure spring of water, why would they turn their back on it to drink out of a cistern, or make a cistern to drink out of? Why would they do that? It doesn’t make sense, does it? Then we couldn’t call it living water, because it doesn’t flow anywhere. Once the rain water goes into the cistern, it just sits there and stagnates. It gets stale. That’s why the cistern has to be cleaned out from time to time.

Let’s talk about choosing water sources. I’m trying to get to my point. I know it seems like I’m doing a lot of talking about literal water, but the prophet Jeremiah started out talking about something literal. I’ve already

asked you where you like to get your water, and what you feel is the most refreshing, best-tasting, clearest, cleanest water. If you want to be sure, you could check out the website, *Berkeley Springs results of 2022*, and you would know where the best water is. But the water we have available to us here is tap water. Tap water is municipal water that has been treated, and it’s pretty much guaranteed to be safe to drink. You might not love the taste of it as much as spring water, but it’s pretty much guaranteed to be safe.

You can use bottled water. By the way, 20% of bottled water comes out of the tap anyway. However, I have never seen bottled water with a label on it saying that it came from a cistern. Have you? Do you think they would sell a lot of fresh bottled cistern water? I don’t think so. Just so you know, even if you’re hiking and you don’t take a lot of water with you because it’s a lot to carry if you’re going to be hiking any length of time, you might depend on filling a reusable water bottle from a spring. A really smart thing for a hiker to take with him is a little water tester, because water can look pure and fresh and still have contaminants in it. Remember that.

The spiritual analogy for cistern water is—it’s not living. It’s not connected with a spring, and it’s man-made. When we need water for our souls, it needs to be connected to the living water that comes from that living Fountain that God is. It cannot be from a man-made catchment system and do our souls any good. That’s what God was saying to the people through Jeremiah. “Why have you done these two evils? First of all, you’ve turned your back on the pure living spring, and second, you’ve made your own cisterns, and they’re broken and polluted.”

We sang tonight, “I have found no satisfaction in the fleeting joys of earth; I had hewn me *broken cisterns* that had mocked me by their *dearth* ...” When I was a child, I did not know what those words meant, but I understand them now. They mean using broken cisterns, man-made systems, trying to find spiritual water—satisfaction from a source other than God. It will just mock you if you try to do that.

Here was God’s question: “Why did you do that?” If you’d read earlier in the second chapter of Jeremiah, God starts out (phrasing here), “Why don’t you love Me like you used to?” It wasn’t His exact words, but when you read the second chapter of Jeremiah, that’s what God is saying—“Why don’t you love Me like you used to? Remember when you were in the wilderness, I walked with you and led you. I gave you everything you needed, and we were close. Why don’t you love Me anymore like this? Why?” It’s sad isn’t it? God should not have to say that to a person.

Then God said, “Look at the other nations, the heathen nations. They don’t forsake their gods, and their gods aren’t even anything. Their gods are nothing, but they don’t forsake them. They hang on to them.” God might have been thinking about the Canaanites. They had been worshiping Baal for about 700 years at this point in time. “Seven hundred years they have been faithful to Baal, and he’s nothing but a piece of scum. But they pray to him, and they hear his prophets. They don’t ever turn away from them. But you have Me, and

you've turned your back on Me. How could you do that?"

God might have been thinking about the Babylonians. They had been worshiping their god, Marduk, for more than 1,000 years. Building big temples to him. Bowing down and worshiping him year after year, century after century. "These heathens have gods that don't do anything for them, and yet they are faithful to them. But you're not faithful to Me. Look what I've done for you." It's sad.

If Jeremiah were writing today, he would be saying the same thing to people on this earth. They're not bowing down to a rock they call Baal, or to some idol they call Marduk, but they're bowing down to a lot of things, and they're trying to catch in their poor, broken cisterns whatever water comes down.

I read something just this week written by Matt Tyrnauer. He's not a religious person. He's a journalist. He said something so true, I think. He said, "Fantasy is more real than reality to Americans." Think about that for a minute. That's what a lot of people around us are basing their lives on. Fantasy! It's just like digging your own cistern and catching whatever comes down. What does it come through? Rooftops, gutters with rotten leaves in them, and down into a catchment system that you made yourself, and it sits there and stagnates, and you think you have water. That water will kill your soul.

I wrote a few things down. There are a lot more, but just a few examples in case I'm not being clear about the kinds of things people look to for their souls to be satisfied, for water their souls are thirsty for:

Fashion trends—There is a fantasy out there, and it's propagated by designers and by manufacturers and by business people who want to make money, telling you to dress in a certain way so that you will be desirable, looked up to, and successful. "You just have to dress the way this celebrity dresses." So a couple of years ago it was skinny jeans. "You have to wear skinny jeans. If you want to look like you should look, if you want to be successful, if you want to be admired, you have to wear skinny jeans. So-and-so is wearing skinny jeans," and then down below, "Here's where you can get them at a pretty good price." I know. I was a teacher, and I watched these things come and go. For awhile, everything was skinny jeans.

Do you know what I just saw a couple days ago on a some kind of a little news post? This actress was spotted "wearing the new trend"—wide pants. That's what you have to be wearing now. "This fall, be sure your closet is full of wide pants and shackets. Make sure you have great big plaid shackets." Those are really big shirts that are like jackets but they call them shackets. That's how you can know you belong, you can know you're successful, you can know that your soul, your body, everything you are has "arrived" because you're wearing what a certain celebrity is wearing.

Do you know how many unhappy celebrities there are? I looked at the list of celebrities that have ended their lives since the year 2000, and I gave up counting when I got into the hundreds. If they were wearing what was supposed to make people happy and successful and look the best, why were they so miserable?

Fashion trends. When you see some of the things people call "fashion," you know that water has been through a really, really, rotten gutter, and has sat in that cistern for a long time. It will do your soul no good. It's horrific! They even try to get little children involved in it.

Harmful addictive substances, other people's lives and adventures—that's supposedly what your soul needs. You would think that from what you hear. There are apps that you can download, and they'll really quickly profile you and figure out what you're interested in, and then they'll constantly be showing you tons of short little videos that you can watch to refresh your inner person. People have had their lives ruined by watching some of those videos. So much comparison goes on, so much shaming. Did I say "time-wasting"? I've heard of people who get on those apps and they'll watch those videos for an hour or two every evening. It's entertaining. That's how it catches you. It's entertaining, but then some really ugly side effects follow. People get negatively compared with other people, or somebody that's in public life makes a mistake, and they get "canceled." No mercy.

Let's go back to God's question: "Why would you turn your back on living water and dig out your own cistern, and let that filthy water come into it, and then drink it?" I had to think about that. I'm not really sure. I came up with some ideas why people do that. One thing is, maybe it's in an effort to avoid effort. When you go to a spring, it's a lot of work to travel there and take all those containers and fill them up, put them back in your car, and take them back to your house and unload them. But the water is worth it.

Well, what if you just build your own little catchment system and then just sit there and let it come to you? If you sit in this life and drink in whatever comes to you, there's some really ugly stuff that can come to you.

It is important, and it is worth it, to go to the effort of going to the pure living spring. Going to God. Going to Him in prayer on a daily basis. Going to Him in reading His Word on a daily basis. Asking Him, "What does my soul need?" He's the only One who really knows. I can't trust all this garbage that rains down. I don't want to build my own cistern that all these things drain into, and then my soul drinks that.

Maybe it's because of a desire to have control, have my own catchment system. I don't need anything. I have everything I need right here.

If you're drinking from a cistern, you don't have that much control. You can clean it from time to time, but I mean, did you get every frog out that went into it? If you go to a pure spring of water, you're not going to be getting frogs in your water. So people who think that they have control of their own lives because they dug their own cistern, they are at the mercy of what rains down, what it runs through before it gets to them, and what happens when it sits there and festers and stagnates. That is not what our souls need to be alive spiritually.

Before I close, I would like to just go back a little bit and revisit that Berkeley Springs competition that I mentioned earlier. When you read about those profes-

sional water tasters, it's interesting just to consider the list of attributes that they have in mind when they judge the water they taste from New York, Italy, and Australia. Here's what they're tasting for and looking for. They look at it and they taste for:

(1) *Appearance*—It should be clear.

Let's think of the spiritual. Is there any muddiness to the truth? Is there any muddiness in the Fountain of living water that is God? Do you see any muddiness in the Bible, the Word of the Lord?

(2) *Aroma*—There should not be any.

If you look at the world around us, there is a lot that smells bad, spiritually speaking. We don't want any part of it.

(3) *Taste*—It should taste clean.

The Word of the Lord is pure. We read that in Psalms, don't we? "O taste and see that the Lord is good."

(4) *Mouth feel*—It should feel light. Of course, it doesn't have any pollutants in it.

It's not a heavy burden to serve the Lord. What He gives to us is a light, refreshing, beautiful supply of living water.

Last of all, which I thought was the most interesting:

(5) It should leave you *Desiring more* of that water. That's one of the things that the tasters ask: Would you like to drink more of that water? If you want more of that water, that's a good sign.

That's the Fountain of living water that we need to go to—God. Yes, we sing, "I drink the living water, and I thirst no more." But that means I thirst no more for anything else. I will never get enough of that water that comes from God. I will want more and more and more for my entire life. It is the best. It is what my soul needs to live.

I'd like to look at that hymn that Bro. Ralph chose tonight:

*O drink of the river of pleasure,
A deep, living stream of delight!
'Tis laden with blessings forever,
It flashes in heaven's pure light.*

*O drink of the river of pleasure,
'Tis sparkling with joy for thy soul;
It flows in the bosom forever,
That's given to Father's control.*

*O drink of the river of pleasure,
For thee it is flowing along;
Its source is the bounteous Giver,
Its music a sweet, charming song.*

*O drink of the river of pleasure,
And surely thy spirit shall know
Thy longing and thirsting are over,
Thy blessings forever shall flow.*

I'd like to encourage you tonight that if you've never tested that water, you need to. We sang tonight: "I have tested Him, and proved Him more than all I dreamed He'd be ..." Your soul cannot live without that living water. Your soul cannot survive without it.

We have to guard that we don't ever, ever yield to the temptation to dig our own cistern and take what comes along. It's death to the soul, because only Jesus satisfies. You know it's true. If we could just get that message to the world. They're searching. They're thirsty. The children told me earlier this evening that they know when they need water. They get thirsty.

Do you know your soul can get that feeling of thirsting, too? If you're thirsty, and you've never tried that living water, do it. You're never going to be happy in your inner being until you go to that living water that comes from the Fountain of life—God Himself. †

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Alvin A. Craig, Radio Minister

(Aired on Sundays unless otherwise noted.)

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THE CHURCH OF GOD STANDS FOR

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

YOU SHOULD KNOW MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH OF GOD

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

COMING MEETINGS

**2023 INTERNATIONAL
CHURCH OF GOD CONVENTION**
Hagerstown, Maryland U.S.A.
July 4-9, 2023, Lord willing
Bro. Gregory E. Tyler, Host Pastor

Revival Services

Craigsville, West Virginia
May 10-14, 2023, Lord willing
Bro. Gary Alwell, Evangelist
Bro. Harley McClung, Pastor

JAMAICA

Grants Mountain, St. Ann
August 13-20, 2023, Lord willing
Sis. Linette Jutan, Pastor

HONDURAS

Flowers Bay, Roatan
September 19-24, 2023, Lord willing
Bro. Aldrin McLaughlin, Pastor