

The Way of Truth

Vol. 83

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

No. 3

The Never-failing Love of God

Message begins on page 12



March 2025

A MATTER OF CHOICE

OUR LIFE is the sum of our decisions. Often that which appears to be the obvious choice is but a deception, while that which is least popular, appearing to be most difficult, in reality is the wise choice. It's not uncommon for people to choose the path of least resistance—the way that appears most profitable and easiest to obtain. People do not esteem the value of hidden treasure buried in what seems to be the more difficult way. I want to refer to some Bible characters who chose to take the high road, rather than to choose an easier way.

The first example is MOSES—Hebrews 11:24-26—“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.”

Moses’ life was one of glory and honor leading God’s people out of bondage into the Promised Land. There were times of challenge and trial, but Moses never regretted the choice he made. He met “I AM THAT I AM”; he heard, “Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord,” and he received the 10 commandments on Mt. Sinai written with the finger of God!

Next, I call your attention to JOSEPH who chose rather to resist the advances of Potiphar’s wife and suffer the consequences, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming his reputation and standing before God of greater value than all the women in the world, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. Genesis 39:7, 8—“And it came to pass after these things, that his master’s wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master’s wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand.”

Then we have DAVID who chose rather to put his life on the line and face the giant than to allow the heathen Philistine to defame and curse God, esteeming the cause of God more precious than his own life, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

I Samuel 17:45-47—“Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give you into our hands.”

Adding to my list is the man DANIEL who chose rather to continue in prayer and face hungry lions than

obey the king’s command, esteeming his walk with God more necessary than life itself, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Daniel 6:7-10, “All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforesaid.”

Moving to the New Testament, I refer you to PAUL. He chose rather to suffer loss for Christ’s sake than to gain the fame and wealth of the Pharisee world, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than anything this old world had to offer, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

II Corinthians 11:23-28—“Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”

Paul wrote in Philippians 3:8, “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”

And, of course, our greatest example of making the right choice is JESUS CHRIST who chose rather to die on the cruel cross than to deliver Himself and extend His life, esteeming the souls of men and His love for humanity worth dying for, because He had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Hebrews 12:2 says, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Showing what He could have done if He had a mind to, Matthew 26:53 quotes Him as saying, “Thinkest

ABOUT THE COVER

Christianity is the religion of the New Testament and is filled with messages of God’s love for humanity. The theme for last year’s Hagerstown convention was “Charity Never Fails.” The final message was fittingly, “The Never-failing Love of Christ.” Be inspired as you peruse this issue..

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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Vol. 83

March 2025

No. 3

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

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—Gregory E. Tyler, Editor

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with, esteeming all that we have as gifts from God and ourselves as stewards of it all.

7. We can choose rather to yield our hearts to Jesus than resist His Spirit's call, esteeming a vital experience with God the richest treasure humans could ever find.

8. We can choose rather to seek first the kingdom of God than to put priority on other things, esteeming the kingdom God as full of treasures this earth can't supply, such as love, joy, and peace.

9. We can choose rather to abstain from sin than yield to temptation and reproach the cross of Christ, esteeming the shame of the cross as having a beauty hidden from the masses.

10. We can choose rather to prepare for heaven than waste our time in selfish pursuits and be lost forever, esteeming a life forever with God worth whatever the cost.

Conclusion

Do we have the same commitment as those faithful brethren who have trod before us? D. S. Warner penned these words back in 1890: "Who will suffer with the Savior, Take the little that remains, Of the cup of tribulation Jesus drank in dying pains?" And the chorus: "Lord, we fellowship thy passion, Gladly suffer pain and loss; With thy blessing pain is pleasure, We will glory in thy cross." †

thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Yes, He could have, and there was no one that could have stopped Him! But He chose rather to die on the cross to redeem mankind, rather than demand deliverance.

How about you and me? How can we follow the example of Moses and the ones I have mentioned?

1. We can choose rather to travel the strait and narrow road than to follow the masses on the broad road, esteeming the privilege of following Christ greater riches than having the favor of the world.

2. We can choose rather to obey the Bible than to reject it as men's ideas, esteeming the Word of God as true and vital food for the soul that prepares us for heaven.

3. We can choose rather to dress modestly than follow the trend of the world and be nearly naked in public because of the heat, esteeming God's favor of greater value than personal comfort.

4. We can choose rather to make less money in honest employment than agreeing to a lucrative job that requires dishonesty, esteeming personal integrity more important than financial gain.

5. We can choose rather to spend our Sundays worshipping the Lord with the people of God than enjoying the great outdoors in hunting and fishing, esteeming the first day of the week as the Lord's day. There is nothing wrong with enjoying the great outdoors, but there is a time and a place for it. Some people worship nature as their god!

6. We can choose rather to sacrifice our time, abilities, and possessions to the cause of Christ than be selfish and self-centered with all God has blessed us

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WINNING A CROWN

By the late
C. W. Naylor



Part II

The Moral State of Man

BACK IN the world's springtime, when nature was dressed in her pristine glory, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). Of nothing else of His creation is this said. Man is marked out as separate and distinct from all the rest of creation. He is of the creation, but rises to a higher plane, and possesses a something seen in nothing else. We read further, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27). This was not a physical image and likeness, for such it could not be, inasmuch as God is not physical and does not possess physical organs. It must, then, relate to his mental and moral being. In reason, judgment, choice, conscience, etc., he is in God's image, but we are concerned at present only with his attribute of holiness. As he came from the hand of God he was pure and holy. There was not in him a single element of defilement. God looked upon him and pronounced him very good, and was well pleased. The wise man, speaking of man's original state, says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright" (Ecclesiastes 7:29).

It was as natural for him to love God as to love anything else. He was blameless, and though without experience he could readily yield himself to all God's will. There was no barrier between himself and God. There was no hindrance to fellowship and intercourse. His pure soul shrank not from God. He knew no fear, but in the presence of his Maker walked as a son with his father. What halcyon days were those! But alas! that happy state did not continue. One thing had been prohibited. That prohibition was violated, and in consequence a cloud overspread the heavens. His conscience knew for the first time the sense of guilt and shame. The sweet, sympathetic fellowship between his soul and God was broken. He trembled and shrank in fear. His innocence was gone—that greatest harm, that which endeared him to the Father-heart. Then followed a life of sin, and when he begat a son, the child was in his father's own image. From that time on the current of human life has been a dark and murky stream.

Some tell us that man has never fallen, that he is now in as high a position as he has ever occupied in the moral scale. This, however, is contrary to the Scriptures, as well as to reason. When we look at his present condition and compare that with what the Bible shows him to have been at his creation, we rather marvel that he has fallen so far. The Bible deals with him everywhere as a fallen creature, one who is corrupt and defiled. Thus the record expresses it: "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Genesis 6:12). God manifested His displeasure by destroying the old world.

The posterity of Noah traveled the same path. Hosea, viewing the situation in his day, exclaimed, "They have deeply corrupted themselves" (Hosea 9:9). So the current flows on. Paul draws a dark picture in the first chapter of Romans and elsewhere. It is true that man did not lose all. There is in him yet some elements of nobility, some godlike qualities; but these are, as it were, only a few good things that have survived the wreck of his life. And when God looks upon him, He sees not one holy element; and when He begins to make something of him, He must begin at the beginning and make of him a new creature.

The Motive Purpose of His Life

Man's character is the opposite of God's. God is essentially benevolent; man is essentially selfish. The natural man does not inquire what is the will of God regarding him. He is not concerned in pleasing God. The thing that he desires most of all is to please himself. If he may do this, he asks nothing more. He lives for this alone. If he may but gratify all his own desires, he asks for nothing more. He does not believe that he is moved by such a motive; he does not stop to consider it. In fact, he is likely to suppose that he is moved by very different considerations. God says, "Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations" (Isaiah 66:3). Again He says, "They hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof" (Proverbs 1:29, 30).

His Attitude Toward God

Man ordinarily supposes that he is on quite friendly terms with God, at least so far as his own feelings are concerned. He looks upon the law of God and recognizes it as a very high and worthy law. He assents that man should give to it a ready obedience. Very often he is pleased to see others turn from sin to righteousness. Like Paul, he may delight in the law of God after the inward man. He may approve of it as being most excellent. He may even praise it most highly. He may sit in the congregation of the righteous and find much pleasure in listening to the Word of God. There may be many things in it that he is glad to see reflected in his own life; but when it comes to submitting himself to this law and making it the law of his life and conforming himself to it in detail, another element immediately asserts itself. He finds at once a great reluctance, and if pressed, this reluctance shows itself in rebellion. So long as he can do just as he likes and still fulfil the Word of God, he is pleased to do so. As long as his desires run parallel with the desires of God, he delights in that law; but when his desires are crossed, when he is required to forego them, he at once rebels. And the more God's claims are pressed upon him, the more determined does his rebellion become.

His obedience, so far as he does obey, is essentially selfish. He obeys only because it pleases him to obey. Paul, speaking to the Colossians, tells them their former state, saying, "You ... were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works" (Colossians 1:21). To the Romans he says, "We were enemies" (Romans 5:10). Speaking of the unregenerate, he says that they are "haters of God" (Romans 1:30). This is

the verdict of God. He knows the true state of their hearts. His verdict is true and it is final. There is no element in the sinful man that is truly friendly toward God, at least before his heart begins to yield to God. He is everywhere pictured as a rebel, one who has defied the authority of God and is standing in open hostility to Him. And this, unless he repents, will be his attitude through life, and through the ceaseless ages of eternity. The best unsaved man is not at heart better than this.

God's Attitude Toward the Sinner

But what is God's attitude toward unregenerate man? It has been said that God hates sin, but He loves the sinner. Is this true? Let us hear the voice of inspiration, "Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity ... The Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man" (Psalm 5:5, 6). Does that express an attitude of affection? Again, we read, "The wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness" (Psalm 11:5-7). Read also the following texts: Leviticus 20:23; 26:30; Deuteronomy 32:19. We read further, "God is angry with the wicked every day" (Psalm 7:11). God is not so meek and indulgent that nothing will arouse His indignation. He hates all that is hateful. He could not love righteousness without hating iniquity. He could not love the righteous without hating the wicked. To love both would be to abolish all moral distinctions. Of the impenitent sinner it is said, "The wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). We are not to understand that God hates the sinner as an individual apart from his sins and his sinful disposition. It is only sin that renders Him hateful, but man is responsible for his state of sinfulness and chooses to be what he knows he ought not to be; therefore, to deal with the sin God must deal with the man.

Not only does God hate man's sin, every sinful word, thought, and deed, but He also hates every evil desire. The natural man loves evil. That love of evil, which is a part of his nature, God abhors. All desire that runs out after impurity or for that which is unholy merits and excites God's indignation and abhorrence. Every evil ambition that arises in his soul repels God. Every evil disposition, every evil feeling, hatred, envy, malice, revenge, selfishness, pride, jealousy, deceit, hypocrisy, and all the long catalog of evil things, of which man's heart is the source, are obnoxious to God. All tendency to resist the Holy Spirit, or to array oneself against the will of God, all rebellion at His providences, can excite in God only hatred. How often man rejects his own reason and stifles his conscience! How often he hardens his heart! Can God love the thing in him that causes him to do this? He can love only what is lovable; and only what is pure and holy can appear lovable to a holy God. All else He hates and must hate with all the strength of His character.

Sinner, look this squarely in the face. Your self-complacency may suffer, your conscience may be troubled, your fears may be aroused, but the picture is not overdrawn. Look over it again carefully. Look at yourself in the mirror of God's Word, and think what it means to have God for your enemy. Think what it

will mean before the great judgment seat, think what it will mean in eternity, and turn from your sins before the day of wrath.

God is just and can treat sin and the sinner only as justice demands, or at least cannot go contrary to those demands. He is also merciful and loving. And His attitude toward the sinner, an attitude different from that just considered, is expressed thus: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:16, 17). Again, we read, "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. Thou art ... a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy" (Psalm 86:5, 15). God is so full of love that John calls Him love. He is "our Father which art in heaven." His mercy endureth forever. He loves the sinner. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." God loves men because they are His sons, the work of His own creative power, even though they have gone astray. He loves them because of His own benevolence; He loves them because of the sacrifice He has made for them. He loves all the lovable qualities that He sees in them. He loves all the possibilities for good and nobility and holiness, and He pities them as "a father pitieth his children." And so God's hand of mercy is outstretched toward sinners. His heart yearns over them. He invites them to come back from their wanderings, to turn away from their sins, and holds out to them the promise of a full pardon and a glorious reconciliation.

These two widely different attitudes God holds toward every sinner. So long as the sinner is impenitent, love cannot reach him, and mercy cannot save; but as soon as the heart is softened into penitence and turns away from self to God, a welcome awaits him, the arms of love enfold him, and the past is all forgiven. God does not desire to hate the sinner. He is compelled to do so. But as soon as the sinner gives Him opportunity by changing his attitude toward God from rebellion to submission, God changes His attitude toward him into one of tenderest love and pity. †

OUR SERVICES ON CD'S

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REDEEMED WITH A GREAT PRICE

2024 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Harley McClung

IF YOU HAVE your Bibles, I would like, if you will, for you to turn to I Peter, chapter 1, starting with verse 18 and going on down to verse 23. There are some thoughts there, that by the help of the Lord, I would like to enlarge upon. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." I would like to entitle my thoughts, "Redeemed With a Great Price."

WE CANNOT COMPREHEND HIS SUFFERING

If we think about Jesus going to Calvary, and the pain and agony He had to suffer, I'm really not sure if anyone here today, or at any time, can fully comprehend His great suffering. Jesus did this willingly. He didn't have to go to Calvary. He could have called 10,000 angels, and they would have come to set Him free, but He knew the will and the mind of His Father. His Father's will is that no one should perish. God doesn't want anyone to perish. *To perish* means "death." God doesn't want anyone to be lost. God chose to give His only begotten Son to this sin-sick, sin-cursed world so that anyone who could visualize Jesus hanging there on Calvary could just take the shed blood to heart. When we take Jesus to heart, that's when it comes to the place that we return, in the capacity that He gives us, the love that He so desires and longs for. He wants mankind to love Him, so He went to Calvary just so that we would take that precious blood He shed on Calvary and apply it to our hearts. When that blood is applied to our hearts, it takes away anything in there that would block us or keep us from loving Him.

So many people today have so much of this world in their hearts. They love what's in this world. The love of the world is standing in their way of them loving the One who paid such a high price so that they might have this glorious life and the glorious vision of God's love and mercy that has been extended to all. God did this by sending His only begotten Son who was willing to come to this sin-sick, sin-cursed world and give Himself to redeem us with the precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish. Jesus didn't have any sin. He didn't have to pay that debt because of something He did. He paid that debt because of the spots and blemishes we have on our hearts. So many people in the world today

love the world and the things of the world. They put the love of the world ahead of God. This is why John said, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."



When we look at this world that God created, and we enjoy the beauty of it, then we need to ask ourselves: Jesus redeemed us with a great price, and for this great investment, what kind of a return does He get? What does He get for the great price that He paid? A leftover? Something that maybe no one else wants? What does God deserve? What does He deserve from mankind? The first and great commandment is to love God with all our hearts. It was given to Israel, and of course, to all mankind, so when we look at this world and everything about it, do we love God with all our hearts? "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Deuteronomy 5:7). "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Matthew 22:37, 38). There is no commandment that supersedes that.

GOD'S GREAT INVESTMENT

So, this morning, I think all of us, in order to just give God a little bit of a return on His great investment, should search our hearts. Can we look into our hearts, and be honest with ourselves now in asking, Is God getting anything for this great investment that He has made?

When you make an investment, you really want what you pay for. So many people in the world today are demanding, *I'm going to have what I pay for. I've worked for that money. It's my money, and I want what is mine.* Well, then, why should we fault God for just wanting what is His? As a matter of fact, look at ourselves. All of us by right of creation belong to God. He paid such a high price. It was a great price. Doesn't He deserve to have our hearts? When we look into this world and see all the beauty and everything available to us, He's made available to us richly all things to enjoy, except disobeying Him. That's what sin is. He doesn't give us the right to be unholy. He doesn't give us the privilege to enjoy all of His creation against His will, because if we're doing it against His will, we're bringing harm to ourselves. He's looking on us as His great possession. He doesn't want any harm to come to you and me. This is why He has given us the Word of God.

We'll look at a verse in our text again. Verse 23 of I Peter 1: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." The apostle Paul wasn't ashamed of the gospel of Christ. There are a lot of people who are ashamed of God and His Word. They're ashamed

to live the Word because they might be talked about. The apostle Paul wasn't ashamed. He said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation." That's the salvation of my soul and my return into harmony with God. O yes, the Spirit is there, too, but listen to me: When Jesus was talking to the people there that followed Him out into the wilderness, He said, "I am the manna that cometh down from heaven." This manna, this Bread of life, God has sent down to feed the souls of men. He said, "This manna that cometh down are my words. My words, they are Spirit and they are life." Many times when people hear the Word of God, they are turned off by it. But God sent His Word. He sent His Word so that we, by His Word, might be saved. He sent His Word so that we might see this glorious vision and have the understanding of His love and mercy. He's willing to pardon us and take that debt away from us. He paid the price we could not pay.

JESUS WAS FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH

I'm telling you, we've found that Jesus came full of grace (unmerited favor). We didn't deserve this. He came full of grace and truth. They go hand-in-hand, you know. His truth will reveal to us the life that we're living. It will show us that we're living contrary to God and His holiness. God is holy. He is righteous. Everything about God is righteous. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). There is no evil in God, so everything that He sprinkles down upon us is light and holiness. It's a glory that He has given to us so that it would make our lives sublime. It's a glorious life, a life of beauty, a life of happiness, a life of peace and contentment. This is what God wants for us. That's why Jesus came into this world. This all came to our understanding by grace. Grace is God's unmerited favor, but it goes much deeper than that.

Peter talks about the fear of God. Grace brings us to a place where we can have a respect for God. Remember that God is the great I AM. He's the One who spoke words and everything came into being. Too many people have such little respect for God and such little respect for what the Word of God teaches.

I appreciated so much this morning the little things that Sis. Rebecca and Bro. Ralph did in the opening of Sunday school. They're so creative. These little simple things that they do send a great message. They give you a vision. They make things down here simple that even I can understand. I liked the part where Bro. Ralph took that sweet, little piece of candy (I presume that's what it was.) to bring out a thought. Well, the Word of God is sweet. I'm telling you, the Word of God is sweet. Everything about it is sweet. It's only the natural man that finds it offensive. That's why the apostle Paul said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: ... because they are spiritually discerned." God has sent the Word and the Spirit and made it available to everyone so that we can discern and understand just how glorious He is, and how it favors you and me, individually, to be reconciled to Him. In saying this, I liked what Bro. Ralph did. He took that piece of candy and threw it back there. I don't mean to throw the Word to anyone this morning. But listen to me, we need to get the Word of God to people

any way we can get it to them, because this is something so valuable to their souls. We can't make it to heaven without a vision and applying to our hearts what Jesus came to teach us. We need to love this, because everything the Word of God teaches us is for our benefit.

The blood of Jesus is precious. Peter said, "Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ." That means it should be treasured. It must be the most important thing to us. Prized and cherished. To those who have been redeemed by the blood, that's the value they put on it. That's the value I put on it, because I know what it has done for me. Jesus' blood and His Word have transformed my life. It has taken me out of the kingdom of darkness and translated me into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Now in this kingdom of God's dear Son, I have this glorious life. I'm now a child of God. I'm a part of His kingdom. I'm a part of His family, and He really, really cares for me. He's watching over me. He's protecting me. He's helping me every day of my life. He'll do the same for you, because God is no respecter of persons.

This grace that God has shed abroad in all the world appears to everyone. This grace that brings salvation starts the teaching process. Every single heart needs to be taught the things and the ways of God. This is what grace does. It brings to us a vision and an understanding of what God wants for us and expects of us. He's looking out for our soul's well-being. It's not God's will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Peter points out that God is no respecter of persons. Jesus tasted death for everyone, not just for those in this auditorium this morning, but for the whole world. It was by His grace that He was willing to do this.

GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS

Bro. Jim Morehouse gave me this little article, and I'd like to read it here. I had to study this. It's good, I think, because God is no respecter of persons. It says—

As there is no respect of persons with God in His care and love for us, there can be no respect of God in judgment, so there can be none in the previous administration of His saving blessings, for he that will be condemned for his unrighteousness [Let me stop here for a minute. The unrighteousness is simply this: Setting God's Son aside and considering the blood that was shed on Calvary as unimportant.] will be condemned on the ground that he had sufficient grace afforded him for the salvation of his soul, and his condemnation will rest on the simple principle that he abused the grace which was sufficient to save him by acting in opposition to its dictates and influence. I liked that. It's a truth that all of us should deeply consider. The grace that came to show us God's love came to teach us what He really wants for our lives and hearts.

God's grace shows us how much He loves us. It points us to Calvary. It helps us visualize Jesus' suffering there. One songwriter said, "If I were the only one to redeem, I believe He'd go to Calvary for me." He went to Calvary. He shed His life's blood for you. Each one of us here this morning can look to Calvary and say, "Jesus did that for me."

We were redeemed by and with a great price. God gave a great price to redeem your soul. He made a huge investment. So now, what will God receive for His investment? What will be the return on His investment? In reality, Jesus said that the way to heaven or the way back to the Father is through a strait gate. It's a restricted way. You see, God has made the provisions to save us from sin, and has given us the opportunity to enter into that strait gate and go on that narrow way with a clean heart and a clean way. He has made it possible. Jesus gave us the clear vision and the understanding that there are only a few who are going to go in through that strait gate and get on that narrow way. But it's only that way that leads to eternal glory.

GOD IS BLESSING US ALL

Now, while you have all these blessings in this time world, make no mistake, God is blessing you. God is blessing us all by giving us the privilege and the opportunity to live in His world. This is His world. This is my Father's world. Every day that we live, He blesses us, because it is in Him we live, and move, and have our being. Every day we live in Him. We have our lives because He has willed it so. This time world is so short. Our lives are going by so quickly. I'm 76 years old, and I look back and ask, "Where did my life go?" This is why James says, "What is your life?" All of us need to look at our lives. We need to consider our lives. What do our lives consist of? Are we really enjoying the blessings of God to the fullest that we can? If we are, we're like a glorious rainbow in the sky, so shiny and so beautiful to behold. Our lives are glorious, because the blood of Jesus Christ shed on Calvary has cleansed our hearts, and out of the cleansed hearts come the issues of life. We're pleasing the One who paid this great price for our redemption. What is your life? All of us should consider that little question.

A rainbow consists of particles of moisture with the sun shining through that makes those glorious colors. Sometimes the rainbow comes up quickly, then before long it's gone. But if we have that light, the light of the gospel shining through us, then we're this beautiful rainbow. Beautiful to behold! It is something that the Father is so proud of and so happy to recognize. What is your life? The one thing that James says is that your life and my life are very short. It is only for a very short period of time. Then, what looms out there before us? It's the never-ending age called eternity. It's infinite. It goes on and on and on and on.

God has made a way for us to stand before Jesus Christ, the righteous Judge, and hear Him say one of two things. We can hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." If we don't hear Him say that, we're going to hear Him say, "Depart from me." Those who hear Him say, "Well done," are going to go into the ceaseless ages of eternity with Jesus Christ being their Lord and Savior. Being there without any sin, without any sickness, and without any problems that trouble this world. But if we hear Him say, "Depart from me. You were a worker of iniquity, and I don't know you," then you won't be with Him.

Jesus talked about the strait gate and the narrow way, but the other way is the broad way, which seems so easy to most people. Most people are on the broad

way. But what is the end of the broad way? Destruction.

I want you to consider this: Jesus went to Calvary because His Father gave Him to you and me. God made a huge investment in your soul, in your heart. Jesus suffered all that He did to satisfy His Father's heart against all the sin that mankind had troubled Him with. It was so terrible in the sight of the Father that it took something to appease Him. There was no one else that could have appeased Him except Jesus. Jesus knew that. That's why He so willingly went to Calvary for you and me. What God wants is a return on His investment. He wants to receive back. He wants to get something for the great price that He paid. I'll ask you this morning, Why shouldn't He get it? Why shouldn't He get something for this great investment, this high price that He paid for our redemption. Why shouldn't God receive something in return?

CONCLUSION

Don't you believe this morning that it's only fair to give God something in return for Him giving so much for us? His due. I'm so happy that somehow, somehow, God allowed me to have this vision that I want to give Him something in return. I want to give Him my heart. How about you? Do you want to give God your heart? If you will give God your heart, you will do so by way of repentance, by coming down here and asking God to forgive you, and then believing that He will pardon you. It's seems like a simple act. There is an ingredient of faith. You have to believe, but when you come down here and ask God to pardon you, and believe, He will do that. Why? Because He takes that as a return on the investment He's made. You're now returning to Him your heart. You're giving to Him your heart. Then, do you know what God is going to do? He's going to add something to His investment. He's going to take all of your sins and bundle them up altogether and throw them into the sea of forgetfulness. He's going to remember them against you forever no more. Then, in the eyes of God, you're going to look as though you've never committed sin. You're going to be justified. Isn't that appealing? It's appealing to me to know that in God's eyes, not man's, we're justified. That's what's important. He's made it possible. He paid the price.

Again, shouldn't God get a return on this great investment that He's made? He should have our hearts. When He has our hearts, He has our time, our talents, and everything to use for His glory. He'll bless you far more than this humble preacher can describe to you. All He wants is a return on His investment. How about it? †

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PHILIPPINE CONVENTION REPORT

December 26-30, 2024

Reporter: Sis. Gladys Eve Bagayan

 AS THE YEAR came to a close, the Church of God gathered in the comfortable and warm setting of Lacayanga Subdivision, Paniqui, Tarlac, for the 2024 annual Philippine Convention. This year's theme, "A Perfect Church is a Victorious Church," surely went straight into the hearts of all those who were present, highlighting the importance of our journey together through unity, faith, and dedication.

It was a great privilege to have esteemed attendants from several congregations. From Craigsville, West Virginia: Bro. Harley McClung, his daughter, Sis. Andrea Williams, and son-in-law, Bro. Mike Williams. Deville, Louisiana: Bro. Gary Alwell, and his wife, Sis. Anna Alwell. Grand Cayman: Bro. O'leary Cranston, and his wife, Sis. Miriam. Their participation brought a rich diversity of perspectives from around the world, contributing to the spiritual atmosphere and the sense of unity in the Church of God.

We were blessed with powerful preaching, inspiring testimonies, and soul-lifting singing during the five days, and these meetings were geared towards training our spirits unto the Lord and opening our hearts to receive the Word. By His grace, 29 souls were saved during the five days, therefore, we were spiritually refreshed and strengthened by the convention to face our daily battles with courage and resilience.

Following is the list of the preachers and the titles of the messages and thoughts they delivered during the days of blessing—

Day 1: December 26—Morning Devotional—Speaker: Bro. Rey Fabian, Host Pastor. Title: "Keeping the Church Alive." The opening message focused on the day of Pentecost as a powerful example for the church today. Bro. Rey emphasized the unity, dedication, and fervent prayer of the early disciples, as recorded in Acts 1:14, and encouraged the congregation to follow their example. He reminded the saints that for the church to remain vibrant and effective in a world full of challenges, there must be prayer, unity, and dependence on the Holy Spirit. The congregation was called to renew their commitment to God, work together in harmony, and emulate the dedication of Jesus and the early church to ensure the church continues to thrive.

Morning Service—Speaker: Bro. Antonio Dumrique. Title: "Sanctified to Christ Jesus." His text was I Corinthians 1:1, 2, 9-10. Bro. Antonio spoke on the privilege and calling of those sanctified in Christ Jesus. He reminded the congregation that the Church of God is not established by human might but by the work of salvation through Jesus Christ. Salvation, he explained, is not a mere religious ritual but the transformation of the soul by God's grace. He emphasized that sanctification is an ongoing process, calling believers to daily yield themselves to God, walk in holiness, and maintain unity in the Spirit. The message concluded with a reminder that sanctification empowers believers to live in fellowship with the saints and to glorify God in all things.

Afternoon Service—Speaker: Bro. Rodencio Delos Reyes. The title of his message was based on the theme. Bro. Rodencio's message, drawn from Ephesians 5:27, highlighted God's desire for His church to be a glorious, spotless, and holy body, set apart for His divine purpose. He encouraged the saints to hold firmly to the truth of God's Word as their foundation and shield, even in the face of trials and discouragement. He reminded the congregation that God is faithful to present His church as pure and victorious, free from spot or wrinkle, ready to stand before Him in holiness.

Evening Service—Speaker: Bro. Harley McClung. Thoughts on Genesis 1:1-4. Bro. Harley spoke on the goodness of God as the foundation of His creation and His desire for mankind to live righteously and holy. Using the example of the Good Samaritan, he encouraged the congregation to reflect God's goodness by loving others, including their enemies, and living lives of kindness, charity, and forgiveness. He emphasized the need for repentance and salvation, reminding the saints that God's grace is sufficient to live a victorious Christian life. The message concluded with an invitation to accept God's grace and live a life of goodness and salvation.

Day 2: December 27—Morning Devotional—Speaker: Bro. Frank Palencia. His thoughts were based on the theme. Bro. Frank spoke on the importance of unity and love within the body of Christ, drawing from Ephesians 4:12. He emphasized that backbiting and gossiping have no place among true Christians, as love should cover a multitude of sins. He encouraged the congregation to take responsibility for their actions, resolve conflicts through prayer and forgiveness, and reflect God's goodness in their daily lives. He concluded by urging the saints to embrace unity and love, live blamelessly, and stand strong against division, which is a work of the enemy.

Morning Service—Speaker: Bro. Jet Batalla. Title: "How a Local Church Succeeds." Bro. Jet emphasized the importance of a good pastor who is saved, sanctified, and well-versed in the Word. He encouraged the congregation to support their pastors through prayer, encouragement, and active participation. He stressed the importance of a church dedicated to prayer, using the example of the upper room in Acts 1:14, and encouraged family prayer to strengthen the congregation. He concluded by reminding the saints that a local church succeeds when it is led by a godly pastor, supported by its members, and grounded in prayer.

Afternoon Service—Speaker: Bro. Ed Coraraton. Title: "Christians Live by Faith to Succeed." Bro. Ed's message emphasized the importance of repentance and living by faith. He drew from the example of Moses and the Israelites who faced divine discipline due to their lack of trust and obedience. He also reflected on Jesus' 40 day fast in the wilderness, which exemplified faith and obedience.

The message concluded with a call to repentance and a life of faith, reminding the saints that through justification, regeneration, and adoption, believers are empowered to live victorious lives.

Evening Service—Speaker: Bro. Gary Alwell. Title: "The Transforming Power of the Gospel." Bro. Gary

spoke on the power of the gospel to change lives, using Romans 1:16 and II Corinthians 5:17 as his foundational thoughts. He shared his personal testimony of salvation, emphasizing the importance of seeking God with a whole heart and living a righteous and godly life. He encouraged the congregation to resist the devil, draw near to God, and live joyfully in the transforming power of the gospel.

Day 3: December 28—Morning Devotional—Speaker: Sis. Lovelyn Hogat. Title: “Greater is He That is in Me.” Sis. Lovelyn reminded the saints that victory in the Christian life comes through surrender, sacrifice, and reliance on Christ. She encouraged the congregation to prioritize God above worldly gains and to depend on His strength in times of weakness.

Morning Service—Speaker: Sis. Rose Marzan. Her thoughts were based on the theme. Sis. Rose spoke on the power of the blood of Jesus to heal and restore. She reminded the saints that no earthly solution can cure the spiritual sickness caused by sin, but through the blood of Jesus, believers can find true healing and freedom.

Afternoon Service—Speaker: Bro. Bernie Neri. Title: “The Heavenly Vision for a Victorious Church.” Bro. Bernie emphasized the importance of a God-given vision for the church, focusing on the salvation of lost souls. He encouraged the congregation to stand firm against sin and to be a beacon of hope for those seeking God.

Evening Service—Speaker: Sis. Andrea Williams. Her thoughts were on “Walking to Please God.” She emphasized the importance of walking with God, drawing from Romans 8:1-4 and Genesis 17:1, which calls us to be perfect in our spirit. Emulating Jesus Christ who lived a sinless life and did not lament when at the cross can be a real gift to us. Psalm 133:1 highlights the beauty of unity among God’s people, while Galatians 5:16-25 stresses on the importance of being led by the Holy Spirit to avoid sin and glorify God. Jeremiah 6:16 encourages us to seek the old paths of truth and guidance from older members. Romans 6:4 describes the transformation of salvation leading us to walk in a new life free from sin and filled with gratitude. Walking with God is a privilege and a responsibility. It brings victory and fellowship and makes us part of the perfect church God has established.

Day 4: December 29—Sunday School period—led by Bro. Arnaldo Chichioco. Title: “The Christian Presses for the Prize.” Bro. Arnaldo spoke on the importance of perseverance in the Christian race, drawing from Hebrews 12:1-17. He reminded the saints to lay aside every weight and sin, endure divine chastening, and press forward toward the prize of eternal life.

Morning Worship—Speaker: Bro. Harley McClung. Title: “The Marriage of the Lamb.” Bro. Harley emphasized the spiritual union between Christ and His church, likened to a marriage. He encouraged the saints to live in harmony with God and one another, striving for holiness and reflecting God’s glory.

Afternoon Service—Speaker: Bro. Greg Escullar. The message focused on Ephesians 5:26, using the theme, “A Perfect Church is a Victorious Church.” Using gold as a powerful metaphor, he illustrated how the church must undergo a purification process, similar to

how gold is refined. The core message emphasized that believers must attain holiness before Christ’s return and maintain spotlessness in His presence. Importantly, he addressed the sacred purpose of the pulpit, stressing that it should be used solely for sharing God’s words, rather than targeting others or engaging in negative speech about brethren. This concise, yet profound message, reinforced the biblical principle of maintaining spiritual purity and fostering a positive church environment focused on godliness and growth.

Evening Service—Speaker: Bro. Gary Alwell. His thoughts were on “Do You Know Jesus?” Bro. Gary expressed gratitude for the blessings of the convention, emphasizing how God enriches lives and ministries through such gatherings. Despite language differences, the Spirit of God unites all believers, and the truth preached is universal. Using Matthew 11:27-30, he focused on Jesus’ invitation to the weary and burdened, offering rest and peace. He explained that humanity, created perfect, fell into sin, resulting in heavy burdens. However, Jesus provides relief by taking these burdens away. He shared his personal testimony, highlighting the difference between knowing about Jesus and truly knowing Him. He referenced Nicodemus’ encounter with Jesus to illustrate the need for spiritual rebirth. He encouraged believers to take Jesus’ yoke, which is light, and to learn from Him, as Jesus reveals the Father and fosters a personal relationship with God. He contrasted the fear of God in the Old Testament, with the joy and fellowship found in the New Testament, emphasizing the joy and presence of God evident in the convention. He stressed that God desires a close, personal relationship with each believer, which brings the greatest joy and fulfillment. Then he concluded by urging believers to recognize and follow Jesus’ voice, distinguishing His truth from worldly deceptions. He encouraged seeking counsel, praying together, and staying close to the true Shepherd, Jesus, who came to give life and reveal the Father’s love.

Day 5: December 30—Morning Devotional—Speaker: Bro. Erick Masalunga. His thoughts were based on the theme. He brought forth an inspiring message based on Ephesians 6:10-12, focusing on our spiritual responsibilities. The message particularly stressed the importance of prioritizing church services in our daily lives. Our brother lovingly admonished the saints to make proper preparation for church gatherings and to arrange their plans well in advance, recognizing these as vital appointments with the Lord. This practical, yet spiritual counsel, reminded us that victory in our Christian walk requires deliberate planning and dedication to put the services of God first in our schedules. The truth was presented with clarity and brotherly concern, encouraging each one to examine their commitment to regular church attendance.

Morning Service—Speaker: Sis. Amanda Santiago. Title: “Perfect Love Gives Us Victory.” The message revealed how many faithful saints of old, though not spared from material sufferings, found their victory through perfect love. The truth was beautifully unfolded, showing how sacrifice is connected to genuine love, and those who truly accept Jesus’ love are not just talking about the things of the world. The message emphasized

THE STEPS OF THE RIGHTEOUS

THE SPIRIT WORKS WITH ISAIAH

Scriptures: Isaiah 6:1-10.

Isaiah 6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Memory Verse: Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.—Isaiah 6:8.

Aim: To give an insight into the dealings of God with the early saints.

INTRODUCTION

ISAIAH WAS a very outstanding prophet. The book of Isaiah is called the “gospel” of the Old Testament. The presence of God in Isaiah’s sinful state caused him much concern, and he at once concluded that he was undone, not knowing but fearing what the immediate future might mean to him. However, we find in him a readiness to obey the will of God; and when the Spirit called for a volunteer, Isaiah at once responded, “Here am I; send me.” God is still calling. However, the material blessings of today’s material world have so thoroughly captured the hearts of the people that they content themselves with a mere form of godliness and leave God’s call unheeded. Happy is the man who can say unto God, “Here am I; send me.”

MEDITATIONS

OUR GOD, AN EXALTED GOD—Isaiah 6:1—High and lifted up—Why should He not be when He has demonstrated so much wisdom, power, and kindness in creating the world and placing man over the work of His hands? He is greatly to be praised, and the earth is full of His glory. It is a small thing for His train to fill the temple, for He told Solomon when he finished

that spiritual life can only be maintained through believing and accepting the love of God. A particularly touching portion addressed how this perfect love enables us to love even those who seem unlovable. Our hearts were encouraged by the reminder that while we may make mistakes in our human journey, we need not dwell on those feelings of failure, for God’s perfect love lifts us above our human frailties. Our lives must be rendered for the glory of God alone, not for the praise of men, reminding us that true victory comes through embracing and living out His perfect love daily.

Afternoon Service—Speaker: Bro. Luis Gamboa. Bro. Luis brought forth an inspiring message from Hebrews 12:22. Opening with a note of gratitude—*Thank God there is the Church of God*—our brother presented the precious truth under the title, “The Victory of the Church Through the Blood of Jesus.” Drawing from the rich wells of Acts 20:28 and Romans 6:23, the message emphasized that our victory is not found in merely talking about Jesus, but in the power of His precious blood. The truth was explained with clarity and divine anointing, reminding us of our blessed position in the Church of God, purchased with His own blood.

Evening Service—Speaker: Bro. Harley McClung. We were reminded to “Fear God and Keep His commandments,” a message that resonates deeply as we reflect on the past services and our Christian walk.

Over the five days of convention, we experienced God’s powerful presence through Spirit-filled messages, heartfelt worship, and the salvation of souls. These moments of unity, love, and harmony among God’s people are not to be taken lightly. The convention was marked by sacrifices—both physical and spiritual—as many labored to ensure its success. We witnessed spiritual progress, with hearts sanctified, lives transformed, and a renewed commitment to serve God faithfully. The salvation of even one soul is a miracle worth celebrating, and we rejoice in the victories achieved.

As the convention concluded, we were reminded that while this event must end, God’s eternal work continues. Our hope has been strengthened, our vision sharpened, and our dedication to God renewed. Let us carry these blessings forward, confident in God’s promises as we face life’s challenges. Truly, this convention was a success, and we give all glory to God for His help and favor. The conclusion of the whole matter: fear God, keep His commandments, and live for His glory.

From Bro. Mike and Sis Andrea Williams: *We both were so blessed to have had the opportunity to visit the saints in the Philippines. The convention was Spirit-filled and was such an inspiration. We were encouraged to see so many who attended the services and responded to the messages. It is a blessing to be able to see that God can and does work with all mankind as long as they are willing and humble. It is our prayer that God will continue His work with the saints there as well as all His children.* †



TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

the temple that the heaven and heaven of heavens could not hold Him, so how could he build a house for that purpose? In most cases, I think, we have too small a conception of the might and greatness of God. **Verse 2—Above it stood the seraphims**—These angels were very majestic and powerful and presented a picture that added to the awe that filled the mind of Isaiah. How often men have trembled in the presence of beings who made their appearance from the heavenly realm!

OUR GOD IS HOLY—Isaiah 6:3—Holy, holy, holy is the Lord—The angels are here speaking of Christ, but holiness is equally attributed to all three in the Godhead. Christ, according to the writings of Paul and John, is the Creator of the entirety of creation. These apostles declared it was created for Him; so it can be truthfully said that the earth is full of the glory of the Lord. Holiness is the state of sinlessness. It is impossible for God to sin. He cannot be tempted to sin. He had decreed that we, His children, also be holy, for we read in Ephesians 1:4, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.”

HIS VOICE IS MIGHTY—Isaiah 6:4—Moved at the voice of him—It was the same voice that spoke to the winds and waves and there was a great calm. The same marvelous voice today speaks to affliction and disease, and they disappear. What a privilege it is to be in such a place that the voice speaks in our behalf and not against us! Satan cannot resist the voice of God but flees when He speaks.

ISAIAH UNDERSTOOD THAT THE LORD WAS KING—Isaiah 6:5—Have seen the King—We need to understand that Jesus Christ is King of the entire universe. Sun, moon and stars obey Him. He is not a king who is to receive a kingdom or produce a kingdom in the future, for He is King right now and is reigning over the natural elements and in men wherever He can get them to open the door of their hearts and let Him in. Isaiah understood that his people had been sinful and rebellious, and this appeared to him as a sign that God was going to visit them with some awful catastrophe.

ONLY THE FIRE OF GOD CAN DESTROY SIN—Isaiah 6:6—A live coal—Fire is a powerful cleansing agent; and when it is allowed to have full sway, it will destroy every bit of filthiness. Such is the power of the Word of God. It is a fire that destroys every vestige of sin and leaves the heart clean and pure. **Verse 7—Sin purged**—Holy Ghost fire is much needed in the world today. People need not only to be saved from all their committed sins, but also to be purged, or cleansed, from inbred sin and filled with the Holy Spirit, which will enable them to say no to sin and the temptations of the devil. This is the kind of experience Jesus Christ purchased for all when He died on the cross. A consecrated heart will be able to hear the call of God. (Wildfire, rolling on the floor and indecent acts are of the spirit of Satan and not of God.)

GOD’S CALL TO SERVICE—Isaiah 6:8—Who will go for us?—The great eye of God is continually

running throughout the whole earth, searching out those who will go for Him. He does not come as a mighty thunder but speaks in gentle tones. Not everyone can hear, and not everyone responds who does hear. He who is called of God is a fortunate individual indeed, and we should answer yes to His every desire, for it means life and peace here and eternal life in the world to come. No one ever made a mistake in saying yes to the Spirit of the living God. There never was a time when workers in the vineyard of the Lord were more needed, and there never was, I suppose, a better opportunity to do good than now. Isaiah’s heart was changed. His will now was the will of God. He was ready for service as far as his will was concerned. **Verse 9—And he said, Go**—Of course, his commission was to preach the Word of God, and he was to preach as long as there were any inhabitants left. **Verse 10—The heart fat**—God had been made angry many times by the waywardness of the Israelitish nation. He would have destroyed them had not Moses intervened. They still continued to depart from the ways of the Lord. They continued hardening their hearts against the gospel, making it impossible for them to be saved. Nevertheless, the gospel must be preached, and to this end Isaiah was called out, that from this nation should be saved a remnant.

CONCLUSION

We are now in a time that compares very well with the time in which Isaiah lived. The people today are turning their backs on the true gospel of the Lord. They are satisfied with a form of godliness, for that will permit them to partake of the world and its pleasures as much as they wish. Nevertheless, every true servant of Christ is called to tell the story without ceasing, to carry it to every creature under heaven.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

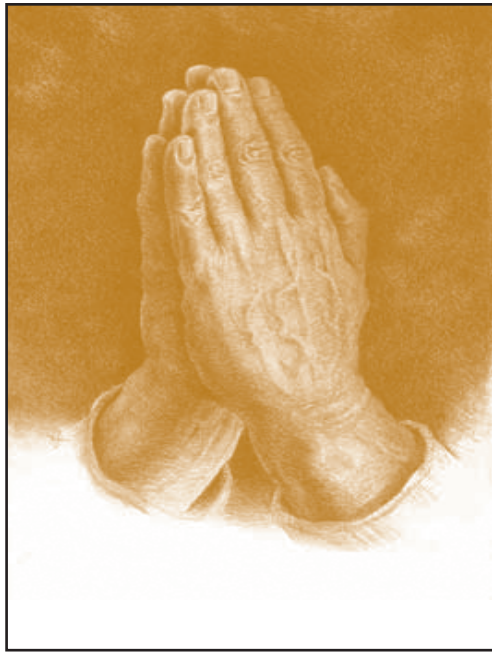
1. How does Isaiah 1:18 and Isaiah 55:6, 7 compare with the gospel message of the New Testament?
2. Why was Isaiah fearful when the angels appeared in the vision?
3. By what means only is it possible for any man to be saved?
4. Why is it proper to exalt the name of our God?
5. Why do you think that the posts shook and the house was filled with smoke because of the presence of God?
6. What is the greatest calling man can have? †

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THE POETRY PAGE



REMEMBERING TO PRAY

Grace E. Easley

"Ask and it shall be given,"
So the Lord would have you pray.
"Seek and you will surely find,"
For He will show the way.
"Knock and it shall be opened,"
Do you think God is about
To turn His back upon us,
Knowing all we are without?

We are as little children,
In this valley full of tears,
We need His love to guide us,
And give meaning to the years.
To cross life's troubled waters,
There is not a better way,
Than in clinging to Him tightly,
And remembering to pray.

THOSE WHO CARE

Lorraine Mueller

As silently as sunrise comes
The days flow into years;
And some are filled with happiness
And some are drenched in tears.

But always it is good to know
That there are those who care;
Who may today, lift up your name
With love in fervent prayer.

BE SURPRISED

Michael Dubina

Wake to Jesus, every morning,
To enjoy each new born day
And to know the joys and blessings
He bestows on Christian ways;
You will find the day is brighter—
And the things you do and see
Will be of a truer value
Than they ever used to be.

Be surprised by gifts of glory
You have never seen before
And by majesties and wonders
You have walked by and ignored.
It will be a day of marvels—
With Lord Jesus in your heart—
For His love makes love a virtue
To enjoy and to impart.

HIS LIVING PRESENCE

Joan Hardin

Ever striving to be like Him,
I'll do the best I can
To follow in His footsteps
And serve my fellow man.

Ever striving to be like Him,
I'll comfort those in need
By a daily word of kindness
Or by a loving deed.

Ever striving to be like Him,
I'll love my neighbor more
And share His living Presence with
The man who lives next door.

DO NOT DESPAIR

Anna Lee Edwards McAlpin

Do not despair,
Let not dismay
Impair your vision
For today ...
Though sunny skies
Have disappeared,
While thunder sounds
And storm-cloud nears;
Do not lose hope
For He abides ...
A Faithful Friend,
Close at your side. †

The Never-failing Love of Christ

2024 Hagerstown Convention

Message by Bro. Lee Jeffries

WOULD YOU please turn with me to the book of St. John, chapter 3? I'd like to read verse 16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The subject on my heart tonight is entitled, "The Never-failing Love of Christ."

When I think about my life, when I think about the struggles that we often face in our lives, we feel so afraid sometimes. Sometimes we feel so alone. There have been times in all of our lives that we've had so many questions. Sometimes we wonder, *what will ever become of me?* But the songwriter says, "I am so glad that our Father in heav'n, Tells of His love in the Book He has giv'n, Wonderful things in the Bible I see; This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me."

When I was alone, lost and forgotten, out in a world of sin wandering and drifting far from the shore, out came the good Shepherd. He came looking for me. He came when we were full of sin, when we were forsaken, when there was no one to look out for us, and even when there was no one to love us. The Word of God says, "God so loved the world."

A chorus of a song says, "When the earth was null and void, And there was no light to see, And the land was not parted from the sea, He knew back then I'd need a friend, A friend to love me til the end, God took nothing and made something of me."

When the whole world caves in around you, and everyone turns their backs on you, I want to encourage you that there is a love that will never fail. There is a love that will stand through the countless ages of eternity. It is the wonderful love of God. O yes, sometimes you wonder if anybody cares for you. We all wonder sometimes if somebody cares for us.

The songwriter says in verse 1 and chorus—
*I walk today in the Christian way,
Tho' dangers I may see;
I will not fear, for the Lord is near,
And he will care for me.*

*No matter what happens, he will care for me,
He will care for me, he will care for me;
And his mighty hand will enable me to stand,
No matter what happens to me.*

Listen, there was a time when this world was full of sin and no hope was in store, but the book of Revelation, the fifth chapter, tells us that they searched the heavens, and they searched under the earth, but there was "no man able to open the book, and to loose the

seals thereof." And John said, "I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed." Even when it was hopeless, even when the world felt like it wasn't anyone to help them, God loved the world. He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever will believe in Him can be saved. I am here to tell you that Jesus is not dead. He is alive and well. He lives forevermore.

The Scriptures remind us that we are but dust. We are helpless. We are nothing without the love of God. I am so thankful that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts so that we're able to have the peace that passeth all understanding.

There is a beautiful plan. It is the plan of salvation. There is no need for anyone to be lost. There is no need for anyone to feel forsaken. I am here to tell you that God has not forsaken you. God has not left you alone. He still has a purpose. He still has a plan. He still has you on His mind.

The songwriter says in verse 2—
*No test I face, but sufficient grace
Is ready for my need;
When sorrows rise to obscure my skies,
He proves a friend indeed.*

When all the winds are blowing, and things are going contrary, there is a Friend. We often remember the song, "I have a Friend, a precious Friend, Oh, how He loves me." He loves you, praise the Lord!

In verse 3, the songwriter says—
*He will not fail in the strongest gale
That stormy winds can blow;
And in his grace is a hiding place,
Unknown to any foe.*

The grace of God, the love of God, is able to withstand whatever we have to face. His love reaches to the highest mountain, and it flows to the lowest valley. Even though you may feel there is no hope for you, His love is flowing down. His love is being outpoured. Can't you feel His love tonight?

Think about your life. Think of where God has brought you from and where you are tonight. It is only because of God's love. Thank God for His love!

In verse 4, the songwriter says—
*I trust in him, tho' disasters grim
Before me seem to be;
He calms my fears and he dries my tears,
And faithful is to me.*

This love I'm talking about is a faithful love. You can count on it. You can depend on it. You can trust God because He'll never, never fail you.

I love the scripture that says, "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." His love makes Him to love and love and love. Despite of our sins, He still loves us. He is longsuffering. He will care for us. Oh, praise the Lord!

I remember as a young boy being raised in a community where drugs and alcohol were very prevalent. I was raised in an environment where, if I wanted to be on drugs, it was offered to me. It wasn't a beautiful sight for a young man to see, but despite of that environment, and all that was around me, the Lord cared for me. He preserved me. He held me up with His right hand and He didn't let me go. What a mighty God we serve! What a good God He is! He is wonderful. I was exposed to drugs and alcohol, and today at the age of twenty-four years old, God has been good to me. He has lifted me up from the miry clay and has set my feet on a Rock to stay. He is a good God, a wonderful God. He never fails.

With all the difficulties of life, the chorus of that song is a reminder to me—

No matter what happens, he will care for me,

He will care for me; [He will care for you tonight. No matter what you have to go through, He will care for you.]

And his mighty hand will enable me to stand,

No matter what happens to me.

God's love is never going to fail you. His love will sustain you. It will uplift you. He will stay near you. It doesn't matter how hard the times may get, He will remain faithful.

Yes, I am thankful that God is the same God yesterday, today, and He'll be the same forevermore. My heart is encouraged and blessed because we can depend upon the love of God. His love is for certain. His love is sure. It doesn't matter what we have to go through.

The scripture says in Romans, chapter 8, verses 28-31: "And we know that all things [God knows all things. The very thing on your heart, God knows about it.] work together for good [He's always looking out for our best interest.] to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" God is for us.

I love the chorus of the song that says, "O church of God! I love thy courts, Thou mother of the free; Thou blessed home of all the saved, I dwell content in thee." I am thankful that God is for His church. He's going to fight for her. He defends her.

Verses 32 and 33 of Romans 8: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." It is God who saves and sets us free from the bondage of sin. He is our hope. He is our everything.

Verses 34-37: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? [Charity never fails. There is no one who can separate us from God's love. No matter how far you may have gone in sin, He still cares about you.] shall

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tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. [Listen to this:] Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Verse 2 of "Jesus Loves Even Me" says: "Tho' I forget Him and wander away, Still He doth love me wherever I stray; Back to His dear loving arms would I flee, When I remember that Jesus loves me." Are you glad Jesus loves you? I am so glad He loves me. Think about it. The most important Person in this world loves you. He cares about you. The King of kings and the Lord of lords loves you.

Verse 3: "Oh, if there's only one song I can sing, When in His beauty I see the great King, This shall my song in eternity be: "Oh, what a wonder that Jesus loves me!" Guess what? Jesus never gets tired of loving us. He loves us every day. Every second and every minute, His love is the same.

Verses 38 and 39 of Romans 8: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." I am here to tell you, charity never fails. The love of God never fails you. He is a good God.

When we read chapter 13 of I Corinthians, all we can see is the love of God, how kind He is to us, and how He deals with us with mercy. He is so compassionate and so understanding to us. When no one else can, He's so willing to understand. Listen to this: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." The love of God will lead you to the truth of His Word. "Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." On this, hang all the law and the prophets.

It doesn't matter what else fails, God's love will never fail. No matter what happens to you, His mighty hand will enable you to stand. No matter what happens to me, He will enable me to stand.

The Lord bless you. †



**GOD'S LOVE IS
NEVER-ENDING!**

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THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



JEALOUSY

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

“Will you help me clean the breezeway?” I asked my younger sister, Twila. My mother had given me the task to do, but I knew the work would go faster if I had help. The breezeway was often skipped during our weekly cleaning. It was a small room that joined the garage and the house. There was no furniture in the room, but its corners tended to collect boots, shoes, and odd tools.

“Sure, I’ll help you,” Twila answered. “What part should we work on first?” I was twelve years old, and by now I’d had plenty of experience planning out chores.

“Well,” I said, “we should probably start with the windows. That way, it won’t matter if we knock dust or spiderwebs onto the floor. We should save the floor for last.”

“Do you want to do the outside or the inside of the windows?” I asked my sister.

“I’ll do the inside,” said Twila. “I’m afraid there might be spiders on the outside.”

“Okay,” I said. “I’m not afraid of spiders. But first let me take the screens out of the windows.”

There were four windows in the breezeway, one on each side of the door on the east side, and one on each side of the door on the west.

The windows on the west side of the breezeway were smaller and easier to clean. They were plain windows that could be pushed up to let in the fresh air or lowered to keep out the cold.

The windows on the east side were different. They were made of horizontal glass slats and turned with a lever, or crank. Each individual slat had to be cleaned, and so they took longer to do.

“Why are these windows different from the others?” Twila wanted to know. “They take so long to clean!”

“They’re ‘jealousy’ windows,” I told her.

“‘Jealousy’ windows?” Twila repeated. “What a funny name! Why are they called ‘jealousy’ windows?”

“I don’t know,” I told her.

“You don’t know?” Twila asked in shocked surprise. Since I was two years older than she, my sister thought I knew pretty much everything.

“No,” I said, “but I can guess.”

“Why do you **think** they are called ‘jealousy’ windows?” Twila asked.

“I think they’re called that because they make it harder to see inside the room. That way people won’t get jealous of what we have in here.”

Twila looked around the room—at the untidy pile of boots and shoes in one corner and at the push broom, leaf rake, and broken hoe in another.

“Who could be jealous of anything we have in here?” she asked.

“Nobody,” I said. “Nobody would be interested in any of this stuff.”

It was about that time that our mother opened the kitchen door leading to the breezeway. She had a ball of used foil in her hand. “Here,” she said, handing me the foil. “Stick this in the trashcan in the garage, please.”

She was about to go back into the kitchen when I stopped her. “Mom,” I said, “could you please tell us something?”

“What do you want to know?” she asked.

I pointed to the windows on the east side of the breezeway. “Why are these windows called ‘jealousy’ windows?”

Mom laughed. “They’re not ‘jealousy’ windows,” she said. “They’re ‘jalousie’ windows. It’s just the name for that kind of window—the kind you have to turn a crank to open and close.” She turned and walked back into the kitchen and closed the door, leaving Twila and me to stare at each other in amazement.

“‘JOWL-uh-see,’” we said to each other, practicing the pronunciation. “‘JOWL-uh-see.’”

Years later, when I moved to a very warm climate, I came to appreciate the fact that most of the homes and other buildings there had jalousie windows. It was a blessing to be able to wind a crank and open the window slats to let in cool air while keeping the rain out.

It was only recently that I discovered that the word “jalousie” actually comes from the French word for “jealousy.” Slatted jalousie windows are similar to a type of window blind that makes it easy for people to look outside, but not so easy for outsiders to see inside. Such a blind or window could be a way to prevent jealousy.

Jealousy is a feeling of envy. It is the desire to have something that someone else has. Jealousy can cause hard feelings between people. That is why the Scriptures tell us to be content with such things as we have. Contentment is the opposite of jealousy. When our hearts are full of thanksgiving for the blessings God has given us, there is no room for jealousy over the blessings that He has given to others.

But there is another aspect to “jealousy” that it is important for us to understand. In Exodus 34:14, we read, *For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.*

God is our Creator. He is our Redeemer and our Friend. He is the Giver of every blessing. He deserves all of our love. He deserves our worship and praise. He deserves our obedience.

When people love something more than they love God, when they obey evil temptations instead of following God’s commands, it causes God to feel jealous, because He wants our love and worship for Himself.

Let us never do anything to cause God to feel jealous. How unkind and unfair it would be to take from Him the love, worship, and obedience He deserves!

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 2:5, which says, *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.* To fear God

means to respect, honor, and obey Him. If we put God first in our lives, we will never cause Him to have a jealous feeling because of our neglect of His ways.

Activity

What can we do to keep God first in our lives? See if you can name 7 things, each beginning with one of the letters that spell JEALOUS. (Scripture locations are given as a hint for each one.)

- J** _____ (John 7:24)
E _____ (Psalm 100:4)
A _____ (John 15:4)
L _____ (Matthew 22:37)
O _____ (Acts 5:29)
U _____ (Ephesians 5:17)
S _____ (Psalm 105:4)

Answer to Last Month's Activity

The root of the word "instruction" is STRUCT, which means "build." The word "instruction" means to "build knowledge" in someone by teaching them. †



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

QUESTION: Some people serve the devil all their lives until their last hours and then repent, with dying testimonies and prayer. I think that is a cowardly act. Can they be saved?

ANSWER: Very, very few people get saved under the conditions you describe. I do not think a person could have such in his mind—I'm going to wait until right before I die, and then repent—and get saved. But I would not say no one could be saved right at the last. I think it would depend somewhat on how much truth the person knew, how the Spirit had dealt with his heart in the past, etc. Jesus saved the thief on the cross, at the "last moment."

Although we might say it is a cowardly way for a person to do, yet the Christian would rejoice at the knowledge of anyone's salvation, regardless of how that person may have lived. None of us "deserve" God's love! Salvation is a gift to an unworthy soul.

QUESTION: Was Cornelius a saved man before Peter visited him?

ANSWER: This is what the Word says about Cornelius. He was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." Not only did he pray but God answered his prayers. He was so close to God that

he was given a vision, an angel came to him and this is what the angel said: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." Further, the men who went to Joppa for Peter said of Cornelius that he was a "just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nations of the Jews."

Now if you are going to say this just, devout man was a sinner, what are you going to say about millions of professed Christians today?

After Peter arrived and began to speak to those gathered in the house, we do not read of Cornelius repenting of sins, or asking God for forgiveness. Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). We do read that he received the Spirit of God.

Surely he was saved! What happened to Cornelius was that he got sanctified during Peter's visit and then was baptized. This doesn't fit into the teachings of some sects, therefore they must say he got saved. Why cannot people accept the Word? Peter said Cornelius knew about Christ, His works and teachings—see Acts 10:37, 38.

Peter later explained to the Jews at Jerusalem what had happened, and he pointed out that he had been shown at Joppa he should NOT call that which God HAD cleansed (not going to, but HAD!) common or unclean. Then he explained that Cornelius and others had received the Spirit, even as they (the Jews) had on the day of Pentecost.

The Spirit is for the justified, not for the sinner, for Jesus said the world (sinner) could not receive the Spirit. Paul asked, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost SINCE ye believed?" (Acts 19:2). Sanctification is for the church (Ephesians 5:25-27).

QUESTION: Some say that the kingdom of God is different from the kingdom of heaven. They say that the kingdom of heaven has already started and that the kingdom of God is yet to come. Is it true?

ANSWER: No, it is not true. This is just another effort to twist the Word of God to make room for a literal kingdom of a thousand years' duration, which the Word of God does not teach.

In the four gospels, you will find one writer quoting the Master using "kingdom of heaven," while another will quote the same statement and use "kingdom of God," which proves they are used interchangeably.

QUESTION: Can you please explain Matthew 7:1?

ANSWER: In this verse, Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." We know that He meant what He said, but what He said in this verse must be understood in the light of other passages of Scripture dealing with the same subject. For instance, in John 7:24 we are told to "judge righteous judgment." And this instruction was given by Jesus.

Let us notice the first part of this verse from John 7:24, "Judge not according to the appearance." This kind of judgment is forbidden. In John 8:15, Jesus said, "Ye judge after the flesh." This, too, is forbidden.

What it really comes down to is, do not judge according to appearance; KNOW what the facts are. Do not

judge according to the flesh, or human reasoning, but judge righteous judgment.

Now if it is something that is not our business, then let us not judge. Let us keep out of it! Do not be a busy-body in other men's matters.

Another point we need to understand—stating a fact is not judging. If a man is a sinner, he is a sinner, and I am not judging to say so. A tree that bears apples is an apple tree. That is a fact. I am not judging when I say that is an apple tree.

Further, in your letter you ask about judges in our courts. This is necessary in our world today. A man in such a position must carefully, honestly weigh all the evidence and then pass judgment according to the facts presented. As long as he does his very best and always acts honestly, I feel he will be clear before God, even though, being human, he may make mistakes from time to time.

God had judges in Old Testament times, including the time Moses and the children of Israel were in the wilderness. We understand Israel was ruled by judges for around four hundred years before they demanded a king to rule over them. So all judgment is not forbidden; the wrong kind is what is forbidden.

QUESTION: Would you please explain this scripture found in II Peter 2:13? "And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you."

ANSWER: If you will read a few verses before verse 13, you will see that Peter was speaking of a class of sinners who walked after the flesh, despised government, were presumptuous and self-willed and were not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Peter said these people would be rewarded according to their own unrighteousness. The last part of the verse seems to imply that they had a form of godliness and went along with others in their religious feasts. But verse 15 declares they had forsaken the right way and were gone astray. They were following the way of Balaam which was the way of feasting, adultery, covetous practices, etc.

QUESTION: Revelation 20:4 speaks of "souls of them that were beheaded." Can you give me some light on this?

ANSWER: This verse speaks of "souls," not literal human beings, reigning with Christ. It says nothing about the reign taking place on this earth. In fact, when you turn to Revelation 6:9, you see the souls "under the altar," an expression which shows they had already finished their lives here on Earth and had gone to be at rest with the Lord. †

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PLEASE PRAY FOR THIS PRINTING WORK!

YOUR SUPPORT IS APPRECIATED



Dear Young People,
This month's article is taken from a Sunday morning Young People's Service. The thoughts are given to us by my thirteen-year-old son, Nathaniel Shenberger. He is sharing thoughts on "Self-Will vs. Obedience."

In the world we live in, obedience is lacking. Most are living a life of self-indulgence, where their will is the driving force. Many haven't learned the blessing of submitting themselves to God and obeying Him out of a heart of love. Obedience is beautiful. May we all be challenged to learn better how to love and obey Him more!

Blessings!
Bro. Doug

SELF-WILL VS. OBEDIENCE

By Bro. Nathaniel Shenberger

An area that I would like to grow in is to learn better how to overcome self-will and be more obedient.

As a young child, my parents worked really hard and consistently to teach me to obey. I wanted to be a good boy and do what was right, but sometimes I gave into my own will.

In order to be a Christian, we need to be willing to give up our self-will and be obedient to God. This isn't always easy because we are still human and have desires. In Luke 22:42, Jesus had a desire for the cup to be removed from Him, but He said, "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." Although the carnal nature is cleansed through sanctification, we need to surrender to Him daily.



In I Corinthians 15:31, we read, "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily."

I can see areas in my life where it has been hard to give up my will. It may have been in something small, such as wanting some candy or a toy, but I can see now, that I am older, that I am thankful for not always getting what I thought I wanted.

I hope that when things come my way, I'll have the determination to obey. As I continue to grow, my desire is to learn better how to have an obedient heart.

In conclusion, we can read in the Bible of those who had consequences of either having an obedient heart or having self-will rule their lives. King Saul lost much because of his self-will. He thought he knew what was best in his own eyes, but Samuel said in I Samuel 15:22, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams?" And then we read about the disciples who were willing to give up all to follow the Lord.

May we all have hearts that want to please Him more than anything else in this world. †

THE TRUE SHEPHERD

Radio Message by Bro. David Shaw

I WOULD LIKE to bring thoughts on Psalm 23: “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” I’d like to entitle my message, “The True Shepherd.” I said *true shepherd* because there are many shepherds. There are also false shepherds. God cares so much for His people that He desires to lead them in the right direction.



A *shepherd* is “one who guides, protects, and cares for the sheep.” God used this example to tell us as a people that whenever we’re given the right to proclaim His Word, we must care for His people, and to put our best foot forward in assisting them to know “thus saith the Lord.” I hope and pray that you are a sheep in the Shepherd’s fold, and that under the influence and direction of the Holy Spirit, you are traveling in the right direction.

David penned in this Psalm some very important thoughts. He made a claim as he wrote, “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: ... He restoreth my soul.” I want you to understand that this passage isn’t only speaking of a literal sheepfold, but it is also speaking of a spiritual sheepfold.

Christ has called man, saying, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” When Christ called man, He called man to follow Him. Wherever He leads, it is our duty to follow without question, because although with man, in many instances, the way seems impossible, with God all things are possible.

When Jesus calls a man, He calls him to a better way. He calls him to a place where life can be more enjoyable and where things can be more pleasant. It is not to say that there won’t be any interruptions, but among the interruptions you may encounter, God gives the power and the ability to override every obstacle. I want us to understand that God loves man with a pas-

sion. Jesus is the true Shepherd, the Shepherd of our souls, the One who gave His life’s blood upon the cross of Calvary that man would be redeemed from the bondage of sin and death, and put into a place where his soul can be fed and enjoy life.

Here we see in the Word of God the Psalmist saying, “He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” We are called by Christ to worship and adore Him as we live on. We need not fear what man might do. We need not fear the storms surrounding us. He leads us in the path where we can be happy and be sustained regardless of the obstacles we encounter. “He leadeth me beside the still waters.” He puts us in green pastures, and we can be fed and lie down in comfort. This is a blessing indeed to know. We can find a relaxing place in the Lord regardless of the misery and torment that life would bring. There is a place in Him that cannot be interrupted. Praise God for that blessing! He is willing to give man something beyond that of man’s imagination, and something he is not worthy of. We have not done anything worthy of obtaining such a shepherd’s care. We have not done anything worthy that a Savior should have died in our stead, but praise God for the love He had for mankind in leading him back to the fold when he strayed away from Him. Certainly, the world is going astray. The true Shepherd is beckoning to man, “Come unto me. You are going in the wrong direction. Turn around. Listen as I speak and attend to the voice of my words.”

In the book of Philippians, chapter 4, verse 19, the writer declares, “My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” We have no need to be suffering in any way because God has made a vast supply for every man. Paul was supplied in the need he had by the brethren there in Philippi, so he was encouraged at that time to make known to us, as God’s children, that God has a supply for whatever is needed. If we will only look to Him by faith, He’ll supply all our needs according to His riches in glory. That is done by the true Shepherd, Christ Jesus. Jesus came and said, “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” Certainly, He intends for man to find a place of comfort and perfect contentment in Him. God uses His Word in various areas to demonstrate to man His love towards him.

In Ezekiel 34, verse 1, it says: “And the word of the Lord came unto me [Ezekiel], saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?” This is happening in our land today. There are many preachers as shepherds, but their intent is only to feed themselves. “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good” (Proverbs 15:3). He watches what we do, and if He is not pleased, be certain things will not work out as you think they should. God said that because the shepherds refuse to feed His sheep, He’s taking note, and they will be giving account to Him for what they do. They will be giving an account to God, and He will reward them according to the deeds that they have done.

God said in Ezekiel 34:14, "I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel." Certainly, God made provision for His people so that the truth of His Word can be heralded, and they can be fed upon His Word. It will keep them satisfied, even in the time of famine and drought. Although the world is evil, the gospel message is still going across our land. Those who desire to feed their souls upon the Word of God can be fat and flourishing and be content as they lie down in God's green pastures. Yes, the Psalmist has said, "The Lord is my shepherd."

I trust as I speak that someone will come to know the Lord. I trust that they will make Him their true Shepherd and obey His every word. Even if they don't understand every word, they will still obey. God leads to victory. God said in verse 16 of Ezekiel 34, "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment." Those who feed upon God's people, He said He will take revenge, so we need **to** feed them and not feed *on* them. God said that there are those who feed *on* them. This is happening today in our land. People are feeding on the children of God. They're not feeding their souls, but feeding on their wealth and their entire possessions. We need to have a heart like God.

God said, "I will give you shepherds of mine own heart who will feed you and give you meat in due season." The time is now. The time is fulfilled. It is now the season when people need to hear the Word of God clearly. It should be given just as God declared it because it cannot be effective unless it is eaten as God intended. Ezekiel 34:17-19: "And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats. Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet [We cannot dilute the Word of God and give it to individuals to eat.]; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet." This might sound a bit hard, but God wants us to obey His every word. God desires for us to be good sheep in the Shepherd's fold. He does not want us to go astray. As I mentioned earlier, Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." God has said He will gather back those sheep that are lost and straying on the mountain. He's going to bring them back to the fold because He has one fold and one Shepherd.

Ezekiel 34:21-23: "Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd." God desired that He would

have a good Shepherd. Praise God, that Shepherd is none other than Jesus Christ who came and gave His life's blood on the cross of Calvary that the world through Him might be saved. I am happy that He came. He came not to condemn the world.

Beloved Ones, do not feel condemned. Do not feel as though you have no part in God's kingdom. He provided a path for you if you are ready to accept it. Yes, God loves the entire world, and He gave His Son to save it. What a privilege it is to have Christ as our Savior, Lord, and Master!

Ezekiel 34:24, 25: "I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods." That's why David said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff [the Word of God] they comfort me." The Word of God is our comfort, our protector, and our food. When you feed on God's Word, you are strong, you are healthy, and you are able to overcome every dark area in life. Trust in the living God when you cannot see. David said he would not fear evil as he walked through the valley of death. Who else could do that for him?

God walks with us by night and by day. Wherever we go, He's there with us. He said, "I will be with you in your going out and in your coming in." The Lord blesses you when you obey His Word. When life seems to you as nothing, don't worry, for God has a plan for your life. When He plans your life, it is well planned.

David said, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." He had an assurance in his heart that nothing would be interrupted by any other thought or condition. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." When you are committed to God, He will keep you, He will guide and sustain you.

Ezekiel 34:26, "I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing." To live for the Lord is beyond human understanding. There is peace, joy, and complete happiness. It leaves you contented because the Lord showers you with His blessings. Verse 27: "And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them." God wants us to be delivered out of bondage. He is to be served in holiness and in righteousness. We cannot allow ourselves to be robbed of God's blessings. There is a lot in God to be found. We need to know where we're going. Someone has said, "I know where I am going." That should be important to every heart. We should know whom we serve, know why we serve, and know who is our shepherd.

Ezekiel 34:28, "They shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour

SOUL AND SPIRIT

By the late H. M. Riggle

(From the book *Beyond the Tomb*)

them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid." When Jesus Christ came, He came to deliver us from the hand of our enemies. Although sometimes we're not looked upon as God's people, we should know in our hearts that we are serving the true Shepherd. Beloved, when we lie down in green pastures, there is comfort. We should not be going hungry. The Word of God is sufficient. It sustains and maintains. Every heart can be filled with the grace of God if we're willing to obey His every word. Verses 29 and 30: "And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God." God made a promise and His promise is true. His promises will not falter. They will be fulfilled.

John said in the book of Revelation, chapter 7, verses 13 and 14: "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." That's what God wants of us. We shall be rewarded for the trials and tests we may go through. Verses 15-17: "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." It is very essential to know that God cares, even beyond our imagination.

As we look to the Lord, ask Him to help us to understand His will for our lives that we may be filled with grace and glory as we continue to live in this unfriendly world. We must be willing to say as David, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Is Jesus your shepherd today? If He's not, My Friend, seek Him as your shepherd because He's the only way to peace, happiness, and joy. †

THE TERM soul is from the Hebrew *nephesh* and from the Greek *psuche*. The word *nephesh* occurs 745 times in the Old Testament. It is translated "soul" 473 times, "life" and "lives" 118 times, "person" 29 times, "mind" 15 times, "heart" 15 times, "body" 11 times, "will" 4 times, "appetite" twice, "lust" twice, and "thing" twice. *Psuche* appears in the New Testament 105 times. It is translated "soul" 58 times, "life" 40 times, "mind" 3 times, "heart" twice, "us" once, and "you" once. From this it will be seen that *soul* in both the Old and New Testament is a generic term. It has a variety of meanings. Then it follows that the signification of the word in any portion of the Scriptures must be determined by the sense in which it is used in the sacred record, and in the light of its context. To do otherwise is to do violence to the Scriptures. Materialists violate this principle by applying "animal life" and "breath of life" to the soul wherever it suits their theory. There are a host of texts, as this book will show, where these terms will not apply at all, but where soul means the real inner man, the moral and spiritual part of our being, the part that survives the death of the fleshly body.

The term spirit is from the Hebrew *ruach* and from the Greek *pneuma*. The word *ruach* occurs in the Old Testament 442 times. It is translated "spirit" 232 times, "wind" 97 times, "breath" 28 times, "smell" 8 times, "mind" 6 times, and "blast" 4 times. *Pneuma* occurs in the New Testament 385 times. It is rendered "spirit" 288 times, "ghost" 92 times, "wind" once, and "life" once. Spirit also, as well as soul, is a generic term, with more than one meaning. Its signification must also be determined by the sense in which it is used, and by the context. Materialists have three favorite terms they use for spirit and apply them in a way that makes many texts bend to their peculiar doctrine, namely, "wind," "breath," and "life." "God is a spirit" (John 4:24). It can hardly be said with consistency that the Almighty is a mere puff of wind, a breath, or a life. Angels are "spirits" (Hebrews 1:7, 14). Are they not more than a breath, a wind, a life? I think so. And "there is A SPIRIT IN MAN" (Job 32:8). It is an intelligent entity that can be saved through Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 5:5) and survives the death of the body (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Surely this is not our breath, or even the animal life we possess.

I shall now present a number of texts where the term soul does not mean animal life, breath of life, or the mere physical person. Isaac desired Esau to come before him "that my soul may bless thee before I die" (Genesis 27:4). "To make an atonement for your souls" (Exodus 30:15). "But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 4:29). "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 6:5). "But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within

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him shall mourn” (Job 14:22). Here is a clear distinction between our flesh and the soul. Note the language, “His soul WITHIN HIM.” This soul is capable of bestowing blessing, of seeking and finding God, and of loving Him supremely.

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (Psalm 19:7). “He restoreth my soul” (Psalm 23:3). “Our soul waiteth for the Lord” (Psalm 33:20). “My soul shall make her boast in the Lord” (Psalm 34:2). “My soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation” (Psalm 35:9). “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God” (Psalm 42:1, 2). “Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation” (Psalm 62:1). “He preserveth the souls of his saints” (Psalm 97:10). “Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name” (Psalm 103:1). “For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness” (Psalm 107:9). How dark and meaningless are all these scriptures from the materialist’s standpoint! But what a wreath of heavenly truth to those enlightened to know that we have a soul, a conscious entity within that stands associated with God and things eternal. Will such texts apply to the ox, donkey, or orangutan? Why not, if man has not a soul different from the brute’s?

Man is “both soul and body” (Isaiah 10:18). “Hear, and your soul shall live” (Isaiah 55:3). “Ye shall find rest for your souls” (Jeremiah 6:16). “The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul” (Micah 6:7). “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28). “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26). “But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee” (Luke 12:20). “His soul was not left in hell [hades], neither his flesh did see corruption” (Acts 2:31). “Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil” (Romans 2:9). “We have as an anchor of the soul” (Hebrews 6:19). “Believe to the saving of the soul” (Hebrews 10:39). “The salvation of your souls” (I Peter 1:9). “Ye have purified your souls” (I Peter 1:22). Some of these texts will be examined critically in other parts of this work, but I have here brought together these many references to show that man possesses more than animal life, breath, and his outer physical being. To apply these scriptures to the brutes would be ridiculous in the extreme. But why, we ask? Because man stands upon a higher and a spiritual plane. Materialism cannot be harmonized with these scriptures.

I shall now present a number of texts in which the term “spirit” does not mean animal life, breath, or wind. “My Spirit shall not always strive with man” (Genesis 6:3). “I have filled him with the spirit of God” (Exodus 31:3). “And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him” (Judges 14:6). “But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul” (I Samuel 16:14). “I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord” (Micah 3:8). “Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness” (Matthew 4:1). “The Spirit like a dove descending upon him” (Mark 1:10). “And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit

gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4). “How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?” (Acts 5:9). “Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot” (Acts 8:29). “The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip” (verse 39).

These are but a few of a multitude of texts that could be given to show that a spirit is an intelligent person. In every reference from the Old Testament the Hebrew word is *ruach*, and from the New Testament the Greek word is *pneuma*. All these texts refer to the Holy Spirit. He is a person. Personal actions are ascribed to Him (see John 16:7, 8, 13-15; 14:16, 17). He searches, speaks, makes intercession, distributes gifts, appoints overseers in the church, leads, guides, comforts, reproves, convicts, regenerates, sanctifies, and preserves. He may be resisted, grieved, insulted, lied to, quenched, and blasphemed. Here then is a spirit—*ruach—pneuma*—that means more than wind, breath, or animal life.

If spirit means no more than wind or breath, then to substitute these terms for “spirit” ought to make good, sensible reading. Let us try this rule: “It seemed good to the wind and to us” (Acts 15:28). “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the *wind* and with power” (Acts 10:38). “Be zealous of *windy* gifts.” “The *breath* itself beareth witness with our *breath*, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16). Anyone can see that this would be ridiculous, and yet the materialistic argument presents such inconsistencies.

Again—“And there came forth a spirit [*ruach*], and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him” (I Kings 22:21). “Then a spirit [*ruach*] passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up: It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God?” (Job 4:15-17). Who ever heard materialists talk like this? Who ever read such language in their literature? Their teachings do not fit these scriptures at all. Surely it was more than a breath, a puff of wind, or an animal life, that appeared before the Lord, stood there, and spoke. Did Eliphaz suppose he had seen a breath, and this breath actually spoke to him? Incredible, preposterous. The inspired writer of the Book of Kings and Chronicles believed in actual spirits that could speak. Eliphaz believed the same thing.

“When the unclean spirit [*pneuma*] is gone out of a man, he *walketh* through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none. Then *he saith*, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first” (Matthew 12:43-45). Is this merely wind and breath that Jesus is talking about? Or is it a life? If a life, then Mary Magdalene was delivered from seven lives. There is no way under heaven to harmonize these scriptures with the doctrine of materialism. There are personal, intelligent spirits both good and bad. During the ministry of Christ and the apostles we read of unclean, deaf-and-dumb spirits being cast out of people. Sometimes these spirits cried out and spoke to Jesus. The

inspired writers have told us so. They believed in spirits. When Jesus suddenly appeared in the midst of His disciples after His resurrection “they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit [*pneuma*].” But Jesus said to them, “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Luke 24:37, 39). If the disciples did not believe in spirits, strange it is that they all thought one appeared visibly in their midst. The very fact that they thought they actually saw a spirit proves that they believed in them. And Jesus confirmed their belief in spirits by saying, “A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” Was Jesus here talking about the wind, or a breath?

God Himself, as we have seen, is a spirit (*pneuma*)—not a fleshly person with corporeal frame, but a being wholly spirit. And this eternal God, our Creator “formeth the spirit [*ruach*] of man within him” (Zechariah 12:1). “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit [*pneuma*] of man which is in him?” (I Corinthians 2:11). Paul is not here talking about wind, breath, or animal life, but the real, intelligent inner man, the soul, or spirit. “That the spirit [*pneuma*] may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” (I Corinthians 5:5). “For I delight in the law of God after the *inward man*; But I see another law in my members” (Romans 7:22, 23). Here the “inward man” is clearly contrasted and distinguished from the physical “members,” or body. The redeemed inward man delights in God’s law, because it is spiritual—saved.

Now this inner or hidden man of the heart is termed the soul, or spirit. It may be asked, “Why the two terms to express the same thing?” I answer, for the same reason that the outward man, the physical part of our being, is expressed by “flesh” and “body,” two words as different as “spirit” and “soul.” “Flesh” denotes that the outer man, the “earthly house” and “tabernacle” in which we dwell, is of material substance, mortal and subject to death. “Body” denotes this fleshly substance in its organized form, the physical outward man. “Spirit” denotes that the inward man is not a material, fleshly being, but wholly of spirit substance like God and the angels in heaven. “Soul” denotes this spiritual substance in its organized form, a real inner man, separate and distinct in substance from the body, and yet in our present state living in union with it. While there is a distinction made in I Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:12 between the soul and spirit, which is accounted for in that both these terms have a variety of meanings, yet when referring to the inner, spiritual part of our being, the real inward man, the terms soul and spirit are used interchangeably and mean the same thing. In this book I shall thus refer to them when treating on the immortal, spiritual nature of our being. †

—Reprinted from our June 2002 issue

POSTAGE RATES INCREASED ... AGAIN

We have a vision to increase our readership, not cut back. But expenses continue to rise. It is important to hear from international readers once each year to remain on our mailing list.

TEMPTED OR TESTED?

(THOUGHTS FROM THE BIBLE ILLUSTRATOR)

ALEXANDER MACLAREN DISTINGUISHED BETWEEN BEING TEMPTED AND BEING TESTED OR TRIED. HE SAID THAT “THE FORMER WORD CONVEYS THE IDEA OF APPEALING TO THE WORST PART OF MAN, WITH THE WISH THAT HE MAY YIELD AND DO THE WRONG. THE LATTER MEANS AN APPEAL TO THE BETTER PART OF MAN, WITH THE DESIRE THAT HE SHOULD STAND. TEMPTATION SAYS, ‘DO THIS PLEASANT THING; DO NOT BE HINDERED BY THE FACT THAT IT IS WRONG.’ TRIAL OR PROVING SAYS, ‘DO THIS RIGHT AND NOBLE THING; DO NOT BE HINDERED BY THE FACT THAT IT IS PAINFUL.’ THE ONE IS A SWEET, BEGUILING MELODY, BREATHING SOFT INDULGENCE AND RELAXATION OVER THE SOUL; THE OTHER IS A PEELING TRUMPET-CALL TO HIGH ACHIEVEMENTS.”

RESTING MY WHOLE WEIGHT

WHEN JOHN PATON WAS TRANSLATING THE BIBLE FOR A SOUTH SEAS ISLAND TRIBE, HE DISCOVERED THAT THEY HAD NO WORD FOR TRUST OR FAITH. ONE DAY A NATIVE WHO HAD BEEN RUNNING HARD CAME INTO THE MISSIONARY’S HOUSE, FLOPPED HIMSELF IN A LARGE CHAIR AND SAID, “IT’S GOOD TO REST MY WHOLE WEIGHT ON THIS CHAIR.”

“THAT’S IT,” SAID PATON, “I’LL TRANSLATE FAITH AS ‘RESTING ONE’S WHOLE WEIGHT ON GOD.’ ”

“GO AS FAR AS YOU CAN SEE, AND WHEN YOU GET THERE YOU WILL ALWAYS BE ABLE TO SEE FARTHER.”

JESUS CHRIST IS UNIQUE, AND ONE CANNOT BE IN HIS PRESENCE AND NOT REVEAL THE MAN HE REALLY IS. JESUS PULLS EACH PERSON FROM BEHIND HIS MASK. IN THE EXPOSURE OF THAT BLEEDING LOVE ON THE CROSS, MEN BECOME WHAT THEY REALLY ARE. YOU MAY THINK YOU ARE WONDERFUL UNTIL YOU STAND IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ONE WHO IS PURITY ITSELF. IT IS THE PURE LIGHT OF GOD THAT PIERCES A MAN. IMMEDIATELY THERE IS NOWHERE TO HIDE, ALL MASKS ARE TORN AWAY, ALL HOLLOW SMILES FADE. REVIVAL MEANS TO BE EXPOSED FOR WHAT WE ARE. †

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COMING MEETINGS

2025 JAMAICA CONVENTION

Cornwall Mountain, Westmoreland

March 4-9, 2025, Lord willing

Bro. Peter Ramsay, Host Pastor



2025 INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF GOD CONVENTION

12819 Point Salem Rd.

Hagerstown, Maryland U.S.A.

July 1-6, 2025, Lord willing

Bro. Gregory E. Tyler, Host Pastor



HAGERSTOWN SPRING REVIVAL

Hagerstown, MD

March 27-30, 2025, Lord willing

Bro. David Goble, Evangelist

Bro. Gregory Tyler, Pastor



ESSEX, MD SPRING REVIVAL

April 4-6 2025, Lord willing

Bro. Duane Jeffries, Evangelist

Bro. Doug Koerner, Pastor

THE CHURCH OF GOD STANDS FOR

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

YOU SHOULD KNOW MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH OF GOD

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