

The Way of Truth

Vol. 84

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

No. 9

October 2025

WHY CAN'T PEOPLE GET ALONG?

See, “Our Relationships”

Full-length message begins on page 3

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS CANNOT FAIL

"Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."

—Psalm 89:33.

IN TIMES LIKE these we are tempted to question the faithfulness of God. With wars plundering innocent people, with corruption infiltrating political platforms, with the decay of religion displaying hypocrisy to the masses, it is very common for questions to haunt even those who have faith in God. We can question the faithfulness of the government and the motives of people, but God, never! It is impossible for God's faithfulness to fail. No matter how things seem and appear to be, we can count on God to be faithful!

Hebrews 6:18 declares, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." The promise and oath of God prove to be an anchor to the soul. The promise that pledged His faithfulness and justice stands true! His oath and all the infinite perfections of His Godhead, He swore by Himself and cannot fail.

God's faithfulness reaches to the clouds! Psalm 36:5, "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." God's mercy is a constant in our lives!

Psalm 121, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."

God's faithfulness is manifested especially to His children. Psalm 89:5, "And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints." But is not limited to the redeemed. His faithfulness is to all generations. Psalm 119:90, "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth."

This is revealed in a prayer of Moses the man of God. It is revealed in Psalm 90:1, 2, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

The prophet Jeremiah emphasized in Lamentations 3:22, 23, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."

The Lord is faithful to forgive if we meet the conditions. I John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Jesus confirms this in St. John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

His faithfulness includes having fellowship with His children. Think of that! It is possible to have fellowship with our Creator!

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (I Corinthians 1:9).

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3).

In Hebrews 13:5 we read that God is so faithful that He will never forsake us: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

He is faithful to keep us from being tempted in a way that it would be too great for us to bear it. I Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

According to I Thessalonians 3:3, He promised us all to establish us in the faith. "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil." I John 5:18, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."

God will do what He said He would do! I Thessalonians 5:24, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." I Thessalonians 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

He has promised to give us rest. Matthew 11:28-30, "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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

He is faithful in spite of our unbelief! The apostle pointed that out in II Timothy 2:13, "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."

God is faithful to all His promises. Hebrews 10:23, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised." Over 5,000 promises and every one of them are true! Every prophecy was fulfilled!

God is faithful to answer prayer. Psalm 143:1, "Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness." Psalm 91:15, "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him."

Even when we are suffering, the Lord proves Himself faithful! I Peter

ABOUT THE COVER

On our front is a picture of an alley covered by foliage in Vienna, Austria. It is a beautiful scene of peace. Unfortunately, the world is full of strife and we are made to wonder why people can't get along. Christ came in part to improve humanity's relationship with God and with each other. We invite you to read the message beginning on page 3.

THE WAY OF TRUTH

(Registered Trademark)

Vol. 83

October 2025

No. 9

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.

Published by the Church of God which assembles at 12819 Point Salem Road in Hagerstown, Maryland. Publishing office: 12811 Point Salem Road, Hagerstown, Maryland, U.S.A.

The Way of Truth is published without any given subscription price, and is supported by freewill offerings from our readers and funds supplied by the local congregation. It is sent out free to anyone who is interested enough to ask for it. We shall continue this policy as long as God sees fit to make it possible. FOREIGN READERS are requested to write us at least once a year if they wish to continue receiving the paper the following year. Address all correspondence to: The Way of Truth, P. O. Box 88, Hagerstown, Maryland 21741, U.S.A. Always when writing, give your name and address clearly, please.

—Gregory E. Tyler, Editor

Our telephone number is 301-739-2980

Our e-mail address is truth@fred.net

Visit our website at www.wayoftruth.org

4:19, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." The apostle Paul emphasized this truth through his admonishment in II Timothy 1:12, "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

As we count God faithful, so we have confidence that His Word is faithful. Every word of God can be counted on! As Revelation 22:6 declares, "And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done."

In this day and age when everything seems to be crumbling around us, our God's faithfulness is sure, steadfast and unchangeable. It can never fail, come what may! Psalm 89:33, "Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." †

STREAMING CHRISTIAN MUSIC ONLINE

We now have a site streaming Church of God music and messages 24/7 recorded during our services. It can be found by going to:

www.wayoftruth.org and clicking on:

Way of Truth Internet Radio

FROM THE BIBLE ILLUSTRATOR

The Miracle of the Monarch Butterfly

It is not uncommon to witness in late summer the migration of the monarch butterfly. The careful observer may see hundreds of them clinging to tree limbs and other shrubbery as the flock rests up on their journey to a remote mountain site in central Mexico. Scientists have recently found 16 of these sites, ranging from 1 to 10 acres each, within a 100-mile radius where millions of butterflies from North America spend the winter. No one knows how butterflies find their way to these tiny plots of land. Each new generation that migrates has never been there before. Something programmed into their tiny bodies directs them to a place they have never seen, but which they somehow know they must find.

These butterflies are one more example of God's creatures being drawn along by the mind of their Creator. They are also illustrative of the children of God referred to in Hebrews 11. These heroes of faith walked roads they had not consciously mapped out, following an inner leading to a land they'd never seen—a land prepared for them by God. †

IN THIS ISSUE:

The Poetry Page	Page 2
<i>Truth in rhythmic form</i>	
Our Relationships	Page 3
<i>Full-length sermon by Doug Shenberger</i>	
Bible Lesson of the Month	Page 6
<i>"Sons of God Have a New Heart"</i>	
Young People's Page	Page 9
<i>"I Am the Good Shepherd," by Valerie Richards</i>	
The Children's Corner	Page 10
<i>"An Understanding Heart," by Rebecca Bland</i>	
Winning a Crown	Page 11
<i>Part VIII of the book by the late C. W. Naylor</i>	
The Question Box	Page 13
<i>Our monthly feature</i>	
Shine as Lights in the World	Page 14
<i>Article by the late Charles Spurgeon</i>	
It Is of the Lord's Mercy	Page 15
<i>Full-length sermon by Matt Deville</i>	
Buy the Truth, and Sell It Not	Page 18
<i>Radio message by Brian Richards</i>	
Judging Righteously	Page 20
<i>Article by the late C. W. Naylor</i>	
Facing the Appointment	Page 21
<i>Article by the late Garry Jeffries</i>	

THE POETRY PAGE



MY BIBLE Keith Brooks

My Bible is not true in spots,
But true in every sense;
True in its tittles and its jots,
True in each verb and tense;
True when it speaks of heaven's joy
True when it warns of hell;
Its truth is gold without alloy—
Its source a Springing Well.

THOSE WHO TALK WITH GOD Author Unknown

How lovely are the faces
Of those who talk with God,
Lit with an inner sureness
Of the path their feet have trod.

Keen are the hands and feet—oh, yes!—
Of those who wait His will;
And clear as crystal mirrors
Are the hearts His love can fill.

SAY SO Geraldine Searfoss

Does a neighbor help a little,
As along the way you go—
Help to make your burden lighter?
Then why not tell him so!

Does a handclasp seem to lift you
From the depth of grief and woe,
When an old friend shares your sorrow?
Then why not tell him so!

Does your heavenly Father give you
Many blessings here below?
Then on bended knee before Him
Frankly, gladly, tell Him so!

THINK TWICE Author Unknown

Should you feel inclined to censure
Faults you may in others view,
Ask your own heart, ere you venture,
If that has not failings, too.

Let not friendly vows be broken;
Rather strive a friend to gain;
Many a word in anger spoken
Finds its passage home again.

Do not, then, in idle pleasure,
Trifle with a brother's fame,
Guard it as a valued treasure,
Sacred as your own good name.

Do not form opinions blindly,
Hastiness to trouble tends;
Those of whom we thought unkindly
Oft become our warmest friends.

THIS I KNOW Eliza M. Hickok

I know not by what methods rare,
But this I know, God answers prayer.
I know that He has given His Word,
Which tells me prayer is always heard,
And will be answered soon or late.
And so I pray and calmly wait.

I know not if the blessing sought
Will come in just the way I thought;
But leave my prayers with Him alone,
Whose will is wiser than my own,
Assured that He will grant my quest,
Or send some answer far more blest.

ASSURANCE Roxie Lusk Smith

In bitter anguish and despair
I sought the Lord,
And He was there—
I sought Him through
The day along;
He moved to make
My spirit strong.
In sorrow, joy, whatever be
He lifts to bless
The whole of me. †

BLESSED ASSURANCE, JESUS IS MINE!

OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Message by Bro. Doug Shenberger



TO BEGIN this message, I'd like to draw your attention to John, chapter 13, verse 34. This is Jesus speaking: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

The last time I spoke here, I endeavored to speak about the relationship between Christ and His church. That's a beautiful example of a relationship. It deals with the overall context of what a relationship should look like and can be.

I'd like to follow up that thought with some thoughts about our relationships, our relationships with our fellowman. We will consider in an overall sense what that should look like or what that involves to some extent. As I said a few weeks ago, this could be somewhat of a series of thoughts. There is a lot to think about and to consider in thinking about relationships. I will try to expand on that a little bit this morning in thinking about our relationships.

THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

We have the example of Christ and His church in what the Bible has to tell us and what we can learn from that relationship. I also mentioned previously that good relationships tend to spread or propagate and produce more good relationships. Relationships that are problems tend to impact people in negative ways, and they can also spread and weaken and damage.

God has clearly called His people and directed us to have good relationships. Hopefully, everyone agrees that God wants us to have good relationships. I don't think that should be a very controversial statement, something that you would say, "Well, I'm not sure whether God wants me to have a good relationship." But I believe we should have a vision, an expectation, a realization that God is leading us that way and directing us to have good relationships with people. You might say, "Well, I have a good relationship with God. It's the people who are the problem." The Bible says something about someone saying that he loves God but hates his fellowman. That's not possible. We can't do that.

The verse that we started with this morning, says, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." So we're talking about Christ and His love for the church—"As I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Now, it's interesting that Jesus said here, "A new commandment." He was making a statement that this was something different than, maybe, what they were used to, or their expectations were, but He made a very plain statement there when He said, "A new commandment." Jesus didn't say *I have a new guideline, a new suggestion, or a new idea.*

What does a commandment from God mean to you? We hear the word *commandment* sometimes. We've heard about the Ten Commandments. When we think about a commandment from God, we think, *if we could*

just hear the voice of God thunder. A commandment is something that is to be obeyed. It's not something you can look at and say, "Well, that's generally true, but there are exceptions."

I think we should look at a commandment as God speaking. When Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another," He meant what He said. We need to be careful that we don't lose the vision or sight of it and take it down to a lower level than what God intended it to be. So, Jesus said, "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

Think about how God loved us. He sent His son, Christ, who gave Himself for the ungodly, for the unworthy, for the undeserving, for the unrepentant, and for those who weren't asking for forgiveness. That's how Christ loves His creation. That's how God loves people.

When you think about the Son of God speaking to a group of people, and saying, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you," that is a high calling. We could spend a lot of time just thinking on what all that means, but He's calling us to love one another the way He loved us. He's commanded us to follow His example. When we think of our relationships with one another and with the people we come in contact with, that is an instruction that should underpin our relationships. We are called to love one another without exception. It's a commandment. If we start there, I believe that we have a good foundation to build on.

ABOVE ALL THESE THINGS

Turn to Colossians, chapter 3, verses 12-14: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." So I'm trying to help us to think about this thought of our relationships with others and the interactions that we have. The interactions that we have and the way that they go and the experiences we have, they form the relationships that we have. Relationships aren't abstract. They don't just exist in the sense of an ideal. They exist in reality in our interactions that we constantly put into those relationships.

As we think about our interactions with people, or those around us, it behooves us to consider some of these thoughts that we are looking at here in this passage of scripture. In verse 12 of Colossians 3, it says: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, ..." I'd like to stop there for a moment and look at the terminology there that's expressed. *The elect of God, holy and beloved*, are the people of God, the ones that

God loves, the ones that He has redeemed. They are holy and beloved by God. So that group of people were instructed to put on some things: *bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering*. I don't have time to go through all of this exhaustively this morning, but I'd like just to stir our thoughts a little bit and to consider what this looks like.

THINGS TO PUT ON

We're instructed to put on some things. If I put on a jacket, and it fits around me, it becomes part of my attire. When you see me this morning, it's part of what you'll identify with me as to how I'm dressed. So if I put on bowels of mercy, that becomes a part of the expression that people see when they interact with me. They see someone that's merciful. They see someone who deals with the realities of life, the problems of life, the things that go wrong, the misunderstandings of life and is merciful. That's part of me. I'm merciful. I'm endeavoring to give people opportunity to see that I'm patient, I'm forgiving, I'm merciful.

There is a thought sometimes when we look at mercy versus judgment. To help us, maybe in thinking about what mercy is like, mercy holds judgment at bay a lot of times. It delays judgment. It's not in a rush to pronounce judgment. We desire that a person would not be judged for their actions immediately. They have opportunity to correct. A merciful spirit is a beautiful thing when we start thinking about relationships with other people. Sometimes we can find it easier to be merciful to one person than we do another, but we need to put on *mercy*.

We need to put on *kindness*. We know what kindness is. We need to put it on in our interactions with other people so we don't arbitrarily be kind sometimes and harsh other times. A part of the package is that we be kind. Is there a reason not to be kind? There are a lot of reasons why we choose not to be kind at times. A lot of times it depends on whether we're offended or hurt about something. Something happens, and then all of a sudden, kindness is put off. We have an excuse to put off kindness, but God is instructing us to put on kindness and humbleness of mind.

I know I talk from time to time about humility and humbleness and walking humbly with our God, but I truly believe that being humble is one of the most beautiful Christian characteristics. Humility to a certain degree is the opposite of pride, but humility is something that absolutely benefits relationships. If you observe people having trouble getting along with other people, one of the things they need to look at is whether they really have a humble spirit. If I'm having trouble getting along with other people, one of the things I need to look at is whether I really have a humble spirit. You might not like to hear that, but I think that's just the reality. That might make some people really upset to hear that, but I believe that's expressed throughout the Word of God. Humility is one of the most beneficial things in our relationships. We're instructed to put that on.

We are to put on *meekness*. Meekness and humility compliment one another. A meek person can be talked to. They have a desire to communicate. If there's a

problem, they like to talk about it. They're able to be entreated. They're able to have a discussion without anger or frustration. A meek spirit is an easy spirit to maintain a relationship with.

Longsuffering; Forbearing one another. Do we have to forbear with one another? Why do I have to forbear with people? I shouldn't have to go through this. Why is somebody saying this about me or taking this attitude? Forbearing with one another. I'm talking about where we actually live this morning in our relationships. It's easy to go along in our lives and accept certain things. Certain things may not be the way we would like, but that's just the way they are, and I can't really do anything about them, so I'll just block them off or compartmentalize that person or that relationship and say "that's just the way it is." But I believe the expression here in this scripture is calling us to something higher than that.

LEARNING HOW TO FORGIVE

Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. If you're going to have good relationships, you're going to have to learn how to forgive. In my opinion, there's no exception to that. Again, if you're going to have good relationships, you're going to have to learn how to forgive. Forgiveness isn't something to be afraid of, because forgiveness is being like God. There's a Godlike aspect to forgiveness. The grace of God empowers us to forgive. *And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness*.

I started out this message with the commandment that Jesus gave that we are to love one another. This is some of the outworking of that love. Because we love one another, we decide that we're going to put on these things, do these things, and we're going to be this person for the glory of God.

Nowhere here does it mention that you have permission to turn your back on someone, ignore people, or withdraw from interactions with people. Those are some of the things we as humans do whenever we're hurt or offended or unhappy. We withdraw ourselves. We separate ourselves. We deny the presence of ourselves to another person. We punish them. We express our displeasure. It doesn't say anything about this here. It speaks of a totally different spirit and attitude.

Matthew, chapter 5, verses 43-45: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

We're talking about relationships here, and sometimes we don't think about having a relationship with our enemies, but we actually do. Sometimes we know more about our enemies than we do our friends. We think more about our enemies than we do our friends. We're aware of them. There's a relationship there. It might not be a good relationship, but it's a relationship. Did you know that enemies can really be valuable for

you? They can teach you things about yourself. They can give you an opportunity to be blessed. They can help you to grow. They'll point out every inconsistency that you have. It can sometimes be really beneficial.

I want us to think about the words of Jesus here in Matthew 5, because the words of the Bible are precious, but Jesus' words have such weight to them. When Jesus says something, we need to pay attention to it. It is a little bit along the line of the first verse that I read. He says, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy." He is saying, in effect, "In times past, you may have heard something different than this. This might sound new to you, but I'm telling you something different. He says in verse 44, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies ..." Have you ever heard, "Well, I love everybody"? Well, we need to love everybody. That needs to be a true statement. But can you say specifically, "I love that person"? the one who cursed you, the one who hates you? Do you pray for that person? Do you love that person?

REQUIREMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY

Do you know Christianity requires something of us? Jesus didn't come and say *I have an easy way. I have a way that everybody can just come on board and we'll all go to heaven together.* I would love to be able to tell you that this morning. That would be the most fun thing to preach in some ways, but Jesus said, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it." That's what Jesus said. When the rich young ruler came to Jesus, He gave him a difficult choice.

Christianity requires something of us. I want you to think about what this verse actually says and what it means to us. It says, "... bless them that curse you" (verse 44 of Matthew 5). Whenever you have somebody who is pronouncing judgment upon you, and saying "you're terrible," or "you're a bad person, you're doing wrong, and you're on your way to hell," that tends to be a total statement. Then you turn around and bless them. How do you do that? Do you tell everybody how bad they are, too? Ignore them? How can you bless them? Blessing someone is an active thing. You have to do something. You just can't say, *Well, I love everybody. I'm going to ignore that person who has said something against me.* You're going to bless them. You're going to have some kind of interaction with them. The scripture says "to pray for them," but it also says "to bless them," and "do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." Can you do good to somebody and never meet them, never have any interaction with them, never talk to them, and never give them anything? It's really hard to do good to somebody unless there's a different idea in doing good to them. You have to actually get that to them somehow, right?

Verse 45 of Matthew 5 gives us a reason: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." There's a reason why: so that I can be a child of God. I'm going to be focused. I'm going to think about how I can do good to someone. That implies that if we do not do that we will not be the children of God.

The thoughts this morning, I guess, are still somewhat of an introduction to this overall subject. I'm not really dealing with individual types of relationships in some of those thoughts that are in the general sense of relationships. Ephesians 4, verses 29-32, says: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

EVIDENCE OF GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

There are a lot of thoughts there in that passage of scripture that can be mentioned that go along with this overall subject, but I have just a couple that I want to look at:

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying. This touches in our relationships—our speech—our communication, that it be good to people. Also, that it may not be damaging, destructive, and we're not doing hurtful things.

That it may minister grace unto the hearers. If we're going to have good relationships, we have to get control of ourselves in the way we communicate with one another.

And grieve not the holy Spirit of God. I want to take a moment just to think about those words. We're not to grieve the Holy Spirit. I believe we can grieve the Spirit of God in our relationships. If we aren't cognizant, if we aren't thoughtful, if we aren't concerned about our relationships with one another, we can actually grieve the Holy Spirit. He can be disappointed in us. This isn't just a *maybe* type of thing. This is a calling that we have as the children of God. We are to love one another, and it needs to be working out in our lives. It needs to be the reality that we live.

Let all bitterness, ... be put away from you, with all malice. Bitterness is so destructive. You can say things like "I love everybody in the world," and still be holding on to bitterness towards some person. We need to deal with that. We need to put that away. Put it away from us, and really be able to embrace that beautiful verse in Ephesians 4:32: *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* A beautiful picture.

A few last scriptures in Mark, chapter 11. Verses 24-26: "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." So God says that if we don't forgive, he won't forgive us.

Forgiveness isn't very easy a lot of times. If it's some little thing that somebody did that really didn't mean much, we can forgive that, but when you get into the really deep things of life, the things that are meaningful, the deep

hurts and failures and problems, forgiveness isn't really easy. It's a challenge a lot of times to truly forgive.

Now, Jesus said in verse 25 of Mark 11, that when you stand praying forgive. That didn't say anything about somebody coming and asking for forgiveness. What if they didn't ask for forgiveness? What if they don't think they need forgiveness? I don't get the sense there that if you're standing and praying before God and it comes to your mind that you have some hurt by someone, you say, "Oh, God, they haven't asked forgiveness for that, so it's okay that I have bitterness. If they had asked, I would have forgiven them." Jesus just says, "Forgive them."

THE NECESSITY OF FORGIVENESS

If we don't learn to forgive, we're not going to have the relationships God wants us to have. It is so much more than just saying words. In ourselves, because we're human, we want to hold on to that hurt. We want to remember how that felt. We want to hold that person responsible for what they said. They should be punished for that. They did wrong. They weren't what they should have been. It wasn't fair.

I believe forgiveness takes away the pain, the damage that's being done to you. It doesn't take away the responsibility that person has before God or before someone else, but it can take away the pain that damages you. Whenever we really forgive, we're able to build better relationships throughout our lives. It's not just a suggestion from God. It's something that God requires. There are people who are not Christians today because they will not forgive someone. God will not forgive us if we cannot forgive other people.

As we think about our relationships, there is a constant source of feedback to us if we're paying attention. We're all interacting with other people all the time; maybe some more than others, but we're interacting with other people. The relationships that we have with the people around us are a source of constant feedback to us. Now, we might say, "I'm really getting good feedback from 90% of the relationships that I have. If I cut off the other 10%, then I'll have 100%." Those 10% where there are some problems, might be the most important things for us to look at, because there's some feedback there that might really be valuable to us. Now, it could be that they're just way out of line. They might be enemies for no good reason, but where there's a relationship there, we have a responsibility to be aware of, and that could be a good feedback for us to see ourselves, to do good, to do God's work, to love, and to forgive.

When you rebuild a broken relationship, when you repair a damaged relationship, when you fix something that's not great, it's something beautiful. The Bible says something about if you love those that love you, what's so special about that? That's just normal. You don't have to be a Christian to do that. You don't have to have the grace of God motivating your heart and life to love the one that loves you.

There will always be misunderstandings, hurts, offenses, mistakes of all different types. How we deal with those are what forms our testimony: who we really are, what we look like to those who are watching us, and those who are learning from us. How do we deal with that?

Some people are going to choose to be our enemy, but I get to choose to love them. That's what God told me to do. If I really love them, I want the best for them, so I want to believe in the possibility of restoration for them. I want to believe that that situation can improve. I don't pronounce permanent judgment on them. I don't give up on them. I get to love them. Jesus told me to love them. So what am I allowing that is acceptable in my relationship with the people around me? I'm not here just to preach to you this morning. I'm talking to myself, too. What am I allowing that is acceptable in my relationship with the people around me? Am I cognizant of the vital importance of those relationships, the ability for those to be better relationships? What does God want for me? What does God ask of me?

CONCLUSION

Jesus had the beautiful prayer that He prayed that we will all be one, and that we would love God and one another. We as human beings struggle with that, but God can help us. I believe we have a part to play. We need to have a vision along this line in our relationship with God and in our relationship with one another.

Jesus was asked what was the greatest commandment, and He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." And He gave us extra: "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." If we love our neighbor as ourselves, we're going to have some good relationships.

May the Lord help us. †

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

THE FAMILY OF GOD SONS OF GOD HAVE A NEW HEART

Scriptures: II Peter 1:4; I John 3:9-18; Hebrews 12:9, 10; I John 2:3, 6.

II Peter 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

I John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

Hebrews 12: 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

I John 2:3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Memory Verse: He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.—I John 2:6.

Aim: To show that God's children have a new heart.

INTRODUCTION

We wish to make it plain that we believe and teach two cleansings: one in justification, one in sanctification. D. S. Warner taught that a justified person had a "dual" nature, the divine and the carnal, and that in sanctification the carnal nature was removed leaving only the divine nature. We feel that the Scriptures, and the experiences related in the Scriptures, such as in Acts 8 and Ephesians 5, support this teaching.

There is a definite change that takes place in the heart of an individual. When he is converted, he is forgiven of past sins, true, but his desires are also changed. The Lord said, through the prophet Ezekiel, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

MEDITATIONS

II Peter 1:4—Whereby are given unto us—We who know Christ have become partakers of a new nature, for we are new creatures. Our old, sinful desires have passed away, and in their place are the desires of the Spirit. We have a longing to read the Bible and to assemble ourselves with the saints. We hate the worldly amusements and the pleasures of the world. Our affection is set upon things above and not on things of the world. Being set free from our old sinful ways, we escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Our hearts have been changed, and we have no desire to do the ungodly things we did while we were in the bondage of sin.

THE SONS COMMIT NO SIN—I John 3:9—Whosoever is born of God—We know that the born-again person does not commit sin, for he that committeth sin is of the devil. As long as we have the grace of God in our hearts, we are not going to sin, because that would be contrary to the divine will. We may yield to temptation, but in yielding we lose the grace of God out of our hearts. **Verse 10—In this the children of God—**"By their fruits ye shall know them"; so we shall

know the sons of God by the fruits they produce. You will find them loving, kind and gentle, and not easily provoked. They would rather suffer wrong than to do wrong. Also, we know that they who follow the lusts of the flesh and are not willing to return good for evil are not of God; neither are those who are selfish and have no love for the brethren.

LOVE, THE BASIS OF THE GOSPEL—I John 3:11—For this is the message—The second commandment says that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. The whole plan of salvation is built around love, for God is love. When we are born of God, our hearts are full of love, and we have a compassion for the lost souls and a desire to see others saved. If the world would but give heed to this one command that we should love one another, there could be no wars and no hungry mouths, but the world would be full of happy people, following the pursuits of peace. **Verse 12—Not as Cain—**Without the love of God in our hearts, we cannot love as we ought. I do not believe for a moment that anyone really wants to commit murder; but when we are servants of Satan, we do things on the spur of the moment that we are sorry for later. This is what happened to Cain. He was jealous of his brother because God's approval was upon him; and Satan entered into his heart, and he killed Abel, and later he was very sorry for what he had done.

HATE, A CURSE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH—I John 3:13—Marvel not, my brethren—We are not of the world, even as Jesus was not of the world; so it is not surprising if the world hates us, especially when we uncover its ungodly ways. While Jesus was still here on Earth, He told His disciples that if the world hated Him it would also hate us. We must not let the fear of the world deter us from witnessing for Christ. If we would reign with Him, we must also suffer with Him. **Verse 14—We know that we have passed—**The love that we have in our hearts for our fellowmen and our brethren bears witness that we have passed from death unto life. There is no hate in our hearts at all, and we can truthfully say that we love everybody, and we are truly aware of the change that has taken place in our hearts. If we love not our brother, the love of God is not in our hearts, and we are abiding in death. Only God can remove the heart of stone and give us a living heart of flesh. **Verse 15—Whosoever hateth his brother—**If we have hate in our hearts, we have the same indwelling principle that caused Cain to kill his brother, and we never can tell how soon Satan may cause us to commit murder, too. We may say that this could never happen to us, but, Dear Reader, it is happening many times every day. We can scarcely pick up a newspaper that does not tell of a murder somewhere. We know that we cannot be murderers and have eternal life abiding in us.

THE POWER OF TRUE LOVE—I John 3:16—Hereby perceive we the love of God—When we think of the sacrifice that God made for our salvation and how Jesus willingly went to the cross for our sins, we are able to comprehend, in a small way, the unfathomable love of God toward us. We who are sons of God love our heavenly Father and our brethren with

this same kind of love. History tells us that millions of Christians were murdered for their stand for Christ by the church of Rome, many of whom were offered their freedom if they would renounce their faith. But their love for the Master was so intense that they were able to go to their death with the praises of God on their lips. Thus, they demonstrated that they had that same undying love that Jesus had for us. Jesus, when He was here on earth, told us not to fear what man can do unto us, for the most they can do is to kill the body, but to fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. **Verse 17—But whoso hath this world's good**—We may say that we love the brethren; but if our hearts are not moved to help them when the occasion arises, we are only fooling ourselves, for real Christian love is a powerful and impelling force that will constrain us to render assistance to our unfortunate brethren. We are all just one big family, and we are interested in one another's welfare; and when one member of the family suffers, we all suffer and will desire to do something about it, not grudgingly or just because it is our duty, but because our love impels us to.

LOVE IS MANIFESTED IN DEEDS—I John 3:18—My little children—The love of God in our hearts is bound to manifest itself in many ways, in deeds of kindness to our fellow men, in lending a helping hand here and there, by going out of our way to do someone a favor. We should never boast about the good things that we have done, but we should let our good deeds speak for themselves, for actions speak louder than words. We are all familiar with the story of Dorcas, how her life was spent in acts of kindness and charity. Her soul was full of love to God and man, and her whole time was filled with works of piety and mercy; and those who had received of her gracious deeds wept at her death until at the petition of Peter, God miraculously restored her life!! Her good works are still testifying of her to this day and will continue to do so as long as time lasts. This is what the apostle had in mind when he said we should not love in word and in tongue but in deed and in truth. Words of themselves do not mean anything unless they are followed by action. It is not what we say that counts, but what we do. Our life is our only testimony to the world, so let us take care that it testifies to the world that we have been with Jesus.

CHASTENING IS ESSENTIAL TO A GODLY LIFE—Hebrews 12:9—Furthermore we have had fathers—When we were children, it was necessary for our parents to correct us to teach us obedience. Even so our heavenly Father chastens us to teach us obedience, for without obedience it would be impossible to keep our salvation. The Scriptures say that whom God loves He chastens and scourges every son whom He receives; so we must rejoice at the chastening of God, because it is being done for our profit. **Verse 10—For they verily for a few days**—Our parents corrected us only for a few years while we were growing up, but as long as we remain in the flesh, we will be subject to correction from God, and we can rest assured that any chastening we receive from Him will be beneficial if we will accept it humbly. It takes the guiding hand of God

to bring us to the place where He can use us in His kingdom.

TO KNOW GOD IS TO KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS—I John 2:3—And hereby we do know—To know or to love God is to keep His commandments. When we really love someone it is a pleasure to do the things that are pleasing to him or her; so, therefore, we can know that we are of God when we are glad to keep His every command. The Word says, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." It is vain to profess to know God and then to live in opposition to His will. To love Him with our whole heart and our neighbor as ourselves is the natural gift of our born-again soul and puts the witness in our heart that we are the children of God.

A STRAIT WAY—I John 2:6—As he walked—The word *ought* means "duty bound" here. Therefore, as fast as we obtain light from God's Word, we must walk in it. To fail to do so means that we lose favor with God. By the transforming power of the blood of Christ, he that is born again of the Spirit of God has become a member of the family of God or has been made a partaker of the nature of God. As God loves truth and hates error, so does the Christian. This is indeed a strait way. Do not allow anyone to tell you that Christianity and the world can mix, for the way is so strait that not any of the world is allowed upon it. The world does not add any betterment to the souls of men, but rather leads to destruction. Therefore, we must forsake the world and seek to walk as Christ walked.

CONCLUSION

"Regeneration [being born again] is in some sense an overcoming of moral depravity, but it is not a complete removal of depravity from one's nature. The Scriptures teach that depravity remains in the regenerated and is entirely cleansed away only in entire sanctification, which is subsequent to regeneration ... In regeneration one is saved from the reigning power of the depraved nature. Justification is salvation from the guilt of sin, regeneration is salvation from the reigning power of sin, and entire sanctification is salvation from the indwelling of sin. ...

"Assisted by the power of God, the regenerated man is able to triumph over the sinful tendency of the depraved nature and to do what is right. But regeneration is also a change of heart or of the affections. The new birth causes one to love what he once did not love and to cease to love sinful things he once loved."—R. R. Byrum, *Christian Theology*.

Many precious souls in the religious world today have been taught the outward form of church membership. They have had no change of heart, therefore, have not become partakers of the divine nature. Some try to do what is right according to the standards that are presented to them. They still hunger for the pleasures of the world because they have not tasted the pleasures that are found in Christ. Their affections are upon things of the earth, not things above, because they have not died out to the world and been born from above. Their natures are still unholy because they have not been led into the light of God's holiness through the new birth.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Why doesn't a person sin who is born of God?
2. Why is chastening necessary?
3. How can one usually distinguish between a child of God and a child of Satan?
4. What is the compelling force of the gospel?
5. Why will the world hate the Son of God?
6. How is he that hateth his brother a murderer?
7. How do we know that we have passed from death unto life? †



Dear Young People,

Greetings! The article this month is a continuation of exhortations given by the young people in a special Sunday morning service. The thoughts are centered on the I AM's given by Jesus while here on Earth.

Sis. Valerie Richards will be sharing on "I Am the Good Shepherd." We trust you will receive a blessing!

Blessings,
Bro. Doug

"I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD"

By Sis. Valerie Richards

I WOULD LIKE to share a few thoughts on Jesus saying, "I am the good shepherd." In John 10, starting with verse one and reading through verse twelve, we read: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, *He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.*"

My first thought is, "I am the door." Jesus is expressing the truth that He is the door and it's only through

Him that we can be saved. There is no other way. He says that if someone tries another way, he is a thief and a robber. He said, *"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."* When we come to Jesus and we are saved, He doesn't just only give us life, but He gives it more abundantly.

In these same verses, Jesus uses the analogy of being a shepherd and the sheep, and so I asked myself, "What does this more abundant life look like?" In Psalm 23 we read, *"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."* This is the abundant life that Jesus gives to those who accept salvation and enter into His sheepfold. He gives us joy, protection, peace. I know that each one of us who are saved are so thankful that He laid down His life for us. I know that I am thankful that He not only laid down His life for me, but He also came looking for me. Each one of us, even if we are saved today, were lost. Each one of us was in sin and He came looking for us.

This leads into the last point that I want to talk about. This touches me the most when I think about the Good Shepherd. In Luke 15 we are told a parable by Jesus. It says: *"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."* When I read this, I get a mental image. I picture a sheep that is lost and maybe injured. Maybe at one point it thought it knew its own way or knew where to go. But now, it's in the darkness and is lost. However, all it has to do is call out and just like that, the Good Shepherd is there. Why? Because the Good Shepherd has been looking and searching for that lost one. He's been waiting for that call. Even though that lost one may have disappointed Him, the Good Shepherd is still looking for him to come to Him. No matter if He's waited for fifty years, five years, or one year, He is still waiting for his call. When the lost one does realize he's lost, the Good Shepherd picks him up and carries him. In my mind's eye, I picture that maybe the Good Shepherd has been injured along the way, maybe even having spots of blood. But while He's carrying His sheep, He is smiling, and He doesn't care. It was worth it to Him, because He has so much love for His sheep.

Then we read in John 10, “He layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”

It didn’t matter what the Good Shepherd had to go through, or the cost. The joy of having one of His sheep come home was worth it all. It brings to mind the words of this song written by Lowell Lundstrom—

*You’ve been running for a long, long time,
You’ve been running with no peace of mind.
You regret the day you turned away and became ...
a fugitive from God.*

*You’ve been wasting all your life in sin,
You’ve been seeking everything but Him.
You can see the light but you still choose the night,
to remain ...
a fugitive from God.*

*God’s been searching for His long lost child,
He’s been calling for a long, long while.
If you hear His voice, make Him your choice, don’t
remain ...
a fugitive from God.*

Chorus:

*Why don’t you turn around, why do you roam?
Can’t you see God the Father waits to welcome you
home?*

*You were never meant to walk the path you’ve
trod,*

*How long will you run away ... a fugitive from
God?*

This is what the lost sheep was doing. He was away. He was choosing his own path, but God was waiting with loving arms to welcome that lost one home. Thank the Lord for His longsuffering and compassion. We were all once that lost sheep, and we have so much to thank Him for that He would go out looking for us.

In conclusion, I would like to look at the Christian’s view of the Good Shepherd. When we think of Him, it gives us joy and thankfulness that He found us. We are grateful that we answered His call, and that He took us home. Instead of running with no peace of mind, wasting our lives, and roaming in our sins, He has given us the Psalm 23 experience. He has given us peace, and He leads us beside the still waters. We can rejoice, for He found His sheep which was lost!

If there is someone here who isn’t saved, even one soul, He is still calling and knocking and reaching out to you. He doesn’t mind the pain that you already caused Him, or the many times you have turned away from Him and gone your own way. He just longs to hear your cry for mercy, and He will carry you home. This is the message of love that I think of when I think of the Good Shepherd. I think of a loving Master who is looking for us! He has so many blessings that He gives us when we come into His fold. What a wonderful blessing to have the opportunity to be one of His sheep! †

THE CHILDREN’S CORNER



AN UNDERSTANDING HEART

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

“Well, there it is again!” said my grandmother as she looked out through the windshield of our car.

My father, seated behind the steering wheel, turned his head toward her. “What are you looking at, Mother?” he asked.

“Those two streets up ahead—the way they join together. I just don’t understand it,” my grandmother replied. “I know you’ve explained it to me before, but I’m still confused.”

“It’s not all that confusing, Mother,” said my father. “Let me explain it to you again.” He paused to think of the words he needed. “We are about to head downhill on West Antietam Street.”

“I understand that,” said my grandmother, “but look!” She pointed out her window. “West Antietam divides, and the right-hand part of it goes uphill while the left-hand part goes downhill and passes under a bridge.”

“Exactly,” said my father. “The right-hand part is the Antietam Street Ramp, and it goes up to South Prospect Street.”

“So the cars above us on the bridge are on South Prospect Street,” said my grandmother.

“Yes,” said my father. “It’s called a dry bridge because it’s built over land—not over water.”

“I don’t understand it,” said Grandma.

“What don’t you understand about it?” my father asked patiently.

“Why did they do it?” asked Grandma. “Why didn’t they allow Antietam Street to intersect with Prospect Street the normal way?”

“Prospect Street used to stop at Antietam Street, I think,” said my father. “The only way to continue Prospect Street was to build a bridge over Antietam Street, because Prospect Street was so much higher.”

“I don’t understand it,” said my grandmother.

My father was silent. By now the dry bridge was behind us, and we could no longer see the confusing street connections.

After a few moments, my father said, “I can’t think of any better way to explain it. But the next time we go under the bridge, I’ll try again.”

I stole a glance at my grandmother, who had a slight frown on her usually cheerful face, and then I leaned back in my seat to think. I was greatly surprised to learn that there was something Grandma couldn’t understand. I was only seven years old, but already I knew that my grandmother was a highly intelligent woman. She was a teacher and a minister. She could explain English grammar rules and how to conjugate Latin verbs. She knew how to make Bible stories come

alive, and she could answer hard questions about the scriptures.

But the connection between West Antietam Street and South Prospect Street was a puzzle for Grandma, and her mind was never able to solve it. Our family developed a name for the landmark. We called it "The Place Grandma Can't Understand." Even today, when I drive beneath the South Prospect Street dry bridge, I smile to think of Grandma's perplexity.

I also think about my father's understanding heart. He was patient and kind. He didn't laugh at my grandmother's confusion, or act as though he thought he was smarter than she was just because he understood something, and she didn't.

It is good to have an understanding mind, but it is even better to have an understanding heart.

An understanding mind helps us solve problems and learn important concepts, but an understanding heart helps us show kindness.

From time to time we will meet a person whose mind doesn't comprehend something. An understanding heart will keep us from saying, "Oh, that's so easy! Why can't you get it?" That kind of remark is hurtful. We wouldn't like it said to us when we can't understand something. And there will always be things we don't understand. No one in the world understands everything.

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 2:11, which says, *Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee*. "Discretion" is the ability to act wisely. A wise and understanding heart preserves, or saves, us from acting or speaking in a way that can hurt the feelings of others.

The words and actions that come from an understanding heart are always kind. God has given us understanding minds. We must ask Him to give us understanding hearts, as well.

Activity

An understanding heart is ruled by love. Below are some scripture phrases about love. Each phrase begins with one of the letters that spell "love." See if you can complete each phrase. Check your answers by using the given locations to look up the scriptures.

L _____ worketh no _____ to his _____ (Romans 13:10).

O _____ evil with _____ (Romans 12:21).

V _____ not itself, is not _____ (I Corinthians 13:4).

E _____ as Christ _____ you, so also do _____ (Colossians 3:13).

Answer to Last Month's Activity

1. MOSES had the strength to patiently lead the children of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land.
2. DANIEL had the strength to pray to God even when the law said he would be thrown to the lions if he did.
3. ABRAHAM had the strength to leave his homeland and go to an unknown land when God asked him.
4. JOSEPH had the strength to forgive his brothers even after they tried to kill him.
5. STEPHEN had the strength to forgive the men who hated his preaching so much they stoned him to death. †

WINNING A CROWN

By the late

C. W. Naylor



Part
VIII

Native Depravity

THERE ARE already so many treatises on this subject that it need be considered here only as it relates to the practical side of the Christian life in the regenerate state. The doctrine is held in some form by most theologians. The Augustinian and Calvinistic view, that man is guilty and is fit only for damnation because of having partaken of Adam's sin, and the more modified view held by most Arminians, do not concern us here. We wish now to consider depravity only as it relates to and affects the nature of man after he is born again.

That man's nature does contain depravity in some form is generally admitted. The Bible does not give us a scientific or philosophical treatment of the subject. Man's natural depravity is one of the many things that are assumed to be so much a fact of human consciousness as to need no proof. Since the Bible so treats the matter, and man is left to form his own conclusion on this, as well as many other points, it is not strange that there are many different ideas. Regarding the universality of the doctrine, I quote from Miley: "The doctrine of entire sanctification in regeneration was new with Zinzendorff and wholly unknown before him."—*Theology*, Vol. II, page 367. This can have no meaning except that the doctrine of the existence of depravity in those regenerated was previously universal, as it practically is today.

From the Scriptural standpoint, it is only necessary to show that believers are promised a sanctification subsequent to their becoming believers. Jesus prayed for the Twelve in these words: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth" (John 17:16, 17). Again, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified" (verse 19). For the Thessalonian Christians, Paul prayed thus: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly" (I Thessalonians 5:23).

There are two general theories as to the origin of depravity. The first is that it is generic, being a corruption of the nature transmitted through all the race from Adam. This is the most commonly accepted idea. The second, held by Mr. Finney and others, is that depravity is not transmissible but results from the order of development of the child. The physical develops before the mental, and the mental before the spiritual, so that the physical and mental habits form and become wholly selfish before the spiritual is developed enough for it to have a proper moral sense; and thus its nature is depraved. Which of these theories may be correct has no practical bearing on the fact of its existence, so does not demand more than passing attention here.

For my part, I am inclined to adopt a middle ground, that is, that depravity is transmissible and transmitted and that it may be increased by the individual's own conduct, and also that it is invariable as a transmitted

quality, being dependent upon the same laws as are the transmission of mental and physical qualities. That depravity is a constant in all, I am not prepared to accept, as observation certainly shows the opposite to be true.

One thing is certainly true of it. It is not an entity or tangible thing, such as a stump, by which it is sometimes illustrated. Nor is it a plant planted by Satan. He has no power to plant in man any such thing. The human will is free, and cannot be coerced by man or the devil, nor even by God himself. Depravity was not a new thing that entered Adam when he sinned. It was only a perversion or corruption of what he already was. It is not a sort of motor that Satan connects with our human nature and by which he operates us. It is not a thing that can be subtracted bodily from a person. It is a corruption that must be cleansed. It is an over development, or rather an abnormal development, of the natural faculties or propensities which in their normal state are pure and necessary. Self-esteem when corrupted becomes pride. The sense of justice becomes vindictiveness and reveals itself in wrath, malice, hatred, and revenge. Love of the beautiful becomes vanity. Amativeness becomes lust. Acquisitiveness becomes covetousness. This seems to me the only rational explanation that can be given to the subject.

The question is often asked: "If depravity is transmissible, how can the children of sanctified parents possess this depravity?" The fact that it is so should seem no stranger than the well-known fact that mental and physical diseases or malformations and abnormalities are transmitted through healthy links. It is undeniable that such diseases as scrofula, insanity, craving for liquor, and many like things are transmitted through parents who show no trace of such things, the diseases breaking out in descendants removed the second, third, or even fourth generation from grandparents who have been so afflicted or diseased. It is the life-current that is defiled. The sanctification of the parent is only as an accidental thing; that is, it is like the amputation of a limb or the removal of an eye in the physical. Parents who have suffered such mutilations do not transmit these to their children. We may not understand some of the laws of transmission; but our lack of comprehension does not prevent them from being true in human experience, neither does it disprove them. The transmission of depravity is only an example of the law of persistence of type—a law which, in natural things, is left unquestioned.

Reversion to Type

The animal and vegetable kingdoms are alike subject to man's control. He may produce new varieties and develop them to a high degree; but when once they are left to themselves, removed from man's care, they all revert to their former types. The different varieties of pigeons, of all colors and characters, would, if taken and placed by themselves, out of the reach of man, revert to the one type from which they were derived. This same law acts all through nature; and we ought not to be surprised on finding that the same law acts as truly in the moral sphere. It is not strange that children revert to the type of their ancestors, no matter what was the condition of their parents.

People who have been sanctified may at any time become depraved by unlawfully indulging desires or by going into rebellion against God. In this manner Adam became depraved; and so may we. In our case, however, we cannot call the resulting depravity Adamic; it is the same as Adam's in essence; but we, not he, are responsible. Depravity is, as already stated, not something planted by Satan, but is a corruption, progressive in its nature and capable of being greatly increased by our sinful actions. It can also be minimized by careful cultivation; and by thus repressing it, men become more moral than they otherwise would. Independent of the grace of God, therefore, we can to a considerable extent limit and restrain this inward element. It is, however, capable of complete elimination by the Spirit of God.

State of Those Possessing Depravity

Among the practical effects of depravity in a regenerated person, is that he cannot love God perfectly. There is a frequent assertion of the self-life. It is so easy for him to think that his way is right and best. And in spite of his desire to please and serve God, there is, nevertheless, within him a something that causes him to want his own way, to want to gratify his own personal desires. There is a twofoldness about his desires. There is a something that desires to please God, and at the same time another something that desires to please himself. This latter is sometimes very strong, and may occasion him no little difficulty when he endeavors to submit himself to the will of God. Through grace he may overcome this and submit to God, but he cannot of himself destroy it. It is quite true that we can never become automatically unselfish; but it is also true that the strength of the self-life is depravity, and that, when this is destroyed, we can much more easily and more naturally be unselfish.

Temptation more forcefully takes hold of one when he is in the regenerate state than it does when he is in the wholly sanctified state, because under the former conditions it receives cooperation from depravity. A brother in telling of his personal experience spoke on this wise: "Temptations used to seem to get right up close to me and to take hold upon me. I used, oftentimes, to have a terrible battle with them; but now it seems that things are changed. Temptations do not get close to me as they did then. There seems to be a something that holds them off at a distance from me so that they do not have the power that they used to have; nor does it take the struggle to overcome them that it used to take."

This brother's experience has been duplicated by the experiences of the writer and thousands of others. There is something within the regenerated man that seems to answer to temptation; and he must resist, not only the temptation, but also that something within himself upon which the temptation takes hold. I refer, not simply to his natural propensities (for these natural propensities will persist in the sanctified state), but rather to the depraved state of these natural propensities. When we are in the regenerated state, our natural desires are more inclined to run in unlawful channels and are harder to restrain than they are when we are in the wholly sanctified state. The more grace we have,

the more our desires are restrained without apparent effort. Grace overwhelms many desires or tendencies in our natural being, making it the more possible for us to guide ourselves in the way of God with ease. The more grace we have, the more easily we can keep ourselves in perfect standing before God and the more perfectly conform to his will. The less of grace we have, the less of power we have to do this.

The warfare between grace and depravity in a regenerated person uses up spiritual strength, and consequently limits his activities in other directions. We cannot accomplish things for God as we might, if we have to use so much of our strength upon ourselves, and so, for this reason the obtaining of release from depravity enables us more fully to throw our energies into the life of salvation and the work of God; the greater grace that we possess when sanctified, increases our spiritual powers and makes us very much more able to accomplish work for God than we otherwise could be. We can thus glorify him in a greater degree. Regenerated people are to a degree conscious of this inner conflict; but they cannot be as conscious of the distinction between the two different states of grace as can the one who has entered the higher state. They must have the personal experience in order to know for themselves.

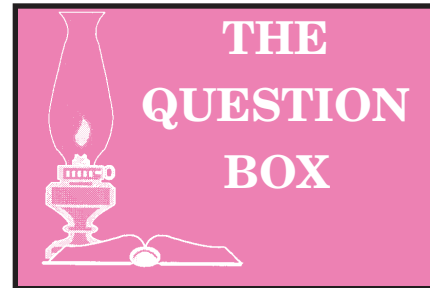
The Remedy

Two remedies for this depraved state have been proposed. One of them is a palliative and the other a specific. The first is the repression remedy; that is, depravity must be kept in subjection through life by the will. Those teaching this theory hold that there can be no elimination of this element, no cleansing from it, but that it is of such a nature that it will ever be with us through the journey of life and that we must continually watch and guard against its asserting itself, lest it should overthrow us and lead us astray from God. According to this theory, life is a continued and unending warfare against it. Their only hope of ending this warfare is in death; they expect to be sanctified at death and not to take this element with them into heaven. Such as these are ready to exclaim with the apostle Paul, "Oh, wretched man that I am!" but they are not able to join with him in the song of deliverance.

The other remedy, that of eradication, is taught by people who believe in a second work of divine grace. The teaching of these, however, frequently runs into an idealism that leaves nothing whatever to repress in our natures. According to this extreme position, we should become practically automatons. Advocates of such teaching like to picture sanctification as making us a sort of angelic beings; and they would have us live in an ecstatic state, high above the practical affairs of life. They can tell us just how glorious we should feel on all occasions; how rapturous it is to dwell in that condition. Their teaching is idealism pure and simple.

The true idea, it seems to me, cannot be expressed by the extreme teachings of either of these theories. As is usually the case, the middle ground between the two extremes is the most tenable. Our human nature is a

creation of God, and as such, it is a necessary part of us; and God will never destroy it, in fact, he cannot destroy it without destroying us. Sanctification, therefore, is not the destruction of this nature, but is the purification of it. It corrects the abnormal spiritual condition and brings the natural into a condition in which it may regain a proper balance. Paul said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection" (I Corinthians 9:27). All the faculties and propensities of our nature are for our service and use. We are to master them. The will is to rule them and have them in subjection to itself and, as a result, to righteousness also. This subject will be discussed at length under the heading Our Natural Propensities. †



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



QUESTION: What is your opinion on feet washing? Will a Christian have any part with Christ if he doesn't observe feet washing when he has light enough on the Word of God to believe that it is for today?

ANSWER: To refuse to obey God's command to wash feet is just as serious as to obey God's command not to steal. Sectism reserves the right to think and do as it pleases in regard to the Scriptures, and it has had a great influence on the thinking of all people, but that does not make it right. Jesus says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

QUESTION: The religious world today talks a lot about legalism. What is the true understanding of legalism?

ANSWER: Theologically, it means "the doctrine of salvation by good works."—*Webster*.

Legalism is self-centered! We see this in Luke 18:9-14, where Jesus tells about two men who went to the temple to pray. One was boastful about *what he did*.

It emphasizes the external to the neglect of the heart. We see this in Matthew 23:5, 6: "But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues."

It makes things other than God absolute. We see this in Mark 7:6, 7, where Jesus told the Pharisees and scribes that Isaiah described them: "This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Legalism is insensitive to human need. An example: “And he [Jesus] entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him” (Mark 3:1, 2).

The Book of Galatians makes it very clear that salvation is not of works, it is not by just observing certain laws; the rich young man that came running to Jesus (Luke 18) did that! Salvation is by grace and grace alone.

The mistake that so many who cry “legalism” make when the standard of God’s Word is preached is, they seem to think that the New Covenant has no laws, and when Christ sets us free, He sets us free from obeying the Word of God, or that we are free to set our own standard, and that no one has a right to tell us how we are to live. The freedom that Christ gives is being set free from sin and Satan *so we can obey the Word!*

We are not only saved by grace, but grace teaches us some things! “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11, 12). “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (James 1:22).

QUESTION: II Timothy 2:15 says, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Can you give me an explanation on this?

ANSWER: The truth is not revealed by a casual reading of the Bible. One must study, seek God, and desire to know the truth for the purpose of doing what the Word teaches. Millions have listened to sect preachers, accepted their ideas as to what the Word teaches; as a result, the blind are leading the blind. Paul said we should rightly divide the Word. We must have the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth, teach us, either directly or through a true man of God, before we can know the truth. Even if you have a true man of God as your pastor and teacher, you still need to study and make sure you are being taught right.

QUESTION: Can you explain Ezekiel 33:8?

ANSWER: Reading verse 7, along with verse 8, you notice that the Lord said, “I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.” Then we go into verse 8, “When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

God is saying that if the watchman does not preach His Word to the people and warn them of their wicked ways, the wicked will die for his evil ways, but I will require his blood at your—the watchman’s—hand.

A man who is truly called of God to preach His Word will preach the Word as long as he is true to God. Many have compromised the gospel and have, as Paul said, departed from the faith, and in doing so have lost their own soul, along with failing to warn the wicked. It is a very sacred thing to be called to preach the Word of God.

QUESTION: Why was God annoyed with Moses in the wilderness of sin for simply beating the stone two times instead of one?

ANSWER: It was not striking the rock twice instead of once that displeased the Lord! The Lord had told him to *speak* to the rock—Numbers 20:8—not strike it. It was Moses’ *disobedience* that displeased the Lord. Because of this act of disobedience, the Lord said, “Ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them” (verse 12). †

SHINE AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD

“In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”—Philippians 2:15b.

We use lights to make manifest. A Christian man should so shine in his life that a person could not live with him a week without knowing the gospel. His conversation should be such that all who are about him should clearly perceive whose he is, and whom he serves; and should see the image of Jesus reflected in his daily actions.

Lights are intended for guidance. We are to help those around us who are in the dark. We are to hold forth to them the Word of life. We are to point sinners to the Savior, and the weary to a divine resting place. Men sometimes read their Bibles and fail to understand them; we should be ready, like Philip, to instruct the inquirer in the meaning of God’s Word, the way of salvation, and the life of godliness.

Lights are also used for warning. On our rocks and shoals a lighthouse is sure to be erected. Christian men should know that there are many false lights shown everywhere in the world, and therefore the right light is needed. The wreckers of Satan are always abroad, tempting the ungodly to sin under the name of pleasure; they hoist the wrong light, be it ours to put up the true light upon every dangerous rock, to point out every sin, and tell what it leads to, that we may be clear of the blood of all men, shining as lights in the world.

Lights also have a very cheering influence, and so have Christians. A Christian ought to be a comforter, with kind words on his lips, and sympathy in his heart; he should carry sunshine wherever he goes, and diffuse happiness around him.

Gracious Spirit dwell with me;
I myself would gracious be,
And with words that help and heal
Would thy life in mine reveal,
And with actions bold and meek
Would for Christ my Savior speak. †

—Taken from Spurgeon’s *Morning and Evening Readings*

IT IS OF THE LORD'S MERCY

2025 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Matt Deville

I INVITE YOU to turn with me to Lamentations 3, starting at verse 17. Jeremiah was a man of God. If you listen to these verses, you might say that he wasn't living very close to God. Verses 17 and 18: "And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace [That doesn't sound very appealing, does it?]: I forgot prosperity. And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord." We say that salvation is enjoyable. Do you mean Christians get down with trials and troubles? We see here that Jeremiah was going through some difficulties. He was discouraged. All of us at times find ourselves in this state. Saints and sinners alike go through times when we feel discouraged. We don't seem to find hope in anything. That's just life.

But Jeremiah did something. Verse 19: "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall." It was some things from his past that affected him. Sometimes in life, difficulties come our way and they affect us. We go through hardships, trials, and we don't understand it. We wonder why. Why does God let this happen? We don't understand. We can't reason within our minds. We as humans like to understand. We like to be able to analyze the situation and be able to make sense of it. That can be a good thing, but it also can be a bad thing.

WHEN JEREMIAH REMEMBERED

Verse 20: "My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me." Jeremiah was down, but the key to this is, he didn't stay there. The key to this, Dear Ones, is the saints of God have a remedy for this. We can look to God. Thankfully, saints and sinners alike have the remedy. We must turn to God to find the answer to our problems.

In verse 21, Jeremiah says, "This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." He started getting his focus off all the negative, all the problems. He started to get his mind on God. He started to get his mind off the impossibilities of the situation and how bad it was. It's good to have hope. You're not going to find hope in this world.

When the Israelites came to the Red Sea, it seemed impossible for them to get away from their enemy. They said, in effect, "Moses, what are we going to do? We're not going to be able to go across this sea. We might as well go back. It's over." But there was a God in heaven who parted the Red Sea and made a way across. Dear Ones, we need to recall to our minds that with man it's impossible, but with God all things are possible. So Jeremiah recalled to his mind that he had hope.

Verses 22 and 23: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness." I have to remind myself of this: It's not in our ability to figure out and solve the situation that keeps us from being consumed. I find myself trying to figure out how this is going to work out, how this is going to come

about, and it gets to me. It gets me farther and farther down, but then when I start to recall to my mind how in times past God has made a way when it seemed impossible, I start drawing strength from that. I start to feel lifted up, and my peace starts to come back. That's the battle of the mind that we're in. We need to get our minds upon God and trust in Him. So when Jeremiah started to recall things to his mind, he started to have hope. He remembered, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed." One of the unsearchable riches is God's mercy towards us. God loves and cares for us. That's the reason we're not consumed. If it wasn't for His mercy, we would be consumed.

There is a devil who comes to steal, to kill, and to consume people. Dear Ones, we can look around and see that he's been very successful in doing that. But when we turn to God and His mercy, we don't have to be consumed. No matter how big the problem is, God's mercy can keep us from being consumed. Is it of the Lord's mercies that we're not consumed, because we're so strong and mighty? Because we get tired of asking Him for help? That's not what the verse says. It's because God's compassions toward us fail not. What does the verse say? They are new every so often? Every month they're renewed? No, they are new every morning, because God loves us with an everlasting love. I am so glad that God loves us like that.

HIS COMPASSIONS FAIL NOT

My desire is that we see God the way He truly is. People can paint pictures of a God who is so harsh. The devil can make us see a God who's there just looking for reasons to kick us out of the kingdom. Did you know that? Sometimes the devil makes us see God as someone who is looking for a reason to beat us down, but this says: "His compassions fail not." I want to see God as He truly is.

Mercy is "benevolence; mildness or tenderness of heart which disposes a person to overlook injury, or to treat an offender better than they deserve." We don't deserve God's mercy. It has nothing to do with what we deserve. No matter how far in sin people go, God still wants to show them mercy. "Oh, but you don't know all that I've done." Some may even say, "Well, I've done hardly anything wrong. I've been a good person." It doesn't matter. We all needed a Savior. We need God's mercy in our lives. We need to recall to our minds that God loves us. In spite of all we're being told, and the battle that's going on in our minds, the devil is there to tell us all these lies about God. Even after we're saved, he wants to come in and tell lies to us and to keep us from being able to receive that mercy from God.

We're in a battle. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but we're in a battle. II Corinthians 10:4, "For



the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." Let me tell you, there are some strongholds that are built up today, and they need to be torn down. Many strongholds are keeping people from receiving the mighty blessings and the unsearchable riches that God has available for them. We can't tear them down within ourselves, but God can tear them down.

CASTING DOWN IMAGINATIONS

Verse 5: "Casting down imaginations ..." You see, the devil works on our minds. Sometimes he puts things in our minds: *Well, Bro. Greg is mad at you.* The devil might even get you to think *I'm not going to go to the convention this year, because last year Bro. Greg was rude to me. He has something against me.* Listen, don't tell me the devil doesn't come to you and put some things in your mind sometimes. Imaginations! *You've crossed the line, and God won't save you. God's not even real.* "... and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." There is so much in this world exalting itself against God. Is that really what it says? Since the Bible says it, we better stick with it.

The devil told Eve, in effect, "Well, I know the Lord said this to you, but that's not what it really means. You're not really going to die." The devil deceived her. He essentially said, "God's not being honest with you." Think about that! God had given Adam and Eve a beautiful garden to enjoy. A perfect life. He had been so good to them. The devil came in and deceived Eve and convinced her that he had something better. Dear Ones, if we're not careful, he can do the same thing to each and to every one of us. If you're not saved tonight, he's doing that to you. Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly, but the devil convinces people, "Oh, you don't want that life." Let me tell you, this is the best life there is.

The Bible says, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Do we believe the Bible? The devil has blinded the eyes of those who are lost. Our desire tonight is that God would break down that stronghold that the devil has and help people to see that God has a beautiful way for them. He wants what's best for them. He said, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jeremiah 29:11). But the devil lies and tells you that you don't need the life God offers. The devil has an expected end for you, too. Sin will take you farther than you want to go.

I had good friends that I was close to that have gone on to eternity. Sin took them farther and farther. One of my friends overdosed. In his sleep he was gone. One of my friends took his own life. How sad! We don't know how far sin will take us, but God said that He came to deliver. God's mercy is here tonight for those who are lost, but Satan is here battling. I'm here to tell you that if God speaks to your heart, that's a guarantee that He'll save you. Let God tear down the stronghold. The enemy is trying to hold you back from all that God has for you. Think about that. The God who created the heavens and the earth, spoke them into existence, He wants to have a relationship with you.

Through the tough times, tough decisions, heartaches, what did the Lord say? "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (I Peter 5:7). He's a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. God cares for us. He wants to have that relationship, but Dear Ones, we must do our part. We must come to Him. We must seek Him, but again, the devil is there to tell us that we don't want the abundant life. That's a lie from the devil. It has nothing to do with what kind of life we've lived. Thank God for that.

How sad it would be if someone came to God and He said, "Well, you're not good enough. You don't have enough money. You're not smart enough." Bro. Matt would have been kept out a long time ago. But it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter if you're from America, it doesn't matter if you're black or white. It doesn't matter! It's not predicated upon us. It's predicated on God's mercy and love for us. So many times people say, "Well, I have to get this right first. I have to get that right first." No, God said to come as you are. Let Him make the change that needs to be made.

THE RICH YOUNG RULER

There was an admirable man, a certain ruler, who came to the Lord. He asked the Lord, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" That was a good question. I would be proud if someone came and asked that question. The Lord told him about the commandments he needed to keep. He said, "All these have I kept from my youth up." That's good, but was that enough? So many people think today think, *well, that's enough.* A lot of people would have probably assumed that he was good to go, but Jesus sees farther than we see. Let me say this: That's why Christ is the Head of the church. No man is the head of the church, because man can't see what He sees. Sometimes we might think we know, but Christ places those in the body as He sees fit. I'm glad He's the Head of the church.

Jesus said to the certain ruler, "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." He wasn't ready to do that. The Bible says, "When he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich." Did Jesus adjust the gospel to suit him? No! Did He say, "Well, I don't love him, I don't care for him, I don't want to give him mercy"? No, He loved him. He wanted to show mercy to him. Dear Ones, we have to do our part. Jesus isn't going to change the gospel to suit us. We have to do our part. But Jesus wanted to show this man mercy. He wanted to save him, but he was not willing to do his part. All the good that he had done, all his obedience to the commandments did not give him what he truly needed.

There was another man who had lived a wicked, wicked life. I would imagine his family was sort of embarrassed of him. He was a thief, and his life was nearing its end. He wasn't going to have the opportunity to witness to others or to work for the Lord. What good was he going to be able to do for the Lord? Why should the Lord even save him? Because His compassions fail not. He loved this man. He doesn't look on us just because we can do something. No, the Lord loves us. He cares for us. This man said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Jesus didn't say,

“Well, look at all the things you have done. Look how horrible you were.” He didn’t say, “You’re no good. I don’t want to have anything to do with you.” No! Jesus looked on him with compassion and love. Jesus said, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” I brought that out because I want you to understand tonight that I don’t care what the devil is telling you, God loves you. Even as Christians, sometimes we make mistakes. We go through difficulties, but God still loves us. He still cares about us. It’s not just because we always get everything right. He still cares. We have to seek Him and ask Him to help us. The thief realized that he had wasted his life. Christ rejoiced to say, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” He was happy to forgive him. The angels in heaven rejoiced at that man’s salvation. That’s the God we serve! Ephesians 2:4, 5: “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.” It’s beyond our understanding. Why should God love us? God loves us. He cares for us.

THE PRODIGAL SON

There was a young man who was blessed to grow up in a good home. You know, it’s a blessing to grow up in a good home. My heart goes out to children who grow up in a tough home. It breaks my heart. This young man had all that he could desire, seemingly, but the devil began to work on his mind. Things looked so much better out there in the world. The devil can make things look so appealing out there. This young man decided that he didn’t like where he was anymore. He wanted to do something else. He wanted to live his life to the fullest. He went to his father for his inheritance. He went out to live an enjoyable life. He had a lot of friends. He thought he had it figured out. He wanted to do what he wanted to do, but as time went on, things started changing. He didn’t have as much money as he had before. His friends started to slowly disappear. He realized his friends were not the friends he thought they were. His finances started to change. A famine started to happen.

This young man every so often thought about home. Time went on, and he started to get a little more desperate. Things he thought he would never do, he found himself doing. Many of us can relate to this. It came to the place that he had no money. He was ashamed of where he was. He really thought about going home. He thought to himself, *How do I go home looking like this? How do I explain that I have none of the money left that Dad gave me? I’ve wasted it. I’ll be an embarrassment to my family. What are they going to think of me? How am I going to look them in the face? The servants there will think I was an idiot. My dad won’t have anything to do with me. Who could blame him? Look at what I’ve done.*

The time came when this young man started to realize, *That’s not my dad. I remember my dad being so kind to travelers as they came by. He would take them in and treat them well.* He got so low. He said, in effect, “I’m going home. I don’t even care what anybody says. I can’t live like this anymore. Something has to change. Even if I have to be a servant, I’m going home.” He started having hope. “I need help. My life is falling apart. I can’t go any farther.”

This young man started to travel back home. No doubt the devil was telling him that he needed to turn around, because it would be bad for him to go home. Home was his last hope. As he approached, he didn’t see one of the servants. Up ahead, he saw his father waiting for him to come home. A father waiting with open arms because he loved him. He desired him to be back. It wasn’t a father who scolded him or jumped on him. The father didn’t care what his son had done or any of the things that he had wasted. He just was glad to have his son home. He rejoiced because his son who was lost was now home.

Dear Ones, I want us to hear this scripture: Micah 7:18, “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever [Here’s the part I want us to get:], because he delighteth in mercy.” He finds joy in mercy. It blesses Him to be able to give mercy. That father had longed and wept and waited for his son to come home. It broke his heart. He was so glad to see his son come home.

God desires to see His precious children come home. Maybe when we’re struggling or going through battles and can’t seem to get the victory, God wants to give mercy and help. If you’re unsaved or backslidden, God’s not here to beat you down. The church is not here to beat you down. God’s mercy is here to reach out and reach down and save your precious soul. It says, “He delighteth in mercy.” He rejoices to see a precious soul come home. But, Dear Ones, we must do our part.

CONCLUSION

Matthew 11:28, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Christ delights in giving rest to those who are burdened down with sin. You have to come to Him. You can’t pay attention to all the lies the devil throws your way.

Do we believe God loves us? Do we believe that He wants what’s best for us? Can we trust Him? Focus on trusting God and His love. We can trust Him to work out whatever problems there are. He has a way of working those things out. We must place our trust in Him. Why not surrender it all to Him? He delighteth in mercy, and He truly wants to give us mercy. Why not let Him?

May God bless you. †

OUT OF BOX 88

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your kind work and prayers. I am so blessed and happy that I can give to the Lord’s work. He has answered many prayers for my family and myself over the years.

I’m so glad we have a great Church of God in Hagerstown. I’m 92 years old and can’t get to church like I did years ago. But I pray for it [the church] every day and night.

God bless all who work for the church, school, and pressroom.

—D. W., Maryland

BUY THE TRUTH, AND SELL IT NOT

Radio Message by Bro. Brian Richards

I WOULD LIKE for us to look at Proverbs, chapter 23, verse 23: “Buy the truth, and sell it not.” I’d like to bring a few thoughts from this verse, breaking it down into two parts. The first half: “Buy the truth” We see here that we are told to *buy the truth*. We get from that part that there must be something else other than truth that we can buy. There is something else that can be bought: untruth or false religion.

We know that there are many false prophets out in the world, and many people are following them day by day. We want to look at just why this is, and what the reasons are for this.

I want us for a moment to look at what would be the most destructive way of destroying the kingdom of God. That is the devil’s sole purpose.

We see back in the days of Nero when the church was flourishing that Nero persecuted the church. He tortured saints and set out great persecutions among the land. Rather than hindering the Church of God, this created martyrs. Christians who were dying became martyrs for those Christians who were still living. They were inspiring the Christian population and encouraging them to stand strong on the truth that they had and to press on and be strong soldiers. This tactic of persecution and outright conflict of the Church of God by the devil was not successful.

Later in history, the Church of God again flourished. It began to grow around the time of Martin Luther. We know, too, that people began to teach many different doctrines, different ideas, and many different sects. The Calvinistic doctrine and many other doctrines were being spread about. We see here that a more successful plan was being used and enforced by the devil. Rather than outright battling the Church of God, he used the Word of God, the Bible, the truth, and distorted it. He made it into something that it is not. He would take a verse, a scripture, and have people build doctrines and churches on distorted scriptures. Scriptures that were taken out of context. This was the root and beginnings of many doctrines that were not founded on the Church of God.

We read in Matthew 24, verses 23 and 24: “Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

Let us look at what makes a false prophet. We read in Revelation 22, verses 18 and 19, that we are not to “add to” or “take from” the Word of God. Many doctrines are manmade: forbidding to marry, and abstaining from meats for examples. We read in I Timothy 4:3, “Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.” Many are distorting the scriptures. Others are taking scriptures and building a doctrine on one scripture rather

than taking the whole Bible, the complete Word, and rightly dividing it. Others omit parts of the Bible, but the Bible tells us to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. We must not take a certain portion of the Bible and live by that and reject other portions of the Bible that do not fit our lifestyle. We must live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. If we don’t do this, we are omitting the Bible and not founding our religious beliefs on truth. The devil has been very successful in causing this. If we look around in our society today, there are many doctrines and many beliefs that are very contrary to one another, and also contrary to the Word. We are to buy the truth and hold to it. This verse again: “Buy the truth, and sell it not.”

In Jesus’ day, He was not only calling those who were outcast, those who were murderers and liars, but He was calling those who were confused and in false religion. He is still doing the same today. There are many people today who are confused. Many that I have come in contact with don’t know what to believe. They say, “Well, how do you know you have the truth? Different people get different interpretations out of the Bible. How can you say that so many who are out in the world are living wrong? How do you know that they’re not founded on the Word? Some have thousands of followers and yet you say they’re wrong.” But we must study the Word, buy the truth, and speak the truth. The truth is found in the Word of God.

We read in Revelation, chapter 18, verse 4: “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” “Come out of her” is referring to Babylon. Babylon was a symbol of false religion. So, the Lord in the old days, as well as today, is calling those who are confused and lost in false religion to come out and seek the truth.

Now, I’d like for us to look at the second half of this verse, “Buy the truth, *and sell it not.*” The Word is simply saying, “Do not sell the truth.” In other words, “Do not lose the truth. Do not get rid of it but keep it.” Keep it dear. After buying the truth, there are some things we need to do to keep this truth. One of those is to establish firm convictions. Without firm convictions, we will be swayed about and tossed about in the waves of life. We would not have a firm foundation or a solid Rock to hold on to and to stand on.

II Timothy 2:15 tells us: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” In establishing firm convictions, we need to study the Bible daily in our own lives. We need to pray that God will direct us and teach us. We must not accept the mere teachings of man. We need to be sure that if we are attending a Church of God that we are being taught the Word. We need to study and follow along with the minister’s message and be sure the teachings are founded on the Word of God.

After establishing firm convictions that are founded on the Word of God, we need to hold fast to those convictions. We are instructed to do this in Hebrews, chapter 2, verse 1: “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest

chapter 3, verses 13 and 14: “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians, chapter 4, verse 13: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

God has promised us the power to overcome the world. He has promised us that if we will buy the truth, if we will seek it, hold to it, and be determined not to sell it, He promised us the power to be victorious in this present world. I John 4:4, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." This is another example of a promise of God's power that He will give us that which we stand in need of if we will but yield our lives to Him.

I would like to encourage those who may be confused or lost, unsure of what to believe, where to stand, or to even how to begin in this race, to seek the truth. Get your Bible out and study it. Get on your knees and ask God to help you to find the truth, to show you the light, to show what is the right way, and just where to go to find more of the truth.

As you study your Bible and pray daily, I believe that even though there might not be true churches in your area, God will minister to you Himself. I believe that He will show the true and the right way. I believe He will enable you to live a pure and holy life, whether it be through Church of God literature or just through your convictions. I believe that God is able to teach those who are sincerely desiring the Word.

I trust these thoughts have been an encouragement and a help to someone who is seeking the truth. †

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

Jesus bought it with His own blood Acts 20:28
It has a good foundation Ephesians 2:20

Judging Righteously

By the late C. W. Naylor

IT IS VERY NATURAL for us to form conclusions about persons and things and just as natural to express those conclusions. Our opinions may be just and well founded, or they may not be founded on an adequate knowledge of the facts, and at times may be very unjust. The Bible warns us over and over against harsh judgment, rash judgment, and judgment without a full knowledge of the facts. No doubt in the back of our mind we desire to be fair to everybody, but we are so influenced by circumstances and by a variety of things until, unless we are careful, the judgment we render and perhaps express may be harmful both to others and to ourselves.

In John 7:24 we have a definite and positive command, and this command is just as binding upon us and should be as conscientiously observed as the command not to kill or to steal. It reads, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." Some of us are altogether too careless of our attitude toward this text. Our opinions or judgments of others may be affected by a great many things. It is therefore highly important that we take these things into consideration and see that we are not improperly moved by them.

The judgment of Jesus was always righteous judgment. That was not merely because He had all knowledge that He needed to judge each case. That knowledge was important, but there was something else still more important. In John 5:30 He says, "My judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." In other words, Jesus was moved by no personal consideration. There was no selfish motive that entered into His judgment. He stood off and kept Himself entirely out of the situation and judged fairly, properly, and mercifully, basing His judgment on the actual facts of the case.

There are a number of things that affect our judgment, some of which we will notice. First, we are often consciously or unconsciously prejudiced against or for a thing. When this is the case our prejudice immediately falls upon the scale in favor of or against the individual or thing being judged, and therefore our opinion is not merely the result of contemplation of the facts, but it is facts plus or minus prejudice. In either case our judgment is not righteous judgment but prejudiced judgment. We are unfairly favorable or unfairly unfavorable to the person or thing judged, therefore our judgment is not the judgment that Jesus would render in the case. If we hold to or express this judgment, we are wronging the individual judged.

It is often very difficult to lay aside our prejudices and judge fairly. It requires real sincerity and honesty to do this. It requires that we take into consideration whether or not we are prejudiced, and whether or not we are judging this individual or person as we would judge other individuals or other things. If we know we are prejudiced against anything or anyone, the most solemn obligation lies upon us to be so careful and so

just in judging that we shall render righteous judgment. Prejudice has been the basis of a thousand wrongs every day in the last thousand years. Let us beware of prejudice.

Another thing that may warp our judgment is self-interest. If someone displeases us, or if someone or something stands in the way of some of our interests, that very fact will affect our judgment in a way that makes it difficult for us to judge righteously. This is especially true if there is a conflict of interest, as for instance, competition in business, or for the friendship or love of an individual, or anything where there is competition of interest and a likelihood that the success of another will mean lack of success for us.

Again, personal desire may strongly influence our judgment. If someone opposes us as we attempt to carry out our desires, if he reproves our conduct, if he criticizes us, if he puts obstacles in our way, or if for any reason our personal desires are crossed, unrighteous judgment is likely to follow. It was because Jesus did not let His personal desires affect His judgment, and the fact that He had no prejudices for or against any, and that he had no self-interest of any sort that He was able to judge righteously. Perhaps we cannot be without these things to the degree that Jesus was, nevertheless, it is just as incumbent upon us to judge righteously as it was upon Him. We must therefore be more careful than He had need to be if we are to be as fair and as just as He was.

Not only do the things already mentioned hinder us in judging righteously, but very often our former teachings bias our judgment. The Bible says, "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." That means to give a fair hearing to everything and to everybody. It does not mean that we shall settle things on the authority of others, nor upon what we have heard in the past about people or things, but that we make sincere and earnest efforts to know the truth. We must have a love for the truth that will overcome natural and acquired bias of opinion.

The opinions of others will strongly influence us, and the tendency will be for us to adopt their opinions without inquiring carefully into the reason why they hold these opinions. It is perhaps not too much to say that the majority of opinions and judgments of others are wrong in some degree or in their entirety. If we readily accept the opinions of others and adopt them for our own, or are too much influenced by them in forming our own opinions, we may be sure we shall often be wrong in our judgment. More than that, we are often swayed by our own opinions. Many of our opinions were formed without due consideration of the facts. We jump to a conclusion without investigation. Now we have the opinions and whether true or untrue, fair or unfair, we shall be swayed by them if we are not extremely careful. And, thereby our judgments may be warped and we may be very unfair in some instances even though we may have had no such intentions.

The command of Scripture to prove all things is a command to make a thorough investigation. If we cannot make a thorough investigation, we should hold our judgment in suspense and not consider it final until we can know the facts. We should keep a question mark

after it and not forget that question mark when it comes to our attitude or our expression of opinion.

Righteous judgment is candid, earnest, sincere, unbiased judgment, formed only after so full an investigation as may reveal the real facts. Righteous judgment comes from a righteous attitude of mind and soul. We cannot judge people righteously unless we hold a right attitude toward them. It is hard to be fair to people whom we do not like or people who do things we do not like. It is hard to overcome our own prejudices, our own self-interest, and our teachings and the influence of others and keep in mind always to judge righteously, to be fair, to be kind in our thoughts toward others. Jesus knew His judgement was like the judgment of the Father because He judged from the same merciful and unbiased standpoint as the Father. Let us sincerely and humbly ask ourselves the question before God, "Is the judgment I render on persons and things, the judgment of God? Am I at all times fair and kind and righteous in my judgments?" †

FACING THE APPOINTMENT

By the late Bro. Garry Jeffries

Ecclesiastes 3:1, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

The wise man Solomon plainly explained that we must not expect a flowery bed of ease, but said it's not just a time to be born or a time to plant, it's not just a time to be healed or to build, it's not a time to laugh, not just a time to embrace or to get, it's not just a time to keep silence or a time to love, or not just a time for peace. No! To each statement of good there is a bad side. There is a two-sided thing, not the doing of bad but the tempting side of life. Satan is always standing by to attack God's church. Satan respects no one. He didn't respect Jesus and he will continue to fight this cause till Jesus comes again. History has revealed to us that down through the ages the church has faced her hour of temptation and pain. So we of this day should not be too alarmed of the appointed time when we must face our challenger. It is true that sometimes we give room to be tempted and let trouble come our way, but we also cannot escape or change the plan of our blessed Lord. Often by being a little careless or overlooking Satan's cunning ways, we run into unexpected trouble. But I would like to speak to this end that I have experienced, down through the years, that every time God began to bless His church and the saints of God began to be happy and encouraged and on the go for God, Satan stepped in and began to use his strong weapon, which is discouragement. Often people fall victim to his delusions, not remembering the good things that God has for them.

I remember one time while I was in Honduras, I was talking to a sister, and she said, "No matter what happens to me, I will not leave the church and go back in sin. God has done too much for me." Now that is what I call a made-up mind, a commitment to serve God—not that she did not expect trouble or tribulation,

hardship, or sorrow, but the thing was they would not be of any hindrance to her commitment to God.

There is a resting period in God's plans for His faithful children. In Revelation 14:12, 13, are some of the most comforting words, words that should make us slow down and get hold of ourselves. People, how often we have told the world of our love, our faith, and patience in God. Verse 12 says, "Here is the patience of the saints: [not of the false prophets or of devils, but of saints] here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Verse 13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Then it is obvious that God does not expect death to bring a standstill to the work that is so needed on this earth. Even if the President dies or the owner of an automobile factory dies, the factory keeps on working. Kentucky Fried Chicken kept right on frying chicken even when Colonel Sanders died. The world will keep on going, no matter who lives or dies. Well, God has His program planned, as it was in days gone by. Moses came so far with the children of Israel and he told Joshua that after his death he would have to take his children on to the promised land. I must say without a doubt that God expects us to carry on. Come what may, I believe that the church should be more inspired and determined to press on after a dedicated person has passed away to make sure that his labor was not in vain. The goal that was set must be achieved by those that remain behind. If a repair job needs to be done for the church, then get the repair finished. If the pastor dies, the remaining congregation must keep on. If a building was started, it must then be finished with inspiration. If we throw up our hands because of a death and let a dream perish, Satan will be given the victory. Yes, it's true that in all the things that we have adjusted to, death is still a stranger when he comes.

Let us everyone work faithfully and do our part, as we will be paid every man according as his works shall be. May God help us to learn to submit to His will always. May God bless you is my prayer. †

—Reprinted from July 1994 issue

STOP—AND REFOCUS

Have you ever wondered why a pigeon walks so funny? According to an interesting article in the *Detroit Free Press*, a pigeon walks the way it does so it can see where it's going. Because it can't adjust its focus as it moves, the pigeon actually has to bring its head to a complete stop between steps in order to refocus. This is the way it walks: head forward, stop; head back, stop. Don't laugh—that's how it goes!

In our spiritual walk with the Lord we have the same problem as the pigeon. We have a hard time seeing while we're moving. We also need to stop between steps—to refocus on where we are in relation to the world and the will of God. That's not to say we have to stop and pray and meditate about every little decision in life. But certainly our walk with the Lord needs to be built into it a pattern of "stops," which will enable us to see more clearly about moving on.

Church of God (Universal), Inc.
The Way of Truth
P. O. Box 88
Hagerstown, MD 21741-0088 U.S.A.

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
Mercersburg, PA
Permit No. 15

2025 PHILIPPINE CONVENTION

Paniqui, Tarlac, Luzon

December 26-30, 2025, Lord willing

Bro. Rey Fabian, Host Pastor



2026 JAMAICA CONVENTION

Lapland, Catadupa, St. James

February 17-22, 2026, Lord willing

Bro. Hezekiah Lamey, Host Pastor



Revival Services

DEVILLE, LOUISIANA

October 9-12, 2025

Bro. Doug Koerner, Evangelist

Bro. Terry Deville, Pastor



HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

October 31-November 2, 2025

Bro. Tim Crooks, Evangelist

Bro. Greg Tyler, Pastor

OUR SERVICES ON CD'S

CD's of our services are available for purchase. These are \$3.00 each; however, orders of 10 or more are only \$2.50 each, postage paid. Please write in the blank how many you would like to receive. Send check or money order to: The Way of Truth CD Ministry, P. O. Box 88, Hagerstown, MD 21741-0088. (credit cards now accepted.)

- ___ CD #1679 Newness in this Life—David Martin
- ___ CD #1680 God's Patience—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1681 Multiplied Grace—Rebecca Bland
- ___ CD #1682 Be Ready—Brian Richards
- ___ CD #1683 Contentment—Thomas Harris
- ___ CD #1684 Ladies' Day—"Shine in Me"
- ___ CD #1685 A Separate People—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1686 In Memory of OOC/Testimonies
- ___ CD #1687 The Message Interrupted—Rebecca Bland
- ___ CD #1688 Be Not Deceived—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1689 Sound Doctrine—Brian Richards
- ___ CD #1690 The Rest of Our Time—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #1691 Have You Not Known?—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1692 Our God, the Great I AM—Young People
- ___ CD #1693 Young People's Service—Young Speakers
- ___ CD #1699 Burn the Boats—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1700 Corruptible vs. Incorruptible—Rebecca Bland
- ___ CD #1701 Stranger from Galilee—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #1702 Motivation for the Christian—Thomas Harris
- ___ CD #1703 An Example of the Believers—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1704 The Five Love Languages—Brian Richards
- ___ CD #1705 Keeping the Feast—Rebecca Bland
- ___ CD #1706 Is Jesus Christ the Same?—Alan Richards
- ___ CD #1710 Transformed—Brian Richards
- ___ CD #1711 Freedom vs. Bondage—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1712 Even More So—Rebecca Bland
- ___ CD #1713 Mercy—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1714 Perspective—Thomas Harris
- ___ CD #1715 Children's Day Service
- ___ CD #1716 Building a House on the Rock—Doug Shenberger