

# The Way of Truth

Vol. 82

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

No. 9

**October 2024**

**The Everlasting Gospel  
in an Ever-changing World**

**Message begins on page 2**

## THE PRAYER OF HABAKKUK

“O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.”—Habakkuk 3:2.



AS WE APPROACH a national election, I point our readers to a prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth. Habakkuk was a prophet of Judah. The date at which he prophesied is uncertain—possibly in the reign of Josiah or of Jehoiakim (c. 600 B.C.). Nothing beyond this is known about him.

Have you ever read the news with all the violence and injustice in the world and in frustration asked, “Why isn’t God doing something? Why do the wicked and the dishonest people prosper? Why do they get elected to the White House?” Well, that is not a new feeling. The prophet Habakkuk felt that way around 620 B.C. and wrote about it.

Habakkuk’s name means to *embrace* or *wrestle*. As is usually the case, his name has something to do with the message of the book. It relates to the fact that he was wrestling with a difficult issue. If God is good, then why is there evil in the world? And if there has to be evil, then why do the evil prosper? What is God doing in the world?

A title for his three chapter book could be, “From Worry to Worship” or “From Fear to Faith.”

In our text we find the prophet crying out: “O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years.” *Revive* means, “to activate, set in motion, or take up again; renew; (2) to quicken or renew in the mind; (3) to return to a flourishing condition.” In other words, Habakkuk’s generation had forsaken God and was in dire need of renewal, of returning to a flourishing condition. He cried out to the Lord to revive His work.

The family of man is the work of His hand. “Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture” (Psalm 100:3). There needs to arise from our generation a cry for God to revive the sensitivity of man’s soul that he might respond to the Holy Spirit’s call.

May God revive the faint and weary! Isaiah 40:28-31: “Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”

May God revive the brokenhearted! Luke 4:18, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.”

Our nation like Israel of old has in general forsaken God. “Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.”—Isaiah 1:4-6. America is sick! I love this country, but it seems she is disintegrating right before our eyes. Though there have been some dark chapters in American history, it has long been the beacon light of democracy and freedom. It is the greatest country in the world.

Isaiah 1:7, “Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.” Modern religion has failed to instill righteousness into the hearts and lives of Americans. We need to cry out as Habakkuk did, “O Lord, revive thy work.” The Church of God is His work. Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, “... Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The church is His production! We must not fail.

We have a promise from the Lord—II Chronicles 7:14, “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” Lord, revive our faith!

“Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”—John 6:29.

“Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”—Luke 18:9.

Lord, revive our joy. The joy of the Lord is our strength! Revive our ability to draw from the wells of salvation.

Lord, revive salvation in our midst! Isaiah 57:15, “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

Revive a spirit of conviction in our land as in days gone by! 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?”

Revive the soul burden of your people. Isaiah 66:8-10: “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith

### ABOUT THE COVER

A photo taken in Jay Cooke State Park in Minnesota graces our cover this month. Located a short distance from Duluth, the spectacle of the change wrought by the autumn changing of colors is in full display. What a mighty God we serve!

# 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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and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

Jesus said that true Christians are the salt of the earth. It is possible that things will wax worse and worse until there is not enough “salt” to preserve the earth and God will say, “Enough.” But it is my hope that there will yet be a great move of God before the end. The Bible says in II Peter 3:8, 9, “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

Habakkuk’s prayer should be our prayer! “O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.” Have mercy on us collectively—as a nation, as a people, as a world in great need.

*“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”—II Chronicles 7:14. †*

the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.”

As Habakkuk cried, “In thy wrath, remember mercy.” I know our hearts are overwhelmed as we see the decline of morality in our country. But we are not to throw up our hands in despair. Rather, let us follow the lead of David: “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” (Psalm 61:2).

Lead me ... activate me ... set my prayers in motion. James 5:16 admonishes, “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” Revive our ability to pray effectually.

When can we expect God to revive us as a nation? “In the midst of the years”! Today—not just someday. Does the Bible speak of a worldwide revival before the end of time? Possibly. I cannot say for sure. But Revelation speaks of fire from heaven devouring the forces of evil. Revelation 20:6-10: “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast

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# The Everlasting Gospel in an Ever-changing World

2024 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. David Goble



**W**E WILL TURN in our Bibles to Malachi, chapter 3. We have two verses as our text. Verse 6: “For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.” There is so much in that verse. It has sermons that could go on for several days.

I thank God that we have the confidence He doesn't change. That's a good thing, because if it were that He was changeable, He would be capricious. He would be one that I couldn't count on. Maybe today He'll be this way, maybe tomorrow He'll be that way, and who knows what judgment I would get if that's the way He were? But because His Word is from everlasting to everlasting, even though I deserved punishment, and His justice in my case was that I should be condemned, God doesn't change. He had already set in motion mercy. He had already made Himself Savior before the world was ever born. I received mercy instead of condemnation. That's part of the blessing of God not changing. So one half of the message is that we serve an Everlasting Gospel.

This is the second verse in our thoughts this morning: Acts 1:7, 8—“And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. *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.*” I thank the Lord He still has witnesses in the uttermost parts of the world today. The reason why He has witnesses, which are true and faithful, is because they go out with power. This is the thought here, so see if we can follow this.

## THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL HAS POWER

We have an everlasting gospel in an ever-changing world. The reason we can go out in this ever-changing world is because we can go out with power with an everlasting gospel. The world is not static. The world is ever-changing. One reason the world is ever-changing is because it left God out in the very beginning. Perhaps it wasn't God's idea that the change that comes about from evil was ever to have happened, but we know from the fall of Adam, evil was introduced into the world that we live in. In that regard, the world is ever-changing.

I want you to consider the word *power*, which in the original language means, “dynamic.” So I want you to think about an ever-changing world—how can we be a part of—or work in (a better way to say it), an ever-changing world with a never-changing gospel. How can that happen? We'll talk about that for a little bit. The world is ever-changing.

In Genesis, chapter 3, because of Adam's fall, nature self-changes. Thistles grow. Adam is evicted from the

garden. He toils by the sweat of his brow. Nature itself and creation in it changes. Death is introduced into the world. So this is an ever-changing world that's caused by that.

I also think that when we talk about *change*, we get nervous sometimes. As people of God we think sometimes that word is a scary word, because perhaps it implies that we move off of this everlasting gospel. Do you know what? There were six days of creation. On each day, something else happened. Something new happened that hadn't happened on the day before. I think God changes things when He wants to. Now, He doesn't change truth. He doesn't change the everlasting gospel.

I changed. Have you changed? I was once lost without hope, deserving of everlasting hell and punishment. Then one day, God in His mercy, presented Himself, and said, “I intend to change you.” Evidently, He understood what that meant. So I'm not afraid of change when God is behind it. God was behind my change. It does come to the point where, once He changes something according to His will, we might want to say He doesn't want it to slip back. He wants it to stay the way He made it. But what we need to think about is, an ever-changing world in a never-changing gospel, and how do those things work together.

I'm thinking about this word *power* also. Somehow God gives His people power to operate in an ever-changing world with a never-changing gospel.

## CHARITY NEVER FAILS

Now, at the end of this story that we're constructing this morning, I want to bring us back to the theme of the convention which is in I Corinthians 13. I'm going to use the last verse of that chapter as a kind of template for describing some things about never-changing and power in an ever-changing world. We're going to use that, because the end of this story is found in the last verse of I Corinthians 13, so we can go there now.

I love the theme of the convention. I have thought for some time it is under reported and under used and needs to be more reported and more used. The apostle said in the last verse of chapter 13 of I Corinthians: “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” Charity is a tremendous word. The word *charity* needs to be given great honor and lifted up and held in high esteem and kept there as the Lord intended. We need to be careful not to add other ideas to this word *charity*, because it is a special word.

If you'll forgive me, charity doesn't mean just love, if you'll understand what I'm saying, because love can mean many things. I love apple pie, and I love my wife.

I'm not comparing apple pie to the love for my wife. I love to travel. I love to be with God's people. We love lots of things, but this is a special kind of love, and we need to talk about it a little bit as we have already. I would like to add to what has already been said in this convention that was so good.

### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAITH AND FATE

Let's talk about faith, hope, and charity for a minute in the context of something that never changes. *Faith* is that idea of trust, confidence, and conviction. But I thought about this: *Faith is an interesting word*. Can you think of what is the difference between faith and fate? A lot has been written on faith and fate. *Fate* is an idea that comes from the pagan world. It means that something is going to happen by chance. You don't really have control over it. By the way, there is no love that is required for fate. In the pagan world in which the apostles had grown up, and those before them, fate was an idea that was very common to people. You prayed to God for a good harvest. You had no control over the weather. If there was a drought, you would starve, and so you needed rain, and you prayed. If there was an enemy at your border, you prayed for protection. Some of this you can kind of see present in the thinking of the Israelites from long ago. They didn't quite understand fate the way we do. Fate has this idea that it's subject to change, but there's no love required for fate. It just happens.

I heard somebody testify once that one day he was driving a car down the road and he sort of lost control of the car. Maybe he was tired. He hit a tree, and the tree saved him from going over the cliff, down into the valley and being killed. He was injured, but he didn't die. His thought was that God planted that tree forty years earlier to save his life in the accident. Well, I never doubted his testimony. That's what he believed, but it had this aspect to me of fate that somehow God was a God of fate. "I was just traveling down the road one day and this happened." I understand we give God thanks for every blessing that He sends our way. I get that. But you know, there's a difference between faith and fate.

Faith is different in this way. It comes really from the gospel. Faith is different because we just don't serve a God who needs to be feared. We serve a God that we love. This was unique in antiquity. This was unique in the time of the Israelites compared to the tribes and peoples who surrounded them. They served gods that were involved in fate. Neptune, Jupiter, Apollo, and all of those other gods didn't love the people that they reigned over. They didn't love the people that they had dominion over in their world and in their way of thinking. There was no love involved there, but then comes the God of Israel. He introduces Himself to the patriarchs, and they begin to understand the reason "I have chosen you is because I want a love relationship with you. Not only you, but you will be a template, an example for all peoples of all ages later, and I'm going to send a Savior one day who will demonstrate the fact that I'm telling you the truth that I want a love relationship with you." This is unique in antiquity where there were no gods that loved their people, but the God of Abraham, the God of Jacob, the God of Isaac, the God

of David, and ultimately Jesus was different. This is different than anything that you could read before them. So faith requires love or it is not faith. It's just this obedience. "I do things out of obedience so that I'm not punished."

### FAITH REQUIRES LOVE

This is one of the main things that happens when we get saved. God introduces Himself as the God of love to our hearts. Faith becomes real at that point. It's as if it was dead before, but now it's alive. Why? Because the love of God has now animated our faith, and it says in the last verse of I Corinthians 13, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity." This charity that we're talking about is this love. It animates faith. Why is charity the greatest? Because faith and hope are dependent on love. Without charity, faith and hope don't operate the way God intends. Therefore, I cannot operate the way God intends unless love is dominating my hope and my faith. I can't be the proper servant of God without charity. Praise God! This is wonderful. But how many times do Christians go out the door into the world professing and want to spread the everlasting gospel without charity in an ever-changing world? Oh, we get excited and upset and feel like we have to defend things. We'll get to this later.

Faith requires love. Faith in God cannot exist without the love of God. The everlasting gospel that requires love requires from time to time, not just a leap of faith, but *leaps* of faith. That's an idea that we find throughout the Bible—faith requires leaps. You're not going to leap over a chasm, over danger, over uncertainty unless love is involved. I thought about this: *We say that salvation requires a leap of faith as if that's the only leap we ever need to take*. I've been taking leaps this week. Before I came here, I was leaping; not just one leap, leaps! I won't leap unless love is motivating my leaping. I want to get to the other side. I want to get to where God is. Faith in God cannot exist without the love of God.

Faith requires love or it is not faith. Let's say we just can't quite agree. We see things differently. Do we have the right to strip love from somebody else's faith? They may be even operating under some false understanding. They might not see things properly, and we think *my job is to correct them on the doctrine. It doesn't matter how I do it, and if it leaves them naked and stripped of love, which perhaps even before now had been operating in them, that's my duty*. We injure people when we do that, don't we? We should have no reason to make another person wrong so that the gospel can be right.

There's a scripture that says, "Let God be true, and every human being a liar." The scripture does not say *let every man be a liar so God can be true*. The Holy Ghost is quite capable of doing His job all by Himself. He can defend the everlasting gospel in an ever-changing world. Therefore, I may not agree that a person sees things the way the Lord sees them, or even that I should follow him, or that his understanding of truth is correct. I may not agree with that, but I have no need to destroy that person in order that God be right. God will be right whether we're wrong or not. We should not be saying *let every man be a liar so that God can*

*be true*, because that would imply that I need to defend the gospel so that your understanding can be corrected. That is not to say that we shouldn't preach the truth. We've been given an everlasting gospel. Things that are true are always true. Things that have been true will be true tomorrow, and we should proclaim the truth. When Jesus' disciples were rebuking a man who had cast out a devil from someone, Jesus said, "He that is not against us is for us." But He didn't say, *And by the way, feel free to follow him*. He didn't say that. We have to follow what God has shown us as truth, but we don't need to destroy somebody else in order for that to be true.

### HOPE IS EVERLASTING

Jesus said that hope is everlasting. There will always be hope. An everlasting gospel in an ever-changing world. Jesus began preaching the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew, chapter 5, and goes on in chapters 6 and 7. It's one sermon. From all the Beatitudes and the blessings and everything that He preached, and all that went forward, this is the end of that sermon. Matthew 7:24-26: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand."

If we're building our house on this Rock, this Everlasting Gospel, we're not building a house on sand. We're building on something firm. It's going to last. It's going to stand the test of time. We don't have to worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow may come. I wake up not knowing what's going to happen, but I don't care, because I serve the God who never changes. He's given us an everlasting gospel, but I live in an ever-changing world, and fear is in this ever-changing world. So somehow we have to be able to have access to this everlasting gospel in this ever-changing world. That's what Jesus meant when He said there's hope. If you're looking for hope, you've come to the right place.

Turn to I John, chapter 4. Some of this has been spoken about. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment [Every time I see the word *judgment*, I also read the word *justice*.]: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect [complete] love casteth out fear." There is nothing lacking in perfect love. God is the Author of perfect love. This, too, is part of our hope, isn't it? This perfection that comes through this gives us hope. This is another reason why, as I said, I don't have to make every man a liar in order for God to be true. God will be true whether every man is a liar or not. He is God. He will be true, even if every man is a liar. But here again, it says, "Herein is our love made perfect." "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." We're made perfect. We're made complete. So from this, we have hope.

If you go back and read those chapters in Matthew that we just came from (chapters 5, 6, and 7), decide whether Jesus is arguing with people or whether He is

affirming something. There's a difference between an argument and an affirmation. An *argument* means that I'm debating something. I'm trying to defeat something. I'm trying to prove something right because something may be wrong. An *affirmation* is that I'm an apologist for truth. I'm affirming something that is truth. In other words, I'm presenting it as if it is true and giving you reasons why it is true. In that way there is no doubt. There is no doubt in the everlasting gospel of Jesus. So when we find ourselves doubtful and confused, not knowing what's going to happen, or how this is going to turn out, we have hope, and hope comes from the everlasting gospel, and Jesus has affirmed that it is true, and there's no debate.

The enemy wants to fill us with doubt and confusion, and from that he wants to fill us with fear. And you know, even saints of God are sometimes subject to this. Saints, this is when we need to go back to our training. We have been trained in the everlasting gospel. We know what is true. We know what the Rock looks like. We know where to stand. If I find myself in those times of doubt and confusion and fear, and look around, I might say *I don't even know where I'm standing*, but I look around for the Rock, and I go back to my training. Paul told Timothy, "Remember the traditions that you've been taught." And I look for the Rock and say, "Ah, there it is!" and I stand on that.

We sing a song, "Standing on the Rock." Do we stand on the Rock when we're filled with doubt and fear? Do we look for the Rock to stand on, or do we say, "I don't know where I am, and I don't know how to get out of this"? Do we look for the Rock? I said to the saints at home, "Look for the Rock. We've been trained. Don't raise our hands and then wring our hands and go 'Woe is me, I don't know what to do! Where is the church? What's going to happen to us? All of this and that is happening. This one who is so faithful is now wavering.'" We begin to get our eyes on men, right? I think to myself, *You've been here for forty years. Where's the Rock? Where's the everlasting gospel in the midst of this ever-changing world? Can you find it? You've been trained. You know how to find it. Go there!* That gives us hope. Praise God!

### NEW TESTAMENT CHARITY

The final is charity. This is where it becomes so important. I looked for *charity* in the Concordance of the Old Testament. I don't know but some of you Bible scholars may find it in the *Septuagint*. I just looked up the word *charity*. I could only find it in the New Testament. This is probably the Greek word. I'm not talking about the Hebrew word. It's not that God has ever changed. The God of the Old Testament is the same God that's in the God of the New Testament. He might have had a different plan for His people then than He has now. We're in a better covenant. I thank God for that, but it's the same God. But it's interesting that this word is found in the New Testament. Charity isn't just found in I Corinthians, chapter 13.

One of the reasons why I think charity is so prevalent in the New Testament is because of one Person. Love changes. The meaning of love changed when Christ came into the world. He is the essence of love. He is the Everlasting Gospel in an ever-changing world.

That's why we should always look to Christ for the power of the gospel, because before Him it might mean obedience, or whatever God intended, but here in the day that we live in, the power of the everlasting gospel is Christ. The meaning of love changes with Christ. We see this idea of perfection. We're going to come back to this in a minute.

### THIS IS AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

Now, we get to this ever-changing world, and how do we work in this ever-changing world with this everlasting gospel? The nature of the world is ever-changing. When I wake up in the morning, I get my news from the internet mostly. I want to see what happened during the night. I go to the internet and look for the news, and I keep scrolling and waiting for some good news. So I need you to pray for me that I would get wisdom that some day I'd realize I'm never going to find good news by doing this. I'm waiting for good news, but it's not showing up. It goes from the politics of the day to the sports and entertainment. Then it's over. I look at it and say, "Is that all you've got?" And I'm thinking, *Why do I want what you're offering? If that is what you're offering the world, why would I want that?* There's no hope, no faith, and no charity in those things. So I say, "No, I think I'll still choose the everlasting gospel. It's still the better deal. They haven't come up with something better that will replace that. I'll still choose the everlasting gospel." The world is ever-changing.

Let's go back to Acts, chapter 1, verse 8. The Lord said, "I want you to stay in Jerusalem until you're endowed with power from on high." The other way to look at that is, "I want you to stay in Jerusalem until you're dynamic." You might think, *Well, dynamic seems to imply change. It's not static, it's dynamic. So what is going on?* But the word that applies there for that is *power*. "I want you to stay in Jerusalem until you have power." So this word *dynamic* has this association with power—the ability to flex, the ability to pivot, the ability to be relevant, the ability to see obstacles, the ability to conquer. Think of everything that the Lord endowed the disciples with power. What were they able to do with their power? They could do all of those things.

Jesus was dynamic. Jesus could pivot, He could flex, He could overcome obstacles, He could conquer. Jesus could come to a situation, such as, the woman at the well who was caught in adultery. Jesus changed the law in that moment. "You should suffer the consequence of your crime. You should die." He changed the law. Why? To conform with charity. Charity comes with Christ. He made the law. He could change any law. Thank God in our day there are things He has made static. He made them before time started in eternity. They're now here in time. They'll be after time. He's that kind of God. So Jesus was dynamic.

Paul was dynamic. David and Abraham were dynamic. They were dynamic because they were working in an ever-changing world, but they were not changed by the world they were working in. Instead, they turned the world upside down because they had power with God. They could interpret and apply an everlasting gospel in an ever-changing world with

power and not be changed by the world they were working in.

We get to the end of I Corinthians 13: We have "faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." We've talked about charity in these terms. It gives life to faith and to hope. It gives us power. But as I thought about it, I thought, *What is the truest definition of charity?* It was this: "love." Love conquers death. That's Christ. Christ is charity. The truest definition of what Jesus does is that He saves us from death. Love conquers death. That's why charity is the greatest of these three. We can have faith. We can hope, but only charity conquers death. Without charity, these other things don't survive.

Some final thoughts: I may not agree with you, but I will do nothing to intentionally hurt you. We may not be able to work together for a time, because these things are important, and we can't preach false doctrine, and we must walk in the truth as He is in the light. That's how we have fellowship. I may not see eye-to-eye with somebody, but I'm not the author of their salvation. For a time I may have difficulty working with somebody, but I will do nothing to intentionally destroy that person. That's not my job.

Charity is the attraction between souls. If we want, we can think of it this way: *the soul of God and the souls of men*. The ultimate definition of this conquering love is not apple pie or things we love in life. It's an intense connection between souls. The Spirit of God and our spirit, or you might want to say, the soul of God and our souls. This is the charity He talks about. Unless it is that, we lower this definition of charity. This charity may include some elements, but unless it is really defined by the connection with our souls with God, we lower it, we lessen it. It's not just kindness, it's not just generosity, it's not just hospitality. It's that my soul is connected to God. That's the ultimate definition of charity. This is why in that moment my soul was connected to Jesus.

### CONCLUSION

Do you remember the moment when God saved you? You might have come to an altar like this. You realized "I'm separated from God. I'm lost from God. I have no hope. I barely have enough faith to make it to the altar." God meets you at the altar. His presence connects with your soul. The power that happens in that moment, and the recognition that all of your sins are no longer there, that's when love first appears. In that moment love conquers death. You're brought into a right relationship with God. We are soul mates with God.

I wonder if anybody here is struggling with hatred, struggling with bitterness or meanness, struggling with doubt and unbelief. Are you interested in charity? Charity will displace all those things. All those things will take us to death. Charity will take us to life. So at the end, that's when the greatest of these three is charity.

"Lord, open our mouths, loose our tongues," because God has given us charity. An everlasting gospel in an ever-changing world.

Thank you for your help this morning. †



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

**QUESTION:** What is meant by, “If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut it off”?

**ANSWER:** In this Christ is teaching how very important it is that we allow nothing to stand in our way of making heaven our home. A person would be better off blind and go to heaven than to have eyes, if his being able to see would cause him to sin. A person would be better off without feet and go to heaven than to have feet if they would lead him away from the pathway of righteousness and truth. The lust of the eyes and the pride of life have damned many souls in hell.

Jesus was not teaching one should literally cut off his hand or foot.

**QUESTION:** Please explain Matthew 10:34-36; John 9:16; John 7:42, 43; and John 10:19. Does it mean Jesus brought division to this earth?

**ANSWER:** Except for Matthew 10:34-36, the scriptures you refer to speak of “division” among the people as to whether they believed Jesus or believed in Him, and, of course, that continues to our day. That division was caused by the people themselves. Had they all believed Him there would have been no division.

Yes, Jesus did come to bring division! He came to bring division between right and wrong, between truth and error, but He did not come to bring division among His true followers. Rather, He prayed for all His disciples to be one. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20, 21).

**QUESTION:** Was Jehu anointed to kill those who opposed God? If yes, can God anoint murderers?

**ANSWER:** There are five Jehu’s mentioned in the Old Testament. I assume you speak of the one who became king over Israel. II Kings 9 tells us that he was to “smite the house of Ahab thy master, That I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel” (Verse 7).

First, let us understand this happened under the Old Covenant. Jezebel, who was not a Hebrew, had brought many false prophets into Israel which taught the people to worship false gods. So Jehu was simply carrying out what the Law required. I would invite you to read the thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy and see what was to be done if anyone tried to lead them away from the true God to worship false gods. If some in a city influenced others to worship false gods, “thou shalt surely smite

the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword” (Verse 15). This law included your brother, even the “wife of thy bosom” (Verse 6).

We find a different standard taught in the New Covenant, though God is just as strongly against false religion! When James and John asked if they should call fire down from heaven, as Elijah had done, to consume some of the Samaritans because they would not rent Jesus a room for the night, Jesus answered, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them” (Luke 9:55, 56).

**QUESTION:** Why do you think Jesus did not respond directly to Pilate’s question, “Are you the king of the Jews?”—John 18:33.

**ANSWER:** Jesus did not respond directly at this point because He wanted to know if Pilate was asking because Jesus’ enemies were accusing Him, or was it because he, Pilate, was suspicious of Him.

It appears from the next verse that Pilate was asking because of the Jews. “I am not a Jew, it is your people that are accusing you. If you do not claim to be a king, then what have you done?” Then in verse 36, Jesus informed him His kingdom was a spiritual kingdom, not a literal kingdom that would be a threat to Caesar.

**QUESTION:** II Chronicles 10:19 says, “And Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.” Was not the house of David part of Israel?

**ANSWER:** All of the tribes were a part of “Israel” at one time. However, in the due course of time there came a separation, and one part was known as Judah and the other Israel. Ten tribes took Jeroboam as king; two tribes took Solomon’s son Rehoboam as king. There were some who left the ten tribes and moved south to be a part of the kingdom of Judah, and many, if not all, of the Levites stood with Judah.

Many of the ten tribes were carried away by Assyria, and were never a kingdom again. It may be that some of them returned with those of Judah after Babylon fell, and King Cyrus ordered those of Judah who would to return and rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.

It seems that some of the northern kingdom may have been left in the land by the Assyrians, and, as people of other nations were moved in, they became mixed with them. It is out of this “mixture” that came the Samaritans.

**QUESTION:** Expressions like these are found in the Scriptures: “the hand of God”, “the ears of the Lord”; “the eyes of the Lord”; “the heart of God.” What do they mean especially as we are aware that our God is not in size or shape as we are, as He is not physical?

**ANSWER:** The Bible was written in human language, mostly Hebrew and Greek. The Lord spoke to the prophets in their language, so we are to understand that God sees all things, knows all things, that He has “feelings”; that is, He can be pleased and He can be displeased. So we find the Scriptures using terms that we use and understand. †





## WHAT CHRIST IS TO US

**Anonymous**

The Shield from every dart;  
The Balm for every smart;  
The Sharer of each load;  
Companion on the road.

The Door into the fold;  
That Anchor that will hold;  
The Shepherd of the sheep;  
The Guardian of my sleep.

The Friend with Whom I talk;  
The Way by which I walk;  
The Light to show the way;  
The Strength for every day.

The Source of my delight;  
The Song to cheer the night;  
The Thought that fills my mind;  
The Best of All to find—is Jesus!

## TROUBLED WATERS

**Albert N. Theel**

When I tread on troubled waters  
And my faith begins to wane,  
With His help I'll rise above it,  
He is with me, praise His name.

He will hold my hand in trouble,  
He will weep with me in sorrow  
And He'll promise that a brighter day  
Is in store for me tomorrow.

There is no one I can go to  
For the comfort He can give,  
He will always be there with me  
Till on earth I no more live.

Then He'll gently life me upwards  
Onto His Father's throne,  
Where pain and heartaches are behind me  
In my eternal home.

## CLING TO THE BIBLE

**M. J. Smith**

Cling to the Bible, though all else be taken;  
Lose not its promises precious and sure;  
Souls that are sleeping, its echoes awaken,  
Drink from the fountain, so peaceful, so pure.

Cling to the Bible, this jewel, this treasure  
Brings to us honor and saves fallen man;  
Pearl whose great value no mortal can measure,  
Seek and secure it, O soul, while you can.

Lamp for the feet that in byways have wandered,  
Guide for the youth that would otherwise fall;  
Hope for the sinner whose best days are squandered,  
Staff for the ages, and best Book of all.

## LET GO AND LET GOD

**F. W. Davis**

Why complain about your troubles  
While you live from day to day?  
Why not take them all to Jesus,  
Simply trusting as you pray?  
Friend, there is no ill or conflict  
That can hide His loving face;  
If you come in faith believing,  
He'll endow you with His grace.

Life has many disappointments;  
And no matter where you go,  
Oft your faith inclines to weaken  
While you're living here below.  
But our God is so invincible,  
If you'll only grasp His hand,  
There's no need to fear or worry;  
He will give you power to stand!

## QUIET TIME

**Lola Neff Merritt**

In a quiet time I find Him,  
Walking down a maple lane;  
On a sunlit field of daisies  
Sparkling bright with last night's rain.

Alone, I feel a presence  
And a knowledge that He's there;  
The world that moves around me  
Makes me ever more aware.

A place down deep within me  
Seeks these times of sweet release  
From the earthly cares I live with  
And I find an inner peace. †

# STEPS HEAVENWARD

By the late R. L. Berry

## Chapter XVI

### Let the Spirit of God Lead You

**T**HE CHRISTIAN life is a spiritual life, fed on spiritual food, by means of spiritual agencies. The young convert has started for a distant goal, heaven, and the way he does not know only as it is revealed to him. There are duties to perform in the service of God, and of these also the newborn babe in Christ is ignorant except as the Spirit may make known what they are.

The first thing for the young convert to realize is that God knows all the way to heaven, knows all the duties the convert is to perform, knows all the dangers, byways, pitfalls, and traps of the enemy along life's pathway, and that He will lead without a misstep those who seek His guidance and will listen to and obey His voice. Let this point be fully established in your mind, that it is God's work to see you safely through to glory, and it is your business to trust God fully to lead you every day. You are to learn and to follow the voice of the Spirit: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14).

The voice of the Spirit is the same voice as convicted you of your sins, the same voice as spoke peace to your soul when you believed, and which is now to lead you into the right, away from wrong, and into paths of duty. That Spirit is to show you how to walk and please God in your everyday life; your whole inner spiritual life is to be guided into being what the Lord would have it be.

God has more than one way by which He will reveal His will to you. Among these are: By the Word, by providential circumstances, by common sense, and by the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit. God may speak in more than one way, but the message must always be the same. When God tells you by one voice to do or not to do any given thing, He is not going to tell you the opposite by another voice. When the voices contradict each other, the speaker is not the same. If all would follow this rule, it would prevent much fanaticism and trouble.

Of these agencies, the one by which the Lord chiefly leads us is the Word. When in doubt on any subject, consult the Bible and see whether it has anything to say on the point. The Bible is marvelously complete in its directions for holy living. Suppose you desire to know how to dress to the glory of God; read I Peter 3:3, 4 and I Timothy 2:9. If instructions are desired on conversation, read Ephesians 4:29 and 5:4; on conformity to the world, read Romans 12:2 and I John 2:15-17.

Whatever is plainly taught in the Bible will not be contradicted by the Holy Spirit. A certain woman, instead of doing as the Bible said, went to pray about the wearing of gold, and asked for a special revelation. When the revelation came it was in direct opposition to the Word of God. We are to try the spirits, the impressions, and all such inner movings and promptings, we

are to try these by the Word, and when not in harmony with it, they are to be rejected.

There are a great many things, however, that you cannot find specific directions upon in the Bible. The Bible is a great book of principles. Many problems in life confront one that require some other leading to know the mind of God. For instance, the Bible says it is honorable to marry; and yet one would not think of yoking for life with the first person he meets. It says to go into all the world and preach the gospel, but yet none should go without a special call to that work. Therefore there is a place for the direct leadings of the Spirit. These "leadings" of the Spirit will be along simple lines of duty in the beginning, as public testimony and prayer, exhortation, praying for the sick, working at the altar with sinners, and similar religious work.

Providential circumstances also may lead us in God's way. If an opportunity comes before you to do good, take it as the voice of God. I knew of a young Christian girl whose hope and ambition was to marry and preside over a home of her own, but who gave up her plans, for a time, to care for her aged father. That, she felt, was her duty, and the call of duty is the voice of God.

Impressions must be tested by the Word and by common sense to see whether they are of God, of man, or of the devil. If the thing you are impressed to do is in harmony with the Bible, if it appeals to your better judgment as being the right thing to do, and if there are no spiritual checks or warnings against it, it is safe to do that; but otherwise the impression had better be rejected for the time being at least, as out of order. Sometimes we may be impressed that such and such a work is God's will for us; but the way must be opened before it is time to enter upon that work. No two God-given duties conflict, and the duty nearest at hand is the one God would have us engage in, until He opens the way for some other duty.

Young convert, when you go to a testimony meeting and hear God's children telling what the Lord has done for them, you may suddenly feel some inward impulse impelling you to testify also. That is the voice of the Spirit, He is leading you to glorify Christ by witnessing to what He has done for you. Arise at once, open your mouth and speak just as you feel to speak, and as soon as the impulse leaves, sit down. At another service you may as suddenly feel that you should lead in public prayer. This is the Spirit of God leading you to glorify Christ. Kneel and pray, speaking the words as they come naturally to your mind. At still another time you may be at a public meeting and a time comes when an exhortation to either saints or sinners is to the glory of God, and you feel an inner impelling to exhort. This is the Spirit's leadings, prompting you to Christian duty. Arise and speak as God gives you words. These simple beginnings lead on to higher responsibilities. And on the other hand you may just as plainly feel the voice of the Spirit warning you against doing wrong. Thus the Holy Spirit leads into duty, away from sin and evil, and prepares the Christian to glorify Jesus Christ in this world.

No one knows the traps, snares, and spiritual pitfalls set along the way to heaven by the enemy to capture

# JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE

Radio Message by Bro. Brian Richards

**I** WOULD LIKE to welcome you to our broadcast this evening. I trust that it will be a blessing to your soul. It's our aim and desire that we would reach every soul that hears our broadcast. I believe our thoughts and desires need to be based upon the Bible. That's what we'll endeavor to do.



The message is entitled, "Jesus, the Bread of Life." I'll begin reading in Deuteronomy, chapter 8, verse 3: "And he humbled thee [Israel], and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live."

The children of Israel were not following the Lord as closely as they should have been. They were looking for material blessings and material possessions. The Lord in His efforts was endeavoring to teach them that there was more to life than material possessions, material gain, and literal food. The Lord let them go hungry for some time, and as they grew hungry, they humbled themselves and called upon the name of the Lord. The Lord in His mercy sent manna from heaven to feed their bodies, but He did it in such a way that He would be able to show them that it was almighty God who was hearing and answering their cry and plea for help. He sent this manna in such a form, in such a way that they would know that it was only from the hand of God. Again, it says in Deuteronomy 8:3, ... "and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." We see today that in the United States we are rather a wealthy nation. We see many who are seeking fleshly pleasures, material possessions, worldly fame, and honor. They're seeking and searching but are not finding satisfaction.

The children of Israel who were following Moses out of Egypt were doing the same thing, and the Lord endeavored to teach them that this is not what life is all about, but that they would not only be fed literal bread here in this life, but that they are to follow the teachings in the Word of God. So the Lord endeavored to teach them through this lesson that it's not only meat and bread that we are to seek after, but we're to follow the teachings and commandments of God.

Something else we want to keep in mind here is that this manna from heaven is symbolic. We read in St. John, chapter 6, verses 31-35, that Jesus is our spiritual manna today: "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from

unwary Christians. But God knows every one, knows where they are, at just what point or period in life we shall strike them, and how to protect us from them. Place your hand, young convert, in the hand of God, and like a child by its father's side look up to God and ask Him to guide you safely through all the rugged way and into heaven. If you will live humble and trustful and obey the Spirit's voice, you will never be ensnared into evil.

Travelers to Switzerland usually climb the Alps. Guides who know the way are provided for the climbers, and it is the duty of the climbers to obey without a question the commands of their guide. No independent action is allowed, not even a general opinion is permitted to develop into action; all must do exactly as the guide says, and a false step might endanger the lives of the whole band, who are bound together by a long rope. It is the same with you and Christ; His every command is to be instantly obeyed, for your own protection and for your own good.

Jesus said, "Beware of false prophets." Here is another danger to the young convert. There will be cries of, "Lo here is Christ," "Lo there is Christ." Many will solicit you for membership in a church, every "ism" will try to enroll you as a member. Remember, young Christian, that the very moment you were converted you became a member of the true church of God. Nothing can ever make you any more a member of it than you were then. Your name is enrolled in the "Lamb's book of life," the church's roll call.

The conditions of membership in God's church are salvation. Your heavenly Father's will says to you, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (II Corinthians 6:14). You will find many churches that have as many unbelievers as believers. Enter them not. Abide with Christ in the church He built. If you ask, "What Church shall I join?" the Bible answer is, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12:13), which is the same as saying, Join nothing, but be inducted by the Holy Spirit into that spiritual church of which Jesus is founder and head.

In this life of yielding to and following God, do not fail to have faith in Him. Have faith that God will really lead you, and trust Him implicitly to lead you. Your friends and worldly companions may often wonder at the way you go, and even some of your best friends may advise you against following out what you deeply feel to be God's will. But follow God. The worldly point of view is vastly different from God's point of view. Your friends see things as they think they are, and they plan for you a life which they think will be most successful. But God can see all the way, and what they call success may be failure with Him.

The only safe way is to give ourselves fully to God, and be glad to be led by the Holy Spirit. In the plan of God for you, young convert, lies the largest, fullest, and most successful life. Do not mar that divine plan by listening to other voices, nor by following your own inclinations. Yield to God and let Him direct your way. On and on He will lead you, more and more beautiful will grow your life and more and more abundant your labors of love, and at the end eternal heaven and bliss forevermore. †

heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." We see here that Jesus is the Bread of Life. He is our spiritual manna. He is our food for the soul. If we partake of this manna, we shall never hunger and never thirst. To me, that means we're going to be satisfied.

If we partake of a literal meal, we are satisfied. I believe if we partake of this Bread of Life, partake of Jesus and His teachings and let them dwell within us, and follow them, we will be spiritually satisfied.

This Bread is not for a certain set of people, but it is for all the world. We read in St. John 6:47-51: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

If we eat of this Bread, we are digesting it, just like we eat literal bread, and it becomes strength to our souls. We must eat of Jesus' teachings, of this Bread of Life. It will provide for our inner man, the soul. It will provide the strength that we seek to live a righteous and a pure life in this present world.

What does it mean "to eat of this Bread"? It means that we must surrender our all to Jesus. We must partake of His sufferings. We read in St. John 6, verses 53-56: "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." So you see what it means to partake of this Bread. It means to partake of the sufferings of Christ, to follow His teachings, and to suffer the rejection of the world.

Jesus said to us, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." He told us that the world would hate us because the world hated Him. We should not think it strange or odd if we do not fit in this world. We are taught in the Bible that we should be a separate and a called-out people.

What else does it mean "to partake of this Bread of Life"? Again our subject is, "Jesus, the Bread of Life," and we are looking at the different aspects of partaking of this Bread of Life. We are told in John, chapter 15, that He, speaking of Jesus, is the Vine, and we are the branches: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no

more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

We mentioned in the beginning that people today are seeking for material wealth, literal fame, and fleshly pleasures to satisfy their inner being, but we see that it is not these things that satisfies the inner man. It is the partaking of this Bread of Life. We must partake of this Bread to truly be happy and satisfied in this life.

The verses that I just read from John 15 teach us that Jesus is the Vine, and we are the branches. Verse 8: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." Once we partake of this Bread of Life, we are to bear fruit for the Lord. The purposes we were put here on this earth by almighty God are that we may bring honor and glory to His name, that we be separate, that we follow His teachings, and show to the devil that there is a better way in following Christ. When we choose to keep the Lord's commandments and live for Christ, rather than choosing the fleshly pleasures and material gain of this world, we are showing the devil that we would rather have Christ than these fleshly and material things. This brings honor and glory to the Lord.

In conclusion, we'll read Romans, chapter 12, verses 1 and 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." †

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- \_\_\_ CD #1635 Knowing the Unknowable—Rebecca Bland
- \_\_\_ CD #1636 What I Know—Thomas Harris

# CHRISTIANS ARE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST

2024 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Harley McClung



**I**N EPHESIANS, chapter 5, verses 1 and 2, Paul said, “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.” My thoughts tonight are entitled, “Christians Are Followers of Christ.”

Following God is walking in the light of Jesus’ teachings. There are a lot of Christians who go under the profession of Christianity. The world is full of people who say, “I’m a Christian.” They believe that Jesus is the Savior, they believe that He is Immanuel, but it seems somehow or another, some people don’t believe in what He says. They don’t believe in His doctrines or His teachings. Well, how can we be followers of Christ without following what He taught us to do, and without following what He taught us to be? Christians are followers of Jesus Christ.

Isaiah said that God’s ways are higher than man’s ways. Man’s ways are the way man thinks. God’s ways are way up here. Well, Jesus came to teach us some of those higher ways. He was very clear. He taught in the parables things that were relevant to people’s thinking. They’re still relevant today. We can take those parables and understand them. They reveal so much truth of God’s high ways.

## THE LORD IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

David said, “The Lord is my shepherd.” And Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd.” Well, a shepherd is one who goes before the sheep, and the sheep follow him. Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice.” Now, I want you to notice what He said: “**MY** sheep.” He didn’t say *all* sheep. He said, “My sheep will hear my voice, and when they hear my voice, they will follow me.” In other words, they will be what James said: “They’ll be doers of the Word and not just hearers of the Word.” To follow Christ, then, is to walk in love. Notice what I said. I said, “Walk in love,” not just merely having some kind of emotion. Love is more than just an emotion, just like faith. Faith is more than just a belief. Real faith creates a work. Love creates an affect. It’s a verb. Love is an action word.

When we read about Jesus’ actions, we find that Paul said, “God commendeth his love toward us.” That means that He got it to us. He didn’t just sit up there and say, “I love you, I love you.” No, Jesus came down to this sin-sick, sin-cursed world, and He put on the robe and veil of flesh so that He could taste what we taste and experience what we experience, and be able to help us with our infirmities. That’s love. Paul said that He did this while we were His enemies. We were all against God. If you’re here tonight and you’re not following Christ, you’re against Him. It’s not helping you, either.

Jesus came to show us the way for *our* benefit, not His. Yes, He loves us. He loves us dearly, and He’s not

willing that any should perish. He puts such a price, such a premium on each soul here tonight. He’s not willing for anyone to perish, no matter what people say. But He says something. He said that you need to repent.

Christ brings us to a place where the principles that He teaches us will not fail. This is why, in part, that God told Paul that His grace was sufficient, no matter what he encountered or faced. God’s grace is sufficient, because that grace gives us a lot of these ingredients that we need to be successful in our Christian life. Love is one of them. This is a principle of God Himself. This principle that God gives to us that we can have in the center of our affection is something, when we utilize it, it will not fail. It will not!

## CHARITY IS FOUND IN THOSE BORN AGAIN

Christian charity is found only then in a born-again heart. That’s why Nicodemus came to Jesus. He was a highly religious man. Religion was not all that there was to this. Nicodemus was even a master in Israel, and yet he didn’t realize what he needed. He needed something more. Jesus in His faithfulness to Nicodemus, and to all of us, said, “Ye must be born again.” Jesus goes on to explain and elaborate, “Ye must be born of the water [which is the Word] and of the Spirit.” Well, Nicodemus didn’t understand that. Most people don’t. I would have to say, I didn’t understand that either, but thank God, He dealt with me and brought conviction on me. That’s God’s love.

When God shows us that we need something and we’re going wrong, He helps us to see that we need to come and give our hearts to Him. He’s doing us a marvelous favor. This is His grace. This is His favor to mankind. He brings conviction, or you might say He brings judgment. It’s His mercy. It’s hard for people to wrap their minds around judgment and mercy, but they go together.

The new Spirit that a person is born again of is the Spirit of Christ. It is the Spirit that Jesus had prevailing in Him. When He left heaven to come to earth and sojourn here, everywhere He went, He put His Spirit on display. In Romans, chapter 8, verse 9, it says: “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” He is not the sheep of Jesus’ pasture. He’s not following Jesus Christ and hearing His voice. He is none of His. It says, “Now if any man have *not* the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” So I take from that verse that we need to have a likeness of Christ ruling within us. We need to have Christ, His Spirit, in our hearts helping us. At least, in part, that Spirit that is in our hearts is love (charity).

Christ offered Himself to God to atone, to pay the debt for our sins we could not pay. There’s nothing we

could have ever done to take us out of that horrible pit. No, there is no way we could come up with money or prestige or fame. It took Jesus Christ giving His life there on Calvary to atone for our sins. Again, we're talking about the Spirit of Christ, and those who follow Him have the Spirit of Christ dwelling and ruling within their hearts. Jesus taught by example to follow Him in love.

### A COMMANDMENT TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER

We read in John 13:34, 35: "A new commandment I [Jesus] give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you." I want to repeat that line: "*That ye love one another; as I have loved you* [When I looked at that, I added, wow! We are to love one another as He loved us. Think about that now. We're to love one another as He loved us, so we can't go over this subject just haphazardly. We have to go into the depth to see what it really means to be a Christian.], that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." God's ways are higher than our ways.

God's love is clearly seen in John 3:16. He gave His only begotten Son. He gave! There is action there. He didn't say, *well, I love the world*. No, God gave something to the world for the saving of the world so that the world through Jesus Christ could have everlasting life. Jesus didn't come into this world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. So He didn't give us the leeway here to condemn people. He didn't give us the right to condemn people. Let me tell you something, He didn't give us the right, especially, to condemn our brothers. Sometimes I don't know who all my brothers are, because there are people out there who are saved, and if they're saved, they're my brothers. We extend our hands in fellowship to every blood-washed one. We need to be careful what we say about people. We need to be careful what we say to people.

The scripture in John 3:16 is not the only John 3:16 in the Bible. There's another one. Did you all know that? Do you know what I John 3:16 says? Well, I'll tell you: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us [Now what did he say?]: and we *ought* [means 'duty bound'] to lay down our lives for the brethren." Let's all look at our hearts here tonight. That's a high standard. God's ways are higher than our ways. We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Christianity is a high calling. It's not something that most of the world perceives. It's not just believing in Christ. Christianity is a walk, a walk on a higher plateau, a walk of holiness. Let me tell you something, Jesus Christ came. He suffered and bled and died on Calvary to enable us to love our brethren enough to give our lives for them. Christians are to walk in pure love, a pure love that is free from any and all selfish motives.

Peter says in I Peter 1:22, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned [unpretended] love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." Well, what does *fervently* mean? "Earnestly." Do we love one another with a pure heart fervently? I'm not trying to

condemn anyone. I'm just trying to teach us what the standard of Christianity is. This is a glorious life. What we have felt here tonight has blessed me so richly. If you don't have this experience in your heart, you're not blessed as you could be. Jesus has made it possible for you to be blessed with this great love (charity) that will never fail.

### PROVING WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE

Paul said that the children of light prove what is acceptable to Christ. In Ephesians, chapter 5, verses 8-11, he says: "For ye were sometimes darkness [evil; I know I was evil. I can actually do a comparison of then and now. Oh, I'm so happy I have what I have now!], but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Listen to me tonight, the only way that we can really prove what is acceptable to God is to have the Spirit of Christ within us—the Spirit of God being in our hearts and having the preeminence on a daily basis. You might say, "That's a high standard." Well, what I read in the Scriptures talks about a glorious life. That's what Christianity really is. In the true sense of the word, it's a glorious life. It is something that is given to us by God Himself. This is of divine origin. This is something where God is giving something to you and to me of Himself, because God does love, and He is love. He has given to all of us something of Himself so that we can have victory in our souls every day that we live and be a help to our fellow man and to ourselves.

Sometimes people do us harm. We're not going to live in this world without people, and even brethren, doing some things to us. Sometimes in just our human ways we'll do things to our brethren. God forbid it's intentional. When someone does us harm, what are we supposed to do in return? Peter asked Jesus, "How oft should we forgive our brother?" *Well, if he's pretty good, I'll forgive him. If he promises not to do it again, I'll forgive him.* That's not what the Bible says. Jesus said to Peter, "Until seventy times seven." Someone has said, "That's every day."

Paul said, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness [Why?]; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." We may be dealing with some situations that we need somebody to help us along the way.

While we were in sin, we were living in darkness. Here tonight, we don't want to pick on those who are not Christians, but we want to give you some understanding that if you're living in darkness, you have an obscurity about you. You can't see this good life. But if you will just receive with meekness the engrafted Word, and just reach out, God will help. He wants everybody to come to the knowledge of the truth. He wants everybody to be free. Thank God, I am free! I am free because Jesus made it possible for me to be free. This free life is a glorious life and the best way to live. Anyone who doesn't have this ability to love, or is dealing with strife, envy, hatred, and indifference is in bondage. Those are things that Jesus Christ came to free man from.

Ephesians 2:2, 3: "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." God changes us when He saves us. He gives us a new heart. He takes out the stony heart and gives us a pliable heart. He gives us something that now He can work with. He takes away that wrath. He takes away that carnal way of living. We are children of light bearing the fruit of the Spirit which is love, the very first fruit that is mentioned. We walk as stewards of light.

### **PREACHING IS ESSENTIAL**

Listen to me tonight, Paul said, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Preaching is essential because God said it is. A lot of people in the world today just don't like preaching. The carnal heart doesn't appreciate it. Jesus came into the world, and He was the preacher of righteousness. He tried to tell those people the things that would be good and beneficial to them. They didn't like it. They arrested Jesus and took Him through a mock trial. They spit on Him, plucked out His beard, and did all kinds of things to Him. They took Him into the court of Pontius Pilate. They told Pontius Pilate things about Him, but Pilate couldn't find any fault with Jesus. Do you know a lot of people today still find fault with Jesus?

Those people who took Jesus into the court of Pontius Pilate didn't like Him because He preached to them. Pilate came out and said, "I find no fault in this man. What do you want me to do with Him?" They said, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" There was no love there. There was hatred. That's a big difference. Jesus went through that horrible beating. They beat Him almost to death, and then they crucified Him. While He was hanging on Calvary's cross, they mocked Him. They did everything to Jesus that they could.

There were two thieves hanging on crosses. One was on Jesus' right side and another on the left side. They were worthy and deserving to be there. One of the men railed on Jesus, but somehow Jesus' love flowed out, and it was captured by one of them. He said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Do you want to hear some love? "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." While Jesus was hanging there on the cross and saw the multitude doing the hideous things that they were doing to Him, He said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Looking at this account, some people would say, "Well, that was Jesus. Only Jesus could do that." No, no! Jesus had a servant. His name was Stephen. Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost. Being full of the Holy Ghost, Stephen had love in his heart, a heart that was full of love for his fellow man. He told them the gospel. He preached to them the gospel. Again, people don't like the gospel. They hated Stephen, so they cast him out the city and started stoning him to death. He had the love of Christ in his heart. Do you know what he said? Similar to the words of Jesus: "Lord, lay not this sin to

their charge." This had an affect on Paul. If we allow the love of Christ to reach out, it will have an affect on people. It is only love used in the proper way that will allow us to be effective in this sin-sick, sin-cursed world. We need to love. Love capitalizes on every opportunity that we're given. If we have the love of God in our hearts, God's going to make opportunities available to us.

In order to have this oneness that Jesus taught in the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter of John, we have to have this love. We have to have this deep concern for each other, and when we gain this oneness, then we're going to have more power than what we have now to see more people saved. We see it's hard to see people saved. The fault does not lie with God. Do we have enough love in our hearts? Do we have enough of Christ or the Spirit of Christ within our hearts? Do we? Let's be honest with ourselves tonight. You know, we're going to be judged on it. We're going to be judged on what's in our hearts.

Jesus' words in Matthew, chapter 25, are about judgment. Sometimes the preaching of the Word does bring judgment. Listen to me tonight, it's far better for us to be judged here and now than it will be then, because now we can do something about it. If we see some lack or something that we need to step up on, now is the time. God will be faithful to help us to come to that understanding, so don't look at judgment now as something bad. It's good for us. Verses 34-40 is about the general judgment: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." How are you going to do this without the love of Christ in your heart? Jesus said, "When you do it to my brethren, you do it unto me." He put the premium on the brethren. He put the premium on those who are following Him, because they hear His voice. We have to take care of our brethren. He said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." We have to love Him.

All of us here want to go to heaven. Well, we have to love one another. Love is a verb, an action word. It is not just saying, "I love you, I love you." No, it's in action. If love is in action, then we're going to have things that are put on display to prove it to each other. When we prove it to each other, it's a kindness and a love that cannot be denied. Jesus has put the whole thing into perspective of His sheep following Him. Jesus said, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" No one can love and overcome except those who have the Spirit of Christ.

## CONCLUSION

Tonight, if you don't have the Spirit of Christ, you can have it. He will give you His Spirit. All you need to do is to come to the altar. There's going to be an invitation hymn given. This is something I promise you on the authority of God's Word, that He will be faithful to you and give you the desires of your heart. If you want this Spirit of Christ, if you want this capacity to love, even your enemies, and especially your brethren, you have to have the Spirit of Christ. Without the Spirit of Christ, you're not going to be able to love God with all of your heart. You're not going to be able to love your brethren, and most certainly you're not going to be able to love your enemies. What about it tonight? Search your heart. Look deep within your heart. If there's something there that you can see beyond a doubt, you need to come and get your portion. It's here. God will give you the desires of your heart if you want this. †

## THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



### A STRONG DESIRE Bible Lesson by Rebecca Bland

"Ahhhhhh!" I whispered to myself, my breath catching in my throat as a large butterfly glided past me. I turned, and with wondering eyes followed its flight until it landed on a flower not twenty feet away. The flower grew just at the edge of our property, right at the treeline that separated our yard from the neighbor's driveway.

The butterfly slowly unfolded its wings, revealing bold black and gold stripes. "A tiger swallowtail!" I breathed. I had seen pictures of tiger swallowtails in the butterfly guide books at the library, and so I had no trouble identifying it. I had seen tiger swallowtails flitting from thistle to thistle in the cow pasture, but I had never gotten close enough to catch one.

Butterflies had fascinated me since I was ten years old. Now, at age thirteen, I considered myself a serious collector. I had constructed a net from a broom handle, a coat hanger, and an old curtain from my mother's rag bag. Clumsy though it was, I had caught a number of butterflies, moths, and other insects with that net.

Gripping the handle of my makeshift butterfly net, I walked stealthily, step by step, toward the tiger swallowtail. In my mind's eye, I could see the beautiful specimen mounted in the center of all the other butterflies in my collection. But I had to capture it first.

Just as I came within range of the butterfly, it lifted itself from the flower and sailed effortlessly across the driveway to land on the neighbor's butterfly bush. I groaned. The tiger swallowtail was not likely to come back to my yard when it had a whole bush full of flowers to investigate.

I looked at the butterfly bush and thought, as I often had before, how wonderful it would be to own such a thing. It grew just beside the neighbor's house, and all summer long it played host to scores of butterflies. *If I had a butterfly bush growing at my house, I thought to myself, I would spend hours watching the many kinds of butterflies attracted to it. I would fill my collection box with every kind of butterfly that lives in this part of the world.*

I doubted that the neighbor, Mrs. Hill\*, would care if I crossed over onto her property to catch butterflies, but I knew I should ask permission first. I looked at Mrs. Hill's front door and pictured myself knocking on it. What would I say when she answered my knock? I practiced a speech. "Mrs. Hill," I would say, "I have been watching butterflies land on your butterfly bush, and I wonder if you would care if I tried to catch some of them and add them to my collection? I would be very careful not to damage your butterfly bush."

Although I practiced my speech until I was satisfied I could say it smoothly, I could not get up the courage to go knock on Mrs. Hill's door. I sighed and watched the tiger swallowtail until at last it flew away.

That evening I talked to my mother about the neighbor's butterfly bush and my desire to catch some of the butterflies that landed on it. "Do you think Mrs. Hill would mind if I did?" I asked my mother.

"She might not care," answered my mother. "But you'd better not go over there without asking her first."

"Couldn't you ask her the next time you talk to her?" I ventured. My mother did sewing jobs for Mrs. Hill from time to time, and they had long, friendly conversations.

"You're the one that wants to catch the butterflies," said my mother, "so you should do the asking."

I knew my mother was right, but her answer did nothing to bolster my courage. For the rest of the summer, I gazed longingly at our neighbor's blossom-laden bush and the beautiful butterflies it attracted. But never once did I get the courage to go knock on Mrs. Hill's door and ask for permission to catch the butterflies that visited her bush.

*When I grow up, I said to myself, I will buy a butterfly bush and plant it in a place that belongs to me. I will watch butterflies and catch the most beautiful ones anytime I want.*

For a long while, one of my strongest desires was to have a butterfly bush of my very own.

The years flew by. I became an adult and developed new interests. My time was filled with study and work. I still enjoyed watching butterflies, but I no longer tried to catch them. The memory of the neighbor's beautiful butterfly bush faded. I seldom remembered the strong desire I once had to own a butterfly bush.

One day, not long ago, my childhood desire came true. Family and friends gathered to help me celebrate the end of my teaching career. I was given some lovely and thoughtful gifts. And there, in the midst of the gifts, was one that could not be wrapped up in paper and tied with a bow. "I'm sorry I could not wrap it," said my friend as she picked up a large flower pot and handed



## DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

BY THE LATE W. A. HAYNES

*“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; ... knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel.”—Philippians 1:12, 17.*

it to me. In the flower pot was a beautiful butterfly bush, ready to be planted wherever I wanted.

“Thank you,” I said with a smile. “You can’t imagine how special this gift is to me!”

I planted that butterfly bush, and it is growing tall and strong on my very own property. But do you know, Children, I almost never take the time to go stand next to it and observe the butterflies it attracts. I have other desires now that drown out the desire to watch butterflies.

I know you have strong desires. All of us do—both children and adults. Some of your strong desires will change as you grow older. Things that seem very important to you now may not seem so important when you become an older child, a teenager, or an adult.

But there is one desire we should always have down deep in our hearts. It is a desire that should never leave us. It should grow and strengthen throughout the years of our lives. What is that desire? It is the desire to be like Jesus.

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 11:23, which says, *The desire of the righteous is only good: but the expectation of the wicked is wrath.*

“Righteous” people are those who are like Jesus in their words and actions. They love God with their whole hearts. Even you children can—and should—be “righteous.” When you pray, ask God to give you a strong desire to please Him. Ask Him to keep that strong desire burning in your heart always.

\*not her real name

### Activity

Here are some more verses from the Bible that speak of righteous desires. See if you can fill in the blanks to complete each verse. The location of each verse is given so you can check your answers.

1. “O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the \_\_\_\_\_ of thy servant, and to the \_\_\_\_\_ of thy servants, who **desire** to fear thy \_\_\_\_\_” (Nehemiah 1:1a).
2. “Whom have I in \_\_\_\_\_ but thee? and there is none upon \_\_\_\_\_ that I **desire** beside thee” (Psalm 73:25).
3. “Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O \_\_\_\_\_, have we waited for thee; the **desire** of our \_\_\_\_\_ is to thy name, and to the \_\_\_\_\_ of thee” (Isaiah 26:8).
4. “But now they **desire** a better \_\_\_\_\_, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not \_\_\_\_\_ to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a \_\_\_\_\_” (Hebrews 11:16).

### Answer to Last Month’s Activity

There are 12 verses in the book of Proverbs that mention the word “prudent.” Did you share your favorite one with a friend or family member? I will share one of my favorites with you.

Proverbs 18:15 says, *The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.* A prudent (careful) person is wise enough to seek the right kind of knowledge. The best knowledge is found in the Word of God. There lies the secret to pleasing God and living a happy life. †

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**T**HE REASON the gospel is to be defended is because it has enemies. The reason it has enemies is because it exposes the works of darkness, and reproves evil deeds. There are but two ways of defending the gospel; the first by preaching it, the second by living it. This is true because the gospel not only consists of doctrines and precepts, but embraces duties and practices.

In the defense of the gospel nothing need be defended except that which is in the gospel. The gospel is only defended by preaching when it is presented clearly and in its entirety. The gospel is only defended by our living when we practice its precepts, and manifest to the world righteous effects, thus proving the certainty of an internal cause established upon the precepts of right.

The gospel only becomes the power of God unto man’s salvation in proportion as the atonement of Christ is clearly presented or hidden by mystic clouds. As a fort with some of its walls broken down only invites an attack of the enemy, just so the gospel half preached invites the cavils of infidels and the scorn of the skeptic. Nowhere do we find that the apostle was set for the defense of himself. Had Paul preached a partial gospel, the enemy would have endeavored to enter the breach and demolish the gospel itself. The apostles having left no breach in their proclamation of truth, the enemy could but turn his force upon the advocates of the gospel.

Let the saints of God be apprised of this fact, that when sectarian strife reigns and men are set for the defense of themselves and their creeds, they wrest the gospel and leave opportunities for the mocks of infidels, while they themselves escape. But when the impregnable wall of gospel truth is set up, all attacks there are of no avail; therefore the persecution must turn, as it always does, upon the vessels of flesh that receive and give out the unconquerable gospel.

The main reason so many make such feeble attempts at the defense of the gospel is because they will try to advance one truth and withhold another, or try to plant a truth upon an uncertain or erroneous basis. The devil being too much interested in his work not to take advantage of such an opportunity, intimidates such ones, and they fail in what they profess. Satan has a vigilance committee too well organized, not to see their opportunity, if but one gospel principle is suppressed.

The gospel must not only be preached so it is possible for it to be understood, but in such simplicity and fullness that the attentive listener cannot misunderstand it. The gospel is not merely intended to make devils tremble, but especially planned to give joy and hope to man.

If a minister would defend the gospel against its many enemies and do it successfully, he must preach it

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appropriately, or must go under the influence of the Holy Spirit's anointing that he may determine not merely what people desire, but that which they need. The varied conditions of different congregations often demand different gospel truths according to their former opportunities regarding gospel privileges. And even when the same subject could be handled with propriety at different assemblies, it is seldom that one subject can be successfully presented at different times and places in the same manner and style. Therefore no defender of the gospel should get into any form or rut in which he would act without the aid of divine guidance.

Another principle that is characteristic of a true defender of the gospel is boldness. The ambassadors of Christ need no less the spirit of boldness today than did the ministers of the morning time who prayed, "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word."—Acts 4:29. The spirit of the gospel has never changed, nor as yet has the spirit of its opposers changed, unless it is from hatred to hatred intensified. Knowing this, the question is, Why should the spirit of our preaching change? Why should our boldness decrease when the danger is more apparent? If we have the same message of salvation given by the same God, why can we not preach with the same authority? If the gospel preached brought persecution then, need we expect anything else now? If the assurance of a future reward delivered those bold defenders of the gospel from the fear of death, are we not under the care of the same God? If heaven to them was so much more precious than an earthly existence, it certainly should be more glorious for us, since it is lighted up with the presence of the myriads of brilliant stars that have since the apostolic days cast their light into this dark world for a time, but are now shining in the eternal world.

The gospel must be preached in a loving way, with the understanding that man's wrath or vengeance works not the righteousness of God. The power of the gospel that saves, the soul is not by "him that willeth [*thelo*—wisheth, desireth, endeavors, attempts], nor of him that runneth [*trecho*—make haste] but of God who showeth mercy." The strength of the sword of the Spirit lies altogether in the power of the Spirit itself. Let none think the offense of the cross has ceased. Do not imagine that the gospel opposers have disappeared. As the gospel is the object of so much hatred, it is not strange that those who would defend it should share the odious attack of its enemies; for the enemies of Christ have not learned nor can they know, any distinction between the gospel and those who proclaim it. The modern hireling preachers are not of God, nor do they defend this gospel; therefore they know nothing of the responsibilities of a true minister, and consequently receive none of their reproaches. And because of this they think the world has about become converted to Christ, while the truth is, it is increasing in wickedness.

You may expect what Christ and His followers have ever received. You need not suppose that the "narrow way" has widened any, nor that those who are traveling this way are finding ease and luxury more than did their brethren of old. Paul, who asked the question, "Who is sufficient for these things?" (II Corinthians

2:16) well understood what it meant to defend the gospel; and if we defend the same gospel against the same devil, we must expect the same results. Brethren, be of good cheer, we will soon cross the border of time where will dawn the brightness of an eternity. We may have to wear a martyr's robe here, but it will be a victor's crown in the world to come. †

—Reprinted from the August 1998 issue

## BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

### THE STEPS OF THE RIGHTEOUS EVIDENCE OF HOLY GHOST BAPTISM

**Scriptures:** Acts 1:8; 6:3-10; 7:54-60.

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 6:3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

Acts 7:54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

**Memory Verse:** But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be wit-

nesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.—Acts 1:8.

**Aim:** To help the student to know if he has received the Spirit, or the Holy Ghost, into his life.

## INTRODUCTION

**I**T IS NOT ONLY necessary that we should set before the people the pure truth of the Word of God, but it is also necessary that we should give instruction in regard to some of the wiles of the devil, since it is his business to deceive and lead astray from the Word of God. Being so cunning and so crafty, he has been successful in making many counterfeits of God's truth, and he endeavors to give it to the people as the truth of the Word of God. Since there is so much said about the evidence of Holy Ghost baptism today, it seems that it would be well to give Bible instruction on this very important point.

## MEDITATIONS

**THE PROMISE OF POWER—Acts 1:8—But ye shall receive power—**Man is very small within himself. Left alone he would not be able to stand, for the devil would sweep him off his feet. However, the believer is promised in this scripture an abundance of power after the Holy Spirit is come into his life. The main power that a Christian receives when the Spirit comes in is to live above sin, saying no to the devil and his temptations.

**SPIRIT-FILLED MEN NEEDED—Acts 6:3—Full of the Holy Ghost—**At that time when it came to choosing men to minister to the material needs in the church, it was required that those chosen be filled with the Spirit. However, it is possible for men to have the Holy Spirit and still not have sufficient wisdom. Wisdom comes in answer to prayer and a close walk with God. We should seek a closer walk with God every day.

**PRAYER INDISPENSABLE—Acts 6:4—We will give ourselves—**It was the apostles who were speaking, and they knew well the need of keeping in close contact with God. We have a strong and merciless enemy to meet, and it is only by the power of God that we can meet and defeat him; therefore, it is necessary that we pray continually in conjunction with the study of the Word.

**SPIRIT-FILLED MEN—Acts 6:5—A man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost—**How did the people know these men were filled with the Spirit? Because of the works that followed them. Anyone who is filled with the Spirit is going to demonstrate the "fruit of the Spirit," which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Galatians 5:22, 23). It is evident that these men demonstrated these attributes in their everyday lives. Stephen demonstrated the power of the Spirit in his life in performing many miracles. Not everyone who is filled with the Spirit will perform miracles, but everyone who is filled with the Spirit will bear the fruit of the Spirit. **Verse 6—Laid hands on them—**These were holy men, and they laid hands on the seven. God heard their prayers and poured out His blessing. He will do the same thing

now if we will live the same kind of lives that the apostles and early Christians did.

**GOD'S KINGDOM ADVANCES—Acts 6:7—The disciples multiplied—**The clear gospel message anointed by the Holy Ghost brought even the leaders of the people to the cross. We cannot win people, especially the leaders, to the divine Church of the living God by compromising the gospel. We must set it forth in its purity and power so that people may see the truth and be privileged to choose for it or against it. A compromise message cannot open the eyes of the people.

**STEPHEN FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT—Acts 6:8—Did great wonders—**The things that Stephen did were of a nature that would be a blessing to mankind. He did not walk over benches or pick up hot irons or handle poisonous snakes. He healed the sick and ministered to the needs of a sin-sick people. A man of God will do the same today.

**THE SUPREME POWER—Acts 6:10—Were not able to resist—**There was power that attended his words that was more than human. It was the power that was contrary to the power that filled the lives of the accusers of Stephen, so they were made angry and sought to get revenge by physical force. If God is permitted to have His way in our lives, we are certain to come into conflict with the forces of evil. Victory is always certain if we stay with God and obey Him. This does not mean that we will not have any suffering, for suffering is a part of our inheritance. If we would reign with Him, we must also suffer with Him.

**UNGODLY ARE AROUSED—Acts 7:54—Cut to the heart—**Stephen did not hesitate to uncover the people's sin and guilt. Since they had no intention of repenting and turning from their evil, they sought to take vengeance on Stephen. The devil hated Stephen and stirred up his followers to do him bodily harm, thinking that by doing so he would remove this godly man from the field of battle. Their actions here reveal deep-seated hatred and carnal degeneration.

**GOD IS WATCHING—Acts 7:55—Jesus standing—**It seems that this extraordinary event brought Jesus to His feet, for He is usually pictured as sitting at the right hand of the Father. Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost, walking in all the light that God had given to him, being fully obedient. So at this dark hour, God encouraged him by the revelation of His divine glory. **Verse 56—I see the heavens opened—**The dealings of God with Stephen were marvelous, and these sinners could not comprehend such, for their eyes could not behold what the eyes of Stephen had just seen.

**HATRED TURNED LOOSE—Acts 7:57—Stopped their ears—**The words and actions of Stephen were about to overwhelm them. So that they might not hear more, they put their fingers in their ears and rushed upon him.

**A DISTINGUISHED ONLOOKER—Acts 7:58—Whose name was Saul—**Saul was the Jewish name for Paul, so it was the apostle Paul who was holding the clothes of the murderers, and, without doubt, he was cheering the persecutors on. There can be no doubt

that Saul's watching the victorious death of Stephen brought conviction to him that was instrumental in winning him later.

**COMPOSURE IN THE FACE OF DEATH—Acts 7:59—Receive my spirit**—The greatest victory that any man ever won was to die in such a way that he could call upon God to receive his departing spirit. There is no way to describe the darkness of the hour to the man who must leave this world and fall into the hands of the merciless demons of hell. To die in Christ Jesus is worth any price that it may cost.

**DEFINITE INDICATIONS OF HOLY GHOST BAPTISM—Acts 7:60—Lay not this sin to their charge**—Stephen, being full of the Holy Ghost, was able to the very last to exhibit the fulfillment of the teachings of the Master in his life. His sincere desire was that these men might not have to suffer for the sin that they had committed against him, for he realized that it was not really they who were doing it, but they were blinded by the devil, and it was his wicked will they were doing. How beautiful it is never really to die but only to fall asleep in Jesus!

### CONCLUSION

Satan makes it his business to deceive people. He will try to convince the Spirit-filled Christian that he has not been sanctified, he will try to convince the justified he does not need to be sanctified. He has convinced many that they must speak in some "unknown tongue" as an evidence they have received the Spirit, which the Bible DOES NOT teach, for we can find no verse of scripture in the Bible that says "tongues" are an evidence of Holy Ghost baptism. In other words, Satan will confuse and deceive any soul he can, to keep them from knowing the truth. We receive and keep the Spirit by faith and obedience. The evidence of Holy Ghost baptism is the witness of the Spirit within, and the fruit that is borne.

### FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Who is it who may receive the baptism of the Spirit?
2. What will the power that is received at the time of Holy Ghost baptism cause a believer to do?
3. Why did the church seek men who were filled with faith and the Holy Ghost to care for the widows and unfortunate?
4. Why did the Jews stop their ears as Stephen gave his testimony?
5. Do you think the godly death of Stephen had any effect on Paul?
6. Have you received the Spirit since you believed?†

#### OUT OF BOX 88

*To the Church of God and Way of Truth,  
Please use this offering of \$— to help in sustaining the ministry of God's Word. I enjoy the magazine and have for years. I am 78 years old, and my mom and dad before me read the magazine, too. Please continue to pray for me in God's name. —D. R., Pennsylvania*

## ABOUT FAITH

### Thoughts from *Bible Illustrator*

#### The Chemistry of Faith

A man who works in the field of chemistry pointed out that if you mix hydrogen and oxygen, the well-known components of water, you get no reaction—and no water! But if you add a small amount of platinum to this stable mixture, things begin to happen very rapidly. The hydrogen and oxygen unite and a chemical change occurs which produces H<sub>2</sub>O.

Just as platinum is needed as a catalyst to achieve the desired result, so faith must be present in our walk with the Lord if we are to experience progress in our relationship with Him. We have to rely wholly upon the wisdom and integrity of God's written Word and be confident that He can and will do the things He has promised. Furthermore, we must abandon any reservations that might hinder our Christian growth if we want the kind of transformation that true faith can bring. This vital ingredient must be introduced to give meaning to our Bible reading, our prayers, and our church attendance.

If we follow this formula, we will see the difference Christ can make in our lives. Then we'll fully understand the "chemistry" of spiritual change.

—Selected

#### God's Treasure-House

When a man hath liberty to go into the treasure-house of a king, to enrich himself, he will first seek the keys wherewith to open the doors; so, if we desire to be enriched with God's grace, we must first labor to have faith, which is the only key of God's treasure-house, and secures us all graces needful both for body and soul.—Cawdray

#### A Six-Inch Miracle

A teacher was doing her best to discredit the miracles of the Bible. She said, "Take, for instance, the crossing of the Red Sea. We know this body of water was only 6 inches deep." Immediately from the back of the room came the remark, "Praise God for the miracle!" Annoyed, the teacher asked, "What miracle?" "Well," explained the boy, "the Lord must have drowned the whole Egyptian army in just 6 inches of water!" † —*Bible Illustrator*



Dear Young People,

Unbelief is one of the greatest problems in the world today. Human reasoning has become the standard of truth instead of God's Word. We should use all the opportunities we can to increase and strengthen our faith. Living faith is what helps us to overcome the

world's philosophies. In I Peter 3:15 we read, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." We need to be ready to give answers for what we believe.

Sis. Lauren Swain had a young people's Wednesday evening service centered around "Christian Apologetics." Each speaker gave evidence to why God is real and the Bible is true. Here are Sis. Lauren's thoughts on the topic of Jesus' Resurrection and how it proves the truth of the gospel.

Blessings,  
Bro. Doug

## **CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS**

### **Sis. Lauren Swain**

What I find fascinating is that the facts I'm going to mention are overwhelmingly agreed upon by New Testament scholars. They only disagree about the best explanation of these facts.

#### **1. The Empty Tomb**

First, Jesus' tomb was found empty on Sunday by Mary Magdalene and some of Jesus' other disciples. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John each tell a story of the women or some of the twelve disciples finding the empty tomb.

In I Corinthians 15:4, Paul writes, "And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures," implying the empty tomb. Even the Jews supported the empty tomb story through their response. They told the guards, "Tell the people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep'" (Matthew 28:13).

If the disciples had somehow been mistaken that the body was gone and then preached that Jesus was risen, the Jews would gleefully have pointed out their error. But since they responded by accusing the disciples of stealing Jesus' body, we know the tomb must have been empty.

#### **2. Eyewitness Accounts**

Jesus appeared to the twelve disciples and to many other followers after His death. This fact is independently attested, not only by the four gospels, but also by Acts and First Corinthians. The ancient historian, Flavius Josephus, also records that people reported seeing Jesus alive again after His death.

In I Corinthians 15, Paul makes a very careful list of the eyewitnesses to whom Jesus appeared, "And that, he was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then by all the apostles. And last of all he was seen by me also, as of one born out of due time" (verses 5-8). Paul made it clear that anyone who doubted the resurrection could read this list and ask the eyewitnesses themselves.

Fascinatingly, the majority of New Testament scholars agree with the idea that many different people had experiences where they believed they saw Jesus alive after His death. However, Christians and many scholars disagree from here onward.

Naturalist philosophers and scholars believe that miracles are impossible. There is no supernatural. They scoff at the very idea of miracles. They believe the disciples and other followers of Jesus experienced hallucinations instead of seeing Jesus in the flesh.

There are a couple of problems with the hallucination hypothesis. Firstly, hallucinations occur in individuals, not groups. Different groups of people as well as individuals saw Jesus after His death, so we know it was not just one isolated event experienced by only one or two people. Secondly, people most often tend towards hallucinations if there are mental issues involved or if they have experienced deep loss. Hallucinations therefore cannot explain the conversions of Jesus' brothers. While the disciples and Jesus' brothers both experienced loss when Jesus died, Jesus' brothers were completely skeptical of His claims to be Messiah. They therefore did not experience the devastating hopelessness, disillusionment, and sense of the loss that the disciples did. When you realize that Jesus' brothers were converted after His death despite all their preconceived ideas to the contrary, you can see that the hallucination hypothesis loses all credibility. There was too much of a variety of witnesses to Jesus' resurrection, and there were too many changed lives for hallucinations to be the answer.

#### **3. The Disciples Staked Their Lives on It**

The disciples came to believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus so strongly that they were willing to lose their own lives for this belief.

In Acts, it's recorded that Herod killed James, John's brother, and put Peter in prison to be killed as well. Peter was delivered at that time, but he was later martyred during the reign of Nero. All of Jesus' other disciples except John are believed to have been martyred.

The fact that the disciples preached the resurrection even in the face of death stands out to me as the single most convincing evidence for belief in the resurrection. The disciples and other followers of Jesus staked their lives on the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to them. They knew that the Jews hated Jesus so much that they had put Him to death. They knew they most likely would face the same fate, and in the end, most of them did.

Atheists and skeptics have no good answer for this. Why would intelligent adult men face almost certain death to preach that a man crucified as a criminal had risen from the dead? The disciples must have experienced some kind of dynamic, life-changing event to alter their lives in such a way. I think the best and the honest answer is clear: Jesus did rise from the dead and is truly the Messiah He claimed to be.

### **Not Just a Teacher, a Resurrected Savior**

These three facts, the empty tomb, the eyewitnesses, and the disciples' unwavering belief in the resurrection all combine to produce a powerfully compelling case that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead. I think Paul sums it up best in I Corinthians 15:14-20: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." †

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## **LIFT UP A STANDARD FOR THE PEOPLE**

**By the late A. Q. Bridwell**

**T**HE PROPHET said, "Lift up a standard for the people" (Isaiah 62:10). The time would come when the standard would be lowered. Paul said in II Timothy 4:2-5, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

### **What Is a Standard?**

A standard means a flag or ensign: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious" (Isaiah 11:10). This has direct reference to Christ. To lift up Christ is to lift up a standard for the people. Philip preached Christ (Acts 8:5). Paul preached Christ (I Corinthians 1:22). Peter preached Christ (Acts 5:42). Paul said to be followers of him just as he was following this Ensign (I Corinthians 11:1). When Philip went down to Samaria he preached Christ to the people and many were healed, many devils were cast out, and there

was great joy in that city because they believed the things Philip taught. Those that believed were baptized both men and women. Preaching Christ or raising the standard will bring results.

### **The Standard for the Church**

Christ built only one church (Matthew 16:18): "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock [Christ] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "He is the head of the body the church" (Colossians 1:18). "There is one body" (Ephesians 4:4). Since there is but one body that is recognized by the Lord there is only one church that is recognized as the bride of Christ. This church is composed of all the saved people. This is the true church. The preacher who is preaching for people to join the church of their choice is catering to the doctrines of men, for there is no choice when we are born of the Spirit. We are in the Church Jesus built. Thank God for the Word which is the standard that is so plain that we can clearly see the one true church." "The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there" (Psalm 87:6). In the fifth verse he says, "And of Zion [Church] it shall be said, This and that man was born in her."

Then there is a standard for church-membership. The first we notice Jesus told Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:3). You absolutely cannot be a member of the Church of God without being born again. This will mean your sins have been blotted out (Acts 3:19). Having our sins blotted out will make us new creatures. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). This is very important to get people to see. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15). We cannot afford to let down the standard to get more members. The only people God can use are those who are measuring to the standard.

### **There Is the Standard for the Preachers**

See I Timothy 3. Also Titus 1. We cannot let down the standard to get more preachers. God has no use for a preacher who will not measure up to the standard. God's preachers must be clean preachers, must be examples to the flock (I Timothy 4:12), must not be lords over God's heritage, but must feed the flock of God, not by constraint but of a ready mind (I Peter 5:2). Preachers must endure hardness as good soldiers. We must lift up the standard by preaching the truth and nothing but the truth, by living the gospel at home and abroad, in our conversation, in our business relations with the world, and with all men. We must hold up the standard in dress, which is modest apparel. You sisters who get in the pulpit to preach, remember the gospel you are preaching. To dress modestly requires modest apparel. *Webster* says the word "modest" means: first, restrained by a due sense of propriety, not forward; second, chaste; third, moderate. Yes, if we have the mind of Christ we will dress in modest apparel.

## Then There Is the Standard of Unity

This is for the preachers as well as the lay-members. Paul said (I Corinthians 1:10), "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Jesus prayed in John 17 that His disciples all might be one as He and the Father are one, that they might be made perfect in one that the world might believe that thou hast sent me. We as evangelists and pastors must lift up this standard so the world can see. Many souls are hungry for this glorious doctrine of unity; they are tired of sectarian bondage.

The battle may be hot and fierce, but we must fight a good fight. We must keep the faith and lift the standard up so the people can see it. Brother minister, you must not become weak. Remember, God will care for those who will obey Him and preach His Word. Paul said, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:16).

Remember, this doctrine is the standard. Christ said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). By the grace of God I shall be true to the work whereunto God has called me. †

—Selected

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## ADMONISHING ONE ANOTHER

By the late B. E. Warren

We are "helpers one of another"; and are desiring to advance, and the general advancement of Christ's cause depends largely upon each one advancing, especially the ministers. Nor can each one advance in a Bible way, unless we do its commands. Should we make an effort to advance over a duty the Bible binds on us, our advancement will be in the head and not in the heart. Now, Beloved, to advance as we should, we must take up a duty that, in the past, has been neglected. In Colossians 3:16, we read these beautiful words, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

In my past experience, two things have hindered me from doing my duty, or advancing on this line. 1. I did not have the humility and grace to admonish a brother. 2. I did not believe, as a rule, they would receive the admonition. But I am learning a little every day and am advancing some. You understand by previous lessons that humility is the first thing necessary as a condition to receive grace to thus do our duty. For "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6). We must be careful, though, not to fault a brother when God does not fault him. We must move apace with God, not lag behind, but walk in the light, or go into darkness and backslide.

October 2024

Now, Dear Ones, you have that aught against a brother or sister, go to them at once. Do not tell it to others, but tell it to the one God's Word commands you to. You know what our Lord says in Matthew 18:15-35; 5:23, 24. God holds His preachers to require penitent sinners to make restitution, reconciliation, forgive trespasses, etc., to become Christians. How can you, then, in the light of His truth, allow these very things to exist in your heart while you profess to serve Him? May the true love and meekness prompt all to a real Christian duty. "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."—I John 3:18. The next verse tells us by so doing we have assurance—doubts are gone, confidence restored, and victory is the result.

God's ministers must advance in these things. Then teaching will go forth; innocent ones will obey it and by doing their duty keep out fault. See Jude 24. The Lord has ordained pastors and teachers to instruct the saints how to reach the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."—Ephesians 2:11-15. Let us by precept and example, do our duty in love, with longsuffering to all the dear ones; not in a conemnation or harsh way, but in the meekness of our Master. †

—Selected

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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

### **CHURCH OF GOD REVIVALS**

**HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND**  
**October 4-6, 2024, Lord willing**  
**Bro. David Shaw, Evangelist**  
**Bro. Greg Tyler, Pastor**

**ESSEX, MARYLAND**  
**October 18-20, 2024, Lord willing**  
**Bro. Matthew Deville, Evangelist**  
**Bro. Doug Koerner, Pastor**

### **PHILIPPINE CONVENTION**

**Paniqui, Tarlac, Luzon**  
**December 26-30, 2024, Lord willing**  
**Bro. Rey Fabian, Host Pastor**

#### **ADD A NAME TO OUR MAILING LIST**

If you know of someone you feel would appreciate this magazine, feel free to send us the name. Please make sure he/she wants it and it won't be refused.

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