

The Way of Truth

Vol. 81

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

No. 7



"Humble Thyself to Walk with God"

Report of Hagerstown Convention

Page 2

September 2023

TWO WORKS OF GRACE

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”—Romans 5:1, 2.

LAST MONTH, I briefly expounded on the thought that the Bible teaches two experiences of grace, the first being justification, i.e. salvation, redemption, the new birth, a return to a relationship with one's Creator. Here I desire to write about the second work of grace which anyone has access to after entering the kingdom of God, termed sanctification. In addition to my pilot text, Romans 5:1, 2, the apostle Paul declares in I Thessalonians 4:3, 4, “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.”

There are various meanings to the word *sanctify*: “to cleanse, purify, or make holy; to set aside for sacred use.” *Sanctification* means, “the act of setting one aside for sacred use; filling one's body with the Holy Ghost; and cleansing one's nature from native depravity.”

Just as there are two phases to justification—forgiveness and regeneration, so also there are two phases to sanctification—infilling of the Holy Ghost and the cleansing or eradication of the defiled carnal nature.

Sanctification is more than simply growing in grace or a gradual cleansing of ourselves from filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Just like justification it is an instantaneous experience in the soul, so is sanctification. Also, I want to point out that justification and sanctification do not happen at the same time.

In Acts 19:1, 2 we read, “And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” The Bible is very clear that being filled with the Holy Ghost is subsequent to conversion (salvation). Believers are saved. Those to whom Paul was speaking were believers, and he asked the question, “Have you been sanctified since you became Christians?”

John 14:15-17 reads like this: “If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” The world (sinners) are not in a position to receive the Spirit of God. A person must be justified before he can be sanctified. The disciples loved their Master and the Holy Ghost WITH them, but He was not yet IN them.

In the book of Acts, we read about Philip holding a revival in Samaria, and many were saved. Notice carefully chapter 8, verses 5-8: “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city.”

Skipping down to verses 14-17: “Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.” So, we see here that salvation was the result of Philip's preaching, and believers were baptized with water. Then later, Peter and John came to Samaria, laid their hands on those who were saved, and then the justified were filled with the Spirit and were sanctified!

Jesus promised that He would send the Comforter (the Holy Ghost) after His departure. John 14:16, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” This was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit fell upon those devout men at Jerusalem and Peter declared, “This is that,” referring to Joel 2:28, “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.”

To understand sanctification, one must understand that our body is meant to be the temple of God. II Timothy 2:19-21: “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.” “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?” (I Corinthians 6:19). “And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (II Corinthians 6:16).

As pertaining to the cleansing of the carnal nature, many do not believe that native depravity even exists. It seems obvious to me that because of Adam's sin all humanity was plunged into sin. What could cause such a condition to exist except that mankind inherited a weakness in moral character, which is the tendency to sin? “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12).

ABOUT THE COVER

The 2023 Church of God Convention in Hagerstown, MD, proved to be an outstanding meeting of saints of God from various states and countries. On our front is a collage of pictures taken by Bro. Dave Marquiss from Louisiana. You may receive a blessing by going to www.wayoftruth.org and clicking on the archives.

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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Vol. 81

September 2023

No. 7

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

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Here are some other scriptures to consider:

Psalms 51:5—"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Ephesians 5:25-27—"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

I Corinthians 3:1-3—"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

To further understand sanctification, we next point to John 15:1, 2: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

The word *purgeth* comes from the Greek *kathairo*, which means, "to cleanse." So there is a cleansing for those who bear fruit which enables the production of more fruit!

The offering of blood signifies cleansing. Hebrews 10:10—"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Hebrews 13:12—"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Hebrews 10:19-22—"Having therefore, brethren,

ren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

To receive sanctification, offer yourself a living sacrifice—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). To offer yourself a *living* sacrifice you must have spiritual life. That means that one must be forgiven and justified prior to receiving the Spirit in sanctification.

In closing, let me refer to H. M. Riggle—"The terms 'sanctification' and 'perfection' very often stagger people because they take too broad of view of them. Sanctification does not make us perfect gods; but perfect people here on Earth. Yet it does not make us so perfect that we cannot err in judgment or make a mistake. It does not place us where we are never tired or tempted, or we can never backslide. No, let no one get that idea. But we do affirm that it makes us perfectly free from sin—pure even as He is pure (I John 3:3); righteous even as He is righteous. And thank God, this experience can be retained and lived all the days of our life, on condition that we obey God." †

IN THIS ISSUE:

Hagerstown Convention Report	Page 2
<i>A breakdown of the July Meeting</i>	
Bible Lesson of the Month	Page 4
<i>"A Living Sacrifice"</i>	
Humility Among the Ministry	Page 6
<i>Convention message by G. E. Tyler</i>	
Steps Heavenward	Page 9
<i>Chapter 3 of the book by the late R. L. Berry</i>	
The Children's Corner	Page 11
<i>"Finder May Keep," by Rebecca Bland</i>	
As Many as Received Him	Page 12
<i>Radio message by James Arch</i>	
Young People's Page	Page 14
<i>"The Consequences of Our Actions," by Sue Craig</i>	
The Question Box	Page 16
<i>Our monthly feature</i>	
Where Do We Stand?	Page 17
<i>Convention message by Rupert Shippy</i>	
Trifling with God's Mercy	Page 20
<i>Does Not Pay</i>	
<i>Article by the late S. W. Parrish</i>	
The Poetry Page	Page 21
<i>Includes, "When I Met the Master"</i>	

HAGERSTOWN CONVENTION REPORT

July 4-9, 2023

Theme: "Humble Thyself to Walk with God"

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



ONCE AGAIN we were blessed to have been able to have another convention. Saints from various congregations throughout the U.S.A. and foreign countries were able to attend. Some were present for the very first time. There were 209 visitors. Twenty-two states were represented and four different countries.

Each day began with a prayer meeting at 7:00 A.M. General services were at 10:30 A.M. and 2:30 P.M.—(only three afternoons.) Evangelistic services were at 6:00 P.M.

The prayer meeting leaders were: Bro. Tim Crooks from Jonesville, Louisiana; Sis. Hyacinth Goodlitt from Jamaica; Bro. Oliver Fisher from Honduras; Bro. Per-von Paul from Louisiana; Sis. Dorrette Clarke from Jamaica; and Sis. Melisa Allen from Miami.

The songs of Zion and other special songs by the saints were blessed of the Lord. Truly, the Spirit of the Lord prevailed throughout the entire six days.

The Lord willing, we plan to print each message in upcoming issues of *The Way of Truth* paper. Below is a synopsis of the messages:

Tuesday—10:30 A.M.—Host Pastor, Bro. Greg Tyler, was the speaker. "Humility Among the Ministry" was the title of the message. This can be read beginning on page 6 of this issue.

2:30 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Rupert Shippy. Title: "Where Do We Stand?" This message is printed in this issue beginning on page 17.

6:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Harley McClung. Title: "Jesus Is Our Peace." Text: John 14:27. Excerpts: *In order to have peace, we need to believe in the Giver of Peace. There's turmoil in the world. The news is troubling. The Word of God gives peace. Jesus came to bring peace of mind. He is the Prince of Peace. When conflict interrupts our peace, it should raise a flag of warning.*

Sin and Satan have people so blinded that they can't see what Jesus offers. There is a place to leave your burdens. Peace is a quality of Jesus' nature. Jesus' peace is a state of mind and a condition of the heart. Salvation is a source of freedom from all anxiety and conflict of the mind.

People who think too highly of themselves are disappointed. When the world shows them what they really are, then comes anxiety. Truth will show people where they really are. God does not want us to compete, but to be humble. Peace is not the absence of turmoil, but grace gives us the strength to climb the mountain.

Wednesday—10:30 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Raymond Martin. Title: "Walk Humbly." Text: Ephesians 2:8, along with other selected scriptures. Excerpts: *What*

does it mean to walk humbly? Being led by the Spirit and the Word of God. You don't have to have what everyone has to be happy. Jesus was our example in humility. He washed the disciples' feet. Pride causes people to make a lot of serious mistakes. Humility causes us to show mercy. The ability to do well comes from God. The devil is constantly working in people to develop a spirit of pride. The heart of the rich young ruler was set on himself. We need to sit at the feet of Jesus. With a wrong attitude, you won't enjoy the presence of God. Keep a humble spirit.

2:30 P.M.—Young People's Service. Title: "What Jesus Means to Me." We'll share a few condensed thoughts from nineteen precious young people who spoke on titles of Jesus:

He is my—

ROCK—Sis. Valerie Shenberger: Psalm 62:5-8. *Things change, but God never changes. I can build a solid foundation on Him.*

I AM—Sis. Joley Williams: Exodus 3:14. *Two small words. Jesus has everything covered, so we don't have to worry about control.*

GOVERNOR—Bro. Logan Arch: Matthew 2:6. *He is not forced into our hearts. We invite Him in. He has ultimate power, but He's not a hard taskmaster.*

ADVOCATE—Sis. Evelyn Crooks: *He is my support. In my hardest times, He's there for me.*

AMEN—Sis. Kiersten Goodyear: Revelation 3:14. *With Jesus in my heart, I can say "Amen" to His will. Amens can be rest notes in our lives—a pause to connect to the spiritual world.*

KING—Bro. Cole Romines: I Timothy 1:17. *He is my today and tomorrow. God controls time. Prayers answered come with time. Hold on a little longer. God has the answers for you.*

LAMB—Sis. Shanda Harris: John 1:29. *Just as a literal lamb saved the Israelites from death, Jesus' blood saves us from spiritual death and hell.*

TRUE VINE—Bro. Ryan Shenberger: John 15:1, 5. *A central vine has branches. The vine supplies the branches. We are branches that must bear fruit and spread the gospel to the world.*

CREATOR—Bro. Cameron Deville: Genesis 1:1-4. *This is my Father's world. He created things for us to enjoy. Our lives are transformed from darkness to light.*

LIFE—Sis. Alana Crooks: John 10:10; 14:6. *When I gave my life to the Lord, I traded a life of misery and shame for a beautiful life.*

GOOD SHEPHERD—Bro. Braden Violet: John 10:11. *Jesus leads and guides us, even when life has its struggles. It's good for us to look back and remember what God has done for us.*

REDEEMER—Sis. Jillian Gossard: Isaiah 43:1. *Redeem means to restore, make new again, to buy back what was lost. He gave me hope, courage, a purpose, and peace. He restored what the devil attempted to destroy. He gave me freedom.*

SAVIOR—Sis. Taylor Brown: Luke 2:11; II Corinthians 5:17. *Jesus rescued me from the wrong path. I was saved two years ago at the age of 15. Don't let the door of salvation be closed on you.*

CORNERSTONE—Bro. Andrew Richards: Psalm 118:22. *The chief foundation on which something is constructed. I can have peace in knowing that, and that Foundation is in God. I really appreciate the peace that God gives.*

ALMIGHTY GOD—Sis. Hartley Broome: Isaiah 9:6. *I've always struggled with anxiety and that scripture has always been so comforting to me. It's a comfort to know that God is always there for us. Jesus knows exactly how it feels to go through hard times.*

COUNSELOR—Sis. Ellie Williams: Proverbs 11:14; I Chronicles 16:11. *We find counsel with our loved ones, but it can be a problem because people can fail. Christ will never fail, and He is always available.*

LIGHT OF THE WORLD—Sis. Emma Roseberry: John 8:12. *I've always found comfort in that verse. Jesus is always there, even though we can't see Him. He will never leave you. That is comforting to know.*

FORERUNNER—Bro. Benjamin Arch: *It's very encouraging to me that Jesus is my Forerunner. I will cling to the old rugged cross, and one day I will exchange it for a crown. I pray that while I'm here in this life that the Lord as my Forerunner will help me to add stars to that crown.*

IMMANUEL—Sis. Lauren Swain: Matthew 1:23; Romans 8:38, 39. *The word Immanuel means God with us. God is light, and He guides His people through dark times. He is with us through loneliness. We don't have to be afraid of being alone. He will never leave us.*

6:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. David Goble. Title: "Hold Me Tight." Texts: Matthew 8:1-4; Luke 19:1-9. Excerpts: *A leper—a type of sin. The love of God finds us in the condition we are in. He reaches in His mercy. He holds us tight. The leper knew Christ was coming to town. Christ is in town. Jesus touched the leper. When we are sick of sin and come to God, immediately we are cleansed. Zacchaeus knew Jesus was looking for him. He made haste and came to Jesus. Salvation came to his house.*

We might feel isolated. The enemy uses unbelief to attack us. God doesn't hold us at a distance because we can't quite take Him in. He wants to hold us tight. Like Zacchaeus, people feel they can never reach Jesus. Scars of sin can sometimes make us feel far from God.

Thursday—10:30 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Darrell Sanford. Title: "Perfectly Joined Together." Text: I Corinthians 1:10, along with other selected scriptures. Excerpts: *The church at Corinth had some issues going on. The Bible gives a way to deal with issues. Satan opposes unity. There will be disagreements, but that doesn't mean division will come. The most important thing is to reach souls. Strive together for the faith of the gospel. Dress as they would in heaven. Behave as a citizen of heaven. Focus on the Word of God.*

What is conversation that becometh the gospel of Christ? Be an example in word, in conduct. Take heed to the doctrine. We have to bring people to truth. It matters what we believe. Holiness matters. What does God require of you? 1) to do justly 2) love mercy 3) walk humbly with thy God.

6:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Doug Koerner. Title: "Love Mercy." Text: Micah 6:6-8, along with other selected

scriptures. Excerpts: *Sometimes people ask themselves why they're here. You're here to please God. God created you for one purpose and that is to serve Him. Our duty isn't to be famous. Our duty isn't to be rich. Our duty is to serve God. God's mercy is abundant. When Christ walked on this earth, He had wonderful, loving mercy. He desires for us to love mercy. One reason why we need to have mercy is because if you're saved, God had mercy on you. You cannot make heaven your home unless you repent of your sins and get saved.*

Friday—10:30 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. David Shaw. Divine Healing Message: "Jesus Paid It All." Text: Matthew 8:14-17, along with other selected scriptures. Excerpts: *Jesus Himself took our infirmities. By His stripes we are healed. He healed all manner of diseases. If you come to Him believing, surely you shall receive. So as you come today, believe that He is. The price for your healing has already been paid.*

2:30 P.M.—This service was an Ordinance Service—the Lord's Supper and Feet-washing.

6:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Doug Shenberger. Title: "Are You Bad Ground?" Texts: Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23. Excerpts: *Most of us want to be good ground, at least, on one level or another. In this passage, Jesus took the time to explain to His disciples what He was talking about. Some people hear the Word of God, but they're in the wayside where, for whatever reason, their understanding is hardened. They can't grasp it. They're unable to bear the storms of life and the persecution that come their way.*

The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word. People need to break up the fallow ground and seek the Lord. They need to do something about it.

Saturday—10:30 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. John Romero. Title: "Humility." Text: I Peter 5:5, along with other selected scriptures. Excerpts: *To be submissive requires humility. Submit to those who have the rule over you. We must be humble as a little child. Ahab humbled himself before God. God will lift up the humble. There must be genuine humility. No one is so good or perfect that he can never have to apologize for a mistake. God accepts a contrite heart and a humble spirit.*

A baptism was held in the afternoon. Nine candidates were baptized: Rachel Molder, Kristen Richards, Kiersten Goodyear, Kevin Cook, Ryan Shenberger, Daniel Swain, Patrick Swain, Logan Arch, and Paul Gossard.

6:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Howard Moncrief. Title: "Disagreements." Text: Colossians 3:12, 13, along with other selected scriptures. Excerpts: *If we're not careful, we can allow our disagreements to separate us. We be brethren. This is the dressing room for heaven. We need to model ourselves after Jesus Christ. We must endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We must become as little children. From whence cometh wars and fightings? Disagreements. All of us need to be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility.*

Sunday—9:30 A.M.—An open Sunday school period.

10:30 A.M.—Speaker: Bro. Brian Richards. Title: "Molded." Text: Isaiah 64:8, along with other selected scriptures. Excerpts: *Jesus is the Potter. We are the clay.*

Clay can be marred with impurities—self, wrong attitudes. What is molding us? News? Music? Culture? What is moldable? Our behavior and attitudes. Whatsoever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, let us think on these things.

6:00 P.M.—Speaker: Bro. Lee Jeffries. Title: “The Blessings of Humility.” Text: James 4:6- 8. Excerpts: *God gives grace to the humble. He resists the proud. Jesus was the greatest example of humility. You’ve heard the story of the Pharisee and the Publican. The publican humbled himself before the Lord.*

We take this opportunity to thank each one who helped in any way to make the convention a success. Much preparations were done before and after the convention as well.

May the Lord grant us with the opportunity to have our 2024 convention July 2-7. Let us remain faithful to the Lord who has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. †

2023 HAGERSTOWN CONVENTION CD’S

We are making available audio CD’s of the wonderful services of the 2023 Convention. These may be purchased for \$3.00 each. The complete set of all services and five musical CD’s included: \$50.00.

Please indicate how many you would like to purchase. Send check or postal money order to: **The Way of Truth CD Ministry, P. O. Box 88, Hagerstown, MD 21741-0088 U.S.A.**

- ☐ CD #1486 Humility Among the Ministry—G. E. Tyler
- ☐ CD #1487 Where Do We Stand?—Rupert Shippy
- ☐ CD #1488 Jesus Is Our Peace—Harley McClung
- ☐ CD #1489 Walk Humbly—Raymond Martin
- ☐ CD #1490 What Jesus Means to Me—Young Speakers
- ☐ CD #1491 Hold Me Tight—David Goble
- ☐ CD #1492 Perfectly Joined Together—Darrell Sanford
- ☐ CD #1493 Love Mercy—Doug Koerner
- ☐ CD #1494 Jesus Paid It All—David Shaw
- ☐ CD #1495 Preliminaries of the Ordinance Service
- ☐ CD #1496 Are You Bad Ground?—Doug Shenberger
- ☐ CD #1497 Humility—John Romero
- ☐ CD #1498 Disagreements—Howard Moncrief
- ☐ CD #1499 Molded—Brian Richards
- ☐ CD #1500 The Blessings of Humility—Lee Jeffries

- ☐ CD #301 Convention Singing #1
- ☐ CD #302 Convention Singing #2
- ☐ CD #303 Convention Singing #3
- ☐ CD #304 Convention Singing #4
- ☐ CD #305 Convention Singing #5 †

RADIO STATION VIA THE INTERNET

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

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

GEMS FROM THE BOOK OF ROMANS

A LIVING SACRIFICE

Scriptures: Romans 12:1-3; Galatians 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; II Timothy 2:19-21; I Chronicles 29:5.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Galatians 5:24 And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

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

II Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.

I Chronicles 29:5 The gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?

Memory Verse: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.—Romans 12:1.

Aim: To challenge the student to make a full surrender to God.

INTRODUCTION

WE READ in Jeremiah 17:9, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” We read in Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” We read in Galatians 3:22, “But the scripture hath concluded all under sin.” So before we can be a living sacrifice, there must be a definite change take place in our hearts and lives. First, a sinner must come to Christ with a broken and a contrite heart, repent of his sins, and then believe that the Lord has forgiven him. We read in the Scriptures about justification. This is what happens when one is forgiven. Then we read about

regeneration, or being born again. This is the second phase of the first work of grace. When a person is justified (regenerated), he becomes a member of the Church of God and is in a position to begin living a holy life. However, there are additional things that must follow, which are dealt with in this lesson.

MEDITATIONS

SOMETHING TO DO—Romans 12:1, 2—Present your bodies—Paul is instructing “brethren,” and he is telling them to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy unto God, which is only a reasonable thing to do. This is a requirement that must be met to receive the Holy Spirit in the experience of sanctification. Paul told the church at Corinth that their bodies were to be the temple of the Holy Ghost. **Verse 2—Not conformed to this world**—The word *conform* means, “pattern after.” There is no way one can be a true Christian, let alone a living sacrifice, while conforming to the world. One must be transformed, changed, receive the mind of Christ, and prove in his life what is the will of God. God has a will for everyone.

BE HUMBLE—Romans 12:3—Think soberly—Pride is one thing that seems to be a problem to many, and it is one thing that God hates. Paul did not say you could not think anything of yourself, but not to think “more highly” of yourself than you ought. You must think soberly and realize that God has given every child of God a measure of faith.

A DEATH TO DIE—Galatians 2:20—I am crucified—Paul said that he was crucified with Christ. Crucifixion was one of the most cruel ways the Romans had to put a person to death. It was usually reserved for the most notable criminals, so Paul was making himself a living sacrifice, for he went on to say: “Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” The reason Paul was able to say what he did was because Christ gave His life for him, and not for him only. Jesus tasted death for every man.

A CHANGED LIFE—Galatians 5:24—They that are Christ’s—Why is it that the doctrine of sin-you-must is so widely taught and accepted? How can it be that he who has died to “the flesh” (which means he has died to sin) continue therein? The Scriptures clearly teach, “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” (Romans 8:13).

NOT IN MAN—Galatians 6:14—God forbid—Living the Christian life—a *living sacrifice*—is not something one can do in himself, and it is not something to boast about. Jesus gave a parable about a certain one who trusted in his own righteousness: “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men ... I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” Our own righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight.

September 2023

A SURE FOUNDATION—II Timothy 2:19—The foundation of God—Paul spoke not only of a foundation, but an entire building, for he said that the Lord knows those who are His. His redeemed make up the house of God, the Church of God, which is built on the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the Chief cornerstone. **Verse 20**—In the Church of God, there are some who are pastors, teachers, and deacons. Some hold no office, yet are faithful members who are living the Christian life. According to this verse, there are some who are not really in the church, but profess to be. Hymeneus and Philetus and their followers were examples.

HE THAT TAKES HEED—II Timothy 2:21—Purge himself—“He who takes heed to his ways and to his doctrines, and walks with God will separate himself, not only from all false doctrine, but from all wicked men, and thus be sanctified and proper to be employed by the Master in every good word and work.” —Adam Clarke.

DAVID WANTED A HOUSE FOR GOD—I Chronicles 29:5—Gold for gold—The Lord did not permit David to build the temple, but he did all he could in gathering material for his son, Solomon, to use: “Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God ... Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house.” Since David had gathered all he could and had given of his own personal goods, he was in a position to challenge Israel to give: “And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord? Have you consecrated yourself “a living sacrifice” to the Lord?”

CONCLUSION

Paul said in the first verse of this lesson, “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” Also, Solomon said, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Did Jesus Christ give His all for us?
2. Can one conform to the world and be a living sacrifice for God?
3. Where and what is God’s temple today?
4. What does sanctification have to do with being a living sacrifice?
5. Have you given your all to the Lord? †

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE

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Humility Among the Ministry

2023 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Gregory E. Tyler

PRAISE THE LORD! What a wonderful place to be! Beautiful crowd of people, and most of you are saved, redeemed by the same blood of Jesus Christ. We're brethren! We're brothers and sisters. Nothing of earth or hell, withal, can rend us from each other. Again, we welcome each one who is here.

I'm thankful for having the privilege of being a spokesman for almighty God. It's a great responsibility. I've been in the way for quite some years now, and I can tell you from a personal standpoint, there's nothing better. I've lived a wonderful life for Christ. Do you know what the best part is? Not only do we enjoy it here, but there's coming a day when we'll lay down our cross and receive a bright, starry crown.

I have been battling Parkinson's disease, and I've been told I'm hard to understand at times, so I'll try to speak slow this morning. I trust that you will understand me.

Our text is not the theme scripture, but it's closely related to it. James, chapter 4, verse 10: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." I have entitled my thoughts, "Humility Among the Ministry."

This theme that we have for the convention is for everyone: "Humble Thyself to Walk with God." Sinners must humble themselves to be saved. One reason why we're not seeing more salvation work done is because of the pride of the world. To get saved, you need to humble yourself. Stop arguing with God, and listen to Him. You're important to God. You're special to Him, but you're still not the most important thing. He is the important One. So sinners must humble themselves to be saved. Christians must humble themselves to be sanctified. You can't be sanctified unless you die to self. You must humble yourself. Dying to self is the same thing.

Brethren must humble themselves to abide in unity. If we're going to abide in unity, we need to humble ourselves. Ministers and deacons must humble themselves to properly lead the people. We don't often hear preaching to the ministry, but in this morning's message, there's going to be a lot for the ministry, and there will be a lot for individual persons in the congregation as well.

Humble means, "having or showing a modest or low estimate of one's own importance." How important do you think you are? Important enough that Jesus died for you, but you're not so important that you can do without Him. See things the way God sees them. Be humble enough to see yourself the way God sees you. If you see yourself the way God sees you, He's going to humble your heart. Romans 12:3, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." We're not to

think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. The Bible does not teach us that we should beat ourselves up, or belittle ourselves, but we should not think more highly of ourselves than we ought. God has dealt to every man the measure of faith. If you're able to do something for the Lord, you have nothing to boast about. After we've done our best, we are still unprofitable servants, having only done what we should have done.

Now, the church is organized. The church is not some haphazard organization. It's organized. Paul told the Corinthian church, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." Every person in the congregation has a place to fill, and pastors and teachers are among those who are set in the church. Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 11 and 12: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." God gave the church these different offices, and the office of pastor is worthy of respect. Did you hear what I said? The office of pastor is worthy of respect, but beyond that, respect must be earned. I Timothy 5:17, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." Being a pastor is not an easy job. It's a full-time job. A man or a woman needs the help of the Lord to be a good pastor. The office of pastor is to be respected for that office, Saints, but beyond that, how a man conducts himself tells whether he's worthy of honor and respect.

No man is infallible. Don't act as if you are. A pastor who would not be willing to apologize for a mistake he's made is not worthy of the office. No man is infallible—not the Pope in Rome—nor even in the Church of God. We're human beings, and we make mistakes. But, you know, sometimes it is hard to get people to admit their mistakes. They don't say they're not fallible, but when it comes right down to it, they think they are. They think they can't make a mistake. We're talking about humility among the ministry. There should be a reciprocal respect between the pastor and the congregation. If I want my congregation to respect me, I need to respect them. The Golden Rule says, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Pastors are not exempt from that. They are to treat the people of the congregation with respect. It should be reciprocal.

There is a thread that binds us together. That thread is the humble Spirit of God. Notice what Paul had to say to the Corinthian church in I Corinthians 12:4-6: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but



it is the same God which worketh all in all.” Let this sink in: We don’t have to be carbon copies of each other. There’s some liberty in the gospel. There are some differences in administrations. I have heard the comment said *the only way to be saved is through our altar. If you’ve been saved somewhere else, you need to be saved here.* Have you heard that? Some people say that. That can’t be true. There are differences in administrations. There are diversities of operations, but the same God worketh all in all. We don’t conduct our services exactly like you conduct yours, but we have the same Spirit of God. Above all, we have humility.

Every member is important in the body of Christ. Back to I Corinthians, chapter 12. This time verses 24-26: “For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked. That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.” We are all equal in His sight when we obey His Word. There’s no enmity in the Church of God. There should not be any jealousy. There should not be any competition. This week, we’re not in competition. We’re together. We’re not trying to outdo anybody. We have to be humble. No schism in the body. Schism is a break of fellowship. There should be no schism in the body. Church of God, don’t let there be a schism among us. Let the members have the same care one for another. When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it, and when one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. I say every member of the family of God is important. A pastor needs to realize that. We’re pastoring people. We’re not pastoring goats. We’re not pastoring cattle. We’re pastoring people with souls, and we need to treat them as such.

In Exodus, chapter 17, we have an account of the children of Israel fighting against the Amalekites. When Moses, with a rod in his hand, lifted up his arms, the battle would go towards the Israelites, but when he got tired and dropped them, the Amalekites would make gains. But when Aaron and Hur saw the man of God struggling, they just didn’t stand there and bad-mouth him. Moses didn’t say *I’ll get this; leave me alone.* Aaron and Hur held up his hands, and the battle was won. The battle was won! Who was responsible for that battle being won? Was it just Moses? Moses in part, Joshua and Hur in part, but they were workers together with God. They were willing to hold up Moses’ hands, and they gained the victory. The church needs to care for their pastor. You know, when we hear things we like, we say “amen.” When we hear things we don’t like, we sit quietly. But what is good for the goose is good for the gander. Humility will keep the members of the congregation from undermining their pastor. Humble thyself to walk with God.

A pastor is to be a servant of the people. He’s not a dictator. Matthew, chapter 20, beginning with verse 25: “But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever

will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” You see, the Church of God is not run like the world. In the world, you have dog eat dog, hurt whom you must hurt, but not so in the Church of God. One who is called to be a minister should be a servant of the people. He’s not to be ministered to, even as Jesus was not ministered to. The pastor holds an important place in the congregation, but it’s only one place. You have an important place to fill, too, and you should be faithful in your place. When we all work together, how happy we will be.

How the pastor says something matters as much as what he says. Ephesians 4:15 says, “But speaking the truth in love.” The pulpit should never be used to bully people or to embarrass individuals. This is a sacred place. If you have a problem with an individual, go to him or her. Don’t get up and preach at them or condemn them from the pulpit. Don’t try to belittle them. Don’t try to get the upper hand. That’s a misuse of the pulpit desk. It is a misuse of your calling. One songwriter said, “By rivers of peace we are led, In pastures of love we are fed.” Is it that way? Are you dwelling in pastures of love? I Peter, chapter 5, verses 2 and 3: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock.” Religion is plagued with that. Even in so-called churches of God, you have pastors who have tried to make their way by bullying people, etc., but we’re not to be lords over God’s heritage. This is God’s heritage. The Church of God is God’s heritage. *A pastor is to be an example to the flock.* We’re talking about humility among the ministry, and the pastor must be an example to his flock.

A pastor should not demand one thing from the congregation and do something else. If he calls for the congregation to fast, he must fast, too. He should want to set the example for the people to follow. I was in a place one time when the pastor fussed the people for missing the convention, but he wasn’t there the next day. Shame on you if you let your job overwhelm your commitment to Christ. In other words, if he had to work on a convention day, he was wrong. The day that this preacher was missing from the service, I asked them, “Where is he?” They said, “Oh, he had to work today.” It doesn’t work that way. You should live what you preach.

A pastor should be patient toward all men. Patience is part of humility. I Thessalonians, chapter 5, verses 12-14: “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.” Are there any feeble-minded people here today? They need to be comforted. We must be patient toward all men. That’s a difficult thing. We were talking in the Ministers’ Meeting about some circumstances that were difficult to have patience. A

pastor should be a patient man. Humility is a necessary requirement for pastors.

Titus 1:7, 8: "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate." I Timothy 3:6, "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Humility is necessary. To be a steward of God, you can't be self-willed. Self-will is the opposite of humility. Being humble—not soon angry, no striker, but a lover of hospitality and good men.

I remember years ago trying to get my mother to come to service. She came a couple times. She said to me, "Greg, you know what? They are some of the finest people on Earth who worship there, but sometimes the ministers treat them like enemies." What was I to say to that? Don't treat the saints as enemies. They are the finest people on the face of the earth. You'll not find any finer people than we have here this morning. Therefore, they need to be treated as such.

The desire to have preeminence among brethren is destructive to the church. III John, verses 9 and 10: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church." Can you imagine? John wrote unto the church. What church did he write unto? The Church of God. What he was talking about was going on in the Church of God. There was someone there who wanted to have the preeminence. Those who want to have the preeminence will rise up in the Church of God. Diotrephes was prating against the apostle John. Diotrephes would not accept John as a Christian, and he prated against him with malicious words. I hate to hear malicious words coming over the pulpit. If you have to warn someone of a bad spirit, that's one thing, but to use malicious words against a saint of God is another. Diotrephes was not only content with that, but he cast John and those out of the church who would not accept him. First of all, no one can cast anybody out of the Church of God. You're born into the church. The only way you can lose out is to sin. I can't cast anybody out of the church. I would not want to, but Diotrephes tried to anyway, because he wanted to have the preeminence.

Church of God, listen to me, let no one have the preeminence but Christ. Colossians 1:18, "And he [speaking of Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." In the Church of God, Christ has the preeminence in all things. So someone having the desire to have the preeminence is destructive to the church. Authority and power can go to a person's head. This is true in the business world, in the world of politics, and yes, even in the church. We have to guard against preeminence in the church.

I've heard people accuse us of being Babylon. I'm very careful when I use the word *Babylon*, because Babylon is the habitation of devils and the hold of every

foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. So when I label people as Babylon, I'm saying, in effect, they're devil-possessed. If they be true children of God, I'm blaspheming against the Holy Ghost. When Jesus performed miracles, people said that He did so by the power of Beelzebub. That was blasphemy. Some people in the Church of God use the term Babylon very casually. That's very serious.

To exalt yourself is a recipe for disaster. Matthew 23:12, "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." When you try to exalt yourself, it is a recipe for disaster. I was thinking about King Nebuchadnezzar. God Himself put Nebuchadnezzar on the throne, and he built Great Babylon. He boasted and said, "See, what I have built." At that moment, God spoke to him and told him he was going to be an animal in the field. We have to be careful, Pastors, not to say, "Look what I've built." A pastor alone does not build a congregation. He's an important part of it, but it takes every member of the congregation working together, like a well-oiled machine, to see growth, advancement, and to see victory. Humble yourself. Don't wait for your brethren to humble you. Don't wait for God to humble you, because He will. Humble yourself. Focus on your dependency on Christ. Without Christ, you can do nothing. Refuse to boast. Remind yourself of your short-comings. It will keep you from exalting yourself. Accept chastisement and that will keep you from exalting yourself.

A pastor must manifest a spirit of meekness. I Corinthians 4:21, "What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" Meekness is not weakness. Moses was a meek man, but he was a powerful man. Christ is our example. He is meek and lowly in heart. If we're going to be children of God, we need to be meek like our Savior. One of my favorite verses is Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." We're to put this into practice. A pastor should be the most spiritual person in the congregation if he is to help someone to be restored who has failed. In the spirit of meekness, he must consider himself, lest he also be tempted. Ministers should act like Christ. We are Christ's face to the congregation. We are Christ's representatives. We're to do like Christ did.

Those who disobey must be admonished as brethren. II Thessalonians 3:13-15: "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." That's the part that some people miss. If a brother does not measure up, he's to be dealt with. He's to be dealt with as a brother, not as an enemy. "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Those who disobey must be admonished as brethren.

I Timothy 5, verses 1 and 2: "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity." Treat the elder as a father. As your father, you would treat him special. Treat the oth-

ers with all purity. Treat people with care. People will make mistakes. They're going to struggle, but they need the pastors to stand with them and to help them through their trials. Don't condemn them. One terminology I hate to hear said is "measure up or get out." Have you ever heard that? What is that saying? You don't care whether they measure up or not? You should not use that terminology as a pastor.

There's danger in ignoring warning signs. I Corinthians 9:27, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." I must die out to self. I must bring my body into subjection. If I don't do that, when I preach to others I could become a castaway myself. So let's not ignore these warning signs. Draw close to God. Ask Him for humility, meekness, and greater power.

There's a reward for those who labor in love. I'm not trying to discourage anyone from becoming a pastor with the words I've spoken this morning. It is a high-calling, a wonderful life. Hebrews 6:10, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." There's a reward awaiting for those who labor in love.

The ministry should set the example in humility for all the flock. My last thought is I Peter, chapter 5, beginning with verse 1: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." When Jesus shall appear, we shall receive a crown of glory.

Saints, pray for your ministry that they be humble and stay humble. Pray for yourselves. Ministers, let's pray for each other that God will keep us humble. Let us all pray for ourselves that we be clothed with humility. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

Saints of God, be clothed with humility. Ministry, be clothed with humility. Ministers, be clothed with humility, and God will work in our midst. †

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.

STEPS HEAVENWARD

By the late R. L. Berry

Chapter III

You Will Be Tempted

YOU MAY be surprised at the heading of this chapter, You Will Be Tempted, but it is literally true that you will be: perhaps you have already been tempted. It is a great mistake to suppose that to become a Christian means that one's temptations will cease and that from now on through life there is to be nothing but joy and happiness and good feelings and sweet experiences. There will be some of the other kind of things, the very opposite of these. The new life that God gives the newborn saint, or child of His, is not something that makes us proof against temptations coming to us, but it is given to make us proof against our yielding to the temptations that come.

There are several reasons why we shall be tempted, and several reasons why it is a good thing for us to be tempted.

You will be tempted because you are a human being. You have the same human desires and human passions that all other human beings have. The greatest prophets, like the mighty Elijah, and even our Lord Himself, were men of like passions as we are (and yet Elijah prayed and the earth gave no fruit for three years and six months). You will be tempted to evil just as Jesus was tempted to evil. You may, and probably will, be tempted to lie, to steal, to take advantage of someone in business matters, to swear, to be proud or act proudly, to yield to sensual solicitations, to strife and fighting, to angry words, and many such things.

You will be tempted because you still are free to make choices. Your service to God is to be a free service, a voluntary service, given to Him in preference to service to Satan. Being bought with the priceless blood of Jesus, you yield to God, soul and body, and all, for love's sake. There is to be no constraint to bring about this yielding, no coercion, no; you are to offer it to the Most Holy God because you want to, because you will to, and every day that same desire and same will, will hold you true in your love to Jesus Christ. This gives your service moral value. It is this free service that makes your choice most pleasing to God and that makes your resistance to temptation partake of the nature of a divine operation; it makes you like God, for since He hates evil and you love Him, so you resist evil out of love to God. This makes you all the more like God. If you were not tempted, you would never know whether you loved God better than sin or not.

You will be tempted because there is a devil, a malignant spirit abroad who seeks above all the destruction of good and of souls. This evil spirit designs to overthrow you, to get you into trouble, but never to help you out; to get you into sin, and then laugh at you for getting in. He will make out that he is your friend and will approach you as if he were trying to confer a blessing on you: but he is, in truth, the greatest enemy man has and plots only your destruction. When he tempts,

he does not sound a trumpet before him, saying, "Here I come, the Devil, to make you sin and fall." No, he comes like a thief, like a deceiver, to tempt you little by little till you will yield some, and then the rest for him is easy. Remember, dear young Christian, that there is a devil, a foe whom you must fight if you would win the crown of everlasting life. Be on your guard. Be watchful. Be careful. You can win, but only by fighting.

Why, you may ask, is it a good thing to be tempted? Because it tests us, and shows to us and to others the stuff we are made of. All tools, all machinery, all first-class goods of nearly every kind, are tested for purity, strength, running-capacity, etc. And it is a truth that every man must be tested to see what there is in him, so you will be tempted to see how weak or how strong you are, whether your love to God is genuine, whether your yielding to God is freely of your own choosing.

You will be tempted to establish and confirm in you moral character. If you could not do both good and evil there would not be any moral value in anything you did. Hence, as you refuse the evil and choose the good you develop moral character, and character is what God looks at. Resisting temptation develops courage, develops faith, develops grit, develops power. In fact, there is no other way in the world to develop character except by way of resisted temptation.

Therefore do not be alarmed when temptation comes. It is a good sign that you are on God's side when temptations come upon you. Satan would not be bothering you if you were still in his control, but because you are out on God's side he throws stones at you, to get you to be discouraged and go back to his side again. But you know what that means, and will not be discouraged.

Forms of Early Temptations

Every stage of the Christian life has its own peculiar temptations.

1. You will be tempted, perhaps, to doubt the reality of your new-found experience. While you were repenting, and praying for forgiveness, there was a most lively sense of the reality and enormity of sin, and in a very real manner did you seek the Lord for His pardoning love. When you believed you realized the delightful sense of forgiveness. It was a very real and delightful experience, one that seemed to you then to be unforgettable forever, so vivid and plain was it. But now, as you look back, or think of it, there seems to be a vagueness, an unreality about it. The feelings that agitated and surged through you so powerfully then have subsided now and have almost, if not entirely, passed away. Was it real? is a question pressed upon your mind now and again. If it was real, why do I feel as I do now? comes to your mind. Did I repent, or was I simply under a false impression?

If this is the way you feel and if these are the thoughts that trouble you, all you have to do to overcome them is simply to state to yourself in a very definite manner that you are the Lord's now, having given yourself to Him irrevocably, and that therefore it is His business to tend to how you feel; that you repented of sin and are done with it forever; that, Whether I feel it or not, the Lord did forgive all my sins, and since I am not going back to them, I am saved; I am a child of God.

2. You may be tempted to be ashamed. You will be told by some evil spirit hovering around that you made a fool of yourself at the altar, that you prayed loud, or otherwise did things that looked unseemly to your worldly friends. The question may come, What will my friends think of my step? If this temptation comes to you, say to yourself, It is impossible to be

"Ashamed of Jesus, that dear Friend

"On whom my hopes of heaven depend."

Your worldly friends may be ashamed of you, but you have nothing to be ashamed of; it is rather they that should be ashamed of themselves for rejecting Jesus and His salvation. You must expect worldly people to think strange of you, for to them it is unexplainable how anyone can give himself to God, and they may even slight or ridicule you, some of them, while others of them will secretly or openly wish you well. But your success in the Christian life does not depend on your worldly friends, it depends on you. They cannot hinder you if you determine to go right on in the service of Jesus Christ.

3. It is probable that you will be tempted to hide your light under a bushel, or to keep your experience all to yourself. There is a story of a young man who was converted and was going away to work in the lumber camps. He was sent away with the exhortations of his brothers to be true and faithful to the Lord. He said he would. After a while he returned, and someone asked him how he got along with the wicked woodsmen. "All right," he replied; "I never let them know anything about it."

The very best way to start out for the Lord is to start out boldly, by letting everybody know, as opportunity affords, that you are a Christian. It not necessary to go around telling all you meet of your change of life, but on every occasion when one must show his colors, be sure to show yours. Let it be known that you are a Christian and it will be a great protection and a help to you, as well as a blessing to others.

4. Another temptation probable to the newborn Christian is the idea that he cannot live the Christian life through to the end. The tempter may show that there are obstacles in the way of the Christian and may seek to discourage him with the way. He may bring to your mind this or that, and question you, "Could you stand for this to be done to you?" bringing some terrible insult to mind, or "Could you bear that?" bringing up some terrible temptation or tragedy at the same time.

This is an old ruse of an old foe. He has been tormenting young Christians for centuries with that same temptation. He knows that no temptation can overtake you only such as is common to man, and only such as you will be able to overcome, for such is God's promises on that line, so he brings up impossible, or at least improbable, things just to get you to doubt. That is all he wants—to get you to waver, stop, and give up, before you have gone far enough into the Christian life to find out just how it is.

Then it is probable that the enemy of your soul will try to discourage you by pointing out others who started and failed. You will be told by the evil one that you will likewise fail; that if they could not hold out, neither

can you. But you know better than this. Because two automobiles started to town and both ran into the ditch is no sign that you cannot run your car to town. That others failed in the Christian life only proves that they were not decided, and that is all. When Satan tempts this way, simply say to yourself and to God, I am a child of God; He will carry me through, I will trust Him only.

5. Another temptation likely to trouble you is the temptation to trust in feelings instead of in Christ. As long as one feels the glow of his new love he has no trouble in believing that he is saved, but when his feelings subside or go the other way and he feels bad, then he has trouble. In such temptations it is wise to consider wherein our part in salvation rests. If it rests in one's feelings, then one would be saved according to his feelings; but if it rests in the will, then all one needs to do is to look to his decision. If you still give to God your life and desire to serve Him, then pay no attention to your feelings, but believe firmly in Jesus as your Savior. Say to your soul, I am a child of God, because I repented and because I believed, and I still believe. God has promised to save you, so just let Him attend to that part of it. You do the trusting, and God will do the keeping.

6. Besides these forms of temptation there will be the ordinary temptations to do wrong, as to lie, to steal, to swear, to cheat, to lust, to follow the world, to seek worldly amusement, etc. Every temptation must be met with an immediate and strong denial. It is no sin to be tempted, the sin is in the yielding. The battle will be fought in your mind first, and if there is consent in the mind or heart sin has been committed; but so long as the consent of the mind has not been given, no sin has been committed. Sometimes in strong temptations one feels as though he had sinned; but if consent has not been given, one should continue to resist, and if momentary consent is given the soul should rally to its faith in Jesus and compel another decision not to yield. †

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



FINDER MAY KEEP

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

"What are we going to do this afternoon?" I asked my grandmother.

My parents had allowed me to go home with Grandma after the Sunday morning church service, and she and I had just finished washing up the lunch dishes.

"Well," said my grandmother, "I have a little job you can help me with."

"What kind of job is it?" I asked her. I was only eight years old, but I had learned how to be helpful, and I knew Grandma wouldn't ask me to do something that was too hard for me.

In answer, Grandma walked across the room to her desk and picked up some sheets of white, unlined paper. She brought them over to the table where I was sitting.

"Now," she said, "let's get the dishcloth and wipe the table one more time to make sure it's perfectly clean. Then we'll dry it with the dish towel. We don't want to get anything on these nice clean sheets of paper."

"What are we going to do with the paper?" I wanted to know.

"We are going to wrap some packages," Grandma answered.

"Packages!" I exclaimed. This sounded like an exciting job.

"Yes," said Grandma. She wiped and dried the table, and then laid the pile of unlined sheets of paper on it. Then she walked over to her desk again and returned with a stack of magazines I recognized instantly. They were *Way of Truth* magazines, and they had been printed in the pressroom downstairs, directly below my grandmother's apartment.

I watched as my grandmother took a *Way of Truth* magazine and began to roll it into a cylinder. When she had rolled it halfway, she placed it on the long edge of one of the sheets of unlined paper, which was exactly the same size as the magazine. She continued rolling the magazine and the paper until the magazine was completely wrapped in the paper. She took two small pieces of cellophane tape from a dispenser on her desk, and taped the paper cylinder closed, with the *Way of Truth* magazine inside.

Grandma turned to me, the paper-wrapped cylinder held gently in her hands. "This is a precious package," she said. "It holds the promise of eternal life to anyone who will read it and accept the truth contained within it."

"Who are you going to give it to?" I asked.

Grandma picked up a pen and wrote in large letters on the cylinder-shaped package: *FINDER MAY KEEP*. She turned the cylinder toward me so I could read the words.

"'Finder may keep,'" I read aloud. "I know what a 'finder' is," I said. "A 'finder' is somebody that finds something." I paused, thinking hard. "Who is going to find this package?" I asked.

"I don't know," said Grandma. "We are going to wrap some more of these packages, and then we are going to pray that God will help us place them where they may be found by people who are hungry for the truth."

My grandmother and I wrapped the rest of the *Way of Truth* magazines. Try as I might, I rolled some of my packages crookedly in the paper, and Grandma had to help me straighten them. In my neatest handwriting, I wrote *FINDER MAY KEEP* on the packages I had wrapped, while Grandma labeled hers.

When we were finished, Grandma stacked the rolled-up *Way of Truth* magazines in a small box. We knelt down at the chairs next to her table, and Grandma prayed that the Lord would help us distribute the magazines where they could do the most good.

Grandma picked up the box, and we walked down her apartment stairs and out onto the sidewalk that ran along busy Salem Avenue. We turned right at the corner and walked along Linganore Avenue. We left some of the *Way of Truth* packages on doorsteps. We left some *Way of Truth* packages on the seats of cars that had their windows rolled down. (In those days, when few cars were air-conditioned, people often kept their car windows rolled down so their vehicles wouldn't get too hot inside.)

After awhile, we turned left and walked up Marshall Street, leaving our precious packages where 'finders' might see them. If we met someone else walking along the street, Grandma would politely offer them a package after explaining what was in it. Some people accepted the magazine, but others declined.

When the box was empty, we turned our feet homeward. "We gave out a lot of truth packages," I said to Grandma. "I wonder how many 'finders' will keep them and read them."

"We will probably never know," said Grandma. "That isn't what matters." She paused, and then continued in an earnest tone. "What matters is that we do our part in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 4:2 which says, *For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.* If you read the entire chapter of Proverbs 4, you will find that it contains the good advice of a godly father to his children. A "doctrine" is a set of beliefs. The Word of God contains 'good doctrine'—the only true set of beliefs that will lead to eternal life.

If you live in a home where the Word of God is taught and practiced, you are fortunate. Not every child has that opportunity. It is your responsibility, then, to share the true doctrine with others at every opportunity. I have just told you a story of how my grandmother helped me do that.

In today's world, things are done differently. Today, for example, we would not put anything inside a stranger's car. But we can find other ways to spread the gospel. We can live a life that is an example of godliness. We can memorize scriptures so that we will always be ready to give an answer when someone asks us about the ways of the Lord. We can pray and ask God to help us be ready when He gives us the chance to work for Him.

Activity

Below are some of the doctrines of the gospel. See if you can match each doctrine with its location in the Bible.

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. We must believe in God. | a. John 3:3 |
| 2. We must be born again to enter the kingdom of God. | b. Matthew 4:4 |
| 3. We must love everyone, even our enemies. | c. I John 2:15 |
| 4. We must be obedient to God's Word. | d. Hebrews 11:6 |
| 5. We must resist the evil that is in the world. | e. Luke 6:27 |

Answers to Last Month's Activity

Let your light so **shine** before men.

Matthew 5:16

I am the light of the **world**.

John 8:12

God is light, and in Him is no **darkness** at all.

I John 1:5

He (Jesus) is in the light.

I John 1:7

Truly the light is **sweet**.

Ecclesiastes 11:7 †

AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM

Radio Message by Bro. James Arch

I WILL BE reading a couple of scriptures taken from St. John, chapter 1, beginning with verse 1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made ... He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." I would like to emphasize for a few minutes the words that are found in verse 12—"as many as received him."



Thank God for the availability of mercy and grace that has been provided by the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank God you can start with the Lord and finish with Him.

Billy Cosby wrote, and I quote: "I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody."

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, and I quote: "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." That is so very, very true.

I remember many, many years ago, as a young man 24 years old, how enthusiastic I was in building a little house to live in and to see it finished and completed. I'm still in that little house today, and I still have the same enthusiasm I had then. So it is the same way with anything in life. If you're going to work for the Lord, you have to have some enthusiasm toward it or something else will draw your attention. That is what is happening around us in the world today. Other things are taking the priority over that which is spiritual, and in many cases, God gets the last thing on the agenda.

The book of John emphasizes and concentrates on Jesus and that believing on Him leads to eternal life. The gospel is not complicated. Many have made it to look that way. It's very simple. Jesus brought a plain teaching, a plain gospel. Believe on the Lord Jesus

Christ. In fact, when Jesus came He said, "Repent and believe." It's still that way today. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"—changed—converted, and taken out of a life of sin.

Jesus referred to Himself as the Bread of Life. He said, "I am the bread of life, I am the light of the world," and "I am the door to the sheepfold." Jesus Christ is the Door to His church. Jesus taught that Himself. "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9). "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26). So when you believe in Jesus, redemption is called the first resurrection. You're resurrected from the dead state of sin and made alive to Christ. If you stay that way, and stay in that state, you'll live with Him forever. Jesus also said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Take the Bible and live by it, My Beloved Friends. "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (John 15:5). Thank God for this wonderful Word of God!

There are several thoughts expressed in the first chapter of John, as it is in all of the Bible. It refers to the eternity of God everlasting. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Thank God you cannot separate these three: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. That's the holy Trinity. Thank God for the Bible truth of the gospel. The Bible tells us, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalm 90:2).

The first chapter of John also says that Jesus is God, and He was before Bethlehem, of course. "The same was in the beginning with God." When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, that was only God come down in the form of a man to mingle among humanity and to understand their problems. God was both human and divine. It never happened before, and it won't happen again. He lived on Earth for a time. He had a wonderful ministry, a rewarding ministry. Jesus went back to be with the Father. You're not going to find Jesus' tombstone in any cemetery on this earth. He still reigns over His kingdom today. He's sitting at the right-hand of God, interceding for us. That's what the Bible teaches.

John, chapter 1, says, too, that God is the Creator of all things. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."

Jesus brought spiritual life to the world. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). The world was in darkness when Jesus came into this world. He opened up a way, a better way, thank God. When Jesus died on the cross, that Old Covenant ceased, that old law system ceased, and today we're under the dispensation of Jesus Christ—the dispensation of grace. John 1:9, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." God sent John the Baptist to bear witness of that light. "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but

was sent to bear witness of that Light" (John 1:6-8). John was the forerunner of Christ.

Not all accepted Jesus. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:10-12). Let me tell you something, My Beloved Friends, salvation is for the whosoever will. It doesn't matter where we come from, how much money we might have or don't have. It doesn't matter. It is for those who will avail themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ. God does not force people to serve Him. It cannot happen. It must be on our own will. That's what the Bible teaches. We must do so with our own will and mind and give ourselves to God. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Verse 13: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." In other words, born of the Spirit, born again, but not of the flesh.

God provided and made possible this old world and all that therein is. I keep telling the church here all the time, enjoy this beautiful world that God made. We don't really enjoy it enough. We don't take note of creation enough. The beautiful birds and the beautiful flowers. Oh, the beautiful mountains and hills! Some are covered with snow, and some are covered with trees. Some are white and some are green. The beautiful seas and oceans of the world. The beautiful fruit and vegetables that God has provided for mankind to live on. God made this beautiful world, My Beloved Friends. The beautiful moon. The sun which rises every morning, and this world is turning around on its axis every day. What a mighty God we serve!

God took dust and formed a man and gave him life. "The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." That's found in Genesis 2:7. God made it possible for us to build a family. He made a woman for the man that He had formed and gave her to him.

Though we were sinful and vile, God made it possible for us to become His children. Can you imagine? "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." There is nothing God cannot do. He is almighty. Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." It takes the power of God to transform a life, to take a man or a woman out of the gutters of sin, to change them around and give them a brand new beginning. That's what God does. He specializes in things thought impossible. He does the things others cannot do.

So what do we see here? "As many as received him"—People responding to the opportunity to follow Jesus. God made it possible for us to make a choice. That is our choice. Salvation is available, but we must avail ourselves to a life hid in Christ. It doesn't just happen automatically. There are different circumstances, in fact, under which people are converted or brought to Christ. The Holy Spirit convicts people through messages that are preached from the Word of God, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit of God. That's the way I was converted on a Sunday night. I'll

never forget that night. That was a long, long time ago. They were singing a song called, "Give Me Thy Heart." *"Give me thy heart," says the Father above, No gift so precious to Him as our love.* The thought came to me, *what would happen if He didn't call me again?* and I surrendered my life to the Lord. Sometimes you struggle hard to get ahead. Sometimes you have to push hard to defeat the enemy, but once you become established in the things of God, you can defeat him. The Bible says, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Some people are moved by singing and repent of their sins because the Holy Spirit spoke to them through the singing of a song. Some are convicted by reading the Bible. Many have been converted by picking up the Bible at midnight, or reading it in a hotel room, and they were convicted. Some are convicted by other people's testimonies. Testimonies are a very strong witness in the world today. Tell people what the Lord has done for you. It's an outstanding witness.

Jesus called two men when He was here on Earth, and they responded to Him. The Bible tells us in Mark 1:16-18: "Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him." I wonder if it's that easy today. It doesn't seem to be that simple today. Jesus called two others, and they responded: "And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him" (verses 19 and 20).

Jesus spoke to a young man who refused to give up the love he had for what he had, rather than to serve the Lord. That stood between him and the Lord. He walked away from Jesus. Mark 10:21, 22: "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions." Possessions are not wrong. Money is not wrong. It's when material things and money become our master. That's what happened to that young man. But if you'll look at the scriptures closely, you'll see that Jesus still loved him.

God loves us all. God's love reaches down to us. It doesn't matter where we go, He still loves us. Even though we reject Him and grieve Him and walk away from Him, the love of God still reaches down. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us" (1 John 3:1).

God always extends a chance to mankind. Noah preached for 100 years. He built an ark, and the people refused to listen to Noah until it began to rain, and then the flood came up, and the ark began to float. God had shut the door. Only those who were in the ark were saved.

Do you know the church is a type of Noah's old ark? The church is the ark of safety. God designed it so to help mankind in the world. That's why Jesus left the

commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always." A lot of people these days are losing the vision of what God's church is about. The mission of God's church is a spiritual mission. That's what it is. To deal with the souls of mankind, and to help them to live in this world, and to make it through to glory.

God gave Nineveh a chance. Jonah took a ship and refused to go to Nineveh, but God spared him. A big fish swallowed him and spued him out, but God called him the second time. Jonah didn't disobey then. He preached to the people of Nineveh. The Bible tells us that the wickedness of Nineveh had come up before God. Noah preached to them. They repented. God didn't destroy them because they repented.

God reaches people by His love. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Even the goodness of God bringeth men to repentance. It's a wonderful life. It's a labor of love. It's a rewarding life to be able to witness to others and win them to the Lord Jesus Christ. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

I trust the Lord will bless you. †



Dear Young People,

Many people have trouble really believing in the Law of Consequences! Understanding that God's laws are fixed and unchanging in the natural and spiritual world is of vital importance to each of us. This is one of the critical jobs of parents with young children, to

instill consistently in them this understanding so that they grow up from the youngest of ages with a mind that is expecting consequences as a result of their actions. Unfortunately, we live in a world where many people believe that they can escape the consequences of their actions because they have in the past or are for a time. The reality is that we will all come face to face with the consequences of our actions as we go through life, and then finally at the judgement. Wisdom is to use the law in our favor, do the small actions every day that result in the blessed and favorable consequences we all desire!

This month's article is a story written by Sis. Sue Craig for a talk she shared with the young people. We trust it is a blessing to you!

—Bro. Doug

THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ACTIONS

(This story was inspired by "The Wise Old Man"
www.moralstories.org)

Once upon a time there was a king who had a 14-year-old son whom he loved very dearly. This boy had all the advantages that wealth and position could

The Way of Truth

give him, but his father had recently noticed his son was developing some disturbing habits. He had become disrespectful to his parents and condescending to his teachers, his father's servants, and the townspeople in general. He was not always truthful, and his father had heard reports of thievery when his son was in the marketplace with his friends. If this trend continues, his father wondered sadly, what kind of king is my boy going to make someday?

Now the king had a wise old friend whom he had often looked to for counsel and advice, so one day when the king and queen had to be away on state business, they arranged for their son to spend the day at the old man's cottage by the sea.

As you might expect, the boy was not entirely happy to be there, but it was far better than having to make the tedious journey with his parents. And if the doddering old man bored him out of his skin, he could always go off and explore the seaside.

The old man greeted him warmly and led him out back where he had prepared some light refreshments. The boy sneered at the thin soup and the stale bread, thinking of all the good things he could have eaten if he were at home, but he ate politely, and even took seconds when he was offered them. And he sat with a polite look of interest on his face as the old man chatted with him.

Now, believe it or not, that old man had once been a boy himself, and he saw that there was still much good in this young man. "Come, walk with me in my garden," he requested when they had both eaten their fill. They walked along in silence, and the boy couldn't help noticing how beautiful this little space had been made by the old man's loving care.

They strolled the garden walks until the old man noticed a very small weed growing in the pathway. "Please," he said to the boy, "could you pull out that weed for me?" The boy bent down and easily plucked up the weed with just two fingers.

A little while later, they came across another weed, about six inches high. "Could you pull out that one also?" the old man asked. The boy grasped the weed with one hand and easily yanked it out.

Further on there was a much larger weed, about two feet high, and using both of his hands and a little elbow grease, the boy also managed to pull that one out, roots and all.

Just as they had decided to turn back to the house, the old man spied an oak sapling. "Ah," he sighed. "Those squirrels. They forgot to ask my permission before they hid their acorn in my garden. If I don't pull up that tree soon, it will grow until it shades my garden and nothing else will have enough sunlight to thrive. Will you help me?" The boy laughed to himself as he grasped the tree firmly. What was with this guy, he thought, as he tugged on the little tree with all his might. But though he pulled until sweat poured down his face, the oak did not budge. "I'm sorry," he said finally. "It's impossible. It just won't come out."

The old man acted as if he weren't bothered at all by this news. He just turned and started walking back towards the house, talking as he did so. "Weeds are a

lot like people's bad habits," he said. "The bigger they grow, the harder they are to get rid of. And habits are formed because of our actions. The consequences of the actions we take today will follow us the rest of our lives. When I was about your age, I knew a boy who had to learn that lesson the hard way.

"He liked to play the blame game. 'My teacher isn't fair ... My parents don't understand me ... My friends are all allowed to do this.'

"He was full of excuses. 'It's too hard ... it's not my fault ... I was going to do it, but I forgot.'

"He hadn't learned that true happiness always comes from within ... not from new toys, not from more money, not from having a palatial home and important parents.

"He hadn't learned about honesty or respect or being kind or showing mercy.

"He picked toxic friends—friends who were always complaining, always criticizing, always disrespectful—because he had never learned that friends who don't make you stronger will make you weaker.

"And when he grew up, instead of showing the world what a fine, upstanding young man he had become, he was despised by everyone—so much so that he was unable to keep his job or his wife or his children. He left the home he had always known and went to live far away from everyone who thought he was nothing but a failure and a disgrace.

But after many, many years, he finally learned some important life lessons:

Watch your thoughts, for they become your words; watch your words, for they become your actions; watch your actions, for they become your habits; watch your habits, for they become your character; watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.

"He also learned that God never gives up on anyone. That only He can take out a heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh. And one day he asked God to forgive him and to root out all the ugly weeds he had allowed to grow in his heart for so long, and he promised the Lord that he would always walk worthy of Him with whatever time he had left on this earth.

"He assumed that by then it was too late for him to make any difference at all in the world, and he was content to spend his days in his garden, using its beauty to express his love for his Creator.

"But one day there was a knock on his door. It was his nephew, who had been searching for him for many months. 'I need your advice,' his nephew said, and more incredibly than that he added, 'and I want to be your friend.'

"Someone needed him! That was almost too much for his poor mind to grasp. And it was even more precious because this nephew of his was now the king of the land, which was the very position he himself had lost because he had let weeds of sin take over his heart. With tears running down his cheeks, he told his nephew the king his story and his promise to God that he would live the rest of his life in His service ... that whatever God needed from him, it would be his pleasure to do.

“Yes, his actions as a young person had cost him his crown and his family, but now here was his chance to make up for all the time he had lost.”

The old man and the boy walked along in silence for a few moments until the young man said softly, “That was you, wasn’t it, sir?”

The old man turned to the boy and smiled down at him. “Yes, my boy, it was. So now you know the secret your father and I have kept for so many years, great nephew,” he said with compassion in his eyes. “I am not proud of my past, but your father thought it was time for me to share my story with his son and heir. He has no doubt that someday you will make a great king, if only you will let God be your friend. You are still young. The weeds in your heart are still small. Pull them out and plant love and kindness and compassion in their place. Live for others. Truly love your neighbor. As the apostle John admonished us, *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*”

As the old man gathered the boy in his arms and held him tight, I am sure that both of them had tears in their eyes. And yes, the young man went on to become one of the greatest kings his country had ever had. He was known far and wide for his wisdom, his patience, his gentleness, his love for his people, and most of all, his love for his God.

And he lived every day by this motto, which his great uncle instilled in him: *Don’t tell me about your God with your words. Show me about your God with your actions.* (quote from Steve Maraboli in *Life, the Truth, and Being Free*). †



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

QUESTION: Can a person continue to be saved who will not make restitution for wrongs done when living in sin?

ANSWER: The Bible teaches restitution! No one can fail to do that which he understands and knows the Word teaches and still keep an experience with God. Rebellion is sin.

QUESTION: Please explain Luke 17:10, “So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.” What more should we do than keep Jesus’ commandments?

ANSWER: The thought of this verse is not to do more than we are able. No one can do that. But after we have done our best we have done only that which was our job to do and we did it by the grace God supplied, so we have nothing of which to boast. We cannot say we have earned salvation, nor can we say we deserve God’s favor.

As Adam Clarke says, “Ye have derived your being from the infinite and eternal, and your obedience and services, however excellent in themselves, and profitable to you, have added nothing, and can add nothing, to the absolute excellencies and glories of your God.”

QUESTION: What does it mean that “we die for our sins”?

ANSWER: Paul said, “The wages of sin is death.”—Romans 6:23. Ezekiel 18:4 informs us, “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” God told Adam he should not eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, “for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—Genesis 2:17. We know Adam and Eve did eat, and we know they did not die physically that day, but they died spiritually. Spiritual death is separation from God, the source of life. “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (I John 5:12). Sin separates from God and brings death—separation—to the soul. This does not mean the soul, or spirit, ceases to exist, but “is dead in trespasses and sins.”—Ephesians 2:1.

QUESTION: Romans 11:26 says that all Israel shall be saved. Does this really mean that no Israelite will go to hell?

ANSWER: We must rightly divide the Word of truth. Remember, the rich man who died and went to hell, when he called on Abraham, was told, “Son, remember ...!” Now a son of Abraham would have to be a Jew, or an Israelite. So we know there was one Israelite who was lost, besides a multitude of others whom the Scriptures tell us about. The reference here in Romans 11 is not literal Israel. It is referring to the Israel of God. To be a part of the Israel of God, you must be a Christian; you must be born again. Therefore, all Israel shall be saved.

QUESTION: How can you assume that God is a person when the Bible clearly says that God is a Spirit?

ANSWER: When we say God is a Spirit, we mean that He is not a material substance. He is not “a mere idea, but a real substance though not a material one.” “He is an individual substance and not a mere principle or power.” “He has intellect, sensibility, and will, and therefore is a person.” The above quotes are from R. R. Byrum’s book, *Christian Theology*.

QUESTION: When Jacob wrestled with the angel, was it an angel from heaven or was it a preacher called an angel?

ANSWER: The word *angel* means “messenger,” and the word is used at times to mean ministers, such as in Revelation chapters two and three. But it would be a serious mistake to insist that in every verse you find the word *angel* it means minister.

As for the angel that wrestled with Jacob, I think it should be clear that he was an angel from heaven. He refused to give his name and by the mere touch, the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint. †

WHERE DO WE STAND?

2023 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Rupert Shippy



SI LOOK behind me and see the theme displayed for this convention, it's such a blessing. The word *humble* has always been a part of my life. I desire to always humble myself before God. This is not new. This is something we've been hearing for many, many years, but it's a reminder in this convention, for every convention we have no new Book. We have the same old Book, the Word of God.

Bro. Greg's message this morning was a wonderful, wonderful message. It laid the foundation for this convention. When I was preparing for this message, I chose some of those same scriptures, so you'll probably hear some of those again. But we study from the same Bible. We are preaching by the same Spirit, the Spirit of God.

I want to speak to you this afternoon on the thought, "Where Do We Stand?" After hearing such a solid message this morning, I want to ask you this question: Do we stand on this Ground, this Foundation? What we heard this morning was a stir to our minds.

This is our Constitution (the Bible) that we use each year. At a general annual meeting, we may have heard someone read their own company's constitution. Probably things are changed in it from time to time. But we have nothing to change here. The Word of God is always the same from Genesis to Revelation. When we read it, or hear it, it causes us to think in our minds, where do we stand?

We have heard about the standard of the Church of God. I want to remind us of some of the doctrines that have been taught through the years. I believe that God has a church here today. To be a member of God's church, one has to be born again. One has to forsake sin and its follies. For one to have fellowship with the Church of God, one must first repent of his sins. Be converted. Endeavor to obey the Bible doctrine.

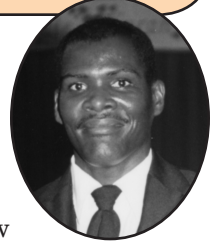
Having the privilege of running this race, we will look into the first scripture text I would like to use. It comes from Ephesians, chapter 4. I want us to take some time to read some of these doctrines or principles we are to follow if we are going to get anywhere at all in the Church of God. We'll start with verse 1: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." It does not say that we are to fight one another. God is love, and if we're going to follow God today, we have to have love one for another. Verse 3: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." We're to have unity. That's what the Bible teaches. We don't want any quarreling. What do we believe? Where do we stand? Are we filled with the love of God deep down in our hearts? The Bible teaches that we are to be one in Christ. Verses 5 and 6: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in

you all." We are one in Christ. Why? Because God is one, and Jesus is one. They are one. Verse 7: "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." We cannot live a holy Christian life without the grace of God. We cannot follow the Bible doctrines unless we have the grace of God. So we need that grace today so that we'll be able to stand on the promises of God and stay true to Him.

Christians need to conduct themselves in the right way so that God can be pleased. Christians must learn to have these virtues as found in Colossians, chapter 3. We want to follow them closely. Verses 12 and 13: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." These are virtues that we all need to follow. We must forgive and forbear one another. We need to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Paul continues to say in verse 14: "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." True love; genuine love; real love. Verse 15: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." I'm very thankful to be in this one body today, the body of Christ, which is the Church of the living God. Verses 16 and 17: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." It's not by some church creed but to the glory of God. Follow good principles. If we are going to be God's church, we have to obey His Word. We are to follow the Bible. Whether you are white or black, rich or poor, high or low, these are Bible principles.

Do you know what the Bible says? "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged" (verses 20 and 21 of Colossians 3). Bro. Greg told us something about that this morning. We are not here to discourage one another. Whether you are young or old, we are here to encourage one another. Whether you are a pastor or whatever you are, we are to encourage one another. I'm so thankful for that encouragement this morning, for there are times when ministers need to be encouraged, too. As Bro. Greg said, a pastor has a big responsibility. Sometimes pastors can be discouraged, so we need to be encouraged now and again. Isn't that true? So we need to encourage one another.



Verses 22 and 23 of Colossians 3: "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." We are not to please men, but we are to do all things to please almighty God. Let Him get the praise and the glory out of everything we do. If it's not to the glory of God, then don't do it. Verses 24 and 25: "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons." Pastors, ministers, and every one of us should not be judging wrongly. We need to judge righteously. Wherever the wrong is, deal with it just as it is, but with love.

There are some things we need to do if God is to be pleased. Jesus Himself said, "If we cannot forgive our brother his wrong, then God will not forgive us of our trespasses." We pray so often "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. ... And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," but if we're going to pray this prayer from time to time as Jesus taught, then we should have forgiveness in our hearts. If we can't forgive, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us of our trespasses. Beloved, we need to follow the Word of God.

Let us also look at what else we are told here in Colossians, chapter 3. We are to have a new mind, a new heart, and a brand new attitude. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." There is some work here for us to do. If we are to remain children of God, members of the Church of God, verse 5 tell us, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." There are numbers of people who believe they can do those sinful things and still be members of God's church. This cannot be. In the Church of God, we must live holy, righteously, and godly in this present world.

Again, we'll go back to Colossians 3:12, 13, which says, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another." This is what we're told to do. This is what we need to do if we're going to be God's servants and children of the most high God. We must do these things. We need to bear the fruit of the Spirit in all goodness, in righteousness, and in truth. God has a purpose in our lives.

I was very much blessed and happy last year in seeing the young people taking part in the services, and today they're still holding on to the Lord. I just want to encourage you, Dear Ones, to hold on to God. Lift up

the holy standard for God. Live a sober life in the sight of almighty God. Let the world see Christ in you. Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in you. Lift up Christ highly as you go along life's journey. There are going to be times in your life when you'll feel discouraged, when you'll feel like you cannot make it, when you'll feel like the world is on top of you, but there is power in God. Keep on keeping on. Pray your way through. Live for God completely. Have a surrendered life. I was so happy to see those of you who were at the altar this morning, surrendering your all to God. Ready to run this race. Yes, get strength from the Lord from day to day and defend the cause of Christ. Don't let the devil have any power over you. Live to God's glory. Paul said in Romans 8:31, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Listen to what Paul says in Romans, chapter 6: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Sin should not have dominion over us. Verses 10-13: "For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Friends, we have the commandments of the Bible. We are not to be sin-you-must Christians. We must be free from sin. We must have on the breastplate of righteousness and bear the fruit of the Spirit in all goodness. Verse 18 of Romans 6: "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Whom the Son sets free is free indeed. If we are free indeed, we're not going to dabble in sin. We are going to have a clean heart, a pure mind, and we'll live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. We will then have unity.

In Romans, chapter 12, we read: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. [Not only on Sundays, not a half-hearted service, but a reasonable service unto God.] And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." This is having a new mind, a new walk with God, and a good attitude. This is what God commands of us. This is what we are to do if we're going to have a humble spirit. "For I say, through the

grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body [We heard about some of that this morning.], and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. "Having then gifts [God gives gifts for the edifying of the body. It isn't because you might have gone to some higher college than others, and think you're higher or better than me, or because you're white and I am black means that you are to feel better than me. No, we're one in Christ Jesus. One in hope, one in doctrine, one in charity.] differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith."

Verses 9 and 10 of Romans 12: "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." It is so wonderful and good to know that God can bring saints from Cayman, Honduras, Jamaica, or wherever they're from, and we're one body. It is good that we can worship together and humble ourselves before God. Verses 11-15: "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." We must bear one another's burdens in love. Your challenges are my challenges. We help to bear one another up in our prayers. Whether we're in Jamaica, in Grand Cayman, or in Honduras, we're to bear one another up in our prayers. Pray for one another because we are brethren. We must care one for another. God cares for me, and we must care one for another as children of God. Thank you for praying for me when I was in my physical difficulties. I know God worked a miracle on my body because you were praying for me.

Verses 16-18 of Romans 12: "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." This is what the Bible teaches. Live in peace and in harmony with one another. Just because your brother made a mistake doesn't mean that you have to push him aside. Just because he's not what you are, you can't try to make him what you want. Let God do the work. Show him love. Care for him. If your brother falls down, help him up. If he makes a mistake, help to correct him. Why? Because the same devil that tempted him and caused him to fall, he can tempt you, too. The Bible tells us that we will be tempted. Sometimes we feel so puffed up and feel so big that we overlook our brother and don't try to lift him up, but we continue to push him further away from God. We are members one of another. Therefore, we are to help one another. Encourage your brother. Get him back on track with God. There are some people who prefer just to push him aside and discourage him. Sometimes we are too quick in our

judgment. Where is the love of God? Where is our sanctification? If we have that kind of attitude, are we really humble enough? Are we really following God? Do we really stand on the promises of God and obedient to His Word?

Verses 19-21 of Romans 12: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Some of you might be having trouble with your neighbors or some others around you, but you have something to do to win them to Christ. You have to love them. You have to care. Do you know it's hard to love some people? There are some people who don't want to have anything to do with you. So often you try to reach out to them, but they continue to reject you. You can't reach out to them as you really want to, but because of your Christian attitude, you try your very best to reach out to them. Why? Because you want to be a good example. Since God loves you, you need to love them.

We are also told in the book of Romans, chapter 13, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

Let us turn our Bibles to I Corinthians, chapter 13. There are some verses there that are very strong and encouraging to the Christian. Verses 1-11: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

There are some people who display childish behavior. There are some people who behave as if they are still children. When you become a woman or a man, you're supposed to put away childish things and be

strong enough to stand, regardless of what's around you. Do we stand on the promises of God today? Do we stand on the Word of God? Where do we stand? What are we preaching? What do we really mean when we talk about true Christianity? What do we really mean when we speak about being members of the Church of God? Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in us.

You must be the Church of God here, there, and everywhere you go. Live out the church in your life. Did you know it makes it easier for the preacher when you live the Word of God in your life? The world will see that you are indeed a child of God, and you are following and obeying the Word of God.

Verse 13 of I Corinthians 13: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." We need to have that perfect love within our hearts that we might be able to show forth the praises of God. Dearly Beloved, God desires that we walk humbly with Him and show forth the church of the living God.

*The church of God one body is,
One Spirit dwells within;
And all her members are redeemed,
And triumph over sin.*

*O Church of God! I love thy courts,
Thou mother of the free;
Thou blessed home of all the saved,
I dwell content in thee.*

*In beauty stand, O Church of God,
With righteousness arrayed;
Put on thy strength and face thy foes
With courage undismayed.*—Charles W. Naylor

We are in a battle, Friends, and we must fight. Never give in to the devil, never give up, but fight till the last mile of the way.

Dearly Beloved, I trust that I have encouraged you as much as I could through the help of the Lord. †

TRIFLING WITH GOD'S MERCY DOES NOT PAY

By the late S. W. Parrish

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, not long after I had begun preaching, my brother and I were holding a meeting in Illinois. We were enjoying a wonderful meeting. Many had already been saved and several sanctified, and a number had come out of sectism and had taken their stand for the truth.

One night, while the message was going forth, conviction was upon a good number of the lost that were present. After the message, and the call had been made and some had come to the altar, I approached a young man toward the end of the building, who was under deep conviction. He was pale, his lips trembling, and his fingers twitching, trying to hold on to the back of the seat in front of him. I approached him with all earnestness, for I knew him well and was acquainted with his life and knew he was very sinful. He was a

drunkard and lived a very ungodly life. We made a very earnest appeal to him to go to the altar, but to no avail. He acknowledged that he should give his heart to God, but not that night. Christ looked down upon the city of Jerusalem and wept, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!" If this man had known what all was in store for him, he would have, no doubt, gone to the altar. But he was like thousands today who are doing the same thing, not realizing the danger they are in. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "We know not the day or the hour when these things shall come upon us."

He went away that night promising he would come to church the next night and get saved. The next day about ten o'clock, there came a messenger to my house, telling me the sad news that this young man had been run over by a freight train about two and one-half miles south of town, and cut to pieces. This happened before we had many automobiles, so three or four of us took a one horse wagon and sheets and other necessary things to take care of what we could find of his body. It was a sad time, indeed, knowing he had rejected God his last time. God offered him mercy by convicting him and giving him a chance to get ready. The best thing that ever happens to a lost soul is when God sends conviction to his heart. And the wisest thing man ever has done, or ever can do, is to accept the challenge and surrender to Him who knows what will be next.

At the same meeting, and the same night, there was an aged man standing about three seats back and at the right of the Bible stand, who was deeply under conviction. Someone went to him and pleaded with him to get saved, but the poor man would not yield and went away unsaved. I was well-acquainted with him, too. I knew him to be a moral man, not a wicked man, but he was unsaved and needed God as much as the wicked young man needed Him. Not many weeks after this meeting closed, this man sent for my brother and me to come to his home. When we arrived there, we found him sorely afflicted with what they call dropsy. His body was badly swollen and he was in a very critical condition. He asked us to pray that he be saved. We prayed as earnestly as we could for the poor man, but apparently our prayers did not ascend higher than the ceiling of the room. We prayed—the church prayed—but the poor man was never able to believe that the Lord saved him; and he went into eternity crying that he was lost, and eternally lost.

These are dreadful things to witness. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31).

Sinner Friend, take warning. These men are only two out of thousands that have met the same fate because they waited. Some until the next night, some until some more convenient time, and others until they have had a little more pleasure. While you are enjoying a little more pleasure, God's time for your salvation may be drawing to a close. I am sure He has talked to your heart before this. Won't you take warning and yield to His loving Spirit that speaks to you now and says, "Lost one, give me thine heart"? Just as the last time or opportunity came to these men, so will you be unless you accept His proffered mercy.

While you are lost and without God, here is what Christ has done for you—When the Lord saw this old world in sin, darkness, and debauchery, He loved the lost human family so much that He sent His Son, the Jewel of heaven, the only heir of the heavenly Father, to be a sacrifice for the sin-cursed world. In Him was a willing sacrifice. He said, “I must be reproached, be spit upon, lifted upon the cross and crucified for you.” He bore the blaspheming accusations of the Jews and went to the garden alone. While the disciples slept, He lifted up His voice to the Father and said, “Not my will, but thine be done.” He arose and marched out to meet the enemy with the angels hovering around Him. Bowed under the weight of the cross on His way to Calvary, He collapsed; another bore the cross to the place of a skull. There He bore the nails driven through His hands, the crown of thorns on His brow, the spear thrust into His side, the accusations of thieves and the blasphemy of the soldiers with never a word; and bowed His head in death and said, “It is finished,” all for you. †

THE POETRY PAGE

WHEN I MET THE MASTER

Author Unknown

I had walked life's way with an easy tread,
Had followed where comfort and pleasures led,
Until one day in a quiet place
I met the Master face to face.

With station and rank and wealth for my goal,
Much thought for my body, but none for my soul,
I had entered to win in life's mad race,
When I met the Master face to face.

I met Him and knew Him and blushed to see
That His eyes, full of sorrow were fixed on me,
And I faltered and fell at His feet that day,
While my castles melted and vanished away.

Melted and vanished, and in their place
Naught else could I see but the Master's face.
And I cried aloud, “Oh, make me meet
To follow the steps of Thy wounded feet.”

My thought is now for the souls of men;
I have lost my life to find it again,
E'er since one day in a quiet place
I met the Master face to face.

THIS I KNOW

E. Margaret Clarkson

I do not know what next may come
Across my pilgrim way;
I do not know tomorrow's road,
Nor see beyond today.

But this I know—my Savior knows
The path I cannot see;
And I can trust His wounded hand
To guide and care for me.

I do not know what may befall,
Of sunshine or of rain;
I do not know what may be mine,
Of pleasure and of pain;

But this I know—my Savior knows,
And whatsoe'er it be,
Still I can trust His love to give
What will be best for me.

I do not know what may await,
Or what the morrow brings;
But with the glad salute of faith,
I hail its opening wings:

For this I know—that in my Lord
Shall all my needs be met;
And I can trust the heart of Him
Who has not failed me yet.

IF I CAN

Pearl Scanlan

If I can give to someone
From my heart a bit of love,
Scatter just a little sunshine
While the clouds hang dark above;

If I can sing a little song
To bid some sorrow flee,
Or be a little ray of light
For some poor soul to see;

If I can give a little smile
To cheer some fainting heart,
Or speak a few little words of love
To bid its fears depart;

If I can be a comfort
To someone's troubled breast,
Or be a staff on which one leans
To find a bit of rest;

If I can have a little part
Relieving someone's pain,
If there's one soul that I can help,
I'll not have lived in vain.

TO THE FAITHFUL

John F. Ackerman

Don't lose courage when help is nearby,
And you can on the Savior rely.
He has work for everyone to be done,
So let's not shirk 'til the battle is won.

A crown is waiting for those that are true,
He is calling for workers, What about you?
That will help bring the lost sheep to His fold,
And will bring you endless joys untold.

So let's put our best in for Him every day,
And follow after Christ; the good Shepherd's way,
How much 'twill be worth, we'll not know here,
But we will know when He shall appear. †

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Permit No. 15

COMING MEETINGS

2023 Escondido Camp Meeting
Escondido, California
November 8-12, 2023, Lord willing
Bro. John Romero, Host Pastor

2023 Philippine Convention
Paniqui, Tarlac
December 26-30, 2023, Lord willing
Bro. Rey Fabian, Host Pastor

REVIVAL SERVICES

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

Hagerstown, Maryland
October 13-15, 2023, Lord willing
Bro. Mick Akers, Evangelist
Bro. Gregory Tyler, Pastor

Essex, Maryland
October 19-22, 2023, Lord willing
Bro. Doug Shenberger, Evangelist
Bro. Doug Koerner, Pastor

PLEASE PRAY FOR THESE MEETINGS

RADIO LOG

The Way of Truth Broadcast

Alvin A. Craig, Radio Minister

(Aired on Sundays unless otherwise noted.)

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

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

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

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

North Carolina, Mooresville, WHIP 1350, 6:00 A.M.

Listen live—tunein.com/radio/whip-1350-s29320/

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

Listen live—Go to www.kfxi.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

Virginia, Roanoke, WKBA 1550

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

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

Listen live—Go to www.wkbaradio.com

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

SHORTWAVE

WWCR, Nashville, Tennessee 4.840 on SW band

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

Listen live—Go to www.wwcr.com

WINB, Red Lion, Pennsylvania 9.320 on SW band

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

Listen live—Go to www.winb.com

INTERNATIONAL

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

Heard throughout Jamaica