

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a ship's anchor and rope. On the left, a thick, dark, braided rope runs vertically. To the right, a large, dark metal anchor is visible, partially submerged in the water. The water is a deep blue with some white foam or ripples. The overall scene is nautical and serene.

The Way of Truth

Vol. 82

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

No. 6

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OUR ANCHOR HOLDS

Message begins on page 15

FRIEND, GO UP HIGHER

Luke 14:7-11, "And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

WE BEGIN THIS editorial by looking at a parable of Jesus in which He emphasizes the principle of humility. The Lord warns that the individual who seeks a place of honor must needs be careful, lest he be embarrassed by being replaced in the exalted place by one more honorable than he. The result being that with shame, he that sought to be exalted ends up demoted to a lower status. Jesus said that it would be far better to seek a humble place, that he which invited all would bid you a higher place than that low place you have chosen. The proclamation was, "Friend, go up higher."

I am going to use that thought to impress my reader with the reality that God wants us all to "go up higher" in our experience with Him. Christ is our Friend! He bids us one and all, "Friend, go up higher."

If you want to find God or be closer to God, you must go up, for He dwells on high. Psalm 61:2 says, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Also, Isaiah tells us that God's throne is on high: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."—Isaiah 6:1-8.

Sinner Friend, go up higher onto the ground of salvation.



John 10:10 says, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Christ purchased the higher ground of salvation where the abundant life is found.

Isaiah 35:1-8, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

Sin is the downward road but salvation is up higher. One songwriter penned, "I will walk the downward road no longer; Bless the Lord for saving grace."

Christian Friend, go up to the higher ground of sanctification.

There is an experience higher than justification where the saved individual is filled with the Holy Ghost.

Acts 1:8 declares, "But 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." This higher ground is obtained by consecration and sacrifice. Romans 12:1, 2, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Friend, go up higher!

A pilot was flying his small plane one day, when he heard a noise which he recognized as the gnawing of a rat. Wondering what its sharp teeth were cutting through, he suddenly realized with horror that it might be an electric wire. Then he remembered that rodents can't survive at high altitudes. Immediately, he began climbing until finally

ABOUT THE COVER

Life is full of storms, and unless we are anchored in Christ Jesus, we surely will be blown off course. Many people have many anchors, all of which will disappoint and fail. As the songwriter penned long ago, "On Christ, the solid Rock I stand; All other ground is sinking sand."

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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

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he had to put on his oxygen mask. Soon the gnawing sound ceased, and when he landed he found the rat—dead.

Do you want to destroy the power of evil in your life? Then read the Bible regularly, meditate upon its truths, and actively do God's will. Sinful appetites can't survive in such spiritual heights. Listen to the heavenly Father as He calls, "Children, come up higher!"

Friend, go up to the higher ground of self-sacrifice. Galatians 2:20 describes what I mean: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Also, Philippians 3:7-10, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."

As we walk the ground of self-sacrifice for Christ's sake, we find greater meaning for our lives!

Go up to the higher ground of reverent worship.

"Worship is a way of living, a way of seeing the world in the light of God ... to rise to a higher level of existence, to see the world from the point of view of God."

—Abraham J. Heschel

The time is coming when the faithful shall hear, "It's time to go up higher."

II Timothy 4:6-8, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

I John 3:1, 2, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Jesus says, "Friend, go up higher!" †

QUOTES ABOUT FATHERS

"A father is someone you look up to no matter how tall you grow."—Unknown

"I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father's protection."—Sigmund Freud

"One father is more than a hundred schoolmasters."
—George Herbert

"A father is the one friend upon whom we can always rely."—Emile Gaboriau †

IN THIS ISSUE:

The Question Box	Page 2
<i>Our monthly feature</i>	
Spring Revival Report	Page 3
<i>April services with Harley McClung</i>	
The Choice to Reason with God	Page 4
<i>Full-length sermon by Harley McClung</i>	
Bible Lesson of the Month	Page 8
<i>"The Baptism of the Spirit"</i>	
Steps Heavenward	Page 10
<i>Chapter XIII of the book by the late R. L. Berry</i>	
Living Epistles for God	Page 12
<i>Radio message by David Shaw</i>	
Poetry Page	Page 14
<i>Celebrating Father's Day</i>	
Our Anchor Holds	Page 15
<i>Full-length sermon by David Goble</i>	
The Children's Corner	Page 19
<i>"Grandma's Way," by Rebecca Bland</i>	
Young People's Page	Page 20
<i>"Listening," by Charnita Richards</i>	



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

QUESTION: Would you kindly explain I Corinthians 7:14, which says, "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy"?

ANSWER: I suppose you are asking in reference to the statement "else were your children unclean." I will give you part of Adam Clarke's comments:

"The Jews considered a child as born **out of holiness** whose parents were not proselytes at the time of the birth, though afterwards they became proselytes. On the other hand, they considered the children of heathens born **in holiness**, provided the parents became proselytes **before** the birth. All the children of the heathens were reputed **unclean** by the Jews; and all their own children holy."

In connection with the thought of the unsaved companion being "sanctified," Clarke says, "Or rather, is to be reputed as sanctified on account of his wife; she being a Christian woman, and he, though a heathen, being by marriage **one flesh** with her; as far as it refers to outward things, may be considered as imputed to him so as to render their connection NOT unlawful." Therefore, being lawfully married their offspring was not unclean.

QUESTION: How can our tithes and offerings work for God?

ANSWER: By putting them into God's work. This is something that people need to be taught! Not just to tithe but **MAKE SURE** you tithe to God's work. A true congregation of God's people are doing His work. If you are a part of one, that is where your tithe should go. Offerings can be given wherever God leads you to give. God's church has the commission to "go into all the world, and preach **THE** gospel to every creature." This takes money, along with consecrated workers.

QUESTION: Christ cast out devils from victims of insanity and other diseases and they were healed. In what way do evil spirits contact the spirit or soul of man (at a time when the victim is not aware personally) before they are able to inflict the victim with the disease?

ANSWER: First of all, we need to understand that **ALL** sickness is not the direct result of an evil spirit. Second, we need to realize that a person can have a soul that is pure and clean and still have a sick body,

at times the direct work of Satan, as was the case with Job. There are spirits who are assigned, as it were, by Satan to afflict certain parts of the body: blind devils, deaf devils, insane devils, etc. In some cases, people are actually possessed by these spirits and the only way they can be healed is for those spirits to be cast out. But that does not mean that every blind person is possessed with an evil spirit. As for the contact the evil spirit has with the soul, I can only say that it would be different with some than others. Do not get the idea that every sick person is a sinner!

QUESTION: Why did God leave Satan to carry on with his work in this world, but not to destroy him, so that we could live peacefully?

ANSWER: There are many things that we don't know. However, Satan is an evil spirit and I do not read in the Scriptures where God has or ever will destroy Satan. Of course God could have destroyed Satan, but that was not His purpose in creating a world and putting man upon it. God is proving that people will, of their own choice, serve Him rather than Satan. As far as our living in peace, we can **NOW** if we will take God's way. Satan is not free to do as he pleases. We are promised power through Christ over him. The reason Satan is doing all the evil today is not because God is letting him, but because **MAN IS** by refusing to obey God.

QUESTION: Can a Christian do away with witnessing and be glorified or go to heaven? Why is witnessing so important?

ANSWER: How can a person be a true Christian without being a witness for their Lord? Our very life is a witness. "A city set on a hill cannot be hid." A true Christian will let his light shine; he will not hide it under a bushel.

Also, there will be times when the Lord will have the Christian to speak to others, to witness to them. It is important because it is the will of God, and you can't be a Christian without doing the will of God. Jesus said, "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).

QUESTION: Would you please explain I Corinthians 13:1, which says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity [love], I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal"? There are sects teaching that there are tongues of angels and that people must talk to God in those tongues when in prayer.

ANSWER: Such teachings as you refer to are false. Paul did not say he could speak in the tongues of angels, nor did he teach that anyone must. Nowhere does the Bible require Christians to talk in the language of the angels. No man even knows that language, even those who are teaching such false doctrine. When angels were sent to earth to speak to man, the angel spoke in the man or woman's language, not some other tongue. Paul is simply using this expression to stress the importance of love, not some tongue. Do those people teach you must give your body to be burned?

Regardless of how many languages people may speak, that DOES NOT prove they are Christians. And that is what Paul is saying here. Regardless of what language you speak, if you do not have the love of God in your heart, you are not a true Christian.

The teaching you have referred to just shows how Satan can twist the meaning of the Word of God and mislead people. He can take the Scriptures and make people believe the very opposite of what they say. That's where your "doctrines of devils" come from. †

SPRING REVIVAL REPORT

(taken from notes by Sis. Sarah Arch)

THE ANNUAL spring revival of the Church of God in Hagerstown was held April 24-28, 2024. Bro. Harley McClung, pastor of the congregation in Craigsville, West Virginia, was the evangelist. His wife, Sis. Judy, was also with us. A few other saints from other states were able to be with us as well. Bro. Harley's messages were Spirit-filled and thought provoking.

We were also blessed with inspiring songs by the young people and older saints. God blessed our services in a special way. We can say that it was good to have been there.

We trust those who were at the altar are still pressing on in the good way. May each of us endeavor to make a successful Christian race with God's grace and help. Below are a few combined excerpts from all the messages:

We have been given the ability to choose—heaven, victory, losing. The road to heaven is paved with making the right choices. When you're seeking for Jesus, He can't be found just anywhere and anytime. Choose Him while He's available. So many people have made shipwreck of their lives. They have left God out of their lives. He gave us our lives to live for His glory. People need a new life. God offers a new life for you to choose. Today, now! Religion won't do it. Salvation is necessary. What we are choosing affects the eternal, not just here and now. What made Moses choose to suffer? He saw Him who is invisible. Moses had convenience in Egypt, but he chose to suffer. Faith makes real the things of the unseen world. Paul counted all things but dung so he could really know Christ. God has given us a choice. We can reason with Him.

Jesus came that we might have life in abundance. A life of humility. We see a lot of pride in the world. It's at the core of vanity. Living for God makes life worth living. We enjoy the smile of God on our lives. When we have the love of God, we have purpose in showing love to others. Jesus came to save mankind from the lifestyle of vanity. Our purpose is to help the world to see the vanity. Solomon started out with purpose—wisdom to guide his people well. We need to stay the course and not return to vanity. Solomon's wealth caused him to fall back into vanity.

Paul said that we are saved. We're actually free. That's what being saved means. It's salvation. The grace that brings salvation appears to everyone. This is God's

goodness to mankind. No one is left out. God is no respecter of persons. Faith is absolutely essential to our salvation, to our being free from Satan's power, and being free to be what God wants us to be. God is a holy God. He is a righteous God. Because He is righteous, He's going to judge the world in righteousness. There's no way around that. Don't be a skeptic there. God is going to judge us in the manner by which we lived. God will never force us. He gives us the opportunity to choose. Today we have the opportunity to accept God's grace. Today we have the opportunity to believe in it, or we can be skeptics. It's your choice, but if you choose to have faith in it, we bid you come and experience this glorious experience that Jesus came to offer to one and all.

Adam and Eve were perfect and holy in the Garden of Eden, but they were subject to temptation. Eve reasoned with the devil, which is not a wise thing to do. Satan is a liar and will tell people that God is a liar. Sin separates from God. Adam and Eve were never allowed in the garden again. But God gave them a promise. Jesus' coming would provide a door, a way to escape sin, a way to return to fellowship with God. If we choose to step inside the door, God's power is limitless. He will give whatever is needed. You cannot straddle the threshold. You must step through. It's not a halfway thing. Jesus offers wholeness, but we must step all the way through the door. Inside the door is manna to feed our souls and direction from the Holy Spirit. Outside the door is evil. When it came time for Noah and his family to enter the ark, God shut the door. There comes a time when God's mercy is ended. Today the door is wide open. One way—Jesus Christ. But you must open your heart's door.

We can choose laws that will give us the consequences we want out of life. We choose our destiny by the laws of consequences. Every law of God is a benefit to us. The laws of sin are detrimental. They start a downward trend. When we follow the laws of God, we will prosper. We'll gain more afterward than we have now. It's the opposite when you follow sin. The pleasures of sin diminish. Many times the consequences of sin are later in life so people think they're getting away with something. Nothing can change the laws of God. He has all wisdom and all knowledge. Don't follow man's laws when it comes to the well-being of our souls. The consequence of God's law is freedom. We reap what we sow. Delight in God's laws. Live by them, and we will be blessed. †

SPRING REVIVAL CD'S

CD's are available of these wonderful messages preached by Bro. Harley McClung. These may be purchased for \$3.00 each or the complete set of six for \$15.00.

Please indicate how many you would like by filling in the blanks. Send check or money order to: The Way of Truth CD Ministry, P.O. Box 88, Hagerstown, MD 21741-0088. (credit cards accepted.)

- ☐ #1583 You Can Choose
- ☐ #1584 The Choice to Reason with God
- ☐ #1585 Choosing Vanity or Purpose
- ☐ #1586 Choosing Faith or Skepticism
- ☐ #1587 There Are Doors to be Chosen
- ☐ #1588 Consequences

THE CHOICE TO REASON WITH GOD

2024 Hagerstown Spring Revival Message by Bro. Harley McClung



I ASK YOU to turn with me to a very familiar passage of scripture. Isaiah, chapter 1, verses 18-20. Isaiah said, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." I'd like to entitle my thoughts, "The Choice to Reason with God."

God has given us a lot of choices. He's given us an option. He's given us the privilege to be aware that He is willing to reason with us. But are we willing to reason with Him? Are we going to choose this glorious option that God has given us? He has given us intellect. It would be an extremely intelligent thing for everyone, saint and sinner alike, on an ongoing basis to reason with God. It's intelligent, because God, looking down upon us, has all of our best interests in His great heart. He wants for us the very best heaven has to offer. For us to realize this, He's trying His best to reason with us.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO REASON?

Now, what does it really mean *to reason*? It means "to have a discussion; to rationalize; to think things through, as a problem." Wow! I wish that the leaders of our nation would be willing to reason with one another. Look at the problems we have in this world, in this country. If they would just be willing to reason with one another, there would be harmony. But what we actually see is great contention.

In this sinful world, people are contending with God when He tries to reason with them. Is it not so? So God is trying His very best to reason with us to see this problem. What is this problem? It is sin. God has said to Israel through Isaiah, "Come, and let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be changed. They will no longer look the same way. They will be completely changed. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be changed to appear as wool."

In this reasoning that God sent to Israel through Isaiah, God is also, in His reasoning ways, bringing Israel to understand that if they're unwilling to reason, there will be consequences. This is the thing that all of us need to understand as well. God has given us this privilege, this choice, to reason with Him, but if we're unwilling to do that, there are consequences. Many times people are not interested in reasoning with God. How do we know that? Well, because people often ignore the message that God has sent to reason with mankind. As a preacher, I know what I'm talking about. There are times that I can tell when people really have an ear to hear. That was what Jesus said time and again to the people He was dealing with. He said, "If you have

an ear to hear, then hear." So sometimes when preachers are preaching, they can tell if people are connecting with them, if they're really wanting to receive with meekness what is being preached to them.

God sent Isaiah to Israel to preach to them and to tell them what the problem was they were dealing with. The problem they were dealing with was sin. Isaiah, in preaching and teaching to Israel, went down the whole list Israel was involved in. He was telling them that their lives and activities and everything that they were engaged in was not acceptable to God. Listen to me tonight, God doesn't have to accept everything. He'll never accept a life of sin, but He cares for the sinner. He loved Israel. He loved Israel enough to send Isaiah to them. Isaiah came and pointed out to them all that was going on in their lives. He was actually saying, in effect, that their lives were going to be subject to their very enemy. At that very moment, the Assyrians were planning an attack on Israel, and God was not with Israel. They had sinned. God didn't leave them. They left God. They were subject to a great battle that would go hard with them. Isaiah was telling them, "Now, if you'll reason with God, if you'll allow God to reason with you, then you can come to a place where you can overcome your enemy, but if you're not willing to reason with Me, then you're going to face the sword. "Ye shall be devoured with the sword [Then he goes further on and says]: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." So, we too, as Israel was, are given a choice to reason with God.

EVEN CHRISTIANS REASON WITH GOD

I think, even if we're Christians here tonight, we have the privilege, a glorious choice to reason with God. In preparation for this revival, I've reasoned with God. He has listened to me. I said, "Lord, you know what I am. I'm just a preacher. As you've created me, I'm weak, I'm frail, and I need your help." He said that He would hear our cries. He said, "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers." So I believe with all of my heart that when I reasoned with God, He was there and heard my cry. He was there to help me in my preparation. He's always faithful to mankind.

What about man to God? Are we willing to reason with Him or allow Him to reason with us? Verse 18 of Isaiah 1, tells of Isaiah's vision of God's mercy. He said, "Come now." Can you feel the compassion that God had on Israel? "Come." It's the compassion that we felt when Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. I'll take care of your needs, but you have to come. You have to be willing to reason with Me." We have this choice to reason with God. We're not forced. That's clearly the thing we

need to understand. God is not going to force anyone to reason with Him. This is purely an option. It is a choice that we must make.

If we're going to have God's favor shining on our lives, we have to reason with Him, and allow Him to reason with us. He reasons with us through the preaching of His Word. God chose through the foolishness of preaching of His Word to save those who would believe. But it seems like that there's an ongoing resistance to the preaching of God's Word. These pews would be filled tonight if people really wanted to reason with God through the preaching of God's Word. This is what God sent Isaiah to tell Israel.

I mentioned choices last night. Choice connects to the place of desired intention, values, and faith. So a choice is connected to reason and decision is connected to a cause. The reasoning that God sent Isaiah to do with Israel was a means by which they could be connected to God. Being connected to God, then, would give them the fortitude to face all of their enemies and to clear up this problem that they had with sin.

A preacher needs a vision. He needs an understanding of how to help people with the problem with sin. This is what God gave Isaiah. He gave him a vision of what was going to happen to His people, Israel, if they weren't willing to talk things over, and to get things to where this great problem would be solved. The preacher who does not have a clear idea of what sin is has a problem with telling the people of their problem. We have to see sin for what sin is. There are a lot of preachers in the world today who do not see the problem of sin. As a matter of fact, there are preachers today who are saying we're all sinners saved by grace. Well, that was not what Isaiah told Israel. That's what we need a clear understanding of.

SIN IS MAN'S ENEMY

Sin is man's worst enemy. It is our greatest problem. Sin is not something that we can roll under our tongue as a sweet morsel. It is something that has been created by all the forces of evil, Satan himself, who is the arch-enemy of God. Whenever a person is sinning, they're actually obeying God's arch-enemy. They are transgressing God's law. That's what sin is. Sin is the transgression of the known laws of God. That is why James said, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good [right], and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Isaiah was bringing this to Israel. He was opening up and showing them their sin. He was making them aware of this problem, and what they were going to encounter if they weren't willing to reason with God and allow Him to reason with them to give them a solution for this problem.

Political correctness keeps people from seeing the truth. That's why many times preachers get a bad rap. Neither do people see the truth by harsh lecturing. People see the truth, and they'll accept a solution to this problem whenever it is presented in Spirit and in truth, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. All of us know that there are times when a preacher is more anointed than others. It is not always the same. Whenever the Word of God is preached under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, then what happens in solving this problem is the help that God gives. Whenever it comes

to eradicating this problem, and a minister does it, it's not by his power or might, but it's by the Spirit of God. So in preaching, we let our light shine. We live the truth, but the truth must be preached.

Paul said in I Corinthians, chapter 1, verses 20 and 21: "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom [man's wisdom] knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." So preaching is absolutely a necessity. This is what Isaiah was coming to do for Israel. He was a representative of the most high God. God sent Isaiah because He cared for the souls of Israel. God cares for the souls of people here tonight. He has your soul's best interest on His great big heart. He doesn't want any soul here to face the problems that sin causes. Not just for a day, or for a period of time, but He doesn't want any to be lost. He has made a provision by which people can be saved through repentance. People are not going to repent unless they come under conviction. We must understand conviction is a must. Conviction is not pleasant. Conviction is not something that people just relish to come and sit under. That's why many times people won't come to hear the preaching. They don't want to have that uncomfortable feeling.

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

Jesus Christ came into this world and never a man spake like Him. He had the most eloquent way of preaching and presentation. He spoke in these little stories that people could relate to. All of His parables brought about messages that would deal with the subject of sin and guide people so that they would receive all that He would offer. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost and to preach the Word of God. Some didn't like to hear His words. They didn't like to hear His preaching. Those who opposed Jesus tried again and again to trap Him here or trap Him there in His preaching so that people wouldn't listen to Him. They sent some men to see if they could find something about Him. When they came back, they said, "Never a man spoke like this man. This man spoke as someone with great authority." He spoke with eloquence. He spoke to people's hearts to bring a remedy for the problem they had, the problem of sin.

I Corinthians 1:27, 28: "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." So Jesus was preaching to the descendants of those Isaiah was talking to. They listened to His words, and they were cut to heart. They didn't like to hear. All Jesus was doing was pointing out their sin, pointing out their lifestyle: what they were doing against themselves, what they were doing against God, what they were doing against the well being of their souls. They crucified Him. Why? Because they would not choose to reason with Him. Jesus told them time and again of the lifestyles that they were living and how sin was affecting them, but they wouldn't listen. They

turned their backs on Him. He came to His own people, and His own people turned their backs on Him.

Jesus sent the apostle Paul to preach the gospel. Paul was a faithful servant. God gave Paul a vision to make him willing to suffer all that he did. He sent Paul to preach. At one point in time, they complained so much that they said, "This man's preaching is turning the world upside down." Quite the contrary, actually. What Paul was doing was trying to turn their upside down world right side up. This is what Isaiah was trying very hard to do with Israel. This is what Jesus was trying to do. This is what the apostle Paul was trying to do.

REASONING WITH PEOPLE

Actually, when we preach truth, we are reasoning with people. Whenever we tell people the truth of the gospel, we are reasoning with them. We're telling people just what Jesus said. This is the truth. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He was telling a group of those Jewish people, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Freedom is glorious. It is wonderful. Do we not all want to be free? Jesus was telling them the truth, and they could see it, but they refused to accept it. They actually, at that point, started arguing with Jesus. "We're not in bondage." A lot of times when the truth is presented, people are going to argue about accepting or receiving that truth. Just like these Jewish people were saying, "We're not in bondage. We're Abraham's seed." Just at that moment, if they would have reasoned with Jesus, they would have been able to see and comprehend what He was trying to do. He was trying to help them deal with the serious problem of sin that was keeping them in bondage. Actually, it was affecting them so much that they couldn't even see that they were in bondage. They actually believed that they were free. This is the problem in all the world today. People are living in sin and dealing with the problems and the situations that sin has caused and believing all the while that they are free and living such a glorious life.

Israel had sinned greatly against God. God gave Isaiah this vision to preach to them. This vision that comes from God to a person, and then through that person to bless people should not ever be taken lightly. Israel should not have taken this lightly. Isaiah's vision was that Israel was facing extreme hardship if they were unreasonable, so special urgency was given to these appeals when first uttered. It was well-known to the Hebrew politicians and people that Assyria was preparing for a great war of conquest which would be directed especially against Jerusalem and her allies. Well, tonight make no mistake about it, Satan is, and has always been marshaling his forces to fight against you. He has nothing good for you. He has no mercy. He has no compassion. His whole purpose and aim is to damn your soul and all the world's souls to an everlasting hell. If Israel continued in their sins, they would face their enemy without God.

Quite frankly, that is what is happening today. So many people have so many problems and situations, and they are facing them without God. When we hear

testimonies of how God has answered our prayers, and even healed of cancer, we know that there are people reasoning with God and allowing God to reason with them to handle these situations and problems and eradicate them. The only remedy of sin is to reason with God who would pardon them. He said, "Though your sins be red like crimson, they're going to be altered and eradicated." You'll be justified. You'll be completely cleared of this great crime.

Paul said, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." So here tonight, let's weigh the two options that we have. We can weigh the option of reasoning with God and having the gift of eternal life, or we can weigh the option of reasoning with the devil. But I warn you, you're never going to come out with a good outcome if you reason with Satan. He is a master of reasoning. He doesn't come and stand before you as someone there like these glorious billboards portraying so much pleasures and benefits without the consequences. A lot of times he is reasoning through the thought process. He comes and makes people think this and that. He brings temptation here and temptation there to reason with him. Just give him a moment and he will take advantage.

Then we see the mercy of God, the grace, and the love. In Jesus' parable of the prodigal, the young man left his father's house. He took the provisions that his father gave him. God has given us all provisions. He has blessed us all. Many times people are taking the blessings that God has given them and using them in a sinful way. This young man took all the provisions that his father had given him and went into a far country. He wasted them all on riotous living. You've heard this parable many, many times. When he went into that far country, he faced problems. He faced situations. All of it because of sin. All of it because he left the father. All of it because he went into a far country and found himself actually in such a despicable condition that he would've filled his belly with the husks that the hogs did eat.

Again, we see where God was sending Isaiah to Israel to work out the situation that they were in. You can just feel the Father's love through the words that Isaiah was offering to Israel. The same thing when Jesus makes His appeal: "Come." I believe that there were words in the prodigal's mind that he was hearing. He was hearing his father saying, "Well, come back to father's house. All of these problems and situations that sin has brought to you, all can be eradicated. All of it can be solved. Just come back." I believe somewhere along the way, he was willing to reason with God. I believe conviction was so heavy.

I WAS A PRODIGAL

Let me tell you something tonight, I was a prodigal. I had gone into a far, far country. Judy and I were married, and we lived in Pennsylvania. There we had a certain lifestyle. It was drinking and partying, but somehow or other something came to me that I had to go back to West Virginia. I said to her, "What do you think about us going home?" She said, "Okay, let's go." When I got home, I was troubled all the time. All the time, there was just something that was making me unhappy. I couldn't get around it. I couldn't get away

from it. I know preachers aren't supposed to talk too much about themselves, but I have to tell you this.

Back then, we were poor, and we burnt firewood, and so I asked my uncle, "Do you know where I can get some firewood?" He said, "Well, my neighbor here wants this oak tree cut. If you cut it, you can have all the wood." I said, "Okay." It was a pretty good size tree. I got my saw and started to cut it up. I got it almost cut through, and I was already feeling bad. God was already working in my heart and mind. I believe this with all my heart tonight. I believe this is what God did to the prodigal. When that tree was almost cut, it was supposed to fall this way, but it started to fall the other way. I thought, *Oh, no! it can't fall that way.* So I stopped. I went up to my uncle and said, "Hey, it's going to fall the wrong way. It's going to tear these people's power lines down." He said, "Well, did you not take some wedges?" I said, "No." So he grabbed some wedges and he tried to wedge that tree. It was no use. That big tree fell down on the power lines and all of them came down.

Listen, things don't go well when you're in sin. Things weren't going well for the prodigal. He found himself not favored in any way by God because he had left God. How could God favor him? How could God bless him? He had left the place of blessing. And how could God bless me? I didn't have God with me, but He was reasoning with me. For a long period of time, I wasn't willing to reason with Him. God sent a preacher. I don't know how it came to be, but the preacher stayed at our house. I had no intentions to go to church. We had already made plans to go somewhere else. It was the last night of revival, and the preacher asked, "Are you going to church tonight?" God sent a preacher to reason with me. It was my choice. I didn't have to reason. I didn't have to go to church that night. God gave me a choice to reason with Him. All the time, I felt so miserable out there cutting that tree. That night I went to the service, but it didn't ease up there, either. I sat there, and I was miserable. Even at the moment of the altar call, it was almost like I was determined not to reason with God. This is the way people are.

The closing song was sung—the first verse, the second verse, the third verse, and finally it came down to the last verse, and someone asked, "Don't you want to go?" I couldn't take it any longer. This is the place sometimes where God has to get people in before they're willing to reason with Him. The prodigal had to go really low. He had to really get down in the hog pen, into the beggarly elements of sin. He had to become really miserable before he had any willingness to reason with God. It's a choice. It's something that all of us, within ourselves, must be willing to do. But when I went to the altar that night, the burden, the heaviness, the things that were raging in my mind, everything that I was dealing with, God took them away. He lifted my burdens.

YOUR LIFE CAN CAUSE OTHERS TO REASON

Preaching the Word comes in various ways, many forms. Sometimes we can look at people's lives. Some of you may have heard this story before—

One time a man came to a service. He went to the altar and was gloriously saved. After the message, the

minister said to him, "I was just curious. What did I say tonight that caused you to want to reason with God?"

"Well, Brother, you had a wonderful message, but I've been watching my neighbor's life. He has such a glowing joy that I wanted it, too."

We have to let our light so shine before men that we can glorify our Father which is in heaven. That right there is the means many times that God is reasoning with us, but still through the foolishness of preaching God has chosen to save those who believe.

THE SAD STORY OF DAVID

We find a man God had blessed. Oh, he had blessed David! He had elevated David to being a king, but before that, God had protected him from Saul's wrath. He had given David victory after victory after victory in his warfare and in the commanding of his army. All of the soldiers under his command loved and honored him. They would do anything in the world for him because God had blessed him. But one day, David chose not to go out to battle with his army. That evening he went up to the porch of his palace. Listen, you have to be careful not to reason with Satan. Satan brings temptation and discouragement. He brings anything and everything that's a problem. His whole aim and purpose is to get you to sin, because he knows if he can get you to sin, he's going to put your life in problems. Satan always causes a problem.

As David was looking out, he saw a beautiful woman. Let me tell you something, there are beautiful women everywhere. We need to have the fortitude of God with us all the time, because there are so many options in the world for people to choose. Satan will bring about so many sinful options. Well, here's one for David. He saw Bathsheba, a beautiful woman, bathing.

David asked, "Who is this woman?"

"She's Bathsheba, Uriah's wife."

"Go get her."

Remember, David was the king. People did what he told them to do. They couldn't disobey David, because he had the power to cut their heads off.

David was not permitted by God's law to have this woman. There are a lot of things in the world today that God forbids us to have. We need to be very careful that we don't partake of the forbidden. Bathsheba conceived, and when she told David, he realized, "I have to do something." One sin leads to another sin. This is the compounding effect. This is the problem with sin. It's just not one, and then let go. No, it just keeps going and rolling. So when Bathsheba was with child, David had to cover it up. He sent for Uriah who was on the front line of the battle. He was a faithful soldier. He was faithful to David. Uriah did everything he could to please David, because he thought that was the way it was supposed to be and pleasing to God. So when Uriah came, David said to him, "Now you go down to your wife." And he sent a lot of food and things for them to enjoy and be blessed with. But it just didn't go the way David wanted it to go. Let me tell you something, whenever you're in sin, things don't go the way you think they're going to go.

Uriah wasn't about to go down to his house. He gave the explanation to David the next day. He said, "The ark is having to live in a tent, and your people are out in the field living in tents. How could I be privileged to go down and sleep with my wife? No, I can't do that."

The next night, David got Uriah drunk to send him down there. Again, he wouldn't go. The next morning, David sent a letter by Uriah. It was a message to the captain to put Uriah in the forefront of the battle, knowing that he would be killed. So David's sin is compounding. David's sin is going from bad to worse. Again, God reasons with people through preaching. So one day, after Uriah was killed, David brought Bathsheba into the palace and married her. But God sent a preacher by the name of Nathan. He came to David and said, "David, something really bad has happened. A stranger came to this rich man. This rich man had everything he needed, but he sent to a poor man, who had nothing except one little ewe lamb. This little ewe lamb was so precious to this man that he even considered it as his daughter. The rich man took this man's one little ewe lamb and dressed it for the stranger." David's anger was kindled. Rightfully so. Listen to me, people's anger should be kindled against sin, because God is angry with sin every day. David said, "This man will be put to death." Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man."

The reason that people many times don't like to hear the preaching of the Word is because it brings them face to face with their sins. This is the means by which God has chosen so that people can see the great problem that they're dealing with. There are things that they need to get out of the way. The only way to get those things out of the way is through repentance. Tonight, you can reason with God, and He will open the door of opportunity for you to be pardoned. He'll give you life, liberty, power, and victory, but you must be willing to reason with Him.

Thank God, David came to himself. David was the prodigal, too, just like me. This is a Psalm of David when Nathan came to him. He was willing to reason with God. He said to God, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."

CONCLUSION

This is all the reasoning God wants us to do with Him: just be willing to acknowledge our sins, just be willing to acknowledge the problems that sin has caused, just be willing for Him to show us and to help us to understand that sin is a great enemy to us.

Sin is doing great harm. God is not willing that any should perish. Sin is the reason people are perishing, and God has made a provision. He sent Jesus Christ into this world to save those who are in sin. He is busy seeking people. He is striving with people through the preaching of His Word to make an appeal to them to

give their hearts to Him by way of reasoning with Him. But again, He's not going to force anyone to reason with Him. It's purely an option. He said, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing." It's an option given to you.

David chose the option. He said, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." He took David out of that horrible pit. He took me out of that horrible pit. He took the apostle Paul out of that horrible pit. He freed us all from the miry clay. He set our feet upon the solid Rock. He established our goings. He has even put a new song in our mouths. Praise God!

All that God wants is for you to be willing to reason with Him. Is there anyone here tonight who is willing to reason with God and allow this great miracle to be wrought in your heart and life? You can be brought out of that horrible pit of sin and be lifted up so that we can sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Sin is not only a problem here. It will be a problem when you come down to the end of your life. There's a song by Charles W. Naylor that says—

Heaven is a holy place

Filled with glory and with grace;

Sin can never enter there:

All within its gates are pure,

From defilement kept secure,

Sin can never enter there.

Listen, sin is a big problem. If your heart is full of sin, you're on the broad way. You're not on the way that leads to heaven. †

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

THE STEPS OF THE RIGHTEOUS THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT

Scriptures: Matthew 3:11; John 14:15-17, 26; 20:21-23; Acts 1:8; 2:37-39.

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 20:21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

Acts 1:8 But 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 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Memory Verse: I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.

—Matthew 3:11.

Aim: To stress the importance and true character of Holy Ghost baptism.

INTRODUCTION

“The baptism of the Holy Ghost taught in the New Testament is a special endowment of the Spirit of God in the heart of His believing and obedient children. Different expressions are used to convey this idea—baptism of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 3:11); the Holy Ghost given (John 7:39); receiving ‘the Spirit of truth’ (John 14:17; 16:13); ‘Comforter’ (John 14:16, 26; 15:26); receive the Holy Ghost (John 20:22; Acts 8:17; 10:47); ‘filled with the Holy Ghost’ (Acts 2:4; 4:31); ‘gift of the Holy Ghost’ (Acts 2:38); the Spirit poured out upon men (Acts 2:17; 10:45); etc. These expressions all refer to one and the same thing. They simply represent different aspects of the one subject, just as the different expressions used for the first work of grace convey various shades of meaning, though meaning essentially the same thing. But it must be regarded as *a definite experience in the believer*, for in the apostolic church it was a reality, the Holy Ghost being received some time subsequent to regeneration. The statements of Christ to His apostles that the Holy Ghost ‘shall be in you,’ that He shall be a Comforter that will ‘abide with you forever’—these and other expressions show that it is a *personal reality*, not simply ecstatic feelings on the part of the individual.”

—F. G. Smith, *What the Bible Teaches*

MEDITATIONS

THE TRUE MISSION OF JESUS—Matthew 3:11—He shall baptize you—The true purpose of the sacrifice of Jesus was to make it possible for mankind to be restored spiritually to the relationship with God that Adam and Eve first enjoyed in the Garden. John was successful in his preaching of repentance and water baptism, but Jesus had a greater work; He made it possible for man to receive the Spirit, although He Himself did not baptize anyone with the Spirit during His earthly ministry. **The Holy Ghost—**The word, “ghost,” means spirit. The Holy Ghost is known by several different titles, among which are the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Proph-

ecy, etc. He is the third Person in the Godhead and is co-existent with the Father and Son. In the first verse of the Bible, the fourth word, God is introduced in the plural form, which includes the Spirit. In the second verse, the Spirit is introduced by Himself as the Agent who shaped the earth for habitation. The Holy Spirit has had a very important part all the way through the Scriptures in carrying out the plan of God. With the Holy Ghost comes the fire of heaven. This is a purifying agent. As natural fire cleanses all material things, so the fire of the Holy Ghost makes a perfect cleansing of all things spiritual.

THE PROMISE OF THE MASTER—John 14:15—If ye love me—If we have a real love for Christ, we will put forth every effort to be true to His teaching. Why must Jesus give commandments? There is an evil force in the world that would have us to do things that are injurious to our well-being, physically and spiritually. God’s way leads to life and peace; the ways of Satan lead to sorrow and death. **Verse 16—Give you another Comforter—**When Jesus was on Earth He was the Comforter of the disciples. They could come to Him for help in any way and receive it, but His time came to leave the world. The disciples would still need comfort as much as ever, so Jesus promised to petition the Father to send another Comforter in His place, who would not be leaving but would abide forever. It is a great consolation to us as Christians to know that One so great as He will ever be present to assist us by His gracious power in any way we have need. How foolish for anyone to lean on the weak arm of flesh or upon the undependability of material things when all can have the Spirit! The constant abiding presence of evil in the world makes the necessity of the constant abiding presence of the good Spirit of God in our lives. **Verse 17—Whom the world cannot receive—**“The world” refers to the sinners. It is impossible for sinners to receive the Spirit, because first there must be a change effected in their lives. Jesus said that the world knows not the Spirit of God. However, the disciples knew the Spirit, for He was dwelling with them (through Jesus), and at the appointed time (the day of Pentecost) He would come into their hearts. By the process of the new birth, men are inducted into the family of God and are no longer of the world. Then they are eligible for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. **Verse 26—But the Comforter—**From this verse we learn that the “Comforter” Jesus promised to send in His Father’s name was the Holy Ghost. After He came, He taught the disciples deeper truths and brought to their remembrance what Jesus had taught them. He still will comfort and teach anyone who will receive Him.

THE SUPREME NEED OF THE SOUL—John 20:21—As my Father hath sent me—On the same basis which Jesus came to the world and did His work, so must the disciples be sent into the world. **Verse 22—Receive ye—**Jesus did not at this time impart to them the Holy Ghost; He merely expressed the yearning of His heart that they submit to the Spirit and receive Him at the appointed time. **Verse 23—Whose soever sins—**With the power of the Spirit in their lives, the disciples would be preaching only the message the Spirit ordained, and it would fit the occasion in

which it was given, either delivering or binding the listeners, according to the reaction to the message.

ENDUED WITH POWER—Acts 1:8—Ye shall receive power—To live a life like Christ ordained in this wicked world demands power; not power to do weird things, to act in a supernatural way, but power to say no to sin, power to be a good citizen in any community. Furthermore, he who receives the Spirit will have power to witness for the Lord Jesus Christ at home and abroad. The world today is dying for the want of the true witness of Jesus.

ARE ALL CANDIDATES FOR THIS BAPTISM—Acts 2:37—Brethren, what shall we do?—Here is a clean-cut example of the preaching of the gospel under the direction and anointing power of the Spirit. Just moments before Peter had been filled with the Holy Ghost, his fiery message convinced the listeners, Jews out of every nation, of their error. It is a glorious day for any man when he is convicted of his sins by the Spirit and yields to His wooing. **Verse 38—Gift of the Holy Ghost**—Peter had the correct answer. He told these Jews to repent that their sins might be remitted. Then they would be in line for the very same gift the disciples had received so shortly before. The act of repentance does not automatically give to the believer the gift of the Spirit; sanctification, or the infilling of the Spirit, is an act of faith just as justification. **Verse 39—As many as the Lord ... shall call**—God has called all men to repentance; therefore, all men are also called to receive the Spirit. Now the “Gift of the Spirit” is not one of the several spiritual gifts with which God embellishes His church; it is the Spirit Himself who comes into the heart to abide forever.

CONCLUSION

The receiving of the baptism of the Spirit is definitely an act of faith, as is proven by these words found in Luke 11:13, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” No true parent will withhold anything from his children that is for their good and at stated times will show special affection by the bestowal of gifts. If such be the generosity of earthly parents toward their children, how much more will God give the Spirit to them who ask for Him!

The baptism of the Spirit should follow as closely as possible the experience of regeneration. The word, “baptize,” here as in the case of water baptism, is to be understood as an immersion or a hiding away from sight, a very fitting meaning. In the battle of life our common enemy is so strong it is impossible to win unless hidden away in God, having the unparalleled assistance of the Holy Spirit. Not only does the Spirit of God act as our Comforter and a Protector from our enemies, but also He empowers us to witness in our respective communities that we may help to deliver other precious souls from satanic slavery. Now, of all times, men need the power of the Spirit in their lives. The perilous times foretold by Paul (II Timothy 3:1) are here, and the peril is not to life and limb but to the soul. It is of the greatest importance that we be baptized by the Spirit of God

and walk daily in all the light that shines on our pathway.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What is the thought expressed by the word, “baptize,” in reference to the Holy Ghost?
2. Why is Holy Ghost baptism absolutely necessary and how is it obtained?
3. Name two things Holy Ghost baptism does for a Christian.
4. What was the “promise of the Father”?
5. By what different names is the Holy Ghost known?
6. Why cannot “the world” receive the Spirit? †

STEPS HEAVENWARD

By the late R. L. Berry

Chapter XIII

Work Out Your Own Salvation

EVERY Christian is a worker. All those Christians who do nothing for God nor for others are Christians in name only, they are dead, unfruitful branches of the vine and have long since been cut off.

God said to Abraham, “Get thee out of thy country ... and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing” (Genesis 12:1, 2). God was going to bless Abram, and in consequence of that blessing upon him Abram was to be a blessing to others. This has always been God’s plan—first to bless some soul that came out from the world and then to make that soul a blessing unto others. God does not save us just to keep us from sin and hell and give us a happy time (He gives this indeed), but to make us a blessing. This truth must become thoroughly grounded in your mind and soul, young convert, if you would be a real Bible Christian and prevent your growing cold and finally backsliding.

The first thing the stricken Saul of Tarsus said after being convinced that Jesus was the Christ, was, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” The young convert who begins that way is most likely to be a worker and to be successful as a Christian. The new babe in Christ that asks of his Master, “Lord, what shall I do next? Have you any work that I can do? Here am I, send me,” or “Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth,” will find something to do and will both be blessed and be a blessing in doing it. This is the entire secret of the Christian’s happiness—being a blessing to others.

There are a multitude of ways in which the new convert can be a blessing. Most of you are members of a family, you are a father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister. The happiness of your relatives is largely in your keeping. You can be cheerful around the house, you can do your work cheerfully, singing a song while you do that piece of work which you ordinarily do not like to do. You can be patient, having a kind regard for the weaknesses of the other members of the family, overlooking their failures and making the best of the

matter. You can help lift a burden now and then and make yourself as useful as possible. Such little things have a wonderful influence and are too often forgotten, while the young Christian dreams of doing some great thing. Cultivate a cheerful, sunshiny disposition and make an effort to speak kindly and cheerfully to all you meet. These are simple things, but they are fundamental things, very essential to Christian character.

Every young convert is called upon to be a witness for Christ. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me," said Jesus to the apostles just before He ascended. They were to be witnesses in Jerusalem and in Judea, to their own Jewish race, and then to their neighbors, the unloved Samaritans, and then to the uttermost parts of the world, to strangers and foreigners everywhere. Not each individual Christian could do all this; but this was the command for a universal testimony to be given by all Christ's followers. Each Christian is to bear personal witness concerning Christ to those around him.

A testimony to your salvation, young convert, is absolutely essential to your being true to Jesus and to your being a blessing to others. A testimony is the words of a witness who has knowledge of some facts. A preacher may expound the gospel and declare what God can do, but witnesses are needed to testify to what the gospel has done. A medicine might be widely advertised as a cure for a certain disease and be little known, but when some person declares that that medicine cured him then its popularity increases rapidly. The blessings of God's salvation travel fastest when individuals testify to its wonderful blessings. This is God's way of spreading the truth.

One of the commonest causes of deadness, backsliding, and indifference among professing Christians is the neglect of public worship. And you, young convert, will soon find yourself as dead as the dearest if you neglect the common means of grace. Paul warned thus, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Hebrews 12:25). And Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). A Kentucky gentleman on horseback overtook an old colored man walking through the snow several miles to a meeting.

"Why are you out walking this kind of a day, Uncle?" he asked.

"I am on my way to the meeting. One never can tell when the blessing is going to fall, and I want to be there when it does," he answered.

The blessing "falls" where two or three meet in Jesus' name, and this blessing is a special one obtained nowhere else.

Public worship, singing, praying, preaching, and testifying, are necessary to the life of the church and of every member of the body of Christ. In timbered countries the farmers used to burn refuse logs in large heaps. After burning for some time these logs would roll away from each other. Then the farmer would come and roll the logs together again, and the flames would once more mount up high. Public church worship is like placing the burning logs together again; as Christian greets Christian, as songs ascend in praise to Christ, as prayers go up like incense, as the gospel is preached,

then it is that the flame of devotion grows more fervent and the children of God are blessed. You must go to receive that blessing.

Attend regularly on public worship. You have a duty that you owe to your fellow Christians. They have a right to expect you to be in your place and do your part. Never fail in this important duty.

Another duty, a blessed work, which the young convert will delight in, is personal work among others. There are hundreds of people who would welcome a personal interest in their soul's salvation. This interest must be genuine, born of love, and tactfully exercised. Be free and frank to talk personally to others about Jesus. Get rid of bashfulness and backwardness by boldly pushing out in Christ's name, relying on the Lord to be your sufficiency. As General Booth said, "For God's sake do something." Do something to bring some soul to Christ. No greater joy will you ever know than that of being instrumental in bringing some soul to Jesus.

Begin on a small scale in all these things mentioned. Do not despise small beginnings. The greatest ministers were at one time mere beginners, who could scarcely speak at all. You will feel awkward and self-conscious in your first efforts to do something for Jesus, sometimes you may feel that what little you can do will not be missed if left undone. But such is not the case. Youths going to school sometimes slip over certain subjects without mastering them, but by and by they may have need of that very information or knowledge which they neglected to gain. If you expect to become established in the grace of God, become strong, and please God, you must be a worker, and to be a worker you must begin to work.

Let me enumerate some things a new convert can do. Carefully go over the list and, see if you cannot find something that you can do.

Go to meetings of the church regularly. If you can and will, your very presence will be a blessing and a sermon on faithfulness. Great is the power of example, and regular attendance is a good example to set.

In testimony meetings always, give your testimony. Do not mind how it sounds to you; be yourself, speak naturally, even if awkwardly, and say in your own words and tell in your own way what the Lord has done for you.

At prayer meetings, often, if not always lead in public prayer. As in testifying, mind not how it sounds, simply pray as you feel.

Before the services begin be very friendly to those you meet. If you see strangers at the meeting, shake hands and greet them pleasantly.

After services take notice again of strangers and of others. Do not purposely pass by anyone, but be friendly, and if there are any to whom you feel it would be in place to speak a word about Jesus and to whom it would be a blessing, go to those persons in a quiet, tender manner and ask them about their souls.

Find out whether there are any sick people in the neighborhood where you live, and if there are visit them if possible. Perhaps you can take some flowers or some delicate food, or read some from God's Book or sing a song or say an encouraging word to them, or pray with them. Do what you can.

If there are any poor people in your locality, a visit from you might be like a ray of light in a dark place to them. If they find someone is interested in them, it might give them new life and courage.

Take part in singing. Learn to sing by note and help in special singing if capable.

Take as active a part in Sunday school work as your abilities justify; teaching a class, as secretary, usher, book-passer, or in any capacity that will advance the school.

Canvass, under the direction of the pastor, if there is one, the neighborhood for Sunday school students.

Give a proportion of your income to church work, to God's cause. A part of all you take in is the Lord's. Set the percent at what you feel would please the Lord and give it regularly. Many give a tenth.

Take an active interest in the financial end of God's business on Earth, as the support of the pastor, church expenses, revivals, Sunday school work, home mission and foreign mission work.

Make a list of things to pray for or keep them in your memory and pray daily for them till your prayers are answered.

Do something good every day.

If your circumstances limit you or you are bound with burdens of children, etc., take it all to God in prayer, and be the very best Christian you can, kind and patient in the trials, joyfully bearing your burden whatever it is. If you cannot possibly do anything else for Jesus, you can live for Jesus. Your time will come by and by to do more for Jesus if you will but live for Him.

Some Christian work is a protection against temptation. An idle Christian is a particular mark for the devil to shoot at. Ask God to give you something to do. "Who will consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" †

LIVING EPISTLES FOR GOD

Radio Message by Bro. David Shaw

I WOULD LIKE to speak to you from II Corinthians, chapter 3: "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (verses 1-3).

It is important that we realize that, as Christians, we are living epistles for God. What is an *epistle*? It is "a written message; a written communication; a letter, especially a formal one."

Certainly, I believe the apostle Paul has made mention here that they were living examples for God. They were examples and patterns that others could follow in the pathway of righteousness. So we want we to see ourselves today as living epistles. Let my life speak for

me. The things I do and say will be the message to the world. When they look upon us, as individuals, nothing but Christ should be in view.

We are asked of God to exemplify Him in all our undertakings. The apostle Paul is saying in II Corinthians 3 that he didn't just want to write them a letter. He wanted to be that example, that pattern. They to whom he preached the message were also required to be living epistles, because by the life they lived, they would be able to invite others to come and taste and see that the Lord is good. If you do so, too, you will be able to tell others that it is good to live a Christian life in an evil and a corrupt generation. You will be able to tell others that God is able to keep. His grace is sufficient if you will obey His Word and will in all your undertakings. It is very important that we seek the Lord and lean upon Him heavily for the things we need according to His great riches. So the apostle Paul said, "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."

God has told us in His Word that He will take out the stony heart and give us a heart of flesh. When our hearts become tender toward God, we will be obedient, loving, and kind, and we will want to please Him in every way. We will be able to acknowledge Him to direct us in our paths continually.

The apostle Paul said in verse 4 of II Corinthians 3, "And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward." As we are the epistles of Christ, it is important that we make sure we are determined that whatever it takes, we want to run a successful Christian race. We cannot give in; we cannot give up. Paul desired that we understand that God wants us to be examples.

There was a certain man found in the book of Acts, chapter 18, verse 24, named Apollos. He was a very outstanding man in the Scriptures. He was fervent in the Spirit. He was desirous of serving the Lord. He met with Aquila and Priscilla. They found in this man something outstanding. They desired to assist him in the way of God more perfectly. Let me tell you, it is not the amount you know in your decision to serve God. We need to ask God to increase our knowledge on a day-to-day basis because we cannot know all at one time. This man only knew about the baptism of John, but in his heart he made up his mind to serve God with the little he knew.

Beloved, use what you have to the best of your ability. Make sure that what you know, you keep. Don't allow any man to turn your head around. Don't allow them to turn your mind toward evil thoughts and ideas, still thinking you're pleasing God. We must live that which we know. Let me assure you, we shall only be charged for that which we know. Therefore, the gospel must be preached to the world that they may know what God will require of them at the last day.

We see this man Apollos in the book of Acts as a very outstanding example. All he knew was about the baptism of John, but when Aquila and Priscilla met him, they wrote a letter to the congregation where he was about to go, telling them that they were to receive this man. The epistle was not only in the letter, but in

the man's life. Our lives are required to be that epistle that God wants to recommend to the world that there is indeed a God who should be served. We are to always walk in the path that is made known unto us through the Holy Spirit's guidance, so that we can be efficiently helpful to those we encounter.

The writer says in verses 5 and 6 of II Corinthians 3, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter [A lot of people hold to the letter, but their hearts are not subject to God. The letter is not sufficient.], but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." No matter how much we know about God, unless we put it into practice, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, we are wasting our time. Talking about God is not enough. Living for God is what He requires.

*Let a holy life tell the gospel story,
I am a child of God;
I will testify that the world may hear it,
I am a child of God.*

*Saved from sin today, every band is riven,
I am a child of God;
Thro' the tests of life I have peace from heaven,
I am a child of God.*—Barney E. Warren

Paul is saying in II Corinthians 3 that we must make our lives sublime, attractive, and a means of inspiration. We must put the Word into practice. We must live in the Spirit and not in the letter. Verse 7: "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away." It was only for a dispensation. The commandment given to Moses was to instruct us in the ways of God's requirements for our lives. It was glorious indeed. If it was broken, it meant death. If it was obeyed, it meant life everlasting. So it is for today. The commandment is that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Every individual is asked to live this life. It is the glorious gospel. The world needs to know that God requires us to live holy. It is important that as Moses declared the truth, we today must declare the same admonition. Moses gave the commandments to the people that they should live godly as God required. God requires us to live righteously today.

Verse 8 of II Corinthians 3: "How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?" If the law was glorious, indeed the Spirit should be more glorious. May God help us to hold on to this and be unchangeable as we go, for it is of importance that we live to please God on a daily basis. Why? We never can tell when the Lord shall call us. We never can tell when our end will be. It behooves us to live each day as if we have not another day to live. Don't live carelessly. Don't put off what should be done today for tomorrow, because tomorrow will speak for itself. Tomorrow's sun may never rise. God wants a people that are always on the go and always declaring to the world that Christ is, and He is to be served.

We have seen by this chapter (II Corinthians 3) that Paul desired for us to understand that a life of Christianity is a glorious one, one that is lived as an epistle given to the world as the truth of God's Word, knowing that by the example we live, the gospel is very, very effective. Verse 9: "For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." As Paul made those comments, he always desired that the nation understand what is required of God.

In Romans 1:17, Paul said: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." That is what is required of us today. Build up your faith in the most holy way. Ask the Lord to strengthen you and give you courage, because we are certainly in a world filled with misery, woe, and confusion. I don't know if you are looking carefully around you, but what is happening today is alarming. We are seeing a changing world. Men are drifting away from the Word of God, and they want to put their ideas in front, and leave God's truth behind. But I'm thankful that the Word of God stands forever. Although the gates of hell are fighting against the truth of God's Word, I am certain that as Jesus said, it shall never be defeated. This truth is heralded across our world, and I'm thankful for those who know the truth.

As saints of God, let us first have the faith, and then the truth of God's Word, because it takes faith to trust in God. It takes faith to believe in God. It takes faith to have confidence in God. In our changing world, do not allow the world to change you. Let it be that the Word of God dwells in your heart richly, that even under the shadow of death, you will stand firm and keep ready to meet the Lord.

Verses 10 and 11 of II Corinthians 3, say: "For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." In the gospel we are preaching and living today, we are manifesting the truth of God's Word. Christ came to fulfill the law. The law could not make the comers thereunto perfect, but grace today makes His comers perfect. We can live a life of perfection. We move unto perfection. We move each day from strength to strength, making sure that we are able to make the race successful in the Lord. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (II Corinthians 4:8-10). Let the beauty of Jesus been seen in you. When the world looks upon you, nothing but Christ should be in view.

We want to keep encouraged. Do not faint in your mind. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:10, 11). Beloved Ones, we don't want to faint, but to be steadfast, be strong, and make full assurance that we are the epistles that God desires to be shown to the world to bring them to His dear side. †

THE POETRY PAGE

FATHER'S DAY

Mary Frances Bogle

Over the years
As we grow old,
We remember our father
So brave and bold.

In the garden,
Leaning on the plow,
He would listen to me;
I see him now.

He would give advice
And understand;
He was always there
To lend a hand.

God made fathers
Strong and firm,
For He knew our lives
Would have great concerns.

So He gave us fathers
To teach us to pray,
And guide our lives,
And show us the way.

So on his day
Let's take the time
To say "Thanks, dad,
I'm glad you're mine."

A LITTLE GIRL NEEDS DADDY

Author Unknown

A little girl needs Daddy
For many, many things:
Like holding her high off the ground
Where the sunlight sings!
Like being the deep music
That tells her all is right
When she awakens frantic with
The terrors of the night.

Like being the great mountain
That rises in her heart
And shows her how she might get home
When all else falls apart.
Like giving her the love
That is her sea and air,
So diving deep or soaring high
She'll always find him there.

FATHER **Elizabeth Mercer**

Side by side at the crossroads
We stood in the autumn chill,
And hand clasped in hand we lingered,
Our thoughts mutely blended and still.

Pleasant had been the journey,
Though anon a steep ascent;
But oft in the valley we had tarried,
Spirit with spirit anent.

The calm with assurance we parted
And each went his destined way,
For the roads of men must sever,
Mayhap for a night and a day.

Gone, yet together we journey—
Your life is my guiding star,
Your Christlikeness a benediction
Which nothing on Earth can mar.

MY FATHER

Lois O. Painter

His hands are gnarled and calloused,
His face is worn with care;
His shoulders droop beneath life's load—
Dad's always done his share.

How oft those hands have guided me
When two roads I have met,
Like signposts, pointing me to God;
Dad's never failed me yet.

Dad's face, though worn and wrinkled,
Is handsome yet today,
He smiles, and looks me in the eye—
Love chases care away.

BETTER THAN GOLD

Abram J. Ryan

Better than gold is a peaceful home,
Where all the fireside characters come,
The shrine of love, the heaven of life,
Hallowed by mother or by wife.

However humble the home may be,
Or tried with sorrow by heaven's decree,
The blessings that never were bought or sold,
And center there, are better than gold. †

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

OUR ANCHOR HOLDS

Message by Bro. David Goble, delivered 04/27/22



I WOULD LIKE to speak to you this evening on “Our Anchor Holds.” Do you have an anchor this evening? Did you come with your anchor down in the Foundation where it is supposed to be, or is it still on the deck of your boat? That’s one of the thoughts we’ll get to tonight.

We like to say “my anchor holds,” but it only holds if it’s dropped. If it’s on the deck of the boat, and the storms and billows toss, it doesn’t do us any good. It needs to be dropped, and it needs to be dropped in the right things, doesn’t it? So that’s a little bit of what we’ll talk about, but I have a specific idea in mind that I’d like to share with you. I hope it makes sense. There are a few things I’d like to discuss with you.

Who is our Anchor? I think we know the answer. But we want to make sure we’re all clear on it in terms of how the Bible presents, if you will, the anchor, and where it is to be dropped. I want to speak about dropping the anchor in a certain place in the temple.

The temple is our type for a holy life. I’m thinking we want our anchor in a certain place in that temple. I’d like for you to consider that; and then, what happens if our anchor doesn’t get there? What happens if the anchor is not in that place in the temple? Finally, there are other anchors today that even good people sometimes get anchored in—places that the anchor drops. I’d like to speak about those other anchors. So pray that hopefully we’ll have the Lord’s way about it.

Are you glad to be saved? I don’t know everyone here, but if you believe that you don’t know Jesus as your personal Savior, you can walk out of this building having that knowledge. So if there’s a need in your life, don’t go away without getting your need met.

OBTAINING THE PROMISE

Hebrews, chapter 6, is where we’ll take our text. We’ll start from verse 13: “For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.” Abraham obtained the promise because he patiently endured. “For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.” This, by the way, is a reference to Leviticus 4, where in the law oaths are found. “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable [unchangeable] things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have [What kind of consolation?] a strong consolation [understanding], who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” I’m paying particular attention to the second half of that scripture. We have an anchor

of the soul, which is both sure and steadfast, because an anchor is sure and steadfast, right? It keeps a vessel firmly placed. But listen, where is the anchor found? ... *and which entereth into that within the veil.* “Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

There are two unchangeable things referenced here. One is a promise that God would make a great nation through Abraham, and so we are the spiritual heirs of that promise. The second thing which God would not change is the oath, for God swore by Himself because there was no greater than He. He could swear by no greater than Himself. These two things: the *promise* and the *oath*. It gives us today (because we are still the heirs of the promise and the hope), through the oath, a hope, a strong consolation, a refuge, and this gives us our hope. This strong consolation gives us this refuge, and it gives us this hope.

When we lay out this gospel plan of salvation, I wonder sometimes why someone who may not have even heard the gospel before would turn it down? Why would anyone say, “You know, that’s too hard. It’s not really interesting to me”? Why would anyone turn the gospel down? But what we promise is a life, which is ultimately healthy. Spiritually healthy, emotionally healthy, physically healthy—always healthy! We promise a hopeful future. Our cups are half full. They’re not half empty. Even when the cup doesn’t have water to the top, that’s just how we see it, because the hope is that God will once again fill the cup. God promises these things. He doesn’t promise us unlimited wealth. He doesn’t promise us that we’ll never have trouble. He doesn’t even promise that we won’t ever doubt, or that we won’t ever fear. But He gives us solutions and a refuge where we can find a resting place, a sabbath. Why would someone not want these things? God help us to be a witness.

HOW DOES OUR COMMUNITY KNOW US?

One of my thoughts in coming here is a thought that I bring from home, which has convicted me greatly and recently, and that is, What are we doing for our community, and how does our community know us? The reason I say we have a hope is because we have a need today to have a greater connection with our community, and that our community would have a greater knowledge of who we are. If they’re not going to come into the building and listen to the preaching (but we hope they do), then the question is, What shall we do? What shall we be about?

One of our ministers was bringing a lesson a couple weeks ago on a Wednesday night and he was speaking of a colleague at work. The man asked him, “What do

you do for your community?" I really don't what his answer was, but then the conversation turned to, "How did your community know you?" When people think of the church that's over on Point Salem Road, what do they think of that congregation? What do they say about us here? Let me add myself here now. What do they say about us? I really don't know. "It's a beautiful property. They take good care of it. I see banners out from time to time." Or, "I've known someone who was my neighbor, and they were very pleasant, but I don't know much about them."

We live in a community in California of about 1.2 million people, and I thought, *God, just give us 1%. We'll take that. We'll find room for them. 12,000 folks. We'll just take 1%. I'd even take .1%. That'll be okay. We'll find a way to serve that part of our community.* What that man said convicted me. I started to think, *what really does our community think about where I am, and how am I serving my community?* So as we go through this message, ask yourself this question: How are we in Hagerstown serving our community, and what does our community know about us? Because, Saints, we need to survive.

THE GREAT COMMISSION

We can preach to ourselves, we can preach to the pews, and we like to be found together because we love each other's company, and it's appropriate to do so. There's a biblical reason to preach to us. But in the last chapter of Matthew, there's the great commission. It says something like *go into all the nations, and make them disciples.* I think it's still there. So what that tells me is, yes, we need to see the saints, we need to encourage the saints, but we also need to go out, and we need to serve. There's more that goes with that, but we'll start with that.

In order to do those things, we need to know where our anchor is. So this message is to the church tonight, as anyone else, but we need to know where our anchor is, who is our anchor, and where specifically is it found in the temple. We have these unchangeable promises.

Jesus was made a High Priest for us after the order of Melchizedek. Now, it says in Hebrews 6:19, that we have a hope as an anchor, sure and steadfast. Look at the second half of this verse. Where particularly in the temple is that hope found? Within the veil. What was in the veil? The Holiest of Holies. What was in the Holiest of Holies? What manner of furniture was there? The ark. That was the only furniture within the Holiest of Holies. It was covered by the cherubim. Where those cherubim covered the top of the ark, if you will, the Bible tells us it was called the mercy seat. When God communed with His people, where did God come down to? He came down to that mercy seat and covered it with a cloud. I'm speaking about the tabernacle in the wilderness now. But when God was with His people, that's where He was found. We know He filled the temple that even Moses could not be found within it because God's glory filled it. Specifically, where God came to when He communed with His people within the Holiest of Holies, that's where He found Himself. Do we say we're still His people?

We're not going turn to the book of Leviticus, but on the day of Atonement, certain things had to happen in order for God to fill the Holiest of Holies. Aaron the high priest had to sanctify himself. He had to go through certain rituals. He had to cleanse himself. He had to put on a garment of white linen that was only to be worn that one day a year. He had to go through certain rituals, if you will, to get inside even the holy place. But when he came to the Holiest of holy places, he brought blood with him. He sprinkled blood about the corners of that ark of the Testament. He had to go through these procedures in a certain way, and in a certain order, or God would have taken his life. He had to wear a bell on the fringe of his garment so that they could hear him moving. It is said that he even had to have something to pull him out were he to die within, because no one else could approach that place and remain alive. So certain things had to happen in order for God to honor their request. We know by the time Aaron was done serving inside the Holiest of Holies, he needed to go outside and ultimately place his hand on a scapegoat. There are spiritual types for all of this. Beautiful messages.

The sins of the people were placed on that scapegoat, and that scapegoat was sent into a wilderness, never to be seen again. That's a type for what happens to us when God saves us from sin. He places His hand on the sacrifice of Jesus, and that sacrifice takes our sins into a place that God doesn't remember anymore. I'm thankful that God doesn't remember all the foolish things I've done in my life. Why wouldn't somebody want this? All the foolish things you've ever done in your life can be gone in a moment because God has made a way to pay the price for all our foolishness. The way we are, if something goes wrong, sometimes we keep count of it, don't we? We store it. Sometime back, I spoke about putting some things in a bucket and carrying it around with us. Even if it's not an intent to be evil, sometimes there are things that would hurt us, or we have had hard things that have happened to us that are hard to get rid of. God doesn't have a hard time getting rid of the things that we did to dishonor Him. He sends them as far as the east is from the west. In the depths of the sea, never to be remembered again. Thank God for that. That's what salvation is. That's why I say, Why wouldn't someone want this?

ANCHORING OUR HOPE

Let me go back to Exodus, chapter 40, verse 33. God wants us to anchor our hope in a certain place. "He reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work." That's the end of the story of the tabernacle. Verses 34 and 35: "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle."

I believe it's God's intention still today to fill our tabernacle. I believe He wants to do it from the holiest place that He can place within us. He tells us that He wants to set up residence in us, doesn't He? He wants to be seated on the altar of our hearts. But not simply

in the justification of our spirit, or for the forgiveness of our sins, but God wants to take up residence in a holier place. Do you follow what I'm saying? Because we are a type also of the tabernacle, and the tabernacle is a type of us also. We are found inside the holy place when we come to an altar of prayer and we repent and ask God to forgive us of our sins. He justifies us. That allows us into the holy place. I'm so happy that we still serve a God who loves holiness. That's a hallmark of the Church of God. It's not simply an outward standard, is it? Holiness is first an inward work.

I love the story of Moses when he was approaching the bush that was burning but not consumed. Moses walked up to see this bush. I see types in all of this. The bush was not consumed, and a voice said, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." What do our shoes walk on normally? The ground. If we were out in the wilderness up on that mountain, what were our shoes walking on before we got there? Dirt. That's a symbol of the profanity of life. The sole of our shoe. In certain cultures, it is offensive to show the sole of your shoe to another person. You're not meant to cross your legs and have the sole of your shoe facing the person. Why? Because it's been touching unclean things. In certain cultures, it's offensive to do that.

When we greet someone, we don't wait for them to hand us their foot, and then we shake their shoe, right? I mean, who would want to touch that dirty thing? And when Jesus, on the last night of His life, was serving the brethren, I'd like to think He just didn't wash the top of their feet, but He took His hands and went underneath their feet and cleansed the bottom. Not only the 11, but Judas, who betrayed Him, I believe He washed the bottom of his feet also.

Christ was an expert in dealing with the profane. Profanity is not simply ugly words. *Profane* means "common; not godly; ordinary; not divine." Oh, we were so dirty before Christ found the bottom of our feet! Christ is an expert in taking a profane person, an ordinary, common person, a dirty person, and in His great mercy and compassion, cleaning them up and keeping them. This is what is going on here. Christ is an expert in taking a void and making something. All of us were void. He is an expert in filling the void.

What does it say in the 23rd Psalm? "My cup runneth over," because God fills to overflowing. Satan always empties, God always fills. Satan intends in putting a hole in the bottom of your cup to drain it out. God intends on filling it so there's more than you need that somebody else can use. That's why our cup is meant to run over. But all of this has to do where we're anchored. The way I'm reading this is that God fills this place, and He occupies the holiest place, the holy abode. He comes down, and that's where He communes with His people.

When Jesus died, the curtain of the veil was torn from top to bottom. It was woven in such a way, that evidently, this was not humanly possible. This curtain was tall. No one had a ladder that they could get up to the top, which someone later could say, "Well, His followers went in and tore the curtain." God rent the division between where He comes down to commune with us, and even the place where our sins are forgiven,

He rents that division so that the veil is torn. Jesus is the Anchor. He's not anchored without the veil, is He? He's anchored on the inside of the veil.

In Church of God language, we talk about justification and sanctification. This is a lesson on sanctification. We are meant to be anchored in sanctification. We are meant to be anchored within the veil. Why? Because ultimately, that's where our hope is. That's where our strength is. That's where, when life gets really hard, we're going to be secure. That's where we're going to be safe. Praise God! That's where we're meant to be anchored.

My wife and I were once touring Israel. There's a tour now where you can go underneath the western wall, and at the bottom of the wall, you can still see the great stones that once held up the temple mount at the bottom of it. Well, down at the bottom of it (and you're behind a glass wall), you can see where this western wall goes up to the top. Down at the bottom of it, there's a place for Jewish people to pray. It is exactly the place where it is believed that the Holiest of Holies stood up above. Now, to a certain degree, I would say that they're following superstition because of the physical premises that they're at. But they believe this is the holiest place on Earth. When God honored Israel, I suppose you could say that would be true. Well, you go there, and you'll see that they have their prayer book and their genuflecting. You can see them down there, and I'm thinking, *Thank God, I have that experience in my heart. I don't have to be down at the bottom of these stones, hoping that God will find me there.* We're not the only ones that feel this way. My point is: There is a significance to the holiest place. Do we take this as seriously as we should? Is this the ultimate serious experience for us?

ANCHORED IN THE HOLIEST OF HOLIES

My first question tonight is, Am I anchored in the Holiest of Holies? because what happens if I'm anchored, but I'm only anchored in the holy place? Now, the holy place is the outer room of the tabernacle. Outside the veil. That was the place where the priest ministered the daily ministration—the shewbread. It also contained the lamps, the furniture, the altar of incense. It's a type, we know, of where we find forgiveness of our sins, because any old sinner couldn't go into that place. God made a way for even that place. It's called the holy place. It's not called the profane place. The profane place is without someplace, but even to get into the holy place, we need to do business with God, don't we? We need to have our sins forgiven to get into that holy place.

If a pastor is in this job long enough, and he talks to enough people, he'll find that ordinary people who love God have ordinary problems. They suffer just like anybody else. Sometimes they have fears and doubts. Saints of God, as pastors we find out sometimes that our folks have fears and doubts. Sometimes there are hard situations that good people have to deal with at home, and they come to us. They say, "Brother, help me." One of the greatest blessings is that we can trust the God of our salvation to deal with even those problems. The other thing is that a pastor really begins to understand what compassion and mercy are. There are

certain things that you shouldn't let go of, but there are some things you need to keep in priority. Mercy and compassion are high on the list. I have learned that saints of God have ordinary problems. One of the greatest blessings is, I don't have to make the saints of God an enemy. I don't have to cast them out because of the problems that they're going through.

One could easily say, "Brother, you're just carnal. You just need to get sanctified."

"Oh, I missed that. I'll go to the altar, and it will take care of all of my problems."

They've already been to the altar twice. They've already submitted themselves twice. Why? Because they're obedient. They want to serve God. They want all the promises of God, and yet, guess what? They still have ordinary problems. Am I right? "Bro. Harley, do people come to you with ordinary problems?" We're just being real. We're not making holiness any less. Thank God for a holy life. We're not suggesting that good people are profane people, but they have ordinary problems. But one of the things we want folks to understand is, "Brother, where are you anchored? If you're anchored in the holy place, will you consider moving further up and further into the Holy of Holies?" That is the greater consecration.

I believe the Lord comes to people without the pastor ever preaching about sanctification, because the Holy Spirit convicts us. If we say we trust the Holy Spirit, do we mean what we say? Does the Holy Spirit have power to locate us spiritually? I believe He does. I'm not saying we shouldn't preach on sanctification, but rather that the Holy Spirit can locate us at any point in our lives. If He says, "You have need of moving up," you need to move further up and further in.

DEVELOPING A COLORFUL EXPERIENCE

There's a children's story that I love. The principle characters all get to heaven. In this case, Jesus is represented as a lion, so some of you know what I'm talking about. In the last scene, once they get into the door of heaven, that's not where they stop in this allegory, but they continue up and further in, and the further up and further in they go, the color is more real. The image is more real. The experience, if you will, is more real. The author is trying to convey that the further up and further we go to Christ, it is more real.

I told the saints recently that I was in a foreign country when this place was still under the control of communism. I was going from behind the iron curtain, back into the west. I looked toward the border, and there was a billboard on the western side, and it was in full living color. Where I had come from, it almost appeared gray and dull and colorless. I can't explain it, but it almost appeared that this communist depression that held these people, held them in a colorless, empty sort of life. When we got back into a place that allowed freedom, that living color came back. To me, it has been a personal experience of what God does for us when we move from a life of sin to a life of holiness.

I won't mention the places because I'll offend somebody, but I'd like to think in some places green is not really green. It's sort of khaki (sort of green), but it's faded. My wife and I were traveling around Hagerstown

today, and I told Bro. Tyler, "You all live in the most beautiful place in the world, and you don't even know it, do you?" And Bro. Harley was saying, "No, Brother, that's because they haven't been to West Virginia." How green it is! I love that there's no fences here. You must trust each other somehow. I don't know.

Going from the profaned ordinary lives into a life of holiness in the inner court, the Holiest of Holies, it's going from a dull gray, a washed out life, to a vibrant life. But we need to be found in that holiest place, because when the hard time comes, we need have to have our anchor in the holiest place. An anchor in the other place won't work. God forgave you of your sins. He freed you from your sins. He gave you a change. He changed your spiritual zip code, but He doesn't want you to stay there. He wants you to go to that other room within the veil. That's why Jesus died. To tear the veil. We couldn't carry the veil. We couldn't go around the veil. He died, not only to get us in the outer court, but to get us in the inner court. Saints know this. Mark it down. When you're going through your hardest trial, you want your anchor in the holiest place.

ANCHORS THAT WILL NOT HOLD

The next thing is, you can find yourself anchoring in other things. There are a lot of anchors today. People are still anchoring themselves in personal convictions. I wonder if somebody doesn't know what a personal conviction is because people are still anchoring themselves in personal convictions. We need to be students of the Bible, and we need to understand. If we say that we love the doctrine, we need to know what the doctrine does and where it's found. We can hold it in the right spirit, but we absolutely need to know what's the difference between that and a personal conviction. We cannot be anchored in personal convictions and last the storm. People anchor in personal convictions, personal convictions that rise to doctrine and tradition. If you hold to a personal conviction the wrong way long enough, it will rise to doctrine for you, and you'll say, "That must be truth." I use the word *truth* very carefully when someone says, "I know the truth," as if, "it's in a box, and I've got it." If God is truth, then I'll never know all the truth. I can only know what God has revealed to me, and what He has revealed to His church. In the world today, a lot of people have political opinion. I tell the saints at home, be careful about opinion. It tends to divide today. I'm just saying. People are anchored in attitude. Some folks are anchored in their sorrow. They're not evil at all. They are simply the experiences that a person has had in life, and it has produced sorrow or frustration. Some folks are anchored in those things. They have a hard time lifting the anchor from that. Well, that's not where we're meant to anchor, is there? This is not easy, and it takes a lot of work. But even with someone anchored in their sorrow, God has provided a place where there is no sorrow. You don't have to wait until you get to heaven. In a holy place, He wants your anchor there. But we need to understand, I'm anchoring myself in my own sorrow.

Some folks are anchored in their family, and so when God allows a family member to be touched somehow, it overflows that person. Their boat is ready to capsize because their family has been touched. We know if we

live long enough, and if you have children, sooner or later one of your children is going to get touched by something. Where's our anchor? My wife and I have four children and a grandchild. We love all of them. We're all working together one way or another, but our anchor is not in our children. It's not in our family. Their only hope is if Mom and Dad and Grandpa and Grandma have their anchor in the holiest of holy places. Their greatest hope is we don't have our anchor in the holy place. We have our anchor in the holiest of holy places.

Some people are anchored in misunderstanding. Some people are anchored in trauma. Some people are anchored in false teaching. Some people are anchored in unforgiveness. They just can't forgive. They're anchored in it. Anchored in disappointment. None of those anchors are in Christ, so what should we do? If we have found ourselves dropping our anchor in one of those, we need to cut the line. God, help us to cut that anchor. As I've said, in some of these, they're not even evil. There isn't any sin involved, but people have dropped an anchor into it, and it's keeping them from moving where they have to move, because God wants them to hoist the sail and sail with Him. They're anchored in something that's not letting them move. It's nothing to do with sin.

CONCLUSION

The last thing is, some anchors remain on the deck of the boat, don't they? They should be dropped in that holiest place, and they're not getting dropped. What happens when the weather starts to get turbulent and that boat is not anchored? Where does it go? Wherever the storm takes it. If it's near rock, what happens? The boat crashes. Why? Because it wasn't anchored.

If we're going to sail with Christ, we need to have our anchor in Him. In that holiest place. Sometimes I find folks still have their anchor on the deck. We see this sometimes. A person expresses that they love the Lord, but their anchor is not in the holiest place. How do we know? Our conversation reveals it to us. What I talk about. I'm more interested in popular culture and in the news of the day than I'm really in the holiest place. Rarely am I interested. Our conversation reveals about where our anchor is. What do we talk about at home between us and our children? Do our children see that we've dropped our anchor in the holiest place? I can say, "Son, Mom and Dad have repented, and as for me and my house, we serve the Lord." But you know what? If I'm taking chances with my experience, I wonder if my anchor is really in the Holiest of Holies. Now, I haven't gotten to the place yet where I've backslidden, but I believe backsliding starts when the anchor is not in the holiest of holy places. When we know that we need to move our anchor into that holiest place, and we don't move it, the Spirit convicts us, then that's where backsliding starts. For so many people, backsliding starts from a place of justification. Good people backslide, and more and more today, people who expressed that they love God are backsliding into their own religion. They're not just backsliding into sin. They're backsliding into religion. I think God wants to spue that out of His mouth. That doesn't happen if we

keep that anchor in the Holiest of Holies. I'll let you think about that for awhile. I believe the Lord wants us anchored within the veil.

Our thought again is to help us to find a good future for the church in service, and we felt like we needed to start by asking, Are we anchored within the veil?

The Lord bless you. †

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



GRANDMA'S WAY

Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

Bang! Bang! Bang!

I swung around, startled by the sudden sounds. And then I saw what had caused them. My little grandmother was walking swiftly around our kitchen, closing the cupboard doors, one after the other.

The old farmhouse we lived in had a large kitchen with tall cupboards that went all the way to the high ceiling, and my sisters and I had a habit of leaving the cupboard doors hanging open when we got things out or put them away.

"Shut the cupboard doors!" Mom would say, time after time, and we would guiltily turn to close them. But the next time we got something from the cupboard, we would leave the door wide open again. It seemed a waste of time to close a door that we would have to open a little while later.

Now, watching Grandma close the cupboard doors, my sisters and I were embarrassed. We had just come back from Grandma's home in Pennsylvania, where we had picked up Grandma and brought her to our house to spend the week. Instead of going to her room to rest after the long car ride, she was doing a task we had left undone.

A little while later, we sat down to a supper of leftovers we had brought back from the dinner Grandma had cooked for us at her house earlier that day. "We might as well bring the leftovers with us," Grandma had said. "They won't stay good in my refrigerator all week while I'm gone."

Along with the other leftovers, I ate two pieces of Grandma's homemade bread. It was so light and fluffy and delicious. And then I ate a piece of her homemade pumpkin pie. No one else could make bread or pumpkin pie like Grandma did, not even our mother—her daughter. Grandma smiled as we ate. We could tell she was happy we enjoyed the food she had worked so hard to prepare.

We loved having Grandma as our guest for the week. We loved listening to her tell our mother the latest stories from their hometown in Pennsylvania. We loved watching her busy hands as they cut and sewed dresses for us from the "goods" she had brought with her. Our

mother called sewing fabric “material,” not “goods.” Grandma made us smile when she talked, because she said some things differently from the way we did.

“You’uns are really growing,” she said when she measured us for our dresses.” We looked at each other and grinned. No one in our part of the country said “you’uns” instead of “you all.”

“Come here and let me comb your heads,” she said to my little sisters as she helped us get ready for school each morning. We smiled again. Our mother combed our “hair,” not our “heads.”

But the thing we noticed most about Grandma was the way she worked. Although she wasn’t in the best of health, she was never idle. Watching her, we knew down in our hearts that we should be working harder, ourselves.

“You’uns are getting to be big girls,” Grandma said one evening. “You’uns can be a big help to your mom.” We exchanged conscience-stricken looks. We knew Grandma must have noticed how often we had to be reminded of our chores, and how slow we were to take on any extra work.

I was ten years old, and did a lot of chores around the house. But I had a habit of ignoring other jobs until my mother pointed them out to me. *I’m given enough work to do as it is, I would say to myself, without thinking up even more to do.*

Noticing what needed to be done, and then doing it—that was Grandma’s way. Her house was always spotless, and not one cupboard door ever hung open in her kitchen. Her garden and flower beds were free from weeds, and her chickens were always fed and watered. The canning room shelves in her basement were lined with jars of corn, beans, beets, and tomatoes that she had planted, harvested, and preserved.

We girls could have profited greatly if we had taken Grandma’s instruction to heart the first time we heard it. Unfortunately, we didn’t turn into model workers the week that Grandma stayed with us. After Grandma left, our mother still had to remind us sometimes to do our chores and to close the cupboard doors. But the memories of “Grandma’s way” stayed with us, and eventually we became more responsible in doing, not only our chores, but other tasks that needed to be done.

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 8:33, which says, *Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.* Your parents, grandparents, and other adults have a lot of wisdom they can share with you. They can teach you many valuable lessons. This teaching is called “instruction.” Proverbs 8:33 tells us that we are wise if we listen to instruction. Refusal to follow good instruction always leads to shame and disgrace.

Heeding our parents’ and grandparents’ instruction is important, but it is even more necessary that we follow God’s instruction. The Bible is full of the wisdom of God. In words that are clear and plain, God teaches us to be pure and holy. He teaches us to stay away from evil and cleave to that which is good. We must never refuse God’s instruction; instead, we should follow every command He has given. That is how we can avoid shame and disgrace in our lives. That is how we can make heaven our home one day.

Activity

Below are some verses of instruction from God’s book—the Bible. Only a portion of each verse has been given. Can you complete each verse? (If you need help, the location of the scripture verse has been given.)

1. “Children, obey your” (Ephesians 6:1).
2. “Let the word of Christ” (Colossians 3:16).
3. “Love as brethren, be” (I Peter 3:8b).
4. “Be content with” (Hebrews 13:5b).
5. “And be ye kind” (Ephesians 4:32).

Answer to Last Month’s Activity

1. Moses
2. Abraham
3. Sarah
4. Solomon
5. Adam †



Dear Young People,

“Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not” (Jeremiah 33:3).

This month’s article was taken from thoughts given by Sis. Charnita Richards at a recent prayer meeting. They were challenging us that even in this busy, distracted world we live in, we have the privilege of serving an all-attentive God. May we each be blessed.

Blessings,
Bro. Doug Shenberger

LISTENING

By Sis. Charnita Richards

LISTENING IS a skill. Many classes and seminars are offered to encourage and teach us how to master speaking, but the ability to listen well is rarely taught. Consequently, we have all experienced the frustration of talking to a poor listener. They yawn, look at their watches, check their phones, eavesdrop on a nearby conversation, pretend to listen, or plan what they want to say when it’s their turn to talk. Humans speak at a rate of 140-180 words per minute, while we can process roughly 400-800 words per minute. This gap allows one to side-process any number of thoughts that distract us from a speaker’s more important message. We’ve come to expect and accept these kinds of behaviors, and sometimes, I wonder if we’ve assumed God demonstrates the same actions. I wonder if we think we have to work to get and keep His attention. There are many people in the world for Him to listen to and many prayers to answer, so what if He is distracted during our conversation with Him, and is only partially listening as we pour our hearts out to Him?

But recently, I came across a beautiful passage in Matthew, chapter 20, verses 29-34: "And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him, And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us O Lord, thou Son of David. **And Jesus stood still**, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him." *And Jesus stood still*: This thought and mental image cheered my heart. The moment we call out to Him, we have His full attention. He is not distracted by a nearby conversation, He is God. He will never only pretend to be listening, nor will He ever have the need to check the time or prepare for what He would like to say when it's His turn. While He already knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts, He desires to commune with us, and when we take the time to talk to Him, He's always attentive to what we have to say.

Psalms 34:15 reminds us that "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." How good of a listener, then, am I when He talks to me? God speaks to us in many ways: through meditation, the preaching of His Word, through song, and during our Bible reading. Just as we appreciate when He gives us His undivided attention, I encourage us to practice the same courtesy. Being an active listener means paying close attention when He speaks to us. It means clearing distractions and working to channel our thoughts toward His messages toward us. Setting aside quiet times for God to speak to us gives Him an opportunity to impress, guide, and lead us. He desires to have consistent and meaningful communication with His children. It is a blessed opportunity to have an audience with the Creator of the universe, our heavenly Father, our Friend. May we never take this privilege for granted and work to develop a tender fellowship with God that will truly make our lives so blessed. †

QUOTES ABOUT FATHERS

"DADS DON'T NEED TO BE TALL AND BROAD-SHOULDERED AND CLEVER. LOVE MAKES THEM SO."—PAM BROWN

"BLESSED INDEED IS THE MAN WHO HEARS MANY GENTLE VOICES CALL HIM FATHER."

—LYDIA MARIA CHILD

"A FATHER IS NEITHER AN ANCHOR TO HOLD US BACK NOR A SAIL TO TAKE US THERE, BUT A GUIDING LIGHT WHOSE LOVE SHOWS US THE WAY."—UNKNOWN

"FATHERS, YOURS IS AN ETERNAL CALLING FROM WHICH YOU ARE NEVER RELEASED."

—EZRA TAFT BENSON

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THE CHURCH OF GOD STANDS FOR

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

YOU SHOULD KNOW MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH OF GOD

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

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Bro. Gregory E. Tyler, Host Pastor

Jamaica Youth Revival

Grants Mountain, St. Ann

July 23-28, 2024

Sis Linette Jutan, Pastor