

# The Way of Truth

Vol. 81

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

No. 1



## Show the House to the House

Message begins on page 12

January - February 2023



## POSSIBILITIES FOR THE NEW YEAR

“But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”—Matthew 19:26.



AS WE TRAVEL through life, many things face us that are challenging and look impossible! Circumstances that are adverse, mount against us—physical needs, financial needs, spiritual needs—that would overwhelm us were it not for the Lord's help.

Let us look at a few situations that seem impossible to change and correct. As we look over the political climate of our nation, it would seem that sin and moral degradation have caused a sense of hopelessness. Is there no hope for America? As dark as things look, there is a God in heaven! That assurance brings hope, for He says in II Chronicles 7:14, “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” Our land certainly needs healed. It is possible with God!

The unsaved man may think within himself, “There is no hope for me, for my condition is so dire.” My Beloved, God's grace is greater than all your sin. His hand can reach far down and lift you out. “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (II Corinthians 9:8). The amazing grace of God makes the deliverance from any condition a distinct possibility in this new year.

*When Jesus decided to change Peter's name in John 1:42, it demonstrated how Jesus looks at men. He does not only see what a man is; he also sees what a man can become. He sees not only the actualities in a man; he also sees the possibilities. Jesus looked at Peter and saw in him not only a Galilean fisherman but one who had it in him to become a pillar in his church. Jesus sees us not only as we are, but as we can be; and he says: “Give your life to me, and I will make you what you have it in you to be.” Once someone came on Michelangelo chipping away with his chisel at a huge shapeless piece of rock. He asked the sculptor what he was doing. “I am releasing the angel imprisoned in this marble,” he answered. Jesus is the one who sees and can release the hidden hero in every man.—William Barclay's Commentary on The Gospel of John.*

One attack of the enemy is to convince us that there is no hope for our unsaved loved ones. Our spouse, our children, who are living in sin are not doomed to be lost forever, because God is able to save to the uttermost. As we enter into 2023, let us do so with the hope in the possibility that our unsaved loved ones will be saved. “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).

In our generation, there is so much pressure on married couples to keep their commitment to each other. Often they come to the conclusion that there is no hope

for the marriage. The result is divorce and a broken home for the unfortunate children to deal with. Irreconcilable differences in a pitiful outcome for two people who were once in love. But there is help in God!

*When we tell ourselves, “I can never change,” or “That will never happen,” we presume too much and believe too little. In Jesus Christ, God renders all of our final conclusions premature and all of our talk of determinism as simply bad faith. In Christ, God opens closed doors, brings resurrection, reveals possibilities, reclaims the lost, liberates the cursed and possessed, and changes the unchangeable.—Don Shelby.*

There are many situations in life that seem untenable. But to the Christian all things are possible. When the storm arose on the Sea of Galilee, the disciples were beside themselves with the fear that their vessel would capsize. There seemed no hope until Jesus commanded the storm, “Peace be still.” The storm had to obey! There immediately was a great calm. The storms of life often overwhelm us, leaving us with the same question the disciples struggled with, “Do you care if we perish?” The same Jesus who calmed the Sea of Galilee is able and willing to calm the storms of our lives. All we have to do is commit those threatening circumstances to the Lord and trust Him. As Paul affirmed in II Timothy 1:12, “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

One hymn declares a marvelous truth—

“The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;

That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake! ...”

There are some some things required in order for possibilities to become realities. If these requirements are ignored, the possibilities of life will always remain just that—possibilities.

First of all, a person must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Not just a profession, but a genuine born-again experience that produces a holy life is necessary. It takes the miracle of the new birth to realize the possibilities that exist for the family of man.

*The Christian life is stamped all through with impossibility. Human nature cannot come anywhere near what Jesus Christ demands, and any rational being facing his demands honestly, says, “It can't be done, apart from a miracle.” Exactly.—Oswald Chambers.*

It takes effectual fervent prayer for possibilities to become realities. “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16).

*Prayer is the easiest and hardest of all things; the simplest and the sublimest; the weakest and the most*

### ABOUT THE COVER

On the cover we have a winter scene which shows a house on a hill which stands strong though the elements beat against it. On page 12 is a message entitled, “Show the House to the House” which speaks of the Church of God as the house and the fact that those who are redeemed and in the church need a vision of the church.

# THE WAY OF TRUTH

(Registered Trademark)

**Vol. 81 January-February 2023 No. 1**

*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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—Gregory E. Tyler, Editor

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*powerful; its results lie outside the range of human possibilities; they are limited only by the omnipotence of God.*—E. M. Bounds.

It takes faith for possibilities to become realities. We need greater faith!

Charles Wesley wrote,

“Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,

And looks to that alone;

Laughs at impossibilities,

And cries it shall be done!”

To see the possibilities for 2023 come to pass, there must be a sense of commitment.

*Everyone knows on any given day that there are energies slumbering in him which the incitements of that day do not call forth ... Compared with what we ought to be, we are only half awake. Our fires are damped, our drafts are checked. We are making use of only a small part of our possible mental and physical resources ... Stating the thing broadly, the human individual thus lives far within his limits; he possesses powers of various sorts he habitually fails to use.*

*Isn't that the truth! Alleged "impossibilities" are opportunities for our capacities to be stretched.*

—William James.

We must be determined as the apostle Paul was when he declared in Acts 20:24, “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

We need that kind of determination!

I will close this editorial with the following inspirational admonition entitled: “The Gift.”

*Soon in your hand will be placed a priceless gift. Look at it closely. There is no price maker stamped on it. It cannot be weighed, because no scale can balance its value. A king's ransom in comparison is as nothing, yet it is given to beggar and prince alike. The giver asks only that it be used wisely and well.*

*This jewel, rare and unique, is not displayed in any shop window. It cannot be purchased, cannot be sold. No other treasure holds the possibilities this gift offers—none can surpass its golden splendor.*

*Of all gifts, this is one of the most precious. It has been offered many times before; today, from the depths of a limitless love it will be given again. It will be left to you to find the golden thread running through it. Only with great care will the jewel retain its luster. Carelessness, ingratitude and selfishness will tarnish the brilliance, break the unspoiled thread, mar the perfection.*

*Guard it closely, lest through weak fingers it slip from the hand. Look often at its faultless beauty. Accept it as it is offered from the heart of the giver. Consider it a treasured possession. It is the gift of the New Year. †*

*I am sure our readers have noticed that we have combined the January and February issues of this magazine. We plan to return to our regular monthly format with the March 2023 issue.*

—G. E. Tyler, Editor

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## THE POETRY PAGE

### NEW YEAR'S WISHES

Frances Ridley Havergal

What shall I wish thee! Treasures of earth?  
Songs in the springtime, pleasures and mirth?  
Flowers in thy pathway, skies ever clear?  
Would this insure thee a happy new year?

What shall I wish thee? What can be found,  
Bringing the sunshine all the year round?  
Where is the treasure, lasting and dear,  
That shall insure thee a happy new year?

Faith that increaseth, walking in light;  
Hope that aboundeth, happy and bright;  
Love that is perfect, casting out fear—  
Those shall insure thee a happy new year.

Peace in the Savior, rest at His feet,  
Smile in His countenance, radiant and sweet;  
Joy in His presence, Christ ever near—  
This will insure thee a happy new year.

### HAPPY NEW YEAR

Author Unknown

I do not know, I cannot see  
What God's kind hand prepares for me,  
Nor can my glance pierce through the haze  
Which covers all my future ways;  
But yet I know that o'er it all  
Rules He who notes the sparrow's fall.

I know the hand that hath me fed  
And through the year my feet hath led;  
I know the everlasting arm  
That hath upheld and kept from harm,  
I trust Him as my God and Guide  
And know that He will still provide.

So at the opening of the year,  
I banish care and doubt and fear,  
And clasping His kind hand, essay  
To walk with God from day to day,  
Trusting in Him who hath me fed,  
Walking with Him who hath me led.

Farewell, Old Year, with goodness crowned.  
A Hand divine hath set my bound.  
Welcome the New Year, which shall bring  
Fresh blessings from my God and King.  
The Old we leave without a tear,  
The New we hail without a fear.

### A NEW YEAR'S PROMISE

Anonymous

Another year I enter  
Its history unknown;  
Oh, how my feet would tremble  
To tread its path alone!  
But I have heard a whisper;  
I know I shall be blest;  
"My presence shall go with thee  
And I will give thee rest."

### THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW

F. W. Davis

How much have I done for the Master?  
How many lost souls have I won,  
Thru the year that has gone into history,  
And a new year for me has begun?  
I wonder if Jesus, my Savior,  
Is pleased with the number of men  
I spoke to about their salvation,  
And caused them to turn from their sin?

But the failures I made in the old year,  
I must never repeat in the new,  
For millions in sin still are dying,  
And laborers for Jesus are few.  
If I would press forward to victory,  
I cannot look back on the past,  
But ever march onward and upward,  
Till I shall see Jesus at last. †

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*"In this new year, be grateful that  
God has given you victory over many  
things over the past year."*

*—Steven M. Hitchcock*



# HOW STRONG IS OUR FAITH?

Radio Message by Bro. James Arch

**I** WILL be speaking on “How Strong Is Our Faith?” I am going to be reading from the fourth chapter of Mark. I’ll begin reading from verse 36: “And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?” And of course, it goes on to say, “And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” This is a very familiar passage of scripture.



What is faith? We’ve heard so much about faith all down through the many years and what faith can do. Faith can work wonders in the life of an individual. All down through the centuries we have read and learned about people who accomplished great things by faith, even in Bible times as well. *Faith* is “a confident belief in the truth, value, or trustworthiness of a person, an idea, or a thing.” I always say that my definition of *faith* is “believing in something that you don’t have before you or something that you don’t see.”

There are no two people in the world that are alike. Some have stronger faith than others. In fact, the Bible teaches that—the measure of our faith. Some may allow that to cause them to devalue themselves, but that should never be the case. Faith is faith. Chances are at times we have more faith than we think we have. There are people who look up to people and believe in other people, and that’s faith—believing in something. You believe and you believe and you believe. So faith is a great thing in the life of a person. The Bible says, “Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

The preceding circumstances of this text (Mark 4) begins, of course, from verse 1, where we find Jesus teaching from a ship to a crowd on the shore, and He began again to teach by the seaside. “And there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.”

Jesus taught through parables. All down through the writings of Jesus, you will find where He spoke through parables. Many parables are mentioned in the New Testament spoken by Jesus. It made it easy for the people to understand. Verses 3-9 of Mark 4 show

us the parable of the sower, and I won’t take time to read it. Some asked Him about the parable. Verse 10 says, “And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.” Not everyone understood it. Verse 11 says, “And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables.” Then Jesus explained the parable which is found in verses 14-20: “The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word’s sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.” That’s how Jesus explained the parable of the sower. I took time to read it, because it is so very interesting and so very applicable for us today.

Jesus asked those who were with Him a question: “Should a candle be put under a bed?” If you’ll look at verse 21 of Mark 4, it says, “And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?” And then He went on to give the parable about the kingdom. Verses 30-32: “And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.” When Jesus was alone with His disciples, He spoke directly to them. Verse 34 says, “But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.” That evening He said, “Let us go.” Verse 35, “And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.”

Now we see the testing time. That was no easy time. Mark 4:37, “And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.” Of course, we can apply this to the spiritual. There are times in life when we will meet up with storms. Life is not all smooth sailing. There are spiritual storms to battle as well, but thank God, Jesus is always available. He’s always there to call on Him. This was not an easy time for His disciples. Jesus was at rest at that time, and they were not at rest. Verse 38: “And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?” Yes, He cared, sure He cared, and He still cares today. This was a real storm. The weather

can get violent sometimes, and they had a right to be scared. From time we were children though, we learned the little chorus, "With Christ in the vessel, we can smile at the storm."

Jesus began to manifest His power. Mark 4:39, "And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." He then began to talk to His disciples: "And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" Notice, He used the words *no faith*. "With me here, why are you so fearful?" Let me say here, My Beloved Friends, it doesn't matter how much of a Christian we are, or how strong we are in faith, or how holy we may become, we're still human beings. We still have that human aspect of us. There are things in life that get on us, so He asked them, "Why are you so fearful?" They were human. They saw the ship sinking, and He was asleep in the ship. As I mentioned a few minutes ago, they had a right to feel scared.

Jesus used the words "little faith" with Peter. When Peter began to walk on the water and began to sink, the Bible says, "And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matthew 14:31). Of course, Jesus saved him from sinking. So the subject, "How Strong Is Our Faith?" is not a simple subject.

If you believe in God's creation, you have faith. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 11, which is called *the faith chapter*, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

By faith, one is saved. Only by faith through grace. The Bible tells us in Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." It's a wonderful thing to trust in God for salvation through Jesus Christ. Do you know that God gave His Son as a ransom for us? He gave His Son as a solution for us that we would not have to continue in the kind of life that we were living, but we could be redeemed (bought back, saved, *forgiven*), which is really the best word. To be forgiven, to find the joy of sins forgiven, and to know our slate has been wiped cleaned. In fact, the Bible tells us that He cast our sins into the depth of the sea. The Bible also tells us, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." God has never established a system that people couldn't live. He sent a remedy for us because of love. It was because of love for His people that He sent His Son, Jesus, into the world. It was because of love that Jesus gave His life for us that we could be brought back to Him and live a happy, joyous life, and to know that we're right with God in this world.

By faith, one is kept. We walk by faith, hoping in something we don't see. We can refer to Abraham. Hebrews 11:8-10: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath

foundations, whose builder and maker is God." These Old Testament prophets and patriarchs were saved by faith in God and in the promise of the coming Messiah. Verse 13: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Do you see what faith is?

The Christian church today believes in heaven. We believe that there is a hereafter for those who prepare for it. It's a place beyond this world. The Bible teaches it very clearly. So faith in God in something beyond this world is like an anchor to the soul that holds us and keeps us going.

Jonah fled from the presence of God, but yet he feared God. Jonah 1:8, 9, "Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?" God sent Jonah to preach to the Ninevites, but he took a ship and went to Tarshish and got into problems. That's what this is talking about. "And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land." We know that because of Jonah confessing his wrong, Nineveh was spared. I always say that God had more mercy on Jonah than He had on the Ninevites. Jonah called on God out of the belly of a big fish. He was called the second time to go to Nineveh, and he went.

To believe in something is to believe in it and practice it. What we believe is how we live. Faith moves God. Faith moves God on the throne. Yes, that's what it does. Matthew 17:20, "And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." So faith moves God on His throne. It's a wonderful thing to be able to get down on our knees and call on God when we need Him. If more prayer meetings were held today, if there was more sincere calling on God, we might see some changes in some things. God still moves for people. God moves for those who live for Him and walk upright before Him. The Bible tells us, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." Faith overcomes the world. John said, "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4).

We trust that the Lord will continue to help us, those of us who believe in God and serve Him. We live in very troubled times. We live in times now where our faith needs to be strong. We need to stand for what is right, to stand for our convictions, stand for the truth, and what the Bible teaches. God's way is a wonderful way. It's a beautiful way. He has set a standard for His people to live by. †

**"The new year stands before us, like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written."—Melody Beattie.**

**"Take a leap of faith and begin this wondrous new year by believing."—Sarah Ban Breathnach.**



# FALL ON THE STONE

2022 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Terry Deville



**W**E WILL BE reading from Matthew, chapter 21. We're going to start reading from verse 42: "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected [Jesus, speaking of Himself], the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing [I like how He said that.], and it is marvellous in our eyes?" Do you still see the Church of God as something marvelous in your eyes? "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you [Jesus is talking to His Jewish audience.], and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." This is the scripture I want you to pay close attention to: "And whosoever shall fall on this stone [talking about Himself] shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." These are deep scriptures of Jesus' own words. I trust you've gotten the meaning of what He was saying.

There's another scripture I'm going to add to this. It's Job 41:25b. This is after Job had gone through many breakings. He said, "... by reason of breakings they purify themselves." Do you like that scripture?

When we think of something broken, it's usually not something that projects anything useful. Most broken things are useless. But the way God sees things and man sees things are many times quite different, Dear Ones. If you're a child of God, you'll want to see things the way God sees them, because that's the real reality of how it is. Let's turn over to Isaiah 55:8, 9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your [human] ways, and my thoughts than your [human] thoughts." Do you believe that? Lord, help me to see things. Anoint my eyes to see things as they really are.

The Bible says, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." He's talking about a heart that has godly sorrow. A heart of repentance that acknowledges, "Lord, I need you," which is saying to God, "Lord, I want to give my life totally to you, and I want to serve you for the rest of my life. I want to make sure I do it in a way that pleases you all through my life." It's the Spirit of God that breaks the heart. When He sees an honest heart and knows what's in that heart, He wants to come in. God's Spirit breaks the heart. That, to me, is one of the most beautiful sights I have seen since I've been a Christian. I've seen people many times walk down the aisle with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. What does that tell you they're about to do? They've been convicted of their sins. They want to repent. They want to turn their lives over to God. Another sinner has come home. The angels rejoice in heaven. I think we need to rejoice along with them, don't you? Is that a beautiful sight to you? A broken and a contrite heart in spirit? That's what God is looking for. He will not despise it.

I'm going to speak to the unsaved as well as the saints. I'm going to go over one of the most beautiful stories in the Bible. May the Spirit bless it so it will bless you. The prodigal son was like me and some others. I wandered out from under my mother and daddy's rule at our Christian home. I loved and respected them, but I wanted to go out in the world and live it up for a while. As the old saying says, "To sow my wild oats." Bro. Gary is a good example of this, too. We went far out in the world. Sin just kept taking us farther and farther until we wasted our substance. We wasted our lives. For what?

With the prodigal son, something happened. He came to himself. Who do you think helped him to come to himself? Now, if I can put it in this form, I know I had a mother and father, a grandma and grandpa, and many other people praying for me. When I came to myself, there was no doubt where I was going to go. Mothers and Fathers, keep praying. Do you believe God answers those prayers? You've heard my testimony before, but I was far out there. I was in the music industry. I was in the motorcycle gang with my buddies. I was getting as far out as you could get. I came to myself one day. I think it shocked my wife, Carol. You can remember details when God is in something, can't you? I wanted to get right with God. A long story short: At that time the devil was bidding high for my soul, but there's power in prayer, Saints, power to spare! Let's do our part, and God will do His part.

My dad thought I'd gone too far out in sin, but he kept praying. "I want to get saved, Dad." Of course, he and my mama were rejoicing. "I want to wait until Sunday. I want to get saved in a Church of God service." Kathy's father was preaching. He carried a burden for me, too. October 29, 1978, was the greatest day of my life! I went to the altar. Was I ever so surprised! I felt that God loved me. We talk about the peace of God, the joy of God, the love of God, but to feel it is something much more. I felt it that day. I went everywhere telling everybody. I was well known in the community because of sports, playing in a band, and other things. A lot of people said, "Well, he'll never stay with it," but I made up my mind.

Make up your mind, Dear Ones, and allow yourselves to keep falling on the Stone. There are things in all of us. There were things even in the apostle Paul and Peter that needed breaking. Do you agree? I could go down the line about others, but I'll be here all night. John wanted to call fire down from heaven. Jesus said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." He said that to His disciples, James and John. They needed some work. They needed some breaking, and Jesus knew how to break them. They had to make the decision: "Will I fall on this Stone, or will I reject it?" Falling on the Stone of Jesus Christ is a good thing. I could

go down the line, but Peter stands out more than anybody. He's the one that Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock [this truth] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It's still in the Book, and it's still true. Let's stay in the church! Let Christ be the Head.

In Matthew, chapter 16, beginning with verse 21, and on down, Jesus began to tell His disciples that He was going to go to Jerusalem to be delivered unto wicked men and be killed. I think Peter's motive was good, but that didn't make it right. Did it? "Not so, Lord," said Peter. Do you know the Bible says that Peter rebuked the Lord? With all of Peter's problems, it still didn't disqualify him for the work that God had for him. Think of that! When you're faced with a problem like Peter, and you need to fall on the Stone, just remember, it doesn't disqualify you for the work that God has for you. Just fall on the Stone. So Jesus turned around and rebuked Peter. Jesus said, "Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." In other words, "Peter, you're looking at this from a human standpoint. I know you don't want me to die, but you're not seeing this from a supernatural standpoint." What I love about Peter, he kept falling on the Stone. God's ways and His thoughts are so much higher. When He wants us to fall on this Stone, let's fall on the Stone. It will break away the things that need to be broken away. It purifies us.

After Jesus was raised from the dead, He had appeared to the disciples twice, but there was a little delay at that time. Do you know what Peter said? And Jesus had given him a special visitation after His resurrection. Peter needed it. Peter said, "I go a'fishing." Six others said, "We're going to go with you, Peter." And they went fishing all night long. Come morning, they heard a voice of a man on the shore of Galilee. I've been to Galilee. Oh, what a beautiful place! It's clear water, mountain water, full of fish. Jesus said, "Children, have ye any meat?" They answered him, "No." Jesus said, "Let down your nets for a draught." They did. Do you know how many fishes they brought up in one net? I guess they counted them. The Bible says, "An hundred and fifty and three" (John 21:11). About that time, John said to Peter, "It is the Lord." Peter didn't wait on the ship. When Peter heard that it was the Lord on the shore, he dived into the water. He loved the Lord so much.

When Peter got to the shore, Jesus had already had fish on the coals of fire. One time He even told Peter to go out on the sea and put a hook down and whatever fish was caught, open its mouth, and there he would find a piece of money. "Go and pay our taxes with that." Peter did it, and he saw it. Peter needed a little more breaking, even after Pentecost. Saints, do we still need some breakings? If you'll look through the Bible, Job, Joseph, Abraham, Paul, Stephen, and all down through the line, they needed breakings. You see, that's that higher way that we don't comprehend, but I believe in it.

As the disciples sat around, Jesus began to give them the fish and the bread. He spoke directly to Peter.

Some might disagree with this, but I'll tell you what I believe. Peter denied Jesus three times. You know that. Jesus said to Peter, "Lovest thou me more than these?"

"Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee."

Jesus didn't stop there. Sometimes we just say things without really meaning it from a depth of *yes*. So the Jesus asked Peter again, "Lovest thou me? Feed my lambs." Then when the Lord asked him the third time, "Lovest thou me?" remember this: It was getting deeper and deeper and deeper on that old fisherman's heart. Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." I believe after the third time, Jesus' power was having the effect He wanted it to have.

Peter was grieved. I believe Peter was so full of emotion. "Lord, I know I denied you. I'll leave it all behind. I promise I'll do all I can for you. I'm going to follow you all the way." Peter made that complete consecration of being broken to the will of God. I don't have time to go into the other occasions pertaining to Peter. The point I'm making here, Saints, even the best of Christians need to fall on the Stone. You agree, don't you?

"What does *fall on the Stone* mean, Bro. Terry?" Think of Joseph. This may be the most perfect example we have in the Bible of continuing to fall on the Stone. Do you know the Bible says that Joseph was a type of Christ? Joseph was 17 years old when he told his brothers the vision he had. They hated him for it. What they did to Joseph was as cruel as it could be. They were his brothers. What did Jesus say? "A man's foes [enemies] shall be they of his own household" (Matthew 10:36). They put Joseph in a pit and had planned to kill him. That had to break Joseph's heart. But all through this, there was never a hint that Joseph held any malice towards his brothers who were cruel to him. Joseph didn't let bitterness get in his heart. Do you know the devil tries to put bitterness in your heart? It not only defiles yourself, but it defiles those you're bitter towards. I don't see bitterness in Joseph.

I believe during that time Joseph had so fallen on the Stone that he broke some things and was getting more and more like our Lord. More and more to the Lord's image. As we would say today, Potiphar's wife "made a pass" at Joseph. You know the story. I loved the way Joseph acted. "How can I do this? How can I do this evil?" The devil is still at work today. Believe me, they don't want to handle it like Joseph did. We all want to handle it like Joseph did. So when Potiphar's wife made up this lie and told her husband, he was full of wrath. He said, "Send him to prison [the dungeon]." Joseph was bound with irons and fetters.

Have you ever considered why Joseph didn't defend himself? Did you ever consider that? We like to defend ourselves, don't we? That tells me something deep about Joseph that I want more of. Sometimes when you defend yourself, it doesn't matter. It's not going to help. But I have to believe that the Spirit of God was working with Joseph in such a way, it wasn't best for him to say anything. That would be a tough thing to do. Our humanity wants us to defend ourselves. Joseph didn't say a word to anyone, and he was as innocent as he could be, but they were continually able to see that the



Lord was with him. That's what the breakings are all about. Fall on the Stone, and let the Lord break us. If we'll do it like the Lord wants us to, it means falling on the Stone. People will be able to see that the Lord is with us.

While Joseph was in prison, the butler and the baker had a dream. Joseph interpreted their dreams. The butler's dream came true, and so did the baker's dream, but Joseph said to the butler, "You will be restored to your position at Pharaoh's house." Joseph also said to the butler, "When you go to Pharaoh, tell him to remember me." Genesis 40:14, "But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house." Can you fault Joseph for that? What is the difference here? It wasn't God's time. If it had been His time, He would have made the butler remember. The butler forgot about Joseph. You'll be forgotten, but fall on the Stone, Dear Ones. Joseph was forgotten. He had to deal with that. "I helped the butler to get out of prison, and he just forgot me!" So many times we try to do God's work. It is understood that Joseph wanted out of prison, but it wasn't God's time, because God had a higher plan.

Do you know how much longer Joseph stayed in prison? Two full years. It goes on to say that they realized and saw that the Lord was with him. At the end of the two years that Pharaoh had his dream, they now finally remembered. Well, it was God's time. Do you believe God has a timing? Jesus came in the fullness of time. I want to be in time with God, don't you? Not before Him nor behind Him. So Joseph was broken in three different instances, and he came out next in line to Pharaoh.

When Joseph's brothers came back, after doing what they did, do you remember what happened? We're seeing a depth in Joseph that is Christlike indeed. When his brothers saw Joseph, they didn't recognize him. Joseph was arrayed in vestures of fine linen. Pharaoh had set Joseph over all the land of Egypt. Everything was entrusted to his care. But when Joseph saw his brothers and saw the change in them, he couldn't stand it anymore. He dismissed himself and went back to his chamber and wept because of his love for his brothers. Do you know God can change the most evil people in this world, and when God changes them, we can all rejoice? It will make us all weep, Dear Ones. Joseph wept. Finally, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers. All his family—Jacob and all the sons—were brought back into harmony.

This is summed up in Genesis 50:19-21. This is what Joseph said to his brothers. "And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." Isn't that what we want? Isn't it the desire of our heart to see much people saved? They may have done evil to us, but if we fall on the Stone, God can mean it for good. I don't think Joseph completely understood that while going through the trial. He had a dream of what would happen. "Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them."

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Do you know what the Bible says in Psalm 105:18, 19? "Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: Until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him." So while Joseph was waiting there in prison, this was not matching up with the dream he had at the beginning. Just because things are happening and it doesn't seem to match up with what we want, God's still in control, Saints. God, help us to have our eyes opened in order that we can see the things of God. They're real, Saints! "But my conditions and situations are saying this." Have you all ever been in that? That's the trial of your faith. We have to go through a preparation of breaking, breaking, breaking, but let's fall on the Stone. Let's be a Joseph. Let Jesus conform us more into His image. That's why He came. Romans 8:28, 29, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." We got a lot of it when we got saved, but God, who began a good work in us, will continue it. Many times it's a breaking of things that needs to be broken. There's where you get the deep things of God.

Carol and I have been through some real breakings in our lives. I'm not telling you this for self-pity. That's the farthest thing from my mind. I don't want you to feel sorry for me. That would be the worst thing. The reason I'm telling you this, it's going to lead to a point. I have a scripture to back it up. I'm going to tell you something that I haven't told anyone here: *I told the Lord that whatever it takes to get to heaven, I'm willing to go through it.* I meant it.

Most of you know that we lost our son, Clint, in 1990. He was our only son. Let me say this: I didn't think I could love anybody so much. You talk about love! That's a part of me. He was a wonderful Christian up to his teenage years. He was a Christian before Carol and me. He prayed for us. But the Lord knew that we were about to go through a breaking then. Do you think God just left us there? Do you know who He sent to help us? Greg and Ellen. They came down before they even knew anything had happened. That was not a coincidence. We needed them. When it happened, Bro. Greg was preaching that Sunday morning. Remember what I said: "Lord, whatever it takes to get to heaven, I'm willing to go through it."

I have a list of things of what God gave to me, showing me, that He saved my son before they killed him. He was seen on his knees praying before they shot him. But the main thing here is, so many things had happened, and the Spirit of God would come on me so strongly that the tear of sadness would turn into a tear of rejoicing. Now who rejoices over a lost child? Do you think I could do that? That's impossible, but God can! He gets it over and over and over. We have it, but back to our humanity, it hurts when it hits us. There's no suffering like that. He broke us, but His grace was sufficient. In the long run, I know Clint made it to heaven. Praise God!

Bro. Greg put his arms around me. Oh, that was so comforting. Ellen was with Carol. Bro. Greg went to

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the viewing. He preached the message. He held me up at the viewing as my congregation came to me. Please, I'm not looking for glory. God forbid. I'm saying how much God can help you. Remember that. I was able to give my congregation comfort. It helped them to see that I had such victory. The point I making here: I think you'll agree that's about the worst thing that can happen to a family.

In II Corinthians 1:8-10, Paul is telling the church at Corinth, "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, inasmuch that we despaired even of life." Paul got down. He was a human being. Listen what he goes on to say: "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves [May you consider that, and may the Lord give you understanding of that.], that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."

Let's go back to verses 3 and 4 of II Corinthians 1: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." God's comfort is supernatural. It's not just your everyday comfort. This is the part I want you, especially the young people, to take home with you. Over your life, keep making those in-depth consecrations. What I mean by that is, just before all of this happened to our son, I was in a service in the old building. They sang the song, "Consecration." That song will touch your heart. As I was reading the lines, I just started weeping uncontrollably. It was tears of sadness. It was tears of, "Yes, Lord, I see you. That's what I want." I wept and wept and wept. That's the kind of consecration that we get from the Holy Spirit. He breaks our heart.

God comforts us in all our tribulations. Every one of them! Whatever tribulation is breaking us, we can expect the God of all comfort to do what? Comfort us. I wouldn't want our son to come back to this old evil world for anything. I have a hope, I have a treasure up there! Do you understand what I'm saying? Only the God of all comfort can do that. You and I can't do that. So if the God of all comfort can comfort us in what we consider our worst tribulation, can He comfort you in any tribulation?

Don't fear the future. Don't fear your trials. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Timothy 1:7). There will always be grace and comfort. Set your mind. It's coming. It will always come. Just stay open to the Lord, and He'll bring that comfort, and all those things just melts away.

There's a song that says—

*The most beautiful Rose was broken one day,*

*Nailed to a tree on a hill far away;*

*Forsaken by His friends, bruised by His foes,*

*How sweet is the fragrance of heaven's sweet Rose.*

The rose must be crushed for the fragrance to come out.

Are you willing to fall on the Stone tonight? Saints of God, it's encouraging to know God is working. I see such attention with our people. They need our prayers. Young People, you need to also remember it's not always ice cream and cookies, as it were, but your consecration will get you to the place where you'll realize the deep things of God. It's worth it all. There are only some parts of God we'll know when we're really broken.

Jesus was bruised for our iniquities. What love! Do you have that love in your heart? If God has put His love in our heart, we have it in our heart. We want the world to see it. I'll quickly give one more example. This is important. John 3:16, 17, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." It's through His love. Follow Jesus' example.

A woman was caught in the act of adultery. They said to Jesus, "What do you say?" They were trying to get something on Jesus. Do you know what Jesus saw? A heart that He could touch. Do you know she didn't feel any condemnation from the Lord? Think about it. She felt His compassion. Do you think Jesus put His approval on her sin? Of course not! But condemning people, Dear Ones, is not loving people. It won't win them to the kingdom. You can love them without putting your approval on their sin. Jesus did. He said to her, "Go, and sin no more." Help us to be more like you, dear Lord.

God showed people love. It was His love that won them. Now, He put the Pharisees in their place, because they were using all their laws to keep people out of the kingdom. The Lord treated them the way they needed to be treated, but when it comes to their out and out sin, He loved them. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." One of the thieves on the cross was touched by that. "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Can we love everybody? It's not an option. The thing is, we have the ability to do it, but we have to get the old will out of the way.

In studying about the *love of God*, we find that it is an "unconditional love." It is a "deliberate assent of our will." If we put that with the love of God, what does it tell us? We have it, but there's a war going on right here. Will I show this love, or will people think I condone sin? Do you see what I'm trying to say? Let God do the condemnation. Let God do His work. He wants us to do as Jesus did. Love them. But the war is right here in the will. If we deliberately give our will over to God, we'll be amazed at how it affects people and how it affects us. We have the most powerful thing this side of heaven. We have to learn to get that will surrendered to let that love flow out.

If people talked about me, that doesn't mean I can't love them. "Well, I'll just love them with the act." That's good, but God has a higher way. If you'll let that love flow out, you'll react to Him with a feeling of love. It has helped me in so many situations. Are you understanding this? Fall on the Stone. Everything is love underneath. God conforms us more to His image. We'll really, really be safe. That's what we want.

God bless you. †





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

**Q**UESTION: Please name three or four things the tithes may be used for. The good Book says to bring all the tithes into the storehouse, but what is to be done with them then?

**A**NSWER: The storehouse is where you get your spiritual food. If you are a member of a local Church of God congregation, there is where your storehouse is. In saying “that there may be meat” in His house, the Lord simply means that there should be money in the church treasury for the paying of the operational expenses of the work. This would include paying the light bill; if in a cold place, the heating of the building; keeping the building in proper repair; and, possibly the most important, the support of the pastor.

Also, the tithes and offerings of a congregation can be used to help the poor and needy, home and foreign mission efforts, to name a few. An individual does not have the right to send his tithes anywhere he pleases, if he is a member of a local congregation; the congregation as a whole should decide how their money is to be used, and they should make sure, as far as is possible, that they are using it for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, and not for some false work.

**Q**UESTION: If the power of Christ can forgive a sinner’s sins, why can’t He remove the root or the “Adamic nature” all at the same time? Why should the Lord have to wait until another time to cleanse or purify?

**A**NSWER: First, let me say, it seems to me your question is worded in a misleading way. It is not a matter of Christ’s power, as far as His power is concerned. He could do just as you said, but Christ is just as bound by His Word as we are, and He works within the bounds of His Word. Why did He not give the disciples the Holy Spirit when they were converted? Why did He tell them to wait in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high?

When a sinner comes to Christ for salvation, he is coming because he is convicted of HIS sins and when he confesses and repents, he confesses His sins, he repents of HIS sins, and he is forgiven of HIS sins. You do not have to repent of the depraved nature. Why cannot Christ forgive without a sinner confessing and forsaking his sins? Because that is the Bible requirement! “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). When it comes to sanctification, the infilling of the Holy Spirit, there are Bible conditions to be met, and a person is not sanctified until he meets those requirements. For proof that there is a cleansing in sanctification study Acts 15:9; Ephesians 5:25-27; also

the two rooms of the tabernacle, the tabernacle being a type of the church. There were two altars. Blood was to be put on BOTH, showing, in type, the two cleansings—one in justification, the brazen altar, the other in sanctification, the golden altar. You had to enter the first room before you could go into the second.

**Q**UESTION: What is the difference in Christian perfection and Adamic perfection?

**A**NSWER: I am not sure that I fully understand your question. Do you mean Adam’s perfect state before he sinned, and the Christian today? If so, the difference would be that the Christian today, even though he is saved and sanctified, has had weaknesses passed on down to him which he must strive to overcome, weaknesses which he must guard against, very carefully, lest Satan trip him up. Adam, being the first man of God’s creation, had no earthly parents to pass such weaknesses on down to him.

The Christian’s perfection today is that he loves God with a perfect heart and is walking in all the light he has, yet because of a lack of teaching he may be doing things that are not right; yet he is perfect, in God’s sight, because he is doing all he knows to do.

**Q**UESTION: The Bible says, “In the last days I will pour out of my Spirit, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy.” Does a person have to be saved for God to pour out His Spirit on him?

**A**NSWER: In the meaning of this verse, yes. Jesus taught that the world, the “world of the unsaved,” could not receive the Spirit of God (John 14:17). A person must be truly converted and then present his body a “living sacrifice” to God to be filled with the Spirit—to be sanctified (Romans 12:1).

Let me also point out, this prophecy was given through Joel and the “last days” he referred to began with the early morning church—see Acts 2:16.

**Q**UESTION: In Ecclesiastes 12:7 we read that the dust returns to the earth and the spirit returns to God who gave it. In John 5:28, 29, we read that those in the graves will hear His voice and they will come out of the graves. John 5:28, 29 shows that all people who died a long time ago and those who die nowadays are still in the graves until the day of the resurrection of the dead. What then does Ecclesiastes 12:7 mean? Which of the two is correct?

**A**NSWER: These verses of scripture do not contradict each other. Ecclesiastes 12:7 tells you what part of “man” returns to the earth and it tells you what part returns to God. John 5:28, 29 tells you that those who are in the graves shall come forth. It is the physical man that is put in the grave, it is the physical that returns to the dust of the earth. Paul informs us that “this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (see I Corinthians 15:51-56). In this present world, man is twofold, i.e., flesh and spirit; in that eternal realm where the redeemed of all ages shall dwell with Christ eternally, he will be a spirit being only. “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (I Corinthians 15:50). †

# THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



## A REPROOF IGNORED

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

"You're going to have to start watching that foot of yours," said my mother.

*Watch my foot?* I wondered. *What does she mean by that?*

I looked sideways at my mother, but there was no hint of the meaning on her face. She and I were preparing an early supper so the family could eat before I headed out for my evening class at the small college I attended. Although I still lived in my parents' home, I was nearly an adult. No longer did I need to look up to see my mother's face. I was just as tall as she was.

Mom turned the potatoes in the iron skillet, and my mouth watered at the sight of their golden crustiness.

"Your foot's been getting a little heavy on the gas pedal lately," my mother continued after a few moments. "When Daddy and I saw you come driving down the lane yesterday, we thought you were going to crash into the gate posts. You barely missed them. At the speed you were going, you would have smashed the car if you had hit them."

I stifled a sigh. *Mom and Dad are too picky about my driving, I thought to myself. They are just worried because I haven't had my driver's license for very long, and they are afraid I am going to have an accident. They're not used to the fact that I'm old enough to drive now. I lifted my chin. And I'm a good driver, I thought.*

"I didn't think I was going all that fast," I replied.

"Humpf!" said my mother. "You were going way too fast. You need to slow down!"

"Ok," I said. The sulkiness in my tone brought a frown to my mother's forehead, but she said no more as we began to carry food from the stove to the table.

On my way to college that evening, I remembered again my mother's reproof about my driving. My feelings were still injured. *Mom and Dad probably talked to each other about my driving before they decided to say something to me, I grumbled to myself. That's embarrassing. They act like I'll never be a grownup. They focus on every little detail of every little thing I do, and they criticize it. I can't do anything right. The longer I thought about it, the grumpier I felt.*

*Well, I decided, the next time I'm driving down the lane and my parents are anywhere around, I will creep like a turtle. That should make them happy.* With that, I put my mother's reproof about my driving out of my mind.

Weeks passed. My life became busier and busier as I juggled college classes and a new part-time job. Because the place where I worked was only ten minutes

away from our house, I often came home for lunch. There came a day when I spent too long over the noon meal. When I looked up at the clock, I saw I was nearly late for work. I jumped up from the table and flew down the sidewalk to my car, digging in my purse for my keys as I ran. I jumped into my car, started it up, and backed hurriedly out of the parking space.

Boom! There was the horrendous sound of wood on metal. The car rocked as I slammed on my brakes. One glance in the rearview mirror told me what had happened. I had backed up so fast that I had traveled farther than I should have. I had hit the utility pole that stood next to the garage. I jumped out and ran around to the back of the car to see what damage I had caused. The utility pole was fine, but the car was not. There was a huge dent in the trunk. If I had not been going so fast, the accident would never have occurred.

My mother's words rang in my ears. "Your foot's been getting a little heavy on the gas pedal lately," she had said. "You need to slow down!" Well, I had only pretended to listen to her reproof. In reality, I had disregarded her words, taking them only as criticism when they had actually been meant as instruction.

In shame I returned to the house to tell my parents about the accident I had just had. They didn't scold me, but only asked if I had been hurt.

"I was driving too fast," I admitted. "I didn't slow down like you told me to."

"Well, live and learn," said my father after examining the dent in the trunk. "It could have been worse. The car is still drivable. Just take it easy. I'll see about fixing the trunk later on this week."

I drove slowly and carefully down our lane on my way back to work that afternoon. I had a lot to think about.

Our wise saying for this month comes from Proverbs 13:18, which says, "He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth."

A reproof is a warning. To "refuse reproof" means to pay no attention to the warnings we are given about our actions. We all need reproofs from time to time. As our scripture says, refusing a reproof is an error, or mistake. We should listen respectfully and then make changes to our behavior so we won't have to be reproved over and over again.

Sometimes God reproves us. Through reading the Bible, and by listening to godly ministers, we learn how to make our lives more pleasing to the Lord. If we want to stay in the way of life, we need to accept reproofs. They are good instruction for us and will make our lives a praise and honor to God.

### Activity

II Timothy 3:16 is a very familiar passage of scripture that tells us the Word of God is profitable (valuable) for four things. One of these things is **reproof**. See if you can guess what the other three things are, and then check yourself by looking up the verse in the Bible. How many did you guess correctly?

### Answer to Last Month's Activity

"For this is **good** and acceptable in the sight of God our **Savior**; Who will have all men to be **saved**, and



to come unto the knowledge of the **truth**. For there is one God, and one **mediator** between God and men, the man **Christ Jesus**; Who gave **himself** a ransom for **all**, to be testified in due time" (I Timothy 2:3-6). †



Greetings,

It is a pleasure to hear thoughts from the different young people, and I trust that you enjoy it also!

The thought expressed this month by Bro. Alan Richards are so relevant to the world we find ourselves in today. A world where mankind has

decided, to a large extent, that they are capable and justified in deciding for themselves the right way to live. At least as long as that lines up with the current trends and popular ideas that are being pushed in our culture.

The vision and understanding of God is sadly degraded and increasingly lost to most people. May God help us to have a testimony that will show a blessed and enjoyable life that leads us to heaven.

Blessings,  
Bro. Doug

## YE ARE NOT YOUR OWN

By Bro. Alan Richards



VERSE THAT I came across recently interested me. The verse was I Corinthians 6:19, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and ye are not your own?" I began thinking about the last phrase of the verse, *ye are not your own*, and the apparent paradox that emerges when we describe surrender to Christ as "freedom." To understand this evident paradox, we must first understand a few key truths: that good, evil, and their consequences are fixed, that Satan is evil while God is good, and that there is no third option, only good and evil.

In general, I think people agree that Satan is evil, and God is good. The parts that people have an issue with are that good, evil, and their consequences are fixed, and that there exists no third option apart from good and evil. People have decided that they are capable of determining right and wrong, and the seemingly neutral position of not being quite "righteous" but certainly not evil; just a "good" person. This view causes them to take issue with the idea of being "free moral agents" in a morally fixed world. If you want more clarification on good, evil, and their consequences being fixed, Bro. Dave Goble from Carmichael, California, gave an excellent explanation in his message, "Good and Evil—I."

Now I want to explain what I mean by "free moral agents" in a morally fixed world. When the world was

created, man was given abundant freedom. God's only instructions were to dress and keep the garden, and to refrain from eating the fruit that grew on the Tree of Good and Evil. As Bro. Goble explains, God was essentially saying, "I have given you freedom and paradise, but you may not alter good and evil. That ability is for Me alone."

Although morality and the results of good and evil were fixed, man was not restricted or controlled by God. Man was free. Things changed however, when man disobeyed and ate the forbidden fruit. After that, God seemed to begin dominating man and ordering him about. But that is not the case. What is not understood by many people is that, God IS good. He does not unfairly dominate as a slave master would, rather, knowing the fixed consequences of evil and good, He commands that humans do good! Deuteronomy 30:19, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life ..." All of God's commandments and actions are focused toward returning mankind to his previous state of freedom, as much as that is now possible since man has allowed sin to enter the world. God is good, and therefore anyone wanting to return to that previous state of freedom, and spend an eternity of life, must follow His requirements. Many people mistake this dependence on God for slavery, but in fact, God is the only being that can restore our freedom to us. Satan is evil, and his desire is to destroy and enslave humans. He started first by taking Adam and Eve's freedom in the garden. He is not looking out for your best interests, he is "seeking whom he may devour." God, meanwhile, is willing and able to restore us to a place of freedom where we will praise and thank Him for giving His all for our freedom. †

## REVIEWING THE YEAR

Looking back on the year that has gone, the things that bring us the greatest satisfaction are not only personal successes we may have had, or any pleasures we may have enjoyed, but the efforts we have made to improve the condition of others and our own progress in moral character. Nothing bears reviewing better than acts of self-sacrifice, and nothing brings greater reward. While, therefore, we must not allow ourselves to be unduly depressed by a review of the past, we must allow it to have a salutary influence upon us, and resolve with the lesser opportunities the coming time may present to us to make the most and the best of them. Much is still possible to every man who redeems his time, and who consecrates himself wholeheartedly to the service of God and man.—Selected.

*"New Year's Day is a good time to fix one's eyes on the only One who knows what the year is to hold."—Elisabeth Elliot.*

*"Enter the coming year with renewed hope in the power of God to do through you what you cannot."—John MacArthur.*

# SHOW THE HOUSE TO THE HOUSE

2022 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Paul Wilson



**I** WANT TO speak to on the thought of, “Show the House to the House.” I want us to turn in our Bibles to Ezekiel, chapter 43. We’ll read verses 1-11: “Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house. And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places. In their setting of their threshold by my thresholds, and their post by my posts, and the wall between me and them, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger. Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever. Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.”

Ezekiel lived in the time of Jeremiah, and the people were carried away into captivity because they did not heed the warning of Jeremiah. It is said that Ezekiel was about thirty years old when he was taken into captivity. Five years after being in captivity, God gave him the gift of prophecy.

It is possible for one to lose his vision. It is possible and easy for us to lose our identity. A lot of Church of God people, or a lot of people who call themselves Christians, have lost their identity. Sometimes we cannot recognize Christians differently from other people. Losing identity is not a good thing. When we get away from the truth of God’s Word, when we get away from that which we’ve been taught, that’s where we start to lose our identity. That’s when God starts to leave us, because when we start to lose our identity, we find that

man-rule starts to set in. People give their own opinions and try to use their opinions to rule the church. But I am glad to be a part of the church that is not ruled by man. This church doesn’t have earthly headquarters. I’m glad its headquarters are in heaven. I’m glad our Commander is in heaven.

God appeared to Ezekiel in a vision. God told him to tell the children of Israel to put their threshold by His thresholds. In other words, their standard by His standard. They tried to measure their standard by God’s standard, but they changed a lot of things. We live in a world where there are many changes, and the religious world wants us as the people of God to accept some of their changes that they have brought into the church community. There are some things that are outrageous and are an abomination to the Lord. As I said before, it is sometimes hard to identify the church. People call themselves the church, but it is hard to identify them.

In the book of Haggai, chapter 2, it is said, “Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?” Compare the former church to the latter church, and there is a vast difference. Sometimes we hear some gospel or doctrine preached, and we ask ourselves, what is that? Can that help a man’s soul? Can that deliver a person’s soul from the pit of hell? But God still has a church! God still has some holy people. God has some people who still believe in holiness, righteousness, and truth. I’m glad I’m among a body of ministers who still preach the truth.

It has been said, “A house divided against itself cannot stand,” and “United we stand, divided we fall.” Let me tell you, Church, if we become a united church, we will be a force to be reckoned with. The more divided we are, the weaker we become. Sometimes not everyone understands everything at the same time. We don’t understand certain things the same way, but there should be a unity of the Spirit. The Bible says that we must endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

First, there needs to be a unity of the Spirit before there can be a unity of the faith. I want to show the House to the House. I might not be able to preach it the way I would love to, but I trust you will understand what I’m trying to say to you. “Show the House to the House.” Show the pattern and the form of the House to the House. I always talk about houses that I have seen in some places. I’ve said, “That’s a beautiful house.” And I wonder what it must look like inside that house.

We want the world to see what it’s like in this House. We want the world to see what it’s like *inside* of this House. I’m not talking about this building. I’m talking about the people of God, because the pattern and the furniture in this House are beautiful.



I can tell you what's not in this House: indifference. Hatred is not in this House. Division is not in this House. It's no time for us to stand back and criticize this and criticize that. A thought was brought out in the Ministers' meeting about taking the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye. Some people criticize others, and they look at this and that, and they pick here and there. Bro. Greg brought a thought. He said, "The gospel is rounded. It's not just one thing." You know, somebody can get up here and just preach on Divine healing, Divine healing, Divine healing, but the gospel is not just about Divine healing. It's not just about modesty. Yes, God has a standard. It's rounded. It consists of everything. As I quoted before, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." It will crumble, but when we stand together as the people of God, we are a force to be reckoned with. We will be a powerful church. We will be a mighty church.

As Jesus walked the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked the disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" Some of the His disciples answered, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." But Simon Peter gave the divine relation, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus looked at Peter and said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven, and upon this rock [this truth] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Unity must be in the church. Ephesians 4:3, "Endeavouring [striving] to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." It is a good feeling when I see brethren coming together and being united. Have you ever heard about a united front? It's hard to break that rank. For the enemy to come in, it has to be somebody in the rank that breaks the line. But Jesus' words still stand: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." I love the Church of God.

There's a song in our hymnal that says—

*Like a mighty army  
Moves the church of God:  
Brothers, we are treading  
Where the saints have trod:  
We are not divided,  
All one body we,  
One in hope and doctrine,  
One in charity.*

Let us stand as a united front, because God doesn't have a church that is separated. God has a church that is united.

God gave Moses the pattern on how to build the tabernacle, and if Moses had deviated from the pattern, he would have been in trouble with God. Church of God Ministers, let us stay with the pattern. We do not want to deviate from the pattern. We want to build according to the pattern. As long as we build according to the pattern, we will have a mighty church. "Like a mighty army moves the church of God."

I want to see God work some more. I'm not saying He's not working, but I would like to see Him work more mightily among us. But not until we come to the January-February 2023

place where we stand united will He work mightily among us. Somebody preached the other afternoon that Abraham said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between me and thee, for we be brethren."

Now, to get in this House, there is a door. Jesus said, "I am the door." To get in this House, you don't need to sign a decision card. You don't need to shake the preacher's hand. I don't need to shake the preacher's hand. All we need to do is what Jesus told Nicodemus when he came unto Him: "What must I do to get into the kingdom?" Jesus didn't beat around the bush. Jesus said to him, "Ye must be born again." It sounded hard to Nicodemus. He didn't understand, but Jesus continued to say to him, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

Another song in our hymnal says—

*Divinely built, divinely ruled,  
To God she doth submit;  
His will her law, his truth her guide,  
Her path is glory-lit.*

I say again, I love the Church of God. I really do love the Church of God. I don't want to hear anybody say anything against the church. It pains my heart when people say things against the church that I belong to. She's divinely built. Jesus came and sought her.

Another hymn says—

*The church's one foundation  
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;  
She is His new creation  
By water and the word:  
From Heav'n He came and sought her  
To be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her,  
And for her life He died.*

We read in the book of Revelation, chapter 21, where John said, "I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." I thank God for the church that was not founded by man, but the church that we belong to was founded by Christ. "From Heav'n He came and sought her to be His holy bride; With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died."

I like the next verse of this song—

*Elect from ev'ry nation,  
Yet one o'er all the earth,  
Her charter of salvation,  
One Lord, one faith, one birth;  
One holy name she blesses,  
Partakes one holy food,  
And to one hope she presses,  
With ev'ry grace endued.*

The church is chosen from every nation: Jamaicans, Americans, Mexicans, Filipinos, and others. When we look at her, we see a difference in pigmentation. Some of us are white, some are black, some are brown. Please don't feel offended at what I'm saying. I'm just saying to you, as the song says, "Elect from ev'ry nation." God has brought us together to be one. I love the people of God. There's no difference when it comes to God. There's no difference between Bro. Mickey and me. We are the

saved, because all of us were bought by the blood of Christ. Glory to God!

There are too many thresholds trying to go up against God's threshold. False holiness is wanting us to accept their way, but God is a holy God. He is a divine God. He is a righteous God. We are told as a church, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

Do you know what is in this House? Love. "We know that we have passed from death unto life [Why?], because we love the brethren." If you can't love me, something is wrong. If I can't love you, something is wrong. I need to come to the altar and say, "Lord, help me to love my brother, to love my sister. Help me, Lord, to love, love, love!" Love is in this House. Do you know it's a good feeling when you are loved and when you give love? It might cause pain at times. Jesus loved us so much that it caused Him His life. That's how much He loved us. It caused Him His life to love. Love is in this House. Let's demonstrate love. When you show love, people will catch on to it. Are you hearing me, Church? When they see how much the people of God love each other, they will know we really do. When we bite, devour, and fight against each other, then the world will say, "No, we don't want that." We want to show the world that what we have is attractive.

Do you know what is also in this House? Fellowship. I John 1:7a, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." I don't have to know you to fellowship you. But if we are in the Light, we are going to fellowship one another. When you meet some people for the first time, and you hear them speak, you realize you can fellowship them. Walk in the Light. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." We are one o'er all the earth. This isn't an American church nor a Jamaican church. This is the Church of God. This isn't a California church nor a Honduras church. This is God's church.

*Mid toil and tribulation,  
And tumult of her war,  
She waits the consummation  
Of peace forevermore;  
Till, with the vision glorious,  
Her longing eyes are blest,  
And the great church victorious  
Shall be the church at rest.*

*Yet she on earth hath union  
With God the Three in One,  
And mystic sweet communion  
With those whose rest is won:  
O happy ones and holy!  
Lord, give us grace that we,  
Like them, the meek and lowly,  
On high may dwell with thee.*

I'm glad the church has one Foundation—not two, not three. Do you know who is the Cornerstone and Foundation of this church? Jesus is the Cornerstone and the Foundation. I'm glad that I'm building on this Foundation.

A builder doesn't just build on the rock. He has to dig into the rock. Then the foundation is laid. Let me tell you, that is the strongest part of a house.

Jesus gave us a parable of the wise man and the foolish man. It spoke of the man who built on the rock and one on the sand. Church, keep on building on the Rock. We're going to build with love, with peace, and with joy. Even some longsuffering is going to come, but we still have to build. Some people might try to separate us, but let us continue building and building on the Rock.

There's another song that has a similar title: "The Church Has One Foundation." One verse says—

*Long with a scornful wonder  
Men saw her sore oppressed,  
By schisms rent asunder,  
By heresies distressed.  
Yet saints their watch were keeping  
To hail a brighter day,  
When God should stop their weeping,  
Take their reproach away.*

Despite the separation with a lot of religions, yet saints their watch are keeping.

Because there are other foundations, the last verse says—

*Back to the one foundation,  
From sects and creeds made free,  
Come saints of every nation  
To blessed unity.  
Once more the ancient glory  
Shines as in days of old,  
And tells the wondrous story—  
One God, one faith, one fold.*

God sets the members in the church. The House that God is building, He sets the members each in place. It's not man that does that. Let us everyone stay in the place God has put us. A verse of a hymn says, "God sets her members each in place, According to His will—Apostles, prophets, teachers, all, His purpose to fulfill."

Psalm 137:1, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion." There were people who wanted to tear the Foundation down. But the people of God remembered the glory of Zion. They remembered how God took them across the Red Sea and the glorious things that this amazing God did for them. Those that carried them away in captivity said to them, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." They answered, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

There are people who want to tear the Foundation down. They want to tear love and unity down. There are those who even want to tear the home life down. Listen, when they said that it's okay for two men to be together in marriage, that's tearing the foundation down. When they said that it's okay for two women to be married, that's tearing the foundation down.

The Bible says, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" We as the people of God cannot let the foundations be destroyed. We need to keep building on the Foundation.



Again, Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Ye must be born again.” If you want to get in this House, you must be born again. Psalm 87:5, “And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her.” Are you happy that you have been born in her? I’m glad we’ve been born in her. “And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.” Verse 6: “The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there.”

Do you know what I’m happy about? If there was even a church book, and a pastor or whoever had to write my name in that book, perhaps they might not have written it down. But I’m glad it’s not me, nor you, nor our pastor, but it’s God who writes down our names.

Do you know some people sinned against God in Moses’ time? When God told Moses what He was going to do, Moses said, “If thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.” God said, “Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.” Thank God, He writes our names in His book.

I’m glad God’s glory is still in this House. I’ve experienced it. We still need more of God’s glory to come down and keep filling this temple. We want God to work in a mighty way. At the end of this convention, I would love to see people coming to the altar seeking God to be saved. Why? Because God’s glory is filling the temple. There are praises in this House. There are some people who are afraid of praising God, but there are praises in this House.

God bless you. †

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## BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

### GEMS FROM THE BOOK OF ROMANS

#### THE GRACE WHEREIN WE STAND

**Scriptures:** Romans 5:1, 2; I Peter 5:10, 12; Hebrews 12:28; Galatians 5:1; II Corinthians 12:9; Ephesians 6:10-13; I Corinthians 16:13.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

I Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

12 By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

Hebrews 12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

II Corinthians 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly there-

fore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

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

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

I Corinthians 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

**Memory Verse:** 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.

**Aim:** To reveal that God is willing to supply standing grace for all.

### INTRODUCTION

**W**HEN GOD formed Adam from the dust of the earth, He breathed into him a spirit, or soul, which was made in the image of God, who, of course, is holy. The same was true of Eve. God made them free moral beings with the power of choice. In fact, they were put on probation, and as the Bible clearly shows, they broke the one law God gave them and that brought death to the soul. A price had to be paid before they could be reconciled to God. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, paid that price.

I would like to quote from Russell R. Byrum’s book, *Christian Theology*:

“It is not the doctrine of the death of Christ that saves men, but the death itself. The atonement was made long before men attempted to formulate the doctrine concerning it. Very many devout Christians who have never attempted a formulation of the doctrine have trusted in the great truth of Christ’s atonement to the saving of their souls.

“That the sufferings, humiliation, and death of Christ are vitally connected with the pardon of men’s sins is a truth so frequently stated in the Scriptures that its mention seems almost superfluous. This was the burden of the message of Jesus and the apostolic ministry. It is the central thought of the sacred writings. This must be evident even to the superficial reader.”

It is also clear from the reading of the Scriptures that being reconciled with God is not brought about by works of righteousness of our own. The Bible tells us that our righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight. Then how? “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, ... [Jesus] gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a [separate] people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11, 14).

*Grace*, at least in part, means, “favor or kindness shown without regard to worth or merit of the one who receives it and in spite of what that same person deserves. Grace is one of the key attributes of God.”

## MEDITATIONS

**BEING JUSTIFIED—Romans 5:1, 2—Peace with God**—All have sinned. Thank God grace is offered to all. Being justified means you have been pardoned, and you have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through this experience we then have access to the infilling of the Holy Spirit and into the grace wherein we stand. Jesus told the disciples, “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

**THE GOD OF ALL GRACE—I Peter 5:10—Who has called us**—We see from this verse that grace means more than just unmerited favor in being forgiven of our sins, but that God’s grace covers much more. We see the word suffered in this verse. It is speaking of the disciples suffering. Why should Christians have to suffer for doing what is right? Why did Jesus, the holy Son of God, have to suffer, even die? “They that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”

There is a devil in the world who is opposed to everything that is holy and right, and to everyone who lives holy. We also read in the Scriptures that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it? So there are many who are under Satan’s control and are being used by him to oppose the children of God.

**A FAITHFUL BROTHER—I Peter 5:12—Silvanus**—It is understood that this faithful brother was Silas, Paul’s faithful travel companion on some of his missionary trips. Thus Peter was confident that the letter he had written would be delivered to “the strangers scattered abroad.” Peter was exhorting and testifying that the grace of God was able to give them what they needed to stand. That was not only true for Peter, and to those to whom he was writing, but it is still true today. God is no respecter of persons! His grace was sufficient for Paul, and His grace is sufficient for all who will trust Him.

**A KINGDOM THAT CANNOT BE MOVED—Hebrews 12:28—Let us**—There is so much confusion in the religious world about the kingdom of God. Nowhere in the Bible does it speak of a thousand year kingdom here on Earth. The prophet Daniel was given a vision of a stone that was cut out without hands. That stone represented Christ and the kingdom of God! In Daniel 2:44, we are told that it shall stand forever. “In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: ... and it shall stand for ever.” In Mark 1:15, Jesus said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.” To receive, or to be in this kingdom, is to be in the kingdom of grace; and by this grace, we can “serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

**STAND FAST—Galatians 5:1—Made free**—Sin is bondage! Christ came to set the captive free. Having been set free, we are to “stand fast,” and by the grace of God we can do so. We do not have to sin more or less every day because we have been delivered from the yoke of bondage.

**HE SAID UNTO ME—II Corinthians 12:9—Paul’s plea**—Various ideas have been advanced as to what this “thorn in the flesh” might be. Weak eyes is one, among others, but it seems to me Paul tells us what it was: “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee.” Paul accepted what the Lord told him; therefore, he said: “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

**FINALLY—Ephesians 6:10, 11—Be prepared**—Paul was nearing the end of his letter, and he encouraged them to be strong in the Lord. He instructs them: “Put on the whole armor of God.” There are many wiles of the devil that must be overcome.

**THE BATTLE IS NOT LITERAL—Ephesians 6:12**—We wrestle not against flesh and blood—That is not to say the physical has nothing to do with the battle! Jesus sweat as it were drops of blood in the Garden of Gethsemane. The Christian must battle against social evils, against political evils, and against religious evils—spiritual wickedness.

**THE WHOLE ARMOR—Ephesians 6:13—A battle to fight**—If you know anything about a literal army and a literal war, you know that the troops on the front lines have some very difficult and dangerous conditions to face. It is true that Paul does not speak of literal warfare, but he does speak of spiritual warfare.

**WATCH YE—I Corinthians 16:13—Contend for the faith**—The word *watch* is found in a number of scriptures. It is a word we need to take heed to, for there are many evil forces in the world, even the religious world, that will try to lead each saint away from the faith. The apostle Paul tells us “there is one faith,” and Jude tells us we are to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). Jude said it had been “delivered” to the saints, so any “faith” that has been brought forth since that time is not the true faith.

## CONCLUSION

Thank God for the grace that has appeared to all men. When Jesus died on that old rugged cross, He tasted death for everyone, not just for a select few. The grace of God not only brought salvation to all, but that same grace can keep everyone with victory in his soul. As this lesson shows, there are battles to fight and trials to overcome, but just as the Lord told Paul, “My grace is sufficient for you,” it will be for us.

## FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Discuss the word *grace*.
2. After being saved by grace, why do we continue to need grace?
3. What is the armor of God for?
4. Why was no armor provided for the back?
5. God provides the armor. Who is to put it on? †



# BIBLE UNITY AND FELLOWSHIP

By the late R. L. Erwin

**Scripture text:** John 17:20-23—*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

**T**HE REVELATION of Jesus Christ as set forth by St. John tells of many plagues, woes and vials of wrath. Today we are living in the closing days of grace; these woes are upon us. The devil is working even among some who are supposed to be free—of Satan and sectism—right in among some who make profession in the Church of God today. Man-rule sticks its ugly sect-head up with a seducing spirit.

“Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?” (Psalm 94:20).

Paul told the true Church of God, “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11).

“If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deuteronomy 13:1-3).

Today when a true minister rebukes all evil, then some professors sympathize with the evil.

The accident rate is high today; still the automobile doesn't run down nor wreck as many as the gossiping, hypocritical tongue.

Listen, my Friend, the farther this present-day compromise of the Church of God professors goes, the more seducing and corruptible it becomes. Yes, the great masses of today's false religions have become tolerant and friendly toward corrupt, satanic, apostate conditions. We all know the powers of sin have reached hurricane velocity, and the pressure and suction and of today's departure from God are like hidden currents in treacherous waters. These satanic currents are sweeping the youth of today into moral wreck and spiritual ruin. In this strife-torn, sin-wrecked, confused world, the Spirit of God is the only true remedy to guide us into paths of peace and eternal safety.

There seems to be confusion among some of the saints as to when unity is to become effective among Christians in the Church of God. What is the basis of Bible unity? What is the basis of Bible fellowship? Is unity established sometime later after fellowship is established? Does unity of doctrine establish fellowship? Paul tells the Church of God in Ephesians 4:3 to endeavor to keep the “unity of the Spirit” until they all came to the “unity of the faith [doctrine].” We can clearly see by this that Christ intends that every ONE of His saints who compose the true Church of God come to the same doctrine. Paul also speaks in several scriptures that the saints are to be of the same mind and doctrine.

Let us notice in the above scriptures that this is a command: endeavor to keep the unity; and, therefore, every true Christian **MUST** be obedient to this commandment in order to remain a Christian.

According to the Scriptures, those who divide themselves off into groups are not pleasing Christ, the Builder and Organizer of His one church. **Therefore, those who backslide sever fellowship with Christ, and those who follow their group are guilty of causing division.**

When is fellowship established? We recognize that there is no Christian fellowship among the unsaved, for they are strangers and foreigners to God's way; but when sinners become saints, Paul says in Ephesians 2:19, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God [or Church of God].” How can anyone who has been saved not be able to see by this one verse that salvation makes EVERY saint a member of the household of God, or the one true church, and establishes Christlike fellowship with God and every other saint of the true Church of God? Anyone would think, by the way these so-called Church of God preachers divide into groups, that the household of God is the household of man; and that it is scripturally proper to separate the saints into the non-scriptural groups, and that it is in the order of the Lord. But such is NOT the case; it is a transgression against God and against Christ, His body, or church. All the saved people are the one household of God, the body of Christ.

Ephesians 2:21, “In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.” In this verse, which was inspired of God, it says that all the saints are fitly framed together by the hand of God, not divided and separated into groups by preachers. By reading the 22<sup>nd</sup> verse, everyone ought to see the terribleness and wickedness of this dividing and separating the saints into groups. Paul said, “Let God be true and every man a liar.”

We read in verse 22, “In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God.” The Church of God, here and now on the earth, is the dwelling place of God, and the question quickly comes to the minds of many: Which Church of God group does God live in? Or, is God going to divide and separate His true spiritual body into parts in order to dwell in these separate groups with different preachers as their head, each with a different church organization?

We can plainly see by this next text that salvation is the basis of fellowship and unity of Spirit in Christ's

church or body. We are all baptized by one Spirit; and that fellowship and unity of the Spirit is established between Christ and every saint in His church here and now on Earth. And after studying this one scripture, how can anyone scripturally divide and separate Christ's true church into groups and not see scripturally that it is sin? Instead of dividing the saints, these leaders should teach the unity of all the saints, not only in word, but also in example and practice.

It may be a fact that there are true saints in every one of these separate groups; but they are kept separate by the spirit of "groupism." God's heart must be grieved to see His true Christians separated in fellowship, when His Son died on the cruel, agonizing cross to make perfect unity of the Spirit and faith possible. Christ, through salvation and sanctification, makes unity; it is carnal man who separates. This work of Satan tears the church, Christ's body, into division. Why let Satan defeat God's plan? Why not answer Christ's prayer, "THAT ALL BE ONE"? †

—Reprinted from July 1989 issue

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## SHADOWS OF GOOD THINGS

By the late Russell R. Byrum

(Part XVI)

### THE SACRED SEASONS

(Leviticus 23; Numbers 28, 29)

**T**HE TERM "feast" where used in our common English Bible to designate the set sacred seasons or stated solemnities of the Israelites is somewhat misleading because of the sense in which feast is often understood by many today. These seasons were not all times of banqueting or of elaborate meals, for one called a feast was really a fast. They were principally times of religious rejoicing. Probably a better name for these holy festivals is "sacred seasons." This designation includes the great annual "set feasts," other holy days, and the various holy years.

These sacred seasons are referred to many times in the Pentateuch, but are more formally described in Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28, 29. One weekly and six annual feasts are described in Leviticus 23. They are: (1) Sabbath, (2) Passover (including Unleavened Bread), (3) First-fruits, (4) Pentecost, (5) Trumpets, (6) Atonement, (7) Tabernacles. To these must be added the Sabbatic Year, which occurred each seventh year, and the jubilee Year, each fiftieth year. Besides these the new moon was a time for special observance by offering special sacrifices.

Every day, in fact, was sanctified in a sense by the daily burnt offering, or the morning and evening sacrifice. This consisted in offering a lamb each morning and another each evening as a continual burnt offering. This was a national offering for general acceptance and worship and was offered after the manner of the ordinary burnt offering. With it was offered a common meat-offering of one tenth ephah of fine flour and one fourth part of an hin of oil, also a drink-offering of wine

equal in quantity to the oil. Each Sabbath this daily sacrifice was doubled in number of animals and in quantity of other materials.

On each new moon besides the regular burnt offering nine other animals were offered for burnt offerings, with meat-offerings for each, besides a sin-offering. On every day the great annual feasts several animals were offered in addition to the regular offering, amounting to no fewer than thirty-two on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles were the three great feasts. At these each of the male Israelites was required to gather at the national sanctuary. "Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God" (Exodus 23:17; Deuteronomy 16:16). The first and last days of the Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles, also Pentecost, Trumpets, and Atonement, were to be observed as "holy convocations," or solemn assemblies. No work was to be done in them. They were special sabbaths in addition to the weekly Sabbaths. These assemblies were not necessarily at the tabernacle, but, except in the great feasts, in the communities where the people lived.

Though these were religious occasions, yet they had great value socially, politically, and commercially. These national gatherings were a wise provision of God for the general good of Israel, so far-reaching in their effects were they that it is difficult to believe they could have been so well thought out in their various aspects by any other than the infinite mind. They were observed at the seasons of the year when travel was easiest and when most convenient for an agricultural people to be absent from their work.

At the house of God in a season of rejoicing, a place and time most favorable to the development of friendship, Israel met three times each year. The males only were required to attend, but often women such as Hannah the devout mother of Samuel went. Also families, like that holy family of Nazareth, "went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover" (Luke 2:41). There old friendships were renewed. There under the benign influence of the worship of the Lord new and wider circles of friendships were formed. There those of near kin, like Mary and Elizabeth, living at widely separated points could greet each other and converse of things of mutual interest. And men who had fought the Lord's battles under Joshua or David met again and talked of the events of long ago.

These gatherings could not fail to have great educational value. They required those living in remote places to get out of their own little corner and to see somewhat of the world. In a day when newspapers were unknown and means of communication and travel were most primitive, these feasts could not fail to be a place for general exchange of news. Those coming from distant Beersheba in the south not only would tell of their events, but would doubtless bring somewhat of the doings and culture of the Egyptians, their near neighbors. Worshipers from distant Dan would have the latest news from Damascus and the east. Others from the northwest and southwest would tell of the discoveries or newly planted colonies of the Phoenicians or the



conquests of the Philistines. And especially would there be an exchange of intertribal news.

Politically these gatherings did much to mold the nation in one. Thrice yearly tribal jealousies must be laid aside for a national meeting. They developed the spirit of nationalism by this reminder that all who gathered were one nation of a common ancestry, with a common history, a common religion, and different from all the surrounding nations.

The internal commerce of the people could not fail to be built up by these gatherings at the feasts. They opened the ways for trade and business between the different parts of the country. Commercially these feasts had a value not very different from that of modern fairs. Such religious festivals have always had much value commercially. Mecca, because of the annual pilgrimage of the Mohammedans there, has become one of the greatest markets in the Eastern world. Doubtless this simple requirement of all males attending the feasts at Jerusalem three times each year had a tremendous influence in developing the nation of Israel commercially, socially, intellectually, politically, and especially religiously. He who can attribute this and other equally wise laws to the semi-barbarous people which lived under them certainly possesses a credulity far exceeding that necessary to believe they were divinely given.

The religious influence of these feasts was very great. The very fact that they furnished set times for worship was of importance in making it easier for a man to break away from his daily routine. Similar set times are equally important now. Then the association with others in worship could not help but fan one's zeal for God and warm the heart. Inspiration to worship would naturally be the result of many worshiping together. Men more easily move with the mass than singly. Also there the isolated Israelite would be impressed with the holiness of Jehovah as he gazed from a distance upon His holy house. He would be impressed with the reality of the unseen God as he saw His representative the high priest performing His solemn duties there. The sinfulness of sin and that most glorious truth of pardon through vicarious suffering would grip him as he beheld the bleeding sacrifices at the altar of God. He would hear the priests and Levites teaching God's holy law and go home with a renewed zeal for his most holy faith.

*Times of the Feast*—To know the time of those ancient Jewish feasts it is necessary to do more than name the month and date. They all varied several days each year, as our modern observance of Easter varies according to the common solar calendar. The Jews used the lunar calendar, counting the month by the moon and twelve moons to the year. This meant an average of 29½ days to the month and 354 days to the year. This falling short of the full year by eleven days meant that about every three years, or, to be exact, seven times every nineteen years, an extra moon must be added.

Thus, there was a constant shifting of the beginning of the year, which makes confusion for us in determining the date in our year for these feasts. The Israelites had the civil year, beginning near the time of the fall equinox, and which was common in the

Eastern nations of the time. And they also had the sacred year, instituted by Moses, which was peculiar to themselves and which began six months prior to the civil year, about the time of the spring equinox. This sacred-year calendar is the one that determined the time of the feasts. It properly began with the first new moon before the first full moon after the twenty-first of March. But the Israelites, not having the latter date established, began it, ordinarily, with the moon following the twelfth. If, however, it was seen that on the sixteenth of the moon following Adar, the twelfth, the barley would not yet be ripe, the intercalary month, Veadar, was inserted as a thirteenth moon. But two intercalary years were not allowed in succession. The Jewish month and date of each feast we will give in connection with its discussion.

### **The Sabbath**

(Leviticus 13:1-3)

In the text referred to above God Himself names the Sabbath first in His enumeration of the feasts of the Lord. It was most frequently observed, and more often enjoined than any of the other sacred seasons. Yet we are compelled to differ with those who hold that this primacy of the Sabbath among the feasts was because it was pre-Mosaic in its origin and observance. It is true that in Leviticus 23 it is not first mentioned, but as much may be said of the Passover, the observance of which was prior to the exodus and before any observance of the Sabbath by men. Not one text in all the Bible enjoins the observance of the Sabbath upon any man before the exodus, nor since Pentecost. Its first recorded observance was at the time of the giving of the manna (Exodus 16:23). Objection is sometimes made to this position on the ground of Genesis 2:3, but it is well to remember in reading that text that it was written, not at creation, but by Moses after the Sabbath was commanded to Israel at Sinai. When God wanted to set apart a day each week for Himself, He chose the seventh, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Observe that the sanctifying of the day was subsequent to the resting—"He had rested." God's resting was at creation; the setting apart of the day for men's observance was at least twenty-five hundred years after man's creation—after the exodus. This is positively stated in Nehemiah 9:13, 14 and Deuteronomy 5:2, 3, 12.

Its purpose was for a memorial or a sign (Exodus 31:17) of their deliverance from Egypt and that they were the special people of God (Deuteronomy 5:15; Ezekiel 20:12). It was observed in commemoration of the beginning of their nation at the exodus, as Americans observe the fourth of July for a similar purpose. It was a weekly reminder of their peculiar relation to Jehovah. When the father failed to go to the field to work on the Sabbath he answered his little son's inquiry of, "Why?" with the explanation that it was in commemoration of God's mighty deliverance of their fathers from Egypt. Thus it always had great value as a memorial besides the physical benefit that cannot but result from that wise practice of resting from toil on one day of each seven.

## TO WHOM SHALL WE TURN?

By the late H. R. Matthews

**J**EREMIAH 10:23 says, “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps.”

When we view the international scene, it becomes quite clear that man left to himself, without a guiding hand, chaos is the result. But since it is not possible for man to direct his own steps, what are we to do? When the perplexities of life are beyond what our abilities are capable of coping with, to whom shall we turn? Let us look for our answers from the Word of God.

The Psalmist of Psalm 121 declared, “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.” Doubtless the Psalmist was referring to the city of Jerusalem and the temple where God met with His people from between the cherubims above the mercy seat. The Psalmist may have been from the countryside or from another city, for he lifted up his eyes unto the hills, or in other words, he prayed facing Jerusalem.

Since the New Covenant superceded the Old Covenant, we no longer look to the temple made with hands located in Jerusalem, but now our body is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and ye are not your own?” (I Corinthians 6:19). But whether in the days of the Psalmist who prayed facing Jerusalem, or in our day of the temple not made with hands (our body), the fact remains, it is not in man to direct his own steps.

David, the valiant warrior, went into battle against Goliath, the Philistine giant, in the name of the Lord of hosts, for it was not in him to direct his own steps. Had David gone to battle with Goliath in merely his own strength, he would have been vanquished by the giant. Although being the brave warrior that he was, David realized there would be times when his heart would be overwhelmed, and at such times he cried out, “Lead me to the rock that is higher than I” (Psalm 61:2). God comforted David with the words, “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye” (Psalm 32:8).

What greater blessing could be ours than to have the God of heaven to direct our paths, for He will never lead us down a wrong path. To have this blessing, we must trust in the Lord with all our heart. If we lean unto our own understanding, we are certain to follow paths that will lead us away from God.

To whom do we turn when the burden of sin becomes heavier than we can bear? We turn to the One in whom we are complete, soul, mind, and body. We learn from the Old Testament atonement chapter, Isaiah 53:5 being the atonement verse, “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities ...” Some may expect to be forgiven of their sins through the ritual of an earthly being, but there is only one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men,

It was observed by a complete cessation from work (Exodus 20:10; 35:2; Leviticus 23:3). The law was very strict in its requirement of Sabbath observance. No fire was to be kindled and no cooking done. This could easily be observed in Palestine, where fire is not needed for heating purposes. The violation of the Sabbath was punishable by death. But the Sabbath was not merely negative, it was also positive. It was not to be spent in listless idleness. It was set apart for a holy convocation or assembly, doubtless for the reading of the law and worship. We are not told exactly what was the nature of these holy convocations prior to the Babylonish captivity, but we know after that and in New Testament times the Jews met for worship on the Sabbath, and our blessed Lord Himself read the law and taught in the synagogues. The object, then, of the Old Testament Sabbath was (1) for a memorial, (2) for needed physical rest, (3) for divine worship, (4) for a type of good things now the heritage of Christians.

*The Antitypical Sabbath*—That the Sabbath was a type, one of the shadows of good things, is clear from various New Testament texts. “Let no man therefore judge you ... in respect ... of the sabbath-days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” (Colossians 2:16, 17). It was a type or shadow of a body or substance which we obtain in Christ. The main idea of the Sabbath was physical rest. That physical rest therefore must have been typical of some higher rest to be found by the Christian. The strict observance of the Sabbath which God required of the Jew, like the requirement of strict adherence to the divine pattern for the tabernacle, was because it was to typify a perfect soul-rest of the Christian.

Centuries before Moses, the patriarch Jacob predicted Christ’s coming under the name “Shiloh,” or Rest-giver (Genesis 49:10). Jesus Himself said, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). He is the Rest-giver, and the rest He gives from the burden and bondage of sin is the Christian’s Sabbath foreshadowed by that ancient Mosaic rest-day. It was predicted that “his rest shall be glorious,” and, thank God, it is so. That this is the true Sabbath-keeping is argued by the inspired writer to the Hebrews (chapter 4:3-11). He who ceases from his own works to obtain righteousness and trusts in the mercy of God for pardon of sin has entered the true Sabbath. The Sabbath, like the other ceremonial requirements of the law of Moses, is abolished (Colossians 2:14-17; Hebrews 8:6-13), but the blessed soul-rest it prefigured remains for the people of God. †

### OUT OF BOX 88

**Dear Saints of God,**

**I am so blessed to get *The Way of Truth*. It has helped me so much with serving God. I am sending an offering to help a little in your wonderful work.**

**I got saved at the age of 22, and I am now 93 years old. I love the truth. ... It was so good to read the article in the September issue on Sanctification. Not long after I was saved, I was sanctified. God has kept me through all these years.**

**—J. H., Kentucky**



whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12.) Those who claim to have had their sins forgiven by another man will soon discover that they are carrying the same burden of sin as before. "... the chastisement of our peace was upon him." Peace of mind is a very precious gift from God.

To whom do we turn when the cares of life become greater than we can carry? The apostle Peter assures us that our heavenly Father cares much for us, therefore, we can safely cast all our care upon Him (I Peter 5:7). When we endeavor to carry our own cares, it results in much fretting and worrying and only intensifies and increases the load of care.

Doubts and fears are sure to come, but be sure they do not emanate from our heavenly Father. There is an enemy who plants them in the heart of the Christian in an effort to destroy faith in God. Though they howl and toss as the fierce storm rages, standing on the unfailing promises of God will dispel the doubts and the fears, and the comforting voice of the One to whom we must turn will still the voice of the enemy with the words from heaven, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

To whom do we turn when the dizzying problems arise that require greater wisdom than is resident with us? Let us look again to the apostle James for the answer to this question: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). The apostle Paul says of wisdom: "In whom [God] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). Many times the wisdom of this world will not suffice for the problems that may be confronting us. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (I Corinthians 3:19). Who better could we turn to then, than Jesus Christ, the Wonderful, the Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace? The man of wisdom then will not lean unto his own understanding, but will in all his ways acknowledge God, and God will direct his paths. Even the kings of Old Testament Israel looked to the prophets and seers to get the mind of God on perplexing situations that were beyond their ability to comprehend. Spiritual leaders of today are sought frequently for perplexing situations involving the spirit world. Probably most of our problems are basically of a spiritual nature and require counsel from those through whom the Spirit of God reveals answers. We are warned, through the Scriptures, not to walk after the counsel of the ungodly (non-Christian).

Because of it being their livelihood, many of the professional counselors will encourage their patients to return for session after session. This is not meant to cast reflection on those counselors who have compassion and deep concern for their patients. But again, this falls far short of the Source of all wisdom and understanding, the Wonderful, the Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Because of the age of sect-making, many denominational churches arose causing much confusion in the religious world, with multitudes crying out, "What church do I join? To whom shall I turn?" Jesus said, "I will build my church." Joining church does not place

one in the church Jesus is building. Jesus told Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3) The church Jesus is building took the Father's name: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Ephesians 3:14, 15).

The apostle Paul addressed the congregation at Corinth as "the church of God which is at Corinth." This was a local congregation of the universal family of God. The church Jesus is building is the only church that was purchased with His own blood. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Only the church Jesus is building is the pillar and ground of the truth (I Timothy 3:15). The church Jesus is building is the only church that the Holy Spirit guides into all truth: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). Although God's church may not be bound together geographically, we are bound together by the Spirit of truth that dwells within us.

To whom shall we turn when our Guiding Light seems to have flickered out, and the Holy One of Israel responds with silence as we lament with the wail of Job, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him?" (Job 23:8, 9). Even our blessed Redeemer, as He suffered the agony of the cross, cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). Every child of God will at times during their Christian sojourn experience a Guiding Light blackout, and it seems to occur just as we are passing through the fiery trial that the apostle Peter spoke of in his first epistle. At these times we may cry out, "Lord, why have you forsaken me right at the time when I need you most?"

God has good reasons for all that He does or permits Satan to do. It may be that God is endeavoring to wean us away from our feelings to perfect trust in Him. Satan will take advantage at that moment to come in like a roaring lion with his powers of accusation, shouting, "You're lost, you're lost; your profession is a sham; you are not able to live it, just give it up!" This is the most crucial moment of your entire lifetime. What will you do? To whom shall you turn? To yield to the father of lies who is pressing you sore would bring sure defeat. So what shall we do? Cast all our cares on Him who loves us, the Father of all truth who has solemnly promised never to leave us nor forsake us. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27). He it is that bears us up on eagles' wings.

Because it is He to whom we have turned to direct life's steps, He it is whose angels shall bear us safely into the realms of glory when our final step here on Earth is taken.

By God's grace, I expect to hear my name called out when the roll is called up yonder.

When the roll is called up yonder, will you be there? †

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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](http://www.winb.com)*

### **INTERNATIONAL**

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

Heard throughout Jamaica

### **THE BIBLE STANDARD BROADCAST**

Church of God (Universal)

James Arch, Pastor

Radio Cayman

1:30 P.M. Sun. E.S.T.

Grand Cayman

*\*Listen to The Bible Standard Broadcast from anywhere in the world via the internet. Go to [www.radiocayman.gov.ky](http://www.radiocayman.gov.ky) and then click on Radio Cayman 1 89.9. (Since it airs live, you have to log on at the appropriate time.)*

## **COMING MEETING**

### **2023 INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF GOD CONVENTION**

Hagerstown, Maryland U.S.A.

July 4-9, 2023, Lord willing

Bro. Gregory E. Tyler, Host Pastor

We are happy to announce that we now have a site streaming Church of God music and messages 24/7 recorded during our services. It can be found by going to [wayoftruth.org](http://wayoftruth.org) and clicking on:

**Way of Truth Internet Radio**

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