

# The Way of Truth

Vol. 76

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

No. 2



**The Christian Path**  
A Shining Light for Perilous Times  
Theme of 2017 Cayman Convention

**February**  
**2018**



## *From the Pen of the Editor*

**D**URING the month of February, the United States observes the birth of two of the greatest presidents the nation has ever had. They held principles that are greatly needed in our day.

George Washington was born at his father's plantation on Popes Creek, Westmoreland County, Virginia, on February 22, 1732.

In June 1775, Congress commissioned George Washington to take command of the Continental Army. He later resigned from the army and went home to Mount Vernon, Virginia, expecting to live a quiet peaceable life. However, when the Revolutionary War broke out, George Washington became Commander-in-Chief.

At Valley Forge (1777-78), northwest of Philadelphia, the Army suffered greatly! Starvation, disease, malnutrition, and exposure killed more than 2,500 American soldiers.

The war started April 19, 1775, and ended September 3, 1783. On December 23, 1783, Washington presented himself before Congress in Annapolis, Maryland, and resigned. He did not remain at Mount Vernon! When the first presidential election came, George Washington received every elector vote; no other president has. Washington served for two four year terms and refused to serve any longer. Every president followed his example until Franklin Roosevelt.

Abraham Lincoln was born in a log cabin in the state of Kentucky in February 1809. He was elected the 16<sup>th</sup> president in very troublesome times. There were threats against his life before he came to Washington to be sworn in. In fact, he slipped into the city at night.

During his first term, the Civil War broke out when a number of states withdrew from the Union. Lincoln was sworn in for his second term on March 4, 1865. By then the end of the war was in sight. 620,000-750,000 soldiers died in the war. Lincoln was already making plans to help the South rebuild the states.

On March 4, 1865, in Lincoln's second inaugural address he alludes to "God," the "Bible," "providence," "the Almighty," and "divine attributes." He concludes the address with these words: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

On April 14, 1865, Lincoln was shot, and on the 15<sup>th</sup> he died. During his lifetime, he was one of the most reviled presidents the nation had. Now, he is considered one of the nation's greatest and is given credit for keeping the nation together. One of the outstanding things about Lincoln was the humble spirit he showed without malice toward anyone. This is something that is greatly needed in our nation today.

### **Some quotes from the past:**

"The first and almost the only Book deserving universal attention is the Bible."—John Quincy Adams

"All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated through this Book; but for the Book we could not know right from wrong. All the things desirable to man are contained in it."—Abraham Lincoln

"... the Bible ... is the one supreme source of revelation of the meaning of life, the nature of God and spiritual nature and need of men. It is the only guide of life which really leads the spirit in the way of peace and salvation."—Woodrow Wilson

"Go to the Scriptures ... the joyful promises it contains will be a balsam to all your troubles.

—Andrew Jackson

"The moral principles and precepts contained in the Scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws. All the miseries and evils which men suffer from vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery, and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible."

—Noah Webster

"The foundations of our society and our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country."—Calvin Coolidge

—Quotes from, *The Rebirth of America*

The Constitution of the United States says nothing about "the separation of church and state." The first amendment does make it clear that there was to be no "state church" like so many in Europe.

The various quotes given in this Editorial clearly show that the Bible and religion were not to be ruled out of the teaching and lives of the people, not even our national rulers.

What we read in Proverbs 14:34 is still true today! "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Righteousness is simply doing what is right. It is a sad state of affairs that so many religious groups teach that we are all sinners, that we sin more or less every day. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him" (I John 3:4-6). "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin" (I John 3:9a). †

## **I'M NOT ALONE**

**Rosie Krain**

I'm not alone in the darkest night,  
For I have Jesus, my guide and my light.  
I'm not alone through the toilsome day,  
For I have Jesus each step of the way.  
I'm not alone in each trying hour,  
For I have Jesus, my strong and high tower.  
I'm not alone if Satan tempts sore,  
For I have Jesus to keep evermore.

# THE WAY OF TRUTH

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Vol. 76 February 2018 No. 2

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

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—Alvin A. Craig, Editor

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## OUT OF BOX 88

Dear Saints of God,

I want you to know I am still getting a lot of good out of your *Way of Truth* magazine. We don't hear the truth like we once did, but God's Word hasn't changed, and it never will. I am so thankful for God's people who still put the truth out there for us all.

I am sending an offering to help with the good work you all are doing. I pray for your work every day. May God's blessing be on you all.

—J. H., Kentucky

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

What would I do without the support and "God's truth" that I get from *The Way of Truth*? I have not found a Church of God in my area with our beliefs. ... I use the wonderful blessed sermons and articles in your magazine to sustain me and keep me focused on God's love and words. Bless your ministry.

—S. M., Indiana

Dear Saints,

Let me begin by saying thanks for sending me *The Way of Truth* for the past 65 years. I believe in the standard of truth you folks teach and practice, including the standard of dress and jewelry. Sixty-five years ago, I found a congregation that taught that same message, and today I still believe and practice it for myself. Sad to say, the standard was let down, and today that congregation no longer exists. ... Never let down the standard. If you do, the devil will come in like a flood. ...

—J. R., Ohio

Bro. Alvin and Bro. Greg,

I trust this letter finds you doing well. I appreciate the effort through *The Way of Truth* publication toward the unity and fellowship of God's people.

It has been a burden of mine for many years to see God's people enjoying Christian fellowship. My brothers in Christ, I hope the effort will continue. ...

I believe with all my heart that God's people have a right to have unity and fellowship, and that right has been taken away, forbidden under different guises. Maybe some people are sincere in what they call being cautious, or not wanting to compromise their position. My brothers, the saints of God hunger and long for fellowship. May other people stand up and contend in all humility for those rights that belong to them.

I have encouraged others to join with me in fervent prayer that God will move upon the hearts of His people. Regardless of who a person is or his position in the body, God can work through him. ...

I lived many years, as I said earlier, desiring to have the freedom to fellowship people (saints) whom I discerned had a like spirit as I have. My brothers, in my despair, I came to the point where I may first have to live the rest of my life, never enjoying true unity and fellowship until I made it to heaven. I know that this is not all what God desires for His people.

Since coming in contact with brothers and sisters who, for decades have been withheld from me, I will never cease to contend for the right of Christian fellowship, for that is our witness to the world, our families, and to all men.

His kingdom is forever.

—A brother in Christ (Anonymous)

**PRAY FOR BIBLE UNITY TO PREVAIL IN 2018! †**

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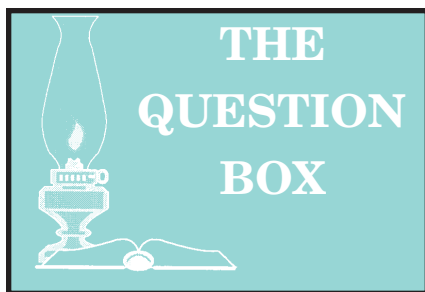
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*Answered by the Editor*



QUESTION: Please explain Revelation 14:1-5.

—Anonymous

ANSWER: John says that he saw a Lamb stand on mount Zion. The Lamb, of course, is Jesus Christ, and Mount Zion is the Church of God. Standing with Him are 144,000 “having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.” They have God’s seal of approval, whereas false religion has “the mark of the beast.”

The 144,000 are a symbol of the Evening Time church of God. There is nothing in this passage of scripture about them being the only ones that will go to heaven. There is nothing that says they all were men! Being a symbol of the church, they would include men, women, and children. The fact that the scripture speaks of them being “virgins” has no reference to sexual purity, but that they are pure in heart—free from all sin and free from all false religion. The 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation speaks of false religion the beast, and also the second beast, and the verses we have from chapter 14, speak of true saints of God.

The late F. G. Smith, in his book, *Revelation Explained*, says, “There is no difficulty in identifying this company on Mount Zion as the true people of God in marked contrast with the worshipers of all corrupt and false religion.” The fourth verse says, “These are they which were not defiled with women [false religion]; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.”

QUESTION: I need light on I Corinthians 10:21.

—O. O., Nigeria

ANSWER: Paul, in verse 20, says, “I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should fellowship with devils.”

In verse 21, Paul is pointing out that they could not partake of the Lord’s Supper—to drink of the fruit of the vine, which was a symbol of the blood of Christ, nor could they eat the bread which was a symbol of Christ’s body and partake of the table of the devil. If they worshiped idols, they could not worship the Lord; if they are going to worship the Lord, they cannot worship idols.

QUESTION: A Christian who is working and unable to attend weekly activities due to his work schedule (except Sundays), does that make him a sinner?

—P. P., Nigeria

ANSWER: No! If he were able, he doubtless would be there. In my way of thinking, I would say Sunday’s services are the most important. The Bible says, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25). It cannot be said that a person has “forsaken” the meeting together with the saints if he faithfully meets with them every Lord’s Day.

QUESTION: A brother in the same congregation who cannot tell you he is sorry to hear you are in trouble, or sorry to know you are sick, or have lost a close person, just how do you handle such a situation, or is he a true brother?—P. P., Nigeria

ANSWER: I shall not try to judge the man. God knows his heart. I feel I can say the man is missing something he needs. Paul said, “Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member he honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (I Corinthians 12:26, 27).

QUESTION: My question is concerning neglecting the assembling of ourselves as the matter of some is. To be realistic, the age we live in requires that some work for others to make a living, so they miss many services, even on Sundays. Would that be considered “neglecting”?—I. K., Nigeria

ANSWER: First of all, some cannot be accused of “neglecting” the services if they cannot be there. However, if they have to miss most or all of the services, they should endeavor to find another job.

QUESTION: Can a woman become an ordained pastor?—I. K., Nigeria

ANSWER: I have worked with two women pastors for years. Both have now gone to be with the Lord. I had one to hold us a revival.

QUESTION: What about what Paul said about women keeping silent in the church, as recorded in I Corinthians 14:34?—I. K., Nigeria

ANSWER: That applied to a special condition at Corinth and not to the church as a whole.

The late F. G. Smith, in his book, *What the Bible Teaches*, said, “The equality of women with men in the apostolic church extended even to official positions.” Then he goes on to give examples, such as Phoebe and Philip’s four daughters.

QUESTION: Among the gifts, which one is the best gift?—P. P., Nigeria

ANSWER: Paul says, “But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way” (I Corinthians 12:31), but he does not name the “best gifts.” If you were preaching to only sinners, evangelism might be the best gift. If you were ministering to only sick people, then miracles and healing would be the best gifts. If you were a pastor and preaching only to saints, then pastoral and teaching would be proper gifts. You can see by this answer that conditions can vary. †



# BECAUSE OF THE WORD

2017 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Doug Koerner

**W**HAT A Savior! The Bible says that He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. We can't comprehend all He can do. What a God! He's the One who created all things. He didn't make it; He created it. Man makes things. Man takes materials from the world and puts them together, but God created everything. He spoke it. The words of God spoke things into existence, and there they were. What a God! What a Savior!

I thank God that one day that He stopped by my life and asked me to be a part of this way. I thank God that I'm saved, and I thank Him for His goodness and love to me. By the grace of God, I want to finish my course. I preach this in many of my messages at home: When I first got saved at a young age, I had no idea what was ahead of me. I had been living for God for awhile, and I still didn't know what was ahead of me; but one thing I knew, I knew God would take care of me. But I had to learn that He would. God had to teach me in the earlier years to trust and to lean on Him. When battles and trials came, I had to go to Him in prayer. I also know that I can be living for God for 30 or 40 years, but I have to finish. You have to finish. You can live for God for 50 or 60 years and be faithful, but if you don't finish the course, all those years will be of no value. You can also thank God that you can live for the enemy of the soul for many years, but He can have mercy and save you before you leave this world.

It's good to be here this week. I truly, as many have testified, do thank the Lord for the wonderful spiritual blessings that I have received. I thank God for these refreshing times when we can get together with the saints. As I have mentioned many times in services, the greatest thing that we can do, Saints, is to stay true and faithful. We want to hear that you're faithful, and I want you all to hear that I'm faithful. We don't want to hear that one has lost out. We thank the Lord for His goodness and protection through this week.

## OUR TEXT

If you would, I invite you to open your Bibles to Matthew, chapter 13. We're going to read a parable that Jesus had given and get some thoughts out of it. In verses 18-23, Jesus said, "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh

unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty."

The parable that Jesus gave there, and one most of us are probably familiar with, is considered to be the parable of the sower. We know that Jesus was talking about the seed falling on different grounds. He gave an indication of four particular grounds that the Word of God had fallen upon. We know that the grounds indicate people and the seed indicates the Word of God. Jesus, in general of all grounds, just mentioned four. One of the greatest things that concerns me with this parable, and other parables that Jesus gave, is: of the four grounds—the Word of God—He said, "The seed took root in only one of those grounds."

Isaiah says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." Consider the Word of God. We're here for a little portion of time; and by the grace of God, we as ministers want God to help us to be able to reason together to get people to understand the Word of God. The Bible lets us know that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Few will find this good path. I want us to understand and realize that. The world out there tells us the opposite. The world tells us that everybody is going to heaven, but the Word of God doesn't say such as that.

## OFFENDED BECAUSE OF THE WORD

We're not going into a lot of detail of what happened in each of these grounds (the Word of God), but in the first ground Jesus mentions, He says: "They understood it not." The second ground: "They took a little bit of root, but they failed to go deeper into the things of God, and they also failed." The third ground: "All the cares of the world"; the activities. That's why the Word of God says in Ecclesiastes, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." I understand that scripture now. I remember when I got saved. I was still living at home. I didn't have bills to pay and responsibilities, but now as an adult, I have all kinds of responsibilities and activities. Remember God in your youth before the evil days draw nigh. Get saved, established, and settled in the things of God before all the cares of the world take hold. The fourth ground: "It took root and produced fruit."

I want to bring to you my thoughts from verse 21 of our text in Matthew, chapter 13: "Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." I want to take this thought out of the last part of that verse: "Because of the Word." In



every single verse that I read, and in this verse, Jesus makes mention *because of the word*. He said, "Because of the word, they are offended."

I thank God for our convention theme this year: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." I want to look for a moment at the word *righteousness*. Who is righteous? Romans 3:10 says, "There is none righteous, no, not one." I Samuel 2:2 says, "There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee." There's none righteous, none holy; but in the New Testament, Peter says in I Peter 1:16, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." If you will allow me, I'll use the other word: "Be ye [righteous]; for I am [righteous]." Only God is truly, in one sense, righteous. I want you to follow where I'm going with this. Only God is righteous. Only God knows who is righteous. Only God can judge righteously.

The Bible teaches, "Try the spirits." Thank God, we can look at one another and talk to one another, but sometimes we've been fooled. Sometimes the enemy of the soul gets in there and he starts planting seeds of bitterness and wrong things. We may never know that at the time. I've heard over my lifetime that there may be people in heaven that will surprise us. We may not have thought that they had gotten saved at the end and were doing well. There also may be people who are not in heaven that we'll be surprised as to why they're not there. Only God can judge righteously. One day each and everyone of us, from Adam to the last person who comes to the age of accountability, will stand before God and give an account of what we've done with His Son, Jesus Christ. Only God can judge righteously. He's not going to ask your pastor, your husband, your wife, or your parents. Only God Himself can judge righteously. So I ask the question: How do we know we're righteous?

Our theme talks about a nation. How does a nation become righteous? Matthew 13:21 says, "Because of the word." Those of you who raised your hands this morning indicating that you were righteous, you're righteous because of the Word of God. You're righteous because you've allowed the Word of God to be applied to your heart, mind, and soul. As Christ shows us the light, and we walk in that light to the best of our ability, we become a righteous people and a righteous nation. Sin is a reproach. I believe God honored our country at one time because it held the righteous principles of the Word of God. The Word of God was held to a standard, but today our country has rejected the Word of God. God won't allow that to take place and consider our nation righteous.

There are millions today who are not serving God because of excuses. Before we got saved, we reasoned and came up with a good excuse as to why we were not serving God. Sometimes it can seem to be a legitimate reasonable excuse, but it's not. People make excuses all the time. I want to emphasize this particular thought: *The reason people are not saved today is because the Word of God has become an offense to them*. We'll talk about understanding what the Word of God is a little later in the message. The Word of God is Christ. Jesus Christ is an offense to people today. He was an offense when He walked on this earth. Through periods of time,

He has been an offense to people.

One time Jesus gave the parable of the great supper. He said, "A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready." People made excuses. "I have bought a piece of ground"; "I have bought five yoke of oxen"; "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." I want you to get an understanding here. Whatever excuse you are giving God, it will not amount to anything. Again, people make excuses: "Because the sun's too hot; because of the cares of life," but Jesus says, "Because of the Word." Again, verse 21 of Matthew 13 says, "Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth *because of the word, by and by he is offended*."

People can be sick in their bodies. They pray and pray and pray, and not get healed. What they are originally saying is that it is God's fault. "God, you didn't heal me." God allowed Job to go through much suffering. The devil didn't have power over his suffering. God allowed those things to happen to see where Job was going to stand. Sometimes it is God's will and working to try us to see what we're going to do.

### KEEPING OUR TESTIMONY

I have mentioned this a lot of times: Saints, we need to keep our testimony before people. We need to keep our testimony before the saints in our hometown congregation. I appreciated Bro. Sanford's testimony. I asked him the other day, "What was it that caused God to bring you under conviction?" We talked a little bit. I like to hear people's testimonies. Do you know why? We read about Paul and different ones in the Bible, but that was a long time ago. I like to hear how God deals with people today. I've heard Bro. Terry say that he had somewhat the same testimony as Bro. Sanford's. I've heard Bro. Greg's testimony and others from here. They told how God saved them and brought them out of sin. I enjoy hearing those testimonies. We need to keep those before people. Many times when Paul stood before the council, he gave his testimony about his time on the road to Damascus. He said, "Let me tell you how I got saved." The enemy wants to make an offense by saying, "Don't tell people your testimony." We need to get up and tell people how we started to be under conviction and how the Spirit dealt with us. The enemy wants to keep us quiet.

Some years ago, I was chairman of a service in a convention. I remember Sis. Crystal's testimony. She mentioned she was at home watching the service on the internet. She got under conviction and came to the service here and was saved. She went through some oppositions at the altar. The enemy was doing his very best, but she finally prayed through. Thank God, she is still saved, sanctified, and living for God. I like hearing the saints when they testify. I like to hear how they were convicted and brought out of sin. The devil doesn't like to hear those things.

Let us go to Matthew, chapter 18:7, 8. Jesus said, "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy

foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.” I want to try to get you to understand the seriousness of being offended by the Word of God. Jesus made a point here. He said, “Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off.” Why? Because these things are going to hinder you in such a way that to make heaven your home, it would be better if you go through life not having these things than to die and go into eternal hell.

### OFFENDED BY SMALL THINGS

There are so many small things that people get offended over. I can remember when I first started to sing. I really didn’t sing or play the guitar. One time at home, we were having a good service and different ones sang who didn’t normally sing. I sat in the congregation and I said to the Lord, “Lord, why don’t send some more singers?” He said, “Well, how about you?” I didn’t mean it that way, but God started to help me to learn to sing. Our former pastor was very musically talented. I learned to sing some. I’ve been in different pulpits. Many times when I got up to sing, I completely forgot how the song should be sung. You get your nerves going and are sometimes embarrassed having the wrong key or tune. The enemy has multiple times come to me, especially in the earlier years, saying, “Why don’t you just stop doing that and sit down?” Well, God called me to sing. He called me to work. The Bible says that everything that God does, He does it for the edification of the church. We don’t ever need to come up front and do anything for our own purpose or show, but to edify the house of God. So many people have given up many times just over little things. “Someone didn’t speak to me right. Someone gave me a bad attitude about something.” Well, who are you serving?

I’m going to put this in a little deeper perspective this morning. I’ve asked Sis. Crystal to come up front. What is going to offend you to cause you to lose your salvation? I thank God that we live in a country today where we’re safe, but that’s not that way all around the world. “Sis. Crystal, if you don’t denounce Jesus Christ, your child’s going to die.” I want to put this in an understanding thought. There is no greater and closer bond than a mother and a child. Hebrews 11:36, 37, “And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented.” I’m talking about persecution of a physical body of death. People were put to death in the earlier years in the beginning of the church for standing for the gospel. What if someone were to come to Sis. Crystal and say to her, “Unless you denounce Jesus Christ, I’m going to kill your child”? Thank God we do live in a country that’s protected, but I’m talking about how close as it gets.

If something little happens, people give up. “I give up, and I’m not serving God any more.” How foolish to think about those things! Jesus said, “Offenses will come.” Don’t ever think that you’re going to get saved and not have trials and persecutions. You can be assured, they will come.

### WE NEED VICTORY OVER OFFENSES

I can remember when I first got saved. I had some battles and trials in certain areas. The minister started to preach on something I needed. I can remember thinking, *I hope he won’t stay on that too long. I hope he touches on it and moves on.* Why? Because it was a sore spot for me, but the Spirit of God started to deal with me. He said, “There are some things you have to get the victory over. There are some things you have to put on the altar.” If there are some things in the Word of God that’s a trouble to you, you need to ask God to give you the victory over those things, because they will become an offense and cause you to lose your soul. The Word of God should be a delight.

If you’re a new convert, I trust it is your desire, “Lord, I want to be in the Word. I want to study the Word. I want to be in the house of God to hear the Word.” I know when we first got saved, we didn’t know a lot of things. I heard Bro. John Romero’s testimony one time. He said he had long hair when he got saved. Just walking down life’s pathway and enjoying the things of God, all of a sudden the Lord showed him a verse of scripture: “Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?” (I Corinthians 11:14).

To everyone of us, as we began walking the pathway of life, God showed us something on our pathway. We may have struggled with it some, but He gave us the grace, and we finally walked in it. What a blessing it was! The thing is, as we kept walking in it, God showed us something else. I thank God that He is merciful, loving, kind, and patient with us. He never shows us too much that we can’t handle, but when He does show it to us, it has been with love and kindness—every time!

There’s a teaching in the Word of God about modesty. The Bible teaches us that fresh water and salt water don’t mix. This refers to our mouths—blessing and cursing. Out in the world, they’re cursing and using God’s name in vain, but when they go to church, everything’s fine and dandy. He says, “These things ought not so to be.”

God will show us the places we’re not to go. He will teach us that when we get saved, one of the most important things is being in the house of God, where we can be sitting under the Word of God. What I’m talking about is: Because of the Word of God, because of things I’ve mentioned in the message, sometimes people become offended and don’t want to measure up, and they fade away. Regardless of how old or young we are, we will have trials and tribulations. Sis. Anna, in my congregation, has been testifying lately. She said that when she was first saved as a young girl, she would look at some of the older saints and think, *they have it made.* The reason I said that is because Bro. Junior and I were talking the other day, and he said that very same thing. He said, “It’s harder as I get older because the devil doesn’t give up.” He’ll be 90 in two weeks. He’s been living for God a long time, but the devil won’t give up. Bro. Junior doesn’t know all the tricks of the devil yet. God may bring something up, and he has to walk in it. We have to walk in it.



Missing services is one of the first evidences of you having a lack in your experience. Because something has offended you, and you know that if you come to the house of God and God starts to deal with you, it will become an offense to you, so you stay away from services. Before long, you've lost your soul. David said, "But his delight is in the law of the Lord."

### VICTORY THROUGH THE WORD

Do you still have a love for the Word of God? Do you still have a longing for the Word of God? "Lord, I desire to read it. I desire to hear and study it. I desire for the Spirit to talk to me." Do you have that desire? If that desire is gone, you need to ask God to help you to get back in place, because the enemy is working in some roads to try to take your soul away. I use this verse of scripture lots of times: In Psalm 139:23, 24, David said, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts [Listen to what he says at the end.]: And see if there be any wicked way in me."

We need to say, "Search me, Lord; search me with the Word. Try me, Lord, with the Word. Know my thoughts, know my mind. See if there's something that the enemy of the soul is trying to work at. See if there's a wicked way." You might say, "Well, I'm saved and sanctified and doing well," but that needs to be the desire of your heart. Someone said the other day, "We don't need to come to the house of God with a pitchfork." We need to come to the house of God with a desire, "Lord, what do you have for me?" Saints of God, this is the place God has prepared for us. Every service that we have, we need to come to the altar if the Lord deals with our hearts. Hear what He has to say to us.

Let us go to Ephesians 5:26, 27: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Righteous, holy, without blemish. He said, "Without spot, or wrinkle, a glorious church, because of the washing of water by the word." We need the washing of water by the Word of God to help us to be clean.

There was a woman of Canaan who came to Jesus one time. She brought her petition to Jesus. She said, "My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Jesus Christ was the Word. He ignored her. Now, follow my thought: Jesus didn't say a word to her. Some people would have gotten offended. This woman came to Jesus Christ but He didn't say a word. How many of us would have been offended? How many of us would have been affected in that way? But the next step comes through. The disciples said to Jesus, "Send her away." I can't imagine the disciples saying that, but that's what they said: "Send her away. She is troubling us." Let's be honest. How many of us would have probably said, "Okay, I'm going away"? But it got a little worse. The woman of Canaan worshiped Him, and He answered her, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." I'm certain each and everyone one of us would have probably said, "I'm done with that." But she had a need, and she knew where her need was going to be filled. She said to Jesus, "Truth, Lord." How was the disciples' attitude toward an offense to the Word of God with this woman?

I told you before that we're not going to walk this Christian life without some type of offense or persecution. We need to get the victory over that. We may need to ask God for help and grace. Some people in the Bible called Jesus Christ "Beelzebub the chief of the devils." As He hung on the cross, they said, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." Do you know how much that probably affected Him? The woman of Canaan said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." How is our attitude? Do we get offended easily? If someone says something that offends us, will we say, "I'm not going back to church any more?" I'm not telling you this because I haven't seen or heard it before, for I have.

A man named John the Baptist preached the gospel. We find John in prison. Matthew, chapter 11, verses 2-6: "Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

I ask again, Are you hearing the Word? I can assure you that once you hear the Word, and get saved, as you walk in this pathway, there's going to be something that God is going to allow to come across your path through the Word of God. It could be something you've never heard before. "Do I have to do this and that?" But I thank God for His grace.

Are you saved today? I need to clarify my thoughts this morning: *If you're not saved, it is because some part of the Word of God has offended you; if you're not saved, you're offended by Jesus Christ in one form or another.* You might say, "Well, circumstances." No, there is something in the Word of God that is holding you back from getting saved. There is something that you see that you just will not yield your soul to Jesus Christ.

Jesus was once preaching to crowd of people. He said to them, "Except you eat my flesh, and drink my blood, you have no part with me." The disciples came to Him and said, "Don't you know what you said offended many?" The Bible says, "Many of the disciples went back and walked no more with Him," because of what He said. He looked at the twelve disciples and said, "Are you going to go away, too? I'm not changing my Word." Thank God for Peter. He said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Let me tell you, if you leave this gospel, you have nowhere to go.

### CONCLUSION

My last thought: John 12:47, 48: "If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." We'll be judged by the Word of God. I believe this will be at the judgment. Jesus Christ is going to be at the judgment.



I thank God that He gave us an Instruction Book. He gave us the road map on how to make heaven our home. That doesn't mean we understand or know everything in this Bible at all. God will open up our mind and show us what we don't understand; but if we're walking in all the light we know, we're considered to be a righteous people. Jesus said, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." How we receive the Word will determine where we will spend eternity. We know there are only two places. There isn't a purgatory. It is either heaven or hell. The Bible says, "As the tree falleth, so shall it lie." How we leave this old world is how we're going to stand before God. It will be heaven or hell.

When the rich man died and lifted up his eyes in hell, he didn't pray to get out. He wanted someone else to bring him relief because he knew that he could not leave that place. When that didn't happen, he wanted someone to go and tell his brothers not to come to this place. Abraham said, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." I can say to you today, you have the Word of God to direct you and to teach you where you need to go.

I asked you at the beginning of the message, Who is righteous? Many of you raised your hands. You're righteous because you hear and obey the Word of God. That's how a nation becomes a righteous nation. They hear the Word of God and apply it, but when a nation starts to reject the Word of God, sin comes in and the nation becomes a reproach, and God's hand will be lifted off the safety and protection. We need to be aware of that. Because of the Word, people get offended. Will you be offended? Will something offend you through the Word of God that will cause you to lose your soul?

May the Lord bless you. †

imply that the effects must be the same in all lives. As already explained, some of are more depraved than others, because of either inherited or acquired depravity, therefore there must be a difference in the effects of entire sanctification; for the effects of cleansing from depravity must, in the nature of the case, be just as varied as are the effects of the depravity. Likewise, because some do not notice the effects of depravity so much as do others, they do not notice the effects of cleansing from it so much as do others.

Briefly, it may be said that sanctification does not make us infallible, does not make absolutely perfect in all respects, does not save from the possibility of sinning, and does not destroy the human nature.

### How Does a Sanctified Person Feel?

Physical appetites and desires still remain in the sanctified for the reason that they are a part of the human nature and depravity is no essential part of them; these were in Adam before he sinned. However, depravity commonly manifests itself through these physical desires, and sanctification does purify these desires in that sense; but the desire itself was given of God for a good purpose and is not to be despised. Some have supposed that sexual desires should not exist in the sanctified and have been troubled because it did exist in them. The sanctified person is still human; but this sexual desire is exalted from its abnormal, lustful condition to that in which man was created so far as the heart is concerned.

Another person is troubled because he fails clearly to distinguish between natural and sinful pride. Normal self-respect and the quality of approbateness are natural to man, and one should not suppose these will be destroyed in sanctification. Undepraved human nature is good, and these qualities are given man for his good that he might be respectable and pleasing to others. [My mother dressed us in our best clothes to take us to the house of worship—*Ed.*] It is that selfish, sinful desire to be regarded as better than anyone else that is destroyed in sanctification.

Others are troubled because of a failure to recognize the difference between a proper displeasure at an act of injustice and vindictive anger or hatred. This sense of justice is essential to moral character, and without it man would be unable to determine what is right conduct toward his neighbor. But that which enables him to recognize what is right conduct in himself or others must also cause him to recognize that which is wrong in others. A good man must be displeased at injustice, and he will have certain feelings in the matter. ... We do not say you should blindly follow such feelings.

The sanctified person may have feelings of impatience, and these if not controlled may lead him to do that which is sinful in itself; however, the feelings themselves are not sinful nor a result of depravity, but may be traceable to qualities that are good in themselves. We are instructed in God's Word "add patience." It is a result of Christian growth, as are virtue and knowledge. It may not be possible always to draw a fine line of distinction between the natural and the depraved in some of these things either in one's own experience

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## WHAT SANCTIFICATION DOES NOT DO FOR US

By the late R. R. Byrum

**T**HE FAILURE to distinguish clearly between human nature and the depravity of that nature has led many to misunderstanding much as to what effects should result from the cleansing from that depravity in the work of entire sanctification. It has caused some to claim for sanctification that which it does not provide, and because some who sought the experience failed to obtain that which they had been told sanctification would do for them, they have often been led either to reject the doctrine and experience entirely or else to doubt their having the experience and, as a result, become greatly discouraged. Such unreasonable claims for the experience of sanctification are always harmful. The harmful effects may not be apparent at once; but possibly years after, one thus wrongly instructed may be led to doubt his experience or to reject sanctification.

Another common error of teachers of sanctification has been to minimize the work of conversion in order to magnify more that of the second cleansing. Still another error is in preaching what sanctification does in a particular life—to preach personal experience and

or in that of others, but the important thing is that we have the experience.

### Christian Perfection and Adam's Perfection Distinguished

As far as heart-purity is concerned, we understand that Christian perfection is identical with Adam's perfection; but in various other respects there is much difference. The fall into sin affected the race, not only morally, but also mentally and physically. Not until we are glorified in heaven will these effects of the fall, such as physical death, be overcome. Adam, we understand, had a body not incapable of injury, fatigue, or disorder, yet there is reason to believe it was sound, healthy, and sufficient to meet all the demands put upon it by man's duties and needs. But the sanctified man, even though his body is healed by God's power, yet, as in Paul's case, his duties may cause extreme weariness, weakness, and suffering. In other words, man's body has suffered as a result of the fall of the race into sin.

Likewise, it is reasonable to believe that Adam possessed an intellect, not perfect, but so balanced and sufficient as to meet his needs. But how inadequate are the intellectual faculties of man in his present condition! ... Evidently the fall has affected man's intellect. ... Also, it must be allowed that in many qualities which have to do with the moral there is a lack of balance through an under-development or an over-development of those brain cells which have to do with that faculty of man's nature.

Likewise, there may be a lack of balance developed in this way in approbateness, the sense of justice, acquisitiveness, self-respect, pessimism, optimism, physical desires, etc. One may be fully sanctified in heart, yet the effects of depravity in the physical and mental may have to be overcome and struggled against throughout many years. This is why some persons have special trials in one line and others in another. But God's grace is sufficient for these things. †

—Eighth chapter (condensed); This concludes this series of messages from the book, *Holy Spirit Baptism and The Second Cleansing*, By R. R. Byrum, copyright 1923.

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## THE SPIRIT THAT GIVES LIFE TO THE GOSPEL

By G. E. Tyler

*II Corinthians 3:1-6, "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."*

**T**HE GOSPEL of Christ is more than just ink and paper, it's more than just commandments or principles; there is a power that abides with the gospel. The Bible is a dead letter when handled by a wrong spirit. But, thank God, He has "made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Not just any spirit gives life to the law of God. Only the Holy Spirit can give life. Other spirits are at work to dilute the message of the gospel. But the manifestations of the Holy Ghost drives away the diabolical efforts of the adversary. To properly present or proclaim the good news of the gospel of Christ, we must have the Spirit of Truth. There are many spirits in the world. There is one Spirit of Truth and the written Word without the Spirit is dead. It is the Spirit that gives it life, it is the Spirit that gives it power, therefore to properly proclaim the good news we must have the right spirit along with the right message. The scripture says, "Speaking the truth in love." Yes, we need to speak the truth but we need to present it with the right spirit. There are many spirits. The Bible tells us to "try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Humanity is influenced by spirits. There's a battle going on in the spirit world. This is the real battle of Armageddon—the power of God against the power of evil, the Spirit of God against the spirits of evil—and evil spirits have attempted to defile the good news and present the gospel of Christ under a wrong spirit.

### THE SPIRIT OF REVENGE

I want to look at some of the false spirits or evil spirits at work. I point my readers to St. Luke, chapter nine, and beginning with verse 51: "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven,



and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." I do not believe at all that James and John were filled with the devil. They were under the influence of a wrong spirit. They were attempting to apply the gospel of Christ in a wrong manner and in a wrong spirit. There is a spirit of revenge that people can get under and this wrong spirit will kill the right gospel. There are people who are under the influence of a wrong spirit and try to use the Word as revenge or to get back at people. Jesus said to them, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." That's not the true spirit of the gospel. The Son of God did not come to destroy lives. He came to save them. There is a wrong spirit at work, a spirit using the pulpit, using the gospel in a personal way, to prove a point personally, or to prove someone is right personally, or to get back at someone for something he said. That's not what the gospel is given for. Christ did not come to destroy lives, He came to save them. Don't use the gospel in a vengeful way. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

It is possible for people to be saved, yet they may be influenced by a wrong spirit. James and John were under such an influence in our scripture reference. It doesn't necessarily mean they are lost as far as their souls were concerned. That wrong spirit needs to be rebuked to be sure. But be careful when you say someone is demon-possessed. You'd better know what you're talking about. That's what the Pharisees and Sadducees said about Jesus. They didn't understand His gospel, they didn't understand His doctrine, and He did things outside of what they were used to, so they labeled Him as demon-possessed. That's serious ground to stand on. If someone is filled with the Holy Ghost and you say he's filled with the devil, that's a dangerous place to be.

Jesus did say to James and John, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." He did not accuse them of being devil-possessed; simply that the thought they expressed was the result of being influenced by a wrong spirit. Christ rebuked them and set them straight.

### **THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD**

There's another spirit at work trying to degrade the gospel, using the same verses of scripture as we use but in the wrong spirit. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." The Bible tells us there is a god of this world and it's not speaking of the Lord; it's speaking of the evil one. As we look around the world, we have to say that the evil one is having his way in general. We know that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein," but the god of this world is Satan who is manipulating the people of the world. The spirit of the world would try to infiltrate and defile the gospel of Christ, lowering the standard, changing the Word of God to make it suit the world, carrying people away in another spirit. "In whom 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" (II Corinthians 4:4). The purpose of the spirit of the world is to separate people from the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God and the spirit of the world don't go together. They're pulling in opposite directions.

### **A HAUGHTY SPIRIT**

Then there's another spirit that tries to defile the gospel and that is a haughty spirit. We read in Proverbs 16:18, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." There is such a thing as a haughty spirit. People become puffed up, and when they become puffed up they become antagonistic. Our former president, Ronald Reagan, once made a statement about Congress squabbling among themselves, "It's ok to disagree, but it's wrong to be disagreeable." There is such a thing as a disagreeable spirit. No matter what, that spirit will not be satisfied until it gets its own way. It's ok to disagree, but it's wrong to be disagreeable, to have a haughty spirit. If you have the gospel and you feel like you're called of God but you have a haughty spirit, you're in trouble. Preach as you might, but you can't have the blessings of God upon you.

### **A SPIRIT OF PREEMINENCE**

Then there's a spirit of preeminence. Let's look at III John 9, 10: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not." Let's get the picture. Here's a man who loved the preeminence himself, who liked to be highly thought of, regarded, honored, respected, and evidently he feared that if he accepted John and those who were working with John, he would lose his preeminence. He didn't receive them as brothers. As we read this portion of scripture, I can't see that there was a doctrinal problem between them. Doctrine apparently wasn't the issue. It was the spirit of preeminence that was in control. Read on in verse 10: "Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church." Some problems that we face as the modern Church of God, we think are isolated to our age and our generation. But as we read of what was happening in the early morning time, this evil spirit was at work. Here was a man, probably he was converted at one time, probably he believed in Christ, probably considered himself a Church of God minister. But he was afraid of losing the preeminence, therefore he prated against the apostle John with malicious words that cut, degrade. How could you say anything malicious against the apostle John? And yet, here we have it in the Word of God—Diotrephes who wanted the preeminence. He had gathered together a flock and he might have started the congregation and built it, we are not told. But somewhere along the line, he got puffed up and began to build something for himself, not for God. Therefore, when he faced someone who could endanger his position, he rebuked him with malicious words. He wasn't satisfied to cut John and the other apostles down only, but if any of Diotrephe's congregation accepted them, he would endeavor to kick them out of the church. My, what a spirit in the early morning time! You know sometimes I think we put the early

morning church on too high a pedestal as if they didn't have any problems at all. But the spirit of Diotrephes was at work, and it still is at work today. There are people who refuse to work together, not necessarily over doctrinal issues, but out of personality conflicts, what we would term as power struggles. God forbid that we have power struggles! That kind of thing brings reproach to the gospel message. We aren't in competition with one another. We don't want the preeminence. The Bible teaches us in the Church of God that Christ alone is to have the preeminence.

### **THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS**

There's many more other spirits that are at work against the gospel, but let's turn the other side of the coin for a moment and see some manifestations of the Spirit of God. Oh, I love the gospel of Christ because there's a Spirit with it and that Spirit is the Holy Spirit. The spirit of the gospel is a spirit of holiness. In Romans 1:4, the very terminology is used, "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. The spirit of the gospel will create holiness in humanity. Holiness is sinlessness. Holiness is purity. The true spirit of the gospel will propagate holiness. The true spirit of the gospel will cause sin to be destroyed. Jesus came to destroy sin. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

### **THE SPIRIT OF MEEKNESS**

Galatians 6:1, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." There is a spirit of meekness associated with the gospel. A person who has the gospel in reality has a love for individuals, has a love for souls. A person who has the spirit of the gospel does not get any pleasure out of seeing someone fall. The spirit of the gospel will cause someone to have a burden for an individual that falls. According to this scripture, if we're spiritual, we're going to do something to try to reach down to that one and restore that one back into the fold—not kick him while he is down, not get on the phone and start running him down to your neighbor. This is the true spirit of the gospel—to help one another, to build up one another, not to tear down each other. "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." So the spirit of meekness would cause us to restore those who have fallen, those who are mistaken, those who might be under the influence of another spirit. Be merciful and reach out to them, help them, and love them. Remember that you too could be tempted by the same spirit.

### **THE SPIRIT OF LOVE**

Is the gospel really the gospel if it is presented absent of the spirit of love? II Timothy 1:7 says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." I believe, personally, this is the key that unlocks the doors to the glories of God, the depth of love that we allow ourselves to go into. I believe, personally, there are deeper depths of love

that everyone of us need to experience. I know the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, but have we gone so deep as we ought to have in the great love of God?

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God is love. The true spirit of the gospel is the spirit of love. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." What love! That love of God is what we experience when we're saved. I believe our affection or our love can wane or grow depending upon how we allow it to go. You know, it's true with a husband and wife. You can do things to build love and respect for one another or you can do things to tear it down. The same is true with brethren. The same is true with God. We can take a course that would cause us to fall deeper into God's love or we can take a course that would take us farther away from God's love. The farther we travel on the path that takes us deep into God's love, the more treasures we're going to find. We love God with all our heart, all our soul, all of our mind, and all of our strength. The spirit of love is not only love for God but love for our fellowman. I don't believe in a wishy-washy thing. I believe in something that is powerful, something that is meaningful, something that causes you to do certain things or live a certain way. We can't love in tongue or in word only, we have to love in deed and in truth. We can't pat our brother on the back when he's here and stab him in the back when he's gone. We can't tell him, "I love you, Brother," and then as soon as he's out of the way, run him down or tear down his reputation. If brethren would spend as much time lovingly admonishing one another and building up one another as they do condemning and belittling one another, what bridges could be built!

The love of God must go beyond the brotherhood. The love that I'm talking about, the spirit of love, goes beyond the family of God. If we only love those who love us, we're no different than anybody else. But the spirit of the gospel causes us to love our enemy, to do good to them that persecute us. We don't return like for like. Jesus, when He was reviled, reviled not again. We don't attack when we're attacked. Why? Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. The spirit of love is dominating our life, loving our neighbor as ourselves, loving our enemy, loving the whole world. We can't live on the surface and skim the way and hope to have it. We have to go deep in the love of God. We have to find what Stephen had when those men took him out of the city and stoned him to death. Some would have said, "God's going to get back at you. You can go ahead and stone me but God's going to tear down your house, God's going to kill your children." But Stephen had the spirit of love. He, being stoned to death, his last dying breath, rocks were coming, "Lord, don't lay this sin to their charge. Don't hold them accountable because I love them." What power!

Where is our love? Do we have the spirit of the thing? Do we have the letter only, or do we have the spirit of the thing? The true spirit of the gospel causes us to love one another with a pure heart fervently; and not only one another, but our enemies. The spirit of



Diotrephes attacked with malicious words—where was the love for his enemies? Oh, that the people who are adversaries to one another would allow the Spirit of God to work!

The spirit of the gospel is the spirit of love. As we go into this depth, we read in Ephesians 3:17-19, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” There’s something here. The spirit of the gospel is not in letter only. It is the Spirit of God reigning in the life of an individual, giving him power to overcome, giving him power not only to love his friends and the brethren, but his enemies and the whole world. Yes, just like Jesus.

Oh, we have the letter. We understand the principles, but do we have the spirit of it? Does the spirit of holiness, the spirit of meekness, the spirit of love, the spirit of soul-burden dominate in our life? Do we have the true spirit with the true gospel? Or has another foul spirit wormed its way into our message? God help us to be sure we are driven and empowered by the true spirit of the gospel. “For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” †

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## MISSIONARY PAGE

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### ONE THING IS NEEDFUL

By Bro. Eugene Nnaeto, Nigeria

**I** APPRECIATE God for making man in His own image and likeness. He has given him divine impetus to make choices. I believe everything God made is perfect and blest. For this reason, I am indeed glad. What about you?

Jesus said, “One thing is needful.” We have to be at the Lord’s feet. We can seek forgiveness through Jesus Christ. That is needful. This choice is up to you. I want you to receive the engrafted Word, which is able to make you wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. II Timothy 3:16 says, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Man is responsible for whatever choice he makes. That is why God is concerned about the choice we make. He instructs us as to how we are to make a choice. Hear what the Spirit of God says: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”

The Spirit that reveals God’s Word to man is perfect in all things. Without Him, you cannot make a choice that pleases God and obtains favor to your soul. You receive this Holy Spirit by hearing the Word of God, confessing your sins, forsaking them, and believing in Christ Jesus. By doing this, you choose the good part which is the only needful thing. You have chosen the way that leads to eternal life. If you make a choice outside the guidance of the Holy Spirit, you definitely will choose error and condemnation.

Let us take Adam and Eve for an example. They chose the counsel of the devil and both were condemned. You can also fall into condemnation. God does not intend for you to be condemned. Do not refuse to believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:18 says, “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” The inevitable counsel of God before you reads thus: “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it” (Deuteronomy 30:15, 16).

Jesus said to His disciples, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). To love God is to serve Him with all your strength, your entire mind and heart. You don’t need to sow discord, propagate strife and envy, or commit adultery, fornication, and such like. From these things, you should turn away.

Jesus went to the house of Mary and Martha. The Bible says in Luke 10:38-42, “Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” Everywhere Jesus went, He provided salvation which makes a difference. Therefore, in the house of Mary and Martha, Mary made a choice to sit at Jesus’ feet to learn of Him. Martha chose to serve, leaving the more important matter.

People today actually find it difficult to spend their time in the Word of God. Why? They find it easier and more interesting to spend a lot of time on the pleasures of this world. That is their choice. Can you imagine the hustle and bustle on our roads by so many people today? They’re seeking to please the flesh. Some spend a lot of time and money to beautify themselves. You scarcely find a good number of souls coming to the house of God where truth is preached. One thing is needful: salvation. Salvation is good. Choose life! You can if you will obtain salvation.

Let us look at the scene of today: worldly celebrations and merriment. What do you see? Men and women, boys and girls—old and young—dancing, eating and drinking, carousing in the flesh. Now turn to the right path, to the way of truth. What else do you see? A little congregation of God on the street. A very few people but a lot of empty pews. Why? Because “wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13, 14). You can see why the Church of God is left with just a

few. I do not wonder at it. Since truth cannot be altered, I encourage you to accept it, turn away from your sins, and turn to the Lord. You will be happy if you do. This is the only choice that stands with God.

Maybe you are concerned with other things and given to hypocrisy. You might think you are deriving pleasure from it, but little do you know that you are succeeding in sending your eternity-bound soul to hell. You have exhausted your interest on material gain and fleshly lust and have left your precious soul void of God's Word. Why choose those things? The Bible says, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Moreover, the scripture says, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" I am sure you've heard that question; therefore, you will surely answer for your choice on that great day of the Lord, that last day when the reward for your choice will be delivered to you.

Permit me to tell you that *one thing is needful* among all other earthly things. Jesus said to Martha, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." The eyes of the Lord sees the intent of the heart. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). God wants you to make that needful choice. If you willingly choose your part in His kingdom, no one will be able to take it away.

I trust this article has touched your life. Avail yourself to the grace of God and repent of your sins. Remember, God is looking at your heart. He foresees impending danger looming at your soul. The apostle Paul had the same encounter as you. He was totally against God and His kingdom. He destroyed the church of God; but when he had an encounter with God, he quickly made a good choice. His testimony was: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Galatians 1:15, 16).

You are called to enter God's kingdom if you can disallow the pressures and the pleasures of the flesh. Let Jesus come into your heart. Surely, your testimony will never be the same again. "One thing is needful."

God bless you. †

## **2017 BOUND VOLUMES NOW READY!**

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Dear Young People,

Another month has passed and the Lord has been faithful to all of us! I trust these words will find you encouraged, but if they find you struggling, I would exhort you to do as David did when he found himself, seemingly, alone.

He "encouraged himself in the Lord" (I Samuel 30:6). Few things can help us win the battle, like meditating on the goodness of the Lord both to us personally and to humanity as a whole.

This month I am sharing testimonies submitted by two young people in our congregation: Bro. Alan Richards and Sis. Cassie Gossard. I trust the Lord will bless them richly for their efforts!

Following is an article Bro. Greg shared recently in a sermon. It is a contemporary application of I Corinthians 13, also known as, "The Love Chapter."

May the Lord bless and keep you all!

In Christian love,

Sis. Crystal Gossard

### **Testimony from Bro. Alan Richards, age 13**

Poor health gives a different perspective on normal daily routines. A few years ago, I contracted the disease, Henoch-Schonlein purpura (HSP). I had to spend most of the day lying on the couch unable to do anything. When you are in a situation like that, you watch others doing everyday tasks, like washing the dishes, tidying the house, going to the store, and wishing you could do those jobs again. Now, most people, especially children I'm sure, do not enjoy doing those tasks. I know I don't. However, when you can't perform them because of an illness, if God allows you to do these tasks again, you will probably be more thoughtful and thankful next time you complete everyday chores. Also, when you can't get around as well, it allows you to spend more time with God. When I think of this, I think of Bro. Charles Naylor. He didn't let the fact that he could not get out of bed to stop him in his Christian walk or his ministry. Many people have been blessed by the writings of Charles Naylor. When you are sick, it is easy to lean on God, but we need to make sure we don't let go of Him as we get well.



### **Testimony from Sis. Cassie Gossard, age 14**

Ever since I was a little child, I liked going to church. When I was very little, I'd go with my grandma and watch as she went up to the choir to sing with all the other people. I thought it was so cool that MY grandma went up and sang beautiful music. But, as I got older, and my whole family started going to church, I started to notice things about "the other people." How nice they were and how they would sing with all their hearts to praise the Lord! Christians are so different from others. They don't just act kind when they're at church. They are kind every day of the week. If someone needs a hand, they'll lend one. If people are sick, they'll send a card or visit them to see how they're doing. You'll



never find a Christian cursing or talking behind one another's backs. They love each other and lift each other up. Just being in the presence of other Christians is comforting. I wouldn't want to know a world without Christians. †

### I Corinthians 13—For Today!

Author Unknown

1. Though I can speak five languages and talk intelligently on dozens of subjects, if I don't have enough love to keep from gossiping or putting down others, I'm not just making useless noise, I'm being downright destructive.

2. And though I read the Bible regularly and even know parts of it by heart, and though I pray daily and have a lot of faith and other spiritual gifts, if I don't have enough love to sometimes sacrifice some of my personal desires for others' sakes, then all of my "spirituality" amounts to nothing.

3. And though I work two jobs to provide for my family, and though I give to charity and volunteer for every community project that comes up, if I don't show love and kindness to those I live and work with, all my hard work and self-sacrifice are worthless.

4. Love has a long, hard frustrating day at the office, yet doesn't get snappy and short-tempered.

Love is happy for the other person when he gets all the breaks.

Love doesn't have to drive the fanciest car, live in the biggest house or have all the latest gadgets.

Love doesn't always have to be the Boss or have the last word.

5. Love isn't rude or crude, isn't selfish, and doesn't gossip, guilt-trip, or pressure others to get what it wants.

Love is too busy being concerned about the needs of others to spend much time worrying about its own.

Love doesn't freak out when things don't go its way.

Love is quick to believe the best about people and slow to believe the rest.

6. Love hates to hear gossip and instead wants only to talk about others' good qualities and the good that they've done.

Love knows what it listens to, watches, or reads will affect its attitudes and actions and thereby have an effect on others, so it's careful about how it spends its time.

7. Love is flexible, takes everything in stride and can handle whatever comes its way.

Love is always ready to give others the benefit of the doubt and looks for the best in them.

Love wants to see others reach their full potential and does all it can to make it happen.

Love never runs out of patience, even with those who are slow to get with the program or do their share.

Love doesn't keep looking at its watch when others are talking.

8. Love never fails. I can fail others, and others can fail me.

We all can be mistaken, misguided, or confused at times.

Our words and deeds often fall short, and our bright ideas don't always play out the way we want or expect them to.

9. We're frail, fallible and often foolish, and our understanding of the world we live in, and the one to come, is only partial at best.

10. But when God's Spirit of love lives in us, that changes everything.

11. We're really just children when it comes to practicing real love, but God can help us outgrow our foolish way.

12. Without Him we're clueless when it comes to love and the other things that matter most in life, but when we live in His kingdom—the kingdom of Heaven that Jesus said is even now within us, we can see things as He does, get our priorities straight, pull out the stops, and live and love to the fullest.

## BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

### SIN, MAN'S GREATEST ENEMY

#### THE SIN OF OMISSION

**Scriptures:** Matthew 23:23; 25:43; Jonah 1:1-3, 10-13.

Matthew 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Matthew 25:43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Jonah 1:1 Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

3 But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

10 Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

11 Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

12 And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

13 Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

**Memory Verse:** Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.—James 4:17.

**Aim:** To show that when we fail to keep a known law of God, we are guilty of the sin of omission.

#### INTRODUCTION

**I**F SATAN cannot succeed in getting man to commit sin, he then will try with equal fervor to get man to leave undone the things that should be done. The Christian life is one of progress; so indifference or laziness cannot be tolerated. Joy comes to the Christian's heart through overcoming Satan and defeating him on the battlefield of life. Therefore, we must not leave undone one thing that will contribute to the prosperity of the kingdom of God. When we pray we should ask God to help us do the things that we should do.

#### MEDITATIONS

**NEGLECTING THE ESSENTIALS—Matthew 23:23—Have omitted—**Many can tithe and still have an abundance for themselves. It is often difficult for them to give the poor and the unfortunate their just dues. It is not uncommon for the rich to impose upon the poor, demonstrating the abuse of mercy in their lives. This is not Christian and is sin. In Jesus' time, men gave publicly, sometimes sounding a trumpet as they did so. They had their reward then and there because they received praise from men.

**Matthew 25:43—Took me not in**—One of the outstanding marks of Christian character is the concern about the welfare of others. All creation belongs to God, and anyone who ministers to His creation is ministering to God. To neglect any of God's creation willfully is a direct offense to God and a sin. Great is the selfishness and depraved nature in general of the person who will impose upon the poor and destitute to better his own personal position. So, it becomes necessary for every soldier of the cross not only to avoid entanglement in the committed sins, but also to devote himself to the task of kindness and benevolence among his fellowmen.

**JONAH RUNS FROM DUTY—Jonah 1:1—Word of the Lord**—God does not speak idle words, neither does He indulge in an array of words. Therefore, when He speaks, we should listen and obey instantly. He may not speak again on that subject. It is a great honor to have God speak to us. He does so only for our own good.

**A PEOPLE IN NEED—Jonah 1:2—That great city**—If people are allowed to drift, they will become more and more wicked. There is a need for a strong voice in every group of people lifting up the standard of holiness. God was concerned about Nineveh and wanted Jonah to warn them of their immediate danger. Today, the world is drifting, and we need to warn men everywhere of the awful danger ahead.

**RUNNING FROM GOD—Jonah 1:3—From the presence**—To go from the presence of the Lord is to go from the presence of light. The farther the departure, the greater the darkness. If an about-face is not made, the backsliding soul will very soon be lost, separated from God. There is always plenty of cooperation close at hand to help a soul wander away from God. To avoid backsliding, each soul needs to be always climbing up in the things of God.

**AFFECTING OTHERS—Jonah 1:10—Exceedingly afraid**—To fail to do as we should not only affects our lives but, as we see here, seriously jeopardizes the lives and well-being of others. These men were sinners but condemned Jonah for running from God. We have no right to do those things that interfere with the well-being and safety of others.

**CORRECTING THE SITUATION—Jonah 1:11—What shall we do?**—These men did not know just what to do under such a circumstance. The sea was exceedingly rough. Only seamen know the great hazard the angry waters bring to a ship at sea.

**REWARD OF UNFAITHFULNESS—Jonah 1:12—Into the sea**—God certainly had done some reprimanding of Jonah after he had boarded the boat and the storm came upon them. It seems that already Jonah had done some repenting since he was willing to tell the true situation and to be cast into a raging sea. Surely, if nature took its course, death was in line for Jonah; and we suppose that in an effort to preserve his own life, he swam with all his might in trying to escape the whale.

**COMMENDABLE CONDUCT—Jonah 1:13—Rowed hard**—These hard seamen hesitated to throw Jonah overboard and tried hard to bring the boat to

safety. Doubtless, their faithfulness was a rebuke to the unfaithfulness of Jonah. Every Christian should draw a lesson from this and seek to obey the still small voice of God more eagerly. We do not know the greatness of the end of the small thing that God may call us to do nor the awful outcome of failure to do the small thing.

## CONCLUSION

The great mind of God is able to see the end from the beginning, and in His great plan He builds every life that comes into the earth. To fail to do as we should will disrupt the plan of God. This we should earnestly try to avoid, for the things we do, as in the case of Jonah, are certain to have a far-reaching effect on others easily enough to the point of disaster. We have seen the great disaster that results from the failure to close a railroad switch or to stop for a stop sign or to do many commonplace things in life, but it is certain that to fail to do the things we should in the spiritual realm will result in far greater disaster. So, we can see clearly that when we know to do good and do it not, we sin.

## FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. If the devil cannot get men to transgress the law of God outright, why does he try to get them to leave undone the things they should do?
2. What is wrong with a man who will tithe, yet neglect the poor?
3. When men neglect the poor, how can it be said that they have neglected God?
4. Why is it an honor to have God speak to us?
5. Consider the possible result of failing to do what God asks.
6. What was the purpose of Jonah's going from the presence of God?
7. Do we have any right to leave undone the things that will endanger the welfare of others? †

## MY DAILY TASK

W. O. Moon

Have I helped someone today,  
Have I brushed his clouds away?  
Have I shared some traveler's load,  
As he trudged along life's road?  
Have I lent a helping hand,  
Have I blessed some careworn man?

Have I, Lord, of service been  
To the needy sons of men?  
Has my life been full of toil,  
Have I poured on healing oil  
That some wounded, broken soul  
May be brought into the fold?

Let me labor not for self,  
Seek not honor nor for wealth,  
But that I a servant be  
So that God can count on me.  
May this be my daily task  
This, O Lord, is all I ask.



# THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



## APPLY YOUR HEART

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

"Be careful!" my mother warned as I picked up a wet bedsheets from the rinse tub. "Don't try to put the whole thing in at once. Remember what I've taught you to do. Start with a corner, and then untwist the sheet as it goes through the wringer. Keep an eye on the other side to catch the sheet as it comes through. Don't let it angle down and get wrapped around the bottom roller. The whole thing will get jammed."

"Yes, ma'am," I said. I looked up at the clock on the kitchen wall. We had been washing clothes for at least an hour already. It would probably take the rest of the morning to finish them.

"And keep your eyes on what you're doing," scolded my mother. "This is no time to be looking around."

"Yes, ma'am," I said again.

Just then the screen door banged open, and my younger sister, Wilma, came rushing into the kitchen.

"Mommy!" she called. "Daddy needs you to help him in the barn for a few minutes. He said to come right away if you can."

"I'm right in the middle of a load of wash!" said Mom. She paused and looked at me thoughtfully. "Tell you what," she said. "How about you finish wringing out these sheets and pillowcases, and then take them outside and hang them on the clothesline. That way they can get started drying." She paused again. "If I'm not back by the time you get them hung up, you can stop the towels from washing and put them through the wringer. Just be careful, and **KEEP YOUR MIND ON WHAT YOU'RE DOING!**"

"Yes, ma'am," I said. "The last time I did the sheets, they didn't get bunched up in the wringer one time," I reminded her.

"Well, there's a first time for everything," my mother called over her shoulder as she headed for the barn.

I turned my attention to the rinse tub. There were two sheets and a few pillowcases still in it. I took a deep breath. *I'll start with the pillowcases*, I said to myself. *They're easy.*

One after the other, the pillowcases went through the wringer. As each came out the other side, I shook it and laid it carefully in the clothes basket.

*Now for the sheets*, I said to myself. Gingerly, I picked up a corner of one of the sheets. I positioned it carefully next to the wringer rollers and then turned the wringer lever to "forward," making sure to keep my fingers well away from the moving parts.

As the sheet advanced through the wringer, I untwisted it carefully. Too much bunching of the fabric would stop the rollers; I would have to back up the sheet and start over.

I breathed a sigh of relief as the last corner of the sheet disappeared through the wringer and came out on the other side. I shook out the sheet and threw it into the basket. Now there was only one sheet left to put through the wringer.

I picked up a corner of the fabric and turned the lever of the wringer to start the sheet on its journey. *This is actually kind of fun!* I said to myself as I watched the water cascade from the rollers back into the rinse tub. *The water falling from the rollers looks like a fountain*, I mused.

Before I knew it, I was daydreaming. In my mind's eye, I stood beside a fountain in a beautiful garden. I closed my eyes to listen to the gently splashing water.

I opened my eyes to see the fabric of the bedsheets bunched tightly together as it hung from the slowly turning rollers of the wringer. Belatedly, I snatched at the sheet to straighten it, only to gasp in horror as the rollers grabbed my fingertips. Pain shot up my arm as the rollers squeezed my fingers and pulled my hand inexorably forward through the wringer.

In stunned disbelief, I watched as my fingers slipped out of view and my thumb was yanked forward by the greedy rollers. In seconds, my hand was fully engulfed by the wringer. I stood helplessly watching, unable to think what to do. Neither of my parents could hear me if I called for help.

Suddenly, I was jolted from my temporary paralysis by a grinding, screeching sound. I had heard that sound before. It happened whenever there was too large a bunch of fabric for the wringer rollers to handle. Now the sound meant that the wringer had met my wrist and could not pull it through.

I reached for the wringer lever and did the only thing I could think of doing in that moment. I turned it to "reverse" and wrung my hand back out through the rollers.

With a shudder of relief, I grabbed my wounded hand from the wringer's hungry mouth and examined my fingers carefully. None of them appeared to be broken, but my hand prickled and throbbed terribly.

I was still massaging my hand when my mother walked back into the kitchen. Her quick glance took in the dripping sheet, the motionless rollers, and my ashen face.

"What did you do, catch your hand in the wringer?" she asked.

I nodded, too shaken to speak.

"How in the world did that happen?" she wanted to know.

Suddenly I found my voice. "I was trying to straighten the sheet and my fingers got caught," I said.

"I don't see how that could have happened if you were paying attention like you were supposed to," my mother said. "Let me reset the rollers so we can finish rinsing the sheets."

She frowned as she looked at the wringer again. She gave me a sharp look. "It doesn't need to be reset, after all," she said. "How did you get your hand out of there?"

## CAYMAN CONVENTION REPORT

November 21-26, 2017

Theme: "The Christian Path—  
A Shining Light for Perilous Times"

II Timothy 3:1; Proverbs 4:18

(From notes compiled by

Sis. Ganita Myles & Sis. Karen Christian)

"I turned the lever the other way and wrung my hand back out," I said in a small voice.

"Of all things!" said my mother. She pointed to a red pop-up bar across the top of the wringer frame. On it were the words PUSH TO RELEASE. "Didn't you know that all you had to do was hit this red bar and the rollers would pop apart?"

I shook my head. My mother had no doubt pointed this out to me on more than one occasion, but I had not paid enough heed to remember it.

"My hand still hurts," I said.

"Well, no doubt!" said my mother. "Maybe if it hurts bad enough, you'll remember to pay attention to what you're doing the next time I give you a job to do."

The Bible has a lot to say about paying attention and taking heed. We should listen to our parents and learn from them. But even more importantly, we need to take heed to God's commands. In Proverbs 2:2 we read, *So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding.*

What does it mean to "apply thine heart to understanding"? It means to do as we're told, not just listen to the instruction. It means to be "doers of the Word" and not "hearers only" as we are told in James 1:22. It is good to listen to the Word of God, but it is even better to obey it.

Perhaps you have learned Bible verses. Memorizing the Word of God is a valuable use of your time. But it is of little use memorizing Scripture if we do not intend to obey it, just as it was of little use hearing my mother's instruction about the "panic bar" on the wringer if I didn't remember to use that feature.

Remember—incline your ear to hear God's commands, and then apply your heart to obey them.

### Activity

See if you can unscramble the words below to read a Scripture that tells us how God views those who obey His Word.

children of followers therefore as God ye be dear.

**HINT:** To check yourself, read Ephesians 5.

### Answer to Last Month's Activity


"The eyes of the Lord are upon the **righteous**, and his **ears** are open unto their **cry**."—Psalm 34:15. ✚

### VIEW OUR WORSHIP SERVICES LIVE!

As many of our readers know, we can be found on the internet at

**www.wayoftruth.org**

where in addition to reading past issues and other information, you can view our general services every Sunday LIVE at 10:40 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. E.S.T. Enjoy Spirit-filled singing and preaching. Also, our mid-week service at 7:00 P.M. Wednesdays is aired live. There is a chatroom where you can interact with us and share your prayer requests. Tune in and worship with us!

 OUR THANKS is given to the Lord for allowing us to have another convention. His presence was with us during every service. We trust those who were saved and helped in any way spiritually are continuing in this good fight of faith.

We thank the Lord for the local saints and visitors being in attendance. We also had saints and visitors from the U.S.A., Jamaica, and Honduras. They numbered just below 100.

Each day began with a 6:00 A.M. prayer meeting in asking the Lord's help for each day's services.

Below is a synopsis of the general services:

### November 21

**10:15 A.M.**—Speaker: Bro. James Arch, Host Pastor. He spoke on the theme: "The Christian Path—A Shining Light for Perilous Times." This full-length message begins on page 18.

**2:30 P.M.**—Speaker: Bro. Gary Alwell. He spoke on the theme of the convention. He used other scriptures as well as those of the theme. Excerpts: "The path is the life we live. Where is it leading us? There is no hope in false living. There is a true way. We need to let the world know of this glorious light. We are to walk as children of light. The world won't treat us kindly, but we are to let our light shine. Endure hardship as a good soldier. The darker the world, the brighter we need to shine."

**7:00 P.M.**—Speaker: Bro. Greg Tyler. Title: "Your Soul Is Perishable." The Lord willing, this full-length message will be printed in a future issue.

### November 22

**10:15 A.M.**—Speaker: Bro. Donovan Darby. Title: "Be Clothed with Humility." This full-length message, Lord willing, will be printed in an upcoming issue.

**7:00 P.M.**—Speaker: Bro. Duane Jeffries. Title: "Seven Times Jesus said, 'I Am.'" Text: John 14:1-6. Excerpts: "Jesus came to save the lost. He never had a fortune. He never held an office. His friends left Him. He was crucified on a cross for us. While here on Earth, Jesus said: 'I am the bread of life' (John 6:35); 'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12); 'I am the true vine' (John 15:1); 'I am the door' (John 10:9); 'I am the good shepherd' (John 10:14); 'I am the resurrection' (John 11:25); 'I am the way, the truth, and the life' (John 14:6). He cares for us when all have forsaken. Jesus came to give us abundant life."

### November 23

**10:15 A.M.**—Speaker: Bro. Rupert Shippy. Title: "Lord, What wilt Thou Have Me to Do in a Time Like This?" The Lord willing, this full-length message will be printed in a future issue.



**7:00 P.M.**—Speaker: Bro. Ray Hydes. Title: “The Benefits of Serving God.” This full-length message, Lord willing, will be printed in an upcoming issue.

### **November 24**

**10:15 A.M.**—Speaker: Bro. Hezekiah Lamey. He used the theme for the title of his message: “The Christian Path—A Shining Light for Perilous Times.” Text: John 1:5-7. Excerpts: “The light shows us what we are to do. In these perilous times, people are spiritually blind. They need to see the light. When you are in Christ, you see the light. When you are in the light, you won’t hate your brother or be a backbiter. The Christian life is an easy life, for we have God with us. We need to obey God. We need to stay in the light. We are not doing anyone a favor. Let us surrender and walk in the light.”

**7:00 P.M.**—Ordination Service. I Timothy 4:1-16 was read by Sis. Virginia Boddien. Bro. Ray Hydes was ordained to the ministry. Sis. Desiree Kelly was ordained as a deaconess. After the ordination, both were given a few minutes to speak. Bro. James spoke a few words. Excerpts: “God sets the members, every one in His church. God is willing to save and to keep those who are willing to be kept. The ministry of God’s work is a wonderful work. A deacon/deaconess is a helper to the church. This ordination is a recognition of the church of those who have demonstrated their commitment to the work of God.”

### **November 25**

**10:15 A.M.**—This was a Divine Healing Service. Speaker: Bro. David Shaw. Title: “But of God’s Healing Power.” Texts: Matthew 11:22-25; Mark 5:1-8, 21-34. The Lord willing, this full-length message will be printed in a future issue.

**7:00 P.M.**—Speaker: Bro. Mick Akers. Title: “The Kingdom of God, not in Word, by Power.” This full-length message, Lord willing, will be printed in an upcoming issue.

### **November 26**

**9:45 A.M.**—Sunday school period.

**10:40 A.M.**—Speaker: Bro. James Arch. Title: “A Man Who Made God’s Way His Way.” Texts: Hebrews 11:24-27; Matthew 10:39; Luke 13:24; Psalm 32:1, 2. He referred to Moses as a great leader and a meek man. “Moses chose self-denial over the pleasures of sin. We need to make up our mind to turn from the world and focus on the things above. Happy is the man who chooses to live for God. Don’t let the things of this world influence you. God has something better for us. Paul was an example. He forsook the world and focused on God, forgetting the things which were behind. Jesus is an excellent example. We are to respect the Lord’s day. Don’t let others influence you to do wrong. We need good role models. Today is a time for you to make the decision to serve God.”

**2:30 P.M.**—The Young People were responsible for this service. The topic chosen was, “Jesus Is Your Every-



thing.” Sis. Desiree Ebanks was in charge. Testimonies were done by Sis. Karen Christian, Bro. Lennie Collins, and Sis. Latasha Nixon. Various songs and poems were rendered that went along with the topic.

**7:00 P.M.**—Speaker: Bro. Greg Tyler. Title: “An Overview of the Christian Path.” Several scriptures were used. Excerpts: “There are only two ways: God’s way or the devil’s way. The sinner’s path or the Christian path. (1) *Consciousness of God*: He created the heaven and the earth. He made man also. With sin came condemnation. (2) *Conviction*: Saul witnessed Stephen’s death when Stephen cried out to God to ‘lay not this sin to

their charge.’ On the road to Damascus, conversion took place. (3) *Godly sorrow*: You need to be broken about your sins. Confess your sins to God. (4) *Confidence in the Atonement of Jesus Christ*. (5) *Conversion*: You must be born again. (6) *Continual Growth*: Grow in grace and good works. (7) *Dependency on God*: We can’t walk without Him. (8) *Consecration*: Get sanctified. (9) *Conditional Security*: Walk in the light so you will not fall. (10) *Contentment*: Peace and satisfaction in Christ. (11) *Consistent*: ‘Ye are the light of the world.’ (12) *Conform to the Image of Christ*: Ephesians 4:1-6; 11-16. (13) *Conquer the Temptation of Sin*: Romans 8:31-39; Romans 5:5. (14) *Love of God*: I Corinthians 13. (15) *Controlled and Led by the Holy Spirit*: Whatever we face, God is with us. Conquer the final enemy—death. We must be unmovable. This is a joyful life. You must have on the wedding garment—salvation.”

*We trust the Lord will see fit to allow us to have another annual convention. We appreciate all who helped in any way to make this convention a success. May the Lord bless each one is our prayer. †*

### **2017 CAYMAN CONVENTION CD’S**

*We are making available CD’s of these services. These may be purchased for \$2.50 each. The complete set of all fifteen services are only US\$30.00. (Good for U.S. and C.I. only.)*

*Please fill in the blanks for those you wish to order. Send check or money order to: The Way of Truth CD Ministry, P.O. Box 88, Hagerstown, MD 21741-0088.*

- ☐ CD #852 The Christian Path—A Shining Light ...—James Arch
- ☐ CD #853 The Christian Path—A Shining Light ...—Gary Alwell
- ☐ CD #854 Your Soul Is Perishable—G. E. Tyler
- ☐ CD #855 Be Clothed with Humility—Donovan Darby
- ☐ CD #856 Seven Times Jesus Said, “I Am”—Duane Jeffries
- ☐ CD #857 Lord, What Wilt Thou Have Me to Do?—Rupert Shippy
- ☐ CD #858 The Benefits of Serving God—Ray Hydes
- ☐ CD #859 The Christian Path—A Shining Light ...—Hezekiah Lamey
- ☐ CD #860 Ordination Service
- ☐ CD #861 But of God’s Healing Power—David Shaw
- ☐ CD #862 The Kingdom of God, not in Word, by Power—Mick Akers
- ☐ CD #863 A Man Who Made God’s Way His Way—James Arch
- ☐ CD #864 Jesus Is Your Everything—Young People
- ☐ CD #865 An Overview of the Christian Path—G. E. Tyler

# The Christian Path— A Shining Light for Perilous Times

2017 Cayman Convention Message by Bro. James Arch

**I** AM VERY thankful to be here and to see those of you who are here. Those of you who are visiting from the local community, we appreciate your presence as well. We're glad for everyone who is here with us. Thank God for His blessings on us.

I don't know whether I will be able to get across to you what I feel in regard to this theme, but I will do my best. I will ask the Lord to help me not to get too loud, but to be as mild as I can, for I realize the Lord is not deaf either. When it comes to the Christian path, I believe in it. I try my best to live it. The older I get, the less of the world I see. Beautiful creative world, isn't it? But it is more to the world than those beautiful trees. That's not what we're talking about.

Over 50 years ago, when I was a young person, I was riding my bicycle in George Town. As I was riding through the front road one night around 10 o'clock, there was an old woman sitting in her window. You couldn't see her, but she could see you. In those days, the windows could be pushed up and the breeze would blow through the screens. They didn't have any air-conditioners those days. She had the radio on. A female soloist was singing. This song was going through the airwaves of the town—

*When my lifework is ended, and I cross the swelling tide,*

*When the bright and glorious morning I shall see;  
I shall know my Redeemer when I reach the other side,  
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.*

*I shall know Him, I shall know Him,  
As redeemed by His side I shall stand,  
I shall know Him, I shall know Him,  
By the print of the nails in His hand.*

Some of that song is symbolical, of course, but those old people meant well. Those old beautiful hymns are still blessing us today. So, while you're in this convention, be blessed. Come for a blessing.

I don't know if it necessary for me to read the scriptures, as they are displayed before you, but I will read them anyhow. The first one, II Timothy 3:1, a very familiar verse: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." And from Proverbs 4:18, "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." I will refer to the others preceding those a little later on.

The intent of this theme is to convey the thought that although the world is very real with the wicked and evil environment it has become, we all have the privilege to resist that way, to take God's way, and to shine the light of a better way into the darkness. That is the thought of the theme of this convention: "The

Christian Path—A Shining Light for Perilous Times."

Every day we learn more. If we are pliable and flexible in the hand of God, we'll learn more all the time. The more we keep our mouths shut, and open our ears, the more we will learn. We can learn from the simplest person whom we call simple. We can learn from simple things. So we are always learning. We're always climbing the upward way. Don't expect that we're on the plateau. No, we're not home yet. We're still moving on; we're still militant; we're still traveling, but there's a destination we're going to.

Thank God for this path. Life is a pathway; a journey. We're only here for one time. We're not coming back here to plant corn 16 inches long, with butter running down our arms. That is not going to happen. We're here for one time. When Jesus comes back, He's coming to end it, and take His church to glory. What a day that will be! Thank God, there's coming a day. If we remain true and faithful to God, we'll be ushered into that beautiful bliss of heaven, saved to sin no more. There will be no more problems, temptations, and sin. So it is sin and turning against God that has caused the world to be the way it is.

God never designed for righteousness and unrighteousness to mix. That's why He established His church. Thank God for the pathway of the just. What a beautiful way it is! It is a clean-cut way. Christians don't have anything to hide. Nothing to hide! It is a clean-cut path. It's a high standard of living, but it's a good standard. It's not only good for your spiritual, but it's good for your physical. It will keep you healthy. It's good for your health. So, it is my hope that we will be able to remind everyone that we can help to make the world a better place, and that we can be victors and not victims while we're here.

I mentioned awhile ago about coconuts bobbing in the water. Do you know what a coconut bobbing in the water looks like? Up and down, up and down, and sometimes it's under. You don't see it. Sometimes it's floating high up. That's not the way we're supposed to be. We have to be consistent in our walk with the Lord. There are people who do not read the Bible. The only Bible they read is us. The only Bible they read is those who are professing to be Christians. That's why it is so important for us to walk this pathway aright. Do it right. There's no other way to do it but the right way. It's a beautiful way! We must see it that way. Christians must exalt it and lift it up to the world. Tell people about it. Tell people what God has done for you. Testify! That's what the world needs to hear.





When we think about perilous times, we think about the dangers that are prevalent now, but that's not all it means. It's the danger to the soul as well. When Paul spoke about perilous times, he was talking about this dispensation. Paul lived in perilous times. He lived in the last days. We're in the last and final dispensation of grace, the dispensation of Christ. That's where we are today. Thank God for the truth of the gospel of Christ. So, the last days include the Christian era, this gospel dispensation that we're in at this time. We're no longer under the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant fell away with Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, the New Testament was sealed with His blood. The New Covenant came into effect. We're no longer under the Old Covenant. We're under grace, the grace of God that keeps us every day. That's where we are today. That's where the church is.

Romans 14:17, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." This old world is not our home. We're just passing through this place. There's something better than this.

This battle will continue on as long as this world will last. You don't lay this down until you leave this world. It's a struggle, a battle, a race, a journey, a walk, but with God by your side, you can walk it.

When I was in school, I read a poem called, "The Two Ways." One way was wide and broad, the other narrow and grassy and wanted wear. A man, with a jacket on his arm and a hat holding in his hand, stood by the junction of those two ways and wondered which one to take. He took the road less trodden by, and that made all the difference. Jesus said, "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Don't get discouraged, Church. Hold your head up high. Don't be ashamed of the gospel. This is the best thing you ever will have in life.

### **WE ARE LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS**

These last days would be marked by the collapse of moral standards. It can't get much worse. Excuse me, but that's a fact. It really can't get much worse than where it is today. It's unbelievable, unrealistic! There's a trend the world has taken.

In these last days, there will be a multiplying of false believers, but thank God that although we're in that era, God is still with us. God is still on His throne. He never forsakes His own, thank God.

To live as God designed for you to live, it results in a good and joyful life. If you don't watch yourself, the devil will get you down, hold you down, keep you down, and rob your joy and satisfaction. He will rob your little walk with God. The devil doesn't want anyone walking with God. He doesn't want anyone to live good. You have to understand who the devil is. He doesn't want anything good, but thank God for the power of God.

The writer cautioned against the wicked path. If you'll look at Proverbs 4:14-18, you'll see there, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way

of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the just is as the shining light [Solomon makes a contrast between wickedness and the path of the righteous.], that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Jesus said, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." So, we have a responsibility to let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. Christ is the way. He is the light. He said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." It is a glowing light, like the rising sun that comes up every morning. It gets brighter all the time. By midday, it's really bright. By the time we get to the end of this path, we should be shining pretty good. When we live for 45, 50, and 60 years, we should be shining. Don't let the devil rob us.

I know that old age is not the nicest thing to deal with, but you still have a spiritual life. You have to watch yourself when you get old, too. Old age can become an excuse. Defeat the devil. Rub your knee and get going. I know that aches and pains come when you're getting old because I'm there now. Let me tell you something, God is still there, too. Every morning when you awake, God is still there, too. We need to place more things in the hands of God. Too many of us try to take this life into our own hands and try to live it by ourselves. We can't live this by ourselves. God has to live it with us, too. This is a relationship we build, like a marriage. It's a companionship. We walk with God.

### **ENDURING THROUGH DIFFICULT PLACES**

*The Christian path may sometimes lead through some difficult places.* Too many people expect to escape these places. It is not as easy all the time. God didn't create us to live that way. He didn't promise that we wouldn't have problems. They will come. The apostle Peter said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (I Peter 4:12, 13).

Paul and Silas were thrown in jail for the cause of Christ's sake. Twelve o'clock in the night, they didn't sit down and grumble and moan about what was going on. They sang praises unto God. God shook the old prison doors open. The thing about it is: the prisoners didn't run, and that's what scared the keeper of the prison. He thought that would be the end of them. Let me tell you something, Friends, when God does something, He knows what He's doing. God did it! Paul said to the keeper, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." He said to Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." That's a beautiful story in the Bible. So sometimes the Christian path leads through difficult places.

You may sometimes pass through some very deep waters. The Bible tells us about that, too. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame [symbolical, not literal fire] kindle upon thee." Sometimes you go through things in life that you didn't think you would have to go through.

I tell this congregation all the time that they have to keep their mind, their heart, and their eyes off people, and what people say about them. You have to focus on the Lord. If you're a Christian now, people specialize in talking about you, especially if you belong to the Church of God, and especially if you're from the Church of God (Universal). They have special times to talk about them. "Do you know where they're from?" Be proud to know where you're from. Give God the glory! Hold the church up. Thank God for Christianity. It's a genuine product. It's not a myth or a make-believe thing. It's a genuine product. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." Yes, some waters get deep. They are dark, too. The ocean out there is dark, and the farther out you go, the darker it is. You don't see the bottom. Thank God, the waters are not so deep for God to go with you. He can go with you.

### YOU MUST LOVE PEOPLE

*The Christian path may also lead through someone's hurt that you have helped to heal.* You must love and do good for people, like the good Samaritan who saw a human being by the side of the road. Someone had beaten up the man and left him half-dead. A Levite went by and looked at him and left. A priest went by and looked at him and left, but the good Samaritan, who had no dealings with the Jews, didn't see any nationality. He saw the human being. Have you ever seen such inhumanity to man as it is in the world today? It's hard to understand. It really is. The good Samaritan fixed up the man's wounds and took him to an inn. He said to the innkeeper, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Christianity is not a talk, talk thing. It is a practice. Lawyers practice law. Doctors practice medicine. Christians practice Christianity. It's a practice.

*The Christian path may lead through someone's vision that you've helped to clear.* Do you know the Bible says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish"? Don't let the devil blind your eyes. You must keep a clear vision of God's way, a vision of the church, a vision of Christianity, and what God has designed for you. It's a beautiful way. You might go through someone's reputation that you have vindicated. Some people specialize in slaying another's character. That happens, you know. No wonder the Bible says, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity," but "the path of the just is as the shining light."

*The Christian path may lead you through someone's burden that you have shared.* Do you ever talk to anyone? Do you try to help someone with his burden? The Bible tells us to do so.

*The Christian path may lead through someone's soul that you have led to the cross.* That's where it can lead us through. What a good feeling to know that you have

brought someone, not to yourself, but to Christ! That's who we're winning souls for.

*The Christian path is motivated by love, by interest, and by concern.* That's what it is motivated by. It means some sacrifice sometimes. In writing to the Corinthians, Paul said in I Corinthians 9:19, "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." Verse 22: "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." This path I'm talking about is not a stage show on a platform. It's a life. You have to walk this path.

### LIKE TRAVELING ON A ROAD

*The Christian path is like traveling on a road.* Roads take you somewhere. Roads have straight sections sometimes. That's when all is smooth and nice. If you set your accelerator on cruise, you can go for miles. It can't be done here, but it can be done in the States. They drive for miles and miles on those straight highways. Sometimes life is smooth, too, not always rough, but you must give God thanks. When you have it smooth or rough, you still have to thank God.

There are corners in roads. That's the time you have to be more cautious of how you're going around those corners. Some roads have potholes. There are obstacles in life that you have to overcome. Unless we decide in our hearts that this is what it's going to take, we might not run this road so well. There are speed bumps on some roads. Have you ever seen a speed bump? That means it is time to slow down. We don't speed over speed bumps. You know, all of us can slow down a little more. Life is so full.

These days people leave home before daylight breaks, and come back home 10 o'clock in the night. They leave home before their children wake up and come back when they're asleep. All of these things are going on in our world today. We're really not taking the time it usually takes to enjoy the natural life, much less the spiritual one. There's a natural side to life. You must love your family, whether you're a Christian or a non-Christian. Take care of your family. Love your family. Live a good natural life. God gave it to us to live it only once. Live it to its fullest, but there is another side you can live. Jesus called it "the abundant life." You know, the speed bumps make you slow down. Regardless of how fast you're going, you're going to slow down when you come to those speed bumps.

Roads go uphill. We don't have any hills in Cayman, but other places have hills. That's when you need more power or the old car is going to go back down. The old car will slide down if you don't have more power to mount the hill. Do you know there's a song called "Count Your Blessings"? The chorus of that song says—

*Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;  
Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.*

Many of us look at what we don't have. People look at what they don't have. "Oh, I don't have any husband, but you have one!" You might be better off without one. You don't know. "Oh, I don't have any wife, but you have



one!" Don't look at it that way. Look at what you have. Look at where you could have been. Look at what God has done for you. God is so good. Thank God for His blessings on us.

Roads also go downhill. That's when you have to put on your brakes; that's when you need to know you're spiritually fit. You know, I was sick some weeks ago. I'm not fully recovered yet. I told the church here that I was climbing the rough side of the mountain, but when the mountain is smooth, you can slip off. When it's rough, you can grip it. You shouldn't backslide because you get sick. Christians get sick, too, like anyone else. Unfortunately, that's a part of how life is. That's not going to change.

Roads have signs and directions. We know what our road map is. God's Word is our road map. Some roads are long. It takes some endurance to go through them. To run the path and win, it takes some endurance. This is not a one-time, one-day show. It takes some endurance. We have to see the beauty in what it means to live for the Lord. Then it becomes a joy to know we're part of God's family, and we have a heavenly Father who cares about us. God understands us when others don't, and He loves us when others throw us out.

### GOD IS ON THIS ROAD

The psalmist David said, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." You must want to be around your Father; you must want to be in His presence. That's why you come to church services. You want to be where God is. Thank God for it!

I don't like to bring myself into this, but I've been in this a long, long time. As a little boy, I was the bell ringer for the church. I would ring the bell and go back home. Those days two bells were rung: first and second bell. They didn't have many clocks those days. The first bell rang for the people to get ready for church. When the second bell rang, they were in church. This church still rings a bell. All the rest are gone. Too modern now. I said that to say this, being around the church was one thing, but being *in* it was a different thing. Thank God, I've been in it for over 50 years. My wife and I are still in our little house that we moved into when we were married over 50 years ago. What's going to happen now? Time is running out. All of it will soon end. What a joy it would be to know you'll make it through!

All through the journey of life, whether you're a Christian or a non-Christian, there is God. Before we were, God was. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalm 90:2). Thank God, He is still here. When we consider our lives and existence, there is God. The Bible tells us, "[We are] fearfully and wonderfully made."

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The ability to see, to taste, to hear, to feel, and to share with someone else came from the almighty God. If you run to the other side of the world to try to get away from things, even there you'll find God. People try to run from God, but they can't run from Him. I told someone the other day, "Anywhere you go, you'll be you. You can't run from you."

When you view nature, you see God. What else could you see? When you have problems and need help, there is God. "Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." When we begin to wonder why there is so much human suffering, etc., we don't have an answer. The Bible says, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Underneath those questions, there is God. Don't ask me where God came from. I can't answer it. I know God is. He has always been. Underneath your problems, there is a God; underneath your sins, there is a God. God's grace is greater than our sins. When we feel like all our friends have failed us, we still have God. Paul said, "All men forsook me: Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me."

### CONCLUSION

When you're getting old and feeble, you still have God. The Bible says that you will still bring forth fruit in your old age. When your hair is white as milk, thank God for it. Some people who are 90 years old have their hair dyed black. You can't turn back the clock. You've put in the mileage. My mother used to sing a line of a song, "When I'm growing old and feeble, stand by me." Friends, you have to fall in love with God, just like you promised your wife or husband: for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part. It's a relationship that we build with God. You and God walking together. Walk with God. Let your light shine.

I don't like to think too much about nearing home. I wouldn't mind living a little more. Only God knows when the time will be, but when you get there, the Bible says, "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."

I'm not a believer in every time there is a service that everyone has to go to the altar, but if you need to, this is the place to cast your all at the foot of the cross. Whatever you're going through, you can tell the Lord about it. He'll lighten your load. If you haven't experienced the joy of salvation, you can come and experience it. Give the Lord your life. He won't turn His back on you. †

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