

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound,  
who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

**THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER**  
**USPS #871620**

Periodicals postage paid at the post office in Newark,  
Ohio 43055.  
POSTMAN, send form 3579 to the printer:

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER  
675 N. Cedar Street  
Newark, Ohio 43055

This periodical carries no subscription price; however, it  
is partially maintained through the gifts and offerings of its  
readers, with the balance of the expenses being paid by  
the local congregation.

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Print Shop Phone: 740-345-1312

This monthly religious journal is published for the benefit of the  
Church of God universally. It is our supreme purpose to reach the  
world for Christ through the printed page. Our burden is to reveal  
the truth of God's Word to all mankind, to expose sin and error, war  
against apostasy, and to eradicate the longstanding traditions of  
men that have no biblical foundations.

Brother Roger L. Decker ..... Editor  
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

**THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:**

- A personal God (John 4:24)
- A divine Christ (John 1:1, 14)
- An infallibly inspired Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- Salvation from sin (Matt. 1:21)
- The new birth (John 3:3, 5-7)
- A holy life (Luke 1:73-75; Titus 2:12)
- Sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23)
- Unity of God's people (John 17:21, Eph. 4)
- Divine, physical healing (James 5:14-16)
- The ordinances (Matt. 28:19-20; John 13;  
1 Cor. 11:23, 34)
- Eternal life (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43)
- The Trinity (1 John 5:7, 8)

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS  
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

- Jesus organized it (Matt. 16:18)
- On a good foundation (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11)
- Christ governs it (Eph. 1:22-23; Isa. 9:6)
- God admits members (1 Cor. 12:13-18)
- Sin puts you out of it (Rom. 11:22; Ex. 32:33)
- The saved only are members (John 15:2-6)
- Membership is offered to all (Rev. 22:17)
- Final rewards (Rev. 20:12-15; 21:3-4; 22:14)
- Bible name of the Church (Acts 20:28;  
Gal. 1:13; John 17:11)

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**Website: [www.godsacres.org](http://www.godsacres.org)**

**Vol. 30 June 2000 No. 6**

*Quest*  
*Editorial*

**Cherubims and the Way of  
the Tree of Life**

**Part 1 of 4**

*Genesis 3:22-24 reads: "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."*

In Parts 1 and 2 of this study, we will focus on the "tree of life," and in Parts 3 and 4 we will study the Cherubims. This passage of Scripture records the outcome of the sobering account of the expulsion of man from the Garden of Eden. When we think of "the tree of life," these questions come to mind: What is this tree called "the tree of life"? Why was man removed from its presence? What type of life did this tree give? and Where is this tree today? We want to examine the biblical answers to these questions.

Genesis 2:17 states, ". . . for in the day that thou eatest thereof [speaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil] thou shalt surely die." That was the command, and Adam violated it and partook of the tree. Genesis 3:12 says, "And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Genesis 2:17 states, ". . . in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Physically, Adam lived nine hundred thirty years. Genesis 5:5

says, "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died." This teaches us that it was not physical life that was forfeited that day, because he lived approximately nine hundred thirty years. Therefore, we must conclude that it was not physical death that came upon him, but spiritual death.

How do we know this was spiritual death? God, speaking through the Prophet, declared in Ezekiel 18:4, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine." Someone may say, "Since Adam transgressed and fell, every child is born into this world with a sinful nature." No, because God said, "All souls are mine." God puts the soul in each child at conception, and to say there is sin in the soul is to make Christ or God the minister of sin. The Scriptures ask, "Is Christ the minister of sin? God forbid" (Galatians 2:17). He does not create a soul with sin in it.

To further clarify what type of death took place, let us read James 1:15, which says, "Then when lust [or desire] hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." The type of death that occurred in the Genesis account was spiritual death. Again, Ezekiel 18:4 says, ". . . the soul that sinneth, it [the soul] shall die." This substantiates the fact that the death that Adam sustained was spiritual death.

The tree in Genesis 3:22 was called "the tree of life." This is not speaking of physical life, because Adam lived more than nine hundred years without it. Thus, physical death was not a result of the fall of man. Many are under the misconception that this was a result of man's fall. Someone may say, "Man sinned and thwarted the plan of God." No, physical death was always in God's plan. He knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10). Centuries later Paul penned that we can do nothing against the

*(continued on page 25)*

Revelation 18:1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her

plagues.

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

# The Habitation of Babylon

## Part 2 of 2



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

### **The Church Is Built on a Firm Foundation**

In the last issue we found that Babylon means "confusion." You can trace it back to the tower of Babel in Genesis, Chapter 11. The people attempted to build a tower to Heaven, and they all spoke one language. However, God confounded their language and stopped their building program. Genesis 11:8 says, "So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city."

Babylon is not built on the Word of God, but it is built on the creeds and doctrines of men. We find in 1 Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of

the saints." The Church of God is built upon the Rock, not upon the creeds and doctrines of men. She is built on a firm foundation—the sayings of Christ and Christ Himself.

Matthew 16:18 states, "And I say also unto thee [Jesus was speaking], That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Peter is not the Rock. In John 1:42 Jesus said, "Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone." Matthew 16:17 tells us, "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." What is the Rock? Saint, the Rock that you and I stand upon is a di-

vine revelation from God. Someone may say, "The Rock is Christ." How do you know Christ? It takes a divine revelation from God to know Jesus Christ. You cannot follow Him after the flesh. That is the reason John 3:3 says you must be born again to see the Kingdom of God.

John 6:44 says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." The Church of God is divine, and she is built on divine revelation. She did not just spring up; she came down from God out of Heaven. The reason some people have lost their vision of the church is that they have lost the Spirit of God. The Church of God was not raised up by a group of people who got their minds together.

Revelation 21:2 reads, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." This Scripture is not referring to literal Jerusalem, but the new Jerusalem. Hebrews 12:22-23 states: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

### **What Brings Confusion?**

Revelation 21:2 says the church came down from God out of Heaven. Revelation 1:10 says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." Now, remember that as you read Revelation 21:10, which says, "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." These Scriptures let you know that you must be in the Spirit to hear the voice of Christ and that you also must be carried up in the Spirit to see the Kingdom of God.

The reason there is so much confusion today is that people are not in the Spirit of God. John was in the Spirit. Many people cannot see the church because they are following the flesh. When people follow the flesh, they cannot see the Kingdom of God. When God carries you away in the Spirit, He will show you that great city, the Holy Jerusalem.

All other churches but the Church of God came up. You may say, "You are making it very narrow." I am only making it as narrow as the Word of God is. There is no other church recognized in the Bible but the Church of God. That may be hard for you to swallow in a world where there are thousands

of different religions that will suit most everyone's fancy. If you want to cut corners a little here and there, you can find a place that will overlook your cutting corners, but you cannot have peace in your soul.

When Jesus said, ". . . upon this rock I will build my church," He did not say "churches." Jesus is not building something to cause confusion, but man does. I repeat, the Church of God came down from God out of Heaven, and she is divine. Notice in Genesis, Chapter 11, that when men were trying to get to Heaven another way, God confounded their language. What is happening today? Men are trying to get to Heaven another way; therefore, they have confusion. The only way you are going to make it to Heaven is to line up with the Word of God. You may fuss and rise up against it, but you must go God's way or you will not make it.

Naaman the leper did not want to go down and dip in the river Jordan, but that did not change the message. Oh, he got upset, but the message was the same. The message was still, "Go and dip in the Jordan River seven times, and you will be clean."

### **The New Jerusalem**

Just as the Church of God is divine, her Head is also divine. Every church, except the Church of God, has someone at the head besides Christ. The head of the Church of God is Jesus Christ Himself. Colossians 1:18 states, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." Ephesians 1:20-23 reads: "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave

him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

The Head controls the members of the Church of God, just as your head (or brain) controls your natural body. Christ is the Head and the Door, and all members must come through Him. They do not come into the church through catechism or water baptism, and they do not come in through making pledges or by being voted in. They are born in her; there is no other door to the church.

All who come through Christ are made new. That is the reason the church is called "the New Jerusalem." Everyone who comes through Christ is not fit for the old Jerusalem, so there had to be a new Jerusalem. The new Jews cannot go back under the old Mosaic Law and go back to the old Jerusalem. John saw the New Jerusalem descending from God out of Heaven. Every new Jew is a member of the New Jerusalem, the church of the firstborn.

God has no more respect for old Jerusalem than He does for Siberia. All literal genealogy stopped at the birth of Jesus Christ. All new Jews must come through Him, and they are placed in the New Jerusalem. The Church of God was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world, or before the world was ever brought into existence. Revelation 13:8 tells you, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Christ was slain from the foundation of the world. First Peter 1:18-20 states: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for

you."

The Church of God is not a denomination. She is not Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish; she is not a sect, or a man-made organization, but she is the bride of Christ. We find in Revelation 21:9, "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Christ was the Lamb slain before there was ever a man. Why was He slain? He purchased the Church of God with His own blood.

### **The Habitation of Devils**

Our Scripture text in Revelation 18:2 says, "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Babylon is a habitation, or a dwelling place, for the devil. It is a place that foul spirits rise up and protect, and it is a prison to the unclean. I want you to understand by the Word of God why God is so stirred against Babylon and is pouring out a double cup for her. When are the two cups poured out? One was poured out under the sixth seal when brethren such as D. S. Warner stood up and preached, "Come out of her, my people." Babylon is being rewarded double in this seventh-seal time. God still has a ministry, and we still preach, "Come out of her, my people." Why? Babylon has become a dwelling place for devils, and it is a place that foul spirits protect.

You may ask, "How can the devil dwell in Babylon?" Because the devil dwells in darkness; he loves darkness. That is the reason he does not want ministers to preach against Babylon and expose sin. When a man of God preaches and brings light on a certain subject, it gives understanding and brings people out of darkness where the devil thrives and lives.

Exodus 10:21-23 says: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days: They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings." Egypt is a type of sin and bondage, and it keeps people in darkness. But the people of God have light in their dwellings, and they have understanding. Egypt still has people in darkness and in bondage. Babylon is a dwelling place for the devil.

Revelation 13:1 states: "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea [the sea is people], having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." Remember, the Church of God came down from God out of Heaven, but this beast was rising up out of the minds of people. Those who worship the beast were those whose names were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life. People admire and follow after it yet today whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Those who have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life and who have the Spirit of God know better. God directs them and guides their lives.

Roman Catholicism is full of creeds and doctrines of men, and it got its power from pagan Rome: Rome was the force that was in power at the time of Christ and the Apostles. When the Apostles went forth preaching the Gospel, they laid hold on the dragon, which is represented as pagan Rome. We read in Revelation 13:4, "And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"

The dragon, or pagan Rome,

gave power to the beast. The difference between pagan Rome and Roman Catholicism is that Roman Catholicism wears the cloak of religion, but they have the same spirit. Where did Roman Catholicism get its power? It got its power from the dragon. It is still a habitation of devils.

John 8:44 lets us know two characteristics of the devil: first, he is a murderer; and second, he is a liar and has been from the beginning. The devil's beginning was not in Heaven. He was not kicked out of Heaven, because he was never there. In Genesis, Chapter 3, you can see when the devil first came on the scene. He came on the scene as a liar and a murderer, trying to get Eve to disobey God's commandment, just as he tries to get people to do today. He tries to get people to take an easier way.

Roman Catholicism is a murderer of souls. She is sending more souls to hell than all the gambling houses, casinos, and houses of prostitution in America, and she is doing it under the guise of religion. Roman Catholicism is a habitation of the devil, which means that the devil can dwell there in safety and not be disturbed. He captivates people and lies to them, and no one will put the truth on him. He can murder souls and never be condemned through the preaching. He does not have to worry about the priest putting the heat on him with the Word of God. Also, he does not have to worry about being named out. Contrariwise, the devil cannot dwell in the Church of God in safety.

### **Practices Contrary to God's Word**

Now I want to reveal a few more lies concerning old mystery Babylon. Roman Catholicism tells people that Peter was the first pope, and that at the head of the Roman Catholic Church, beginning with Peter, there is along succession of popes that continues to this day. That is a lie of the devil. The truth

is, God never ordained one man to be above another, and He never ordained for a man to be the head of the church. There is no truth in that at all. There are no Scriptures to imply that Peter was the first pope of Rome, but there are plenty of Scriptures to prove contrary to that.

Let us study the principles of the Word of God. We read in Matthew 18:1-5: "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him [He did not call Peter], and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

Mark 10:37-43 reads: "They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.

"And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister." Nowhere did Jesus exalt

Peter to rule over the other Apostles. To exalt a man to rule in a position as the head of the church is darkness. There is no truth in that, yet Roman Catholicism does it. Millions of people are following that false teaching.

Roman Catholicism prohibits the clergy from marrying but Peter was married. The Bible says in Matthew 8:14, "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever." To have a mother-in-law, one must have a wife. Peter having a wife is contrary to the teachings of Roman Catholicism. In 1 Corinthians 9:5 Paul said, "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" Although they teach in Roman Catholicism that the pope is not to marry, there is no Bible for that at all, yet they say they trace their succession back to Peter.

Peter would not allow men to bow down to him, but people bow down to the pope daily. Acts 10:25-26 tells us: "And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man." People bow down to the pope in mass crowds, but when a man tried to bow down before Peter, he said, "Stand up, I myself also am a man." The practice is contrary to the principles of God's Word, and it is complete darkness. Exodus 34:14 says, "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God."

Peter did not wear a crown. We find in 1 Peter 5:4, "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Christ did not give the crown that the pope wears. It came out of the creeds and doctrines of men. Peter never acted as a pope, he never dressed as a pope does, he never spoke as a pope does, he never wrote as a pope does, and the people did not worship him as a pope is worshipped.

Roman Catholicism is full of lies. If you put their false teachings and practices alongside the Word of God, you will see that it is a habitation of devils and foul, unclean spirits. There is not enough Gospel preached there to clean up people's lives.

It is true that Peter had the most outstanding role of the other disciples before Pentecost. Also, on the Day of Pentecost he preached the first message. Peter was the one who took the Gospel to the Gentiles, but not one Scripture indicates that he was a pope or a universal bishop of any kind. Though Peter took a leading role initially, later it seems that Paul had the more outstanding ministry of the two. Let us study it. Peter wrote eight chapters and 166 verses; Paul wrote one hundred chapters and 2,325 verses. Paul said Peter, James, and John were pillars in the Christian church; but in 2 Corinthians 12:11 Paul said, ". . . for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles . . ." We also find in Galatians 2:11 that Paul rebuked Peter: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." Paul rebuked Peter because he was guilty of dissimulation, which is hypocrisy.

### **The Teaching of Infallibility**

Roman Catholicism teaches that the pope is infallible. If you study history, you will find that some popes were very poor examples in morality and integrity. There was a raising up of some people who disagreed with this teaching of infallibility. They did not believe that a pope was infallible. Therefore, in A.D. 1870 the Vatican council decided to narrow down the meaning and give a definition. The wording finally adopted was this: "When the Roman Pontiff, ex cathedra, or in exercise of his office as a pastor or teacher of all Christians, he is by reason of the divine assistance possessed of that infallibility." In other words, when he is teaching or per-

forming duties as a pastor, he is supposed to be infallible. In that capacity, every word he says is true and no one should even question it. Throughout history there have been times when one pope has condemned another pope. Pope Vigilius condemned certain books, then he removed his condemnation, then he condemned them again, then he retracted his condemnation, and then afterward he condemned them again. Pope Eugene III, A.D. 1145-1153, authorized dueling. Later, Pope Julius II, A.D. 1503-1513, and Pope Pius IV, A.D. 1559-1565, forbade it. One pope authorized dueling and the practice was condemned by another, but they are supposed to be infallible. Pope Hadrian II, A.D. 867-872, declared civil marriage to be valid. He said that a couple could be married in a civil court, but Pope Pius VII condemned it as invalid. Pope Eugene IV, A.D. 1431-1437, condemned Joan of Arc to be burned alive as a witch. Later, Pope Benedict IV (in A.D. 1919) declared her to be a saint. What rank confusion and darkness! It is a habitation where devils dwell in safety.

I repeat, Roman Catholicism is full of lies and has millions in bondage. The devil dwells there, and there is not enough truth there to stir him up or to get people under conviction. What else do we see in the Roman Catholic Church today? They hold raffles, bingo parties, and carnivals just as the world does, except they do it under the guise of religion. It is a system that is sending souls into a lost eternity by the millions.

People in Roman Catholicism are not taught the Bible; they are taught the creeds and doctrines of men. Therefore, God is stirred against it. It has millions of souls in captivity. Roman Catholicism dates back to A.D. 270. It became fully developed in approximately A.D. 530. It ruled along with political power the entire world from A.D. 530 to A.D. 1530, a time called the Dark Ages. Millions of souls lost

their lives because they would not bow down, recant, or give in to the pope of Rome but wholeheartedly followed Jesus Christ. Roman Catholicism is a murderer of souls.

### **Having a Form of Religion But Denying the Power of It**

Now let us study how Roman Catholicism began. When the Church of God was in all her glory, preaching the Word of God, pagan Rome could not stand against her. Pagan Rome, who ruled the entire then-known world, could not stand against the one hundred twenty who were filled with the Holy Ghost in the Upper Room. Christ sent them out as witnesses unto Him. Rome could not stand against the Word and the Spirit of God. However, the glory of the morning-time church was short-lived. It is hard to imagine that a church as great as the morning-time church could lose the love of God from its midst, but apostasy is very deceptive and has woven its web around many. Many people have backed away from the stand that they once took because of people. Pilate should have heeded the warning from his wife, but instead he chose to please the people.

The Church of God went into apostasy and turned away from Truth and souls went into darkness. When you leave Truth, there is no telling what you will get into. When apostasy gets hold of people, they back away from Truth only a little at first. The morning-time church did not lose its glory all at once. A few saints were scattered here and there who preached the Truth and still poured out judgment on old pagan Rome. However, little by little, they began to lay aside this and that, and apostasy took over; yet, the people still had a form of religion but denied the power thereof. Saint of God, if you fool around with things of the world, worldly spirits will captivate you and you will apostatize, all the while some will pat you on the back

and say you are doing well.

According to Revelation 18:2, not only is Babylon a dwelling place for the devil but also a place guarded by foul spirits. There you will see murdering spirits, fighting spirits, torturing spirits, and every foul spirit imaginable rise up to protect its stronghold. It is also a prison to uncleanness.

Since there is not enough Gospel preached in Roman Catholicism to clean up a soul, they lie to the people about a purgatory to give them a false hope. There is no hope of the Gospel, because Roman Catholicism does not believe in being born again. No change takes place in the lives of the people. Some of the people live good lives, but self-righteousness is as filthy rags. All people need to be saved. Many people do not smoke, drink, or cuss, but they are not saved. There are people who drink, smoke, take drugs, and commit adultery, and they remain in that cage, unable to be free. It is the Gospel that frees you, and there is no Gospel preached there. It is a hold of every foul spirit and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

The world has divided religion into three categories: Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. The truth is, none of these is the true church. The Church of God is the bride of Christ, the church of the firstborn, and she descended from God out of Heaven.

### **Christ Came to Proclaim Liberty to the Captives**

I want to clarify that we certainly are not against people, but we are against false systems that make up man-made religion. Revelation 18:4 says, "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:1 reads, "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was

lightened with his glory." The angel, or the messenger, came down from Heaven right along with the church. God does not want men and women kept in the clutches of sin and darkness. If you are living in sin, He does not want you to stay there any longer.

The Prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 61:1-3: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the gar-

ment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."

Isaiah said Christ came to open the prison to them that are bound. Thank God, there is a way that you can get out of your condition. You do not have to stay in a lost condition any longer. You do not have to be bound with spirits, bound in sin, bound with this or that. The Prophet Isaiah said Christ came to proclaim liberty to the captives. If you are in a man-made system of religion, you need to heed the Word of God and come out of her; stand aloft and touch not the unclean thing.

If you are bound with the habits of life and cannot get free, the good news is that Jesus came to proclaim

liberty to the captives and open the prison to them that are bound. You do not have to stay in that condition any longer. Jesus Christ came to save the lost.

You may ask, "Why do you preach against Babylon?" Babylon causes people to think they can still sin and yet get along with God; it is deceptive. On the contrary, people cannot do wrong and pray over top of it and do religious works to get by. If you walk in the light as He is in the light, then you can have fellowship with God and the saints of God. Are you bound with sin? How is your home? Is it in turmoil and falling apart? If it is, Christ can put it together again if you will come to Him.

*(Cassette C-1122M)*

# Radio Log



LOCATION	STATION	DAY	TIME
Newark, Ohio	WCLT-AM 1430	Sunday	7:35 a.m.-8:00 a.m.
Akron, Ohio	WHK-FM 98.1	Sunday	2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Cleveland, Ohio	WHK-AM 1420	Sunday	2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Anderson, Indiana	WQME-FM 98.7	Sunday	7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Little Rock, Arkansas	KMLT-AM 760	Sunday	5:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Rochelle, Georgia	WQIL-FM 101.3	Sunday	7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Gaffney, South Carolina	WAGI-FM 105.3	Monday	8:30 p.m.-10:00 p.m.
Harriesburg, Mississippi	WBKM-AM 950	Sunday	12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Tune in to the radio station nearest you to hear an inspiring message from the Word of God. If you enjoy the broadcast, let us hear from you!

*Psalm 127:1 Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*



# GODLY PRINCIPLES ON WHICH TO BUILD A CHRISTIAN HOME

*Brother E. David Stegmeier*

## **The Need of Having Divine Direction**

On the editorial page of a recent edition of *USA Today*, a man wrote a letter to the editor. The caption over the letter said this: "Dads, It's Okay to Ask for Directions and Follow Them." The letter reads: "What is it about men and directions? It is far from being unfairly stereotypical to say most guys avoid directions. Over the years we have unpacked everything from unassembled swing sets to video cassette recorders, leaving the instruction booklets languishing unread in the boxes. We have become completely lost on road maps, ignoring the pleas of our frustrated passengers. We would rather tough it out, like Lewis and Clark slipping westward along the Missouri River, hoping to discover something, anything. Unfortunately

what is true about men and directions can also be true about men and advice, men and sound counsel, or men and wise input from others." Jesus' opening words in recruiting His disciples were "Follow me."

The best advice I can give a father is this: follow Jesus Christ and your godly pastor. We all need divine direction today. Life is a maze, and I believe it is getting more difficult the further we go. However, God has given us a manual. I believe we can get directions on how to build a godly home by looking into the Book of all books, which is the Word of God, or the Bible. We must live up to every principle in the Word of God. Many divine principles are being violated today. Let us look at the principles. Godly principles should direct us in every action of life. Godly directions

can help a husband and a father know how to behave. Godly principles can tell a wife and mother how to act. Godly principles can also direct the children, the pastor, and the flock. The Word of God is replete with many godly principles and how to deal with problems. Some people say, "Well, we are following this principle," but how about the other principles? We must do our very best to obey every godly principle in God's Word. We need to work hard at finding and knowing the will of God. We can know the will of God. God still speaks individually today, but He does not speak contrary to the principles of His eternal Word. When God speaks, what He says coincides and conforms with the principles in His written Word.

I have taught school since 1963, and I have also worked in factories

and lumber mills. Nothing is harder than laboring to build a healthy, wholesome Church of God congregation in this day; it is a laborious task. It takes much work, energy, time, pain, sorrow, grief, and heartache. The Psalmist wrote, "Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it . . . ." We need God in building our congregations and our homes. I plead with God daily, "God, help me to be the husband, the father, and the pastor that I need to be." God can help each of us.

### **In All Your Ways Acknowledge Him**

Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). Without the divine direction of God, you cannot expect your home to weather the storms of life and yet remain strong and find your way through this maze of present-day problems. We all need God. As I said earlier, life is becoming more confusing.

When I was a child and my family was under the ministry of Brother and Sister R. L. Mullen, they were very good to teach us Scriptures. They encouraged us to memorize the Word of God, because we might not always have the written Word. I think the first Scripture they ever taught us was Proverbs 3:5-6. The Bible says, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. [Too many are leaning to the understanding of others. You must get God's understanding of the whole situation of life. You need God.] In all thy ways [in everything you do] acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Everyone has this privilege.

Experts tell us that parents are the first and greatest teachers in the lives of their children. Moses knew this God-given principle, and he wrote in Deuteronomy 6:1, "Now

these are the co commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it." These commands and principles are given so that we can implement them into our everyday lives. We should use our reasoning ability. God said in Isaiah 1:18, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

I like to answer questions concerning the things of God and the stand that I have taken for Him. Paul said in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." I am not ashamed of the stand that I have taken for Christ.

Moses said in Deuteronomy 6:2, "That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God [if you fear Him, you do not have to fear what man will do to you], to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, [In our home we never talk about whether or not we all are going to church; we all go to every service. Father, mother, as long as your children are in your home, you have a responsibility to see that they do the will of God.] and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged." Do you want to live a longer life? Then be sure that you implement God-given principles in your home.

Verses 3-5 continue: "Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Do your children see you do that? Are they convinced that is the

way in which you serve God? There should be no question in their minds. Your children learn by watching you.

### **Finding the Will of God and Doing It**

Paul recognized the transmittal of godly principles from one generation to the next when he wrote to Timothy, "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also" (2 Timothy 1:5). May God help us. I want my children to know that I love God and that above everything else in life I am going to obey Him and do His will. True religion is contagious, and false religion is as well.

The Apostle Paul could have written this: "The stubbornness and wantonness that is in thy grandmother Lois and also in thy mother Eunice is in thee." This judgment of God could be made in referring to many homes in our land today. I believe that God holds fathers most responsible. If your children lack high values and are void of spiritual discernment, it could be laid at your doorstep. I want my children to be taught godly principles, and I want them to have keen spiritual discernment. Where is the spiritual discernment today?

Someone once said, "It is in the family that men find their Heaven or hell on earth." The home should be a refuge from the storms of life. The home should be a haven, a shelter from the dangers and perils of our insidious society. If God is helping you to build your home, it will weather the adverse elements that threaten its extinction. Good, solid, godly homes are very few today.

Father, it is important that you have your priorities in proper perspective. Webster's dictionary says a priority is "something requiring or meriting attention prior to competing alternatives." To what do you give your first and foremost

attention? What is really first in your life? It should be finding the will of God and doing it above everything else.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:31-33: "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Father, mother, what is most important to you? Is it your job or the pleasures of life? Should it not be found in knowing God and doing His will? Jesus said to Martha when she was very troubled by things, "But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:42). One thing is needful: you need to be right with God more than anything else. The next thing that is needful is to tend to the spiritual needs of your children's souls. Your time, your possessions, your affections, and everything about you should be God's. I want God's approval on my life more than anything else.

### **What Is the Whole Duty of Man?**

As parents, we live with an abundance of snares all around us, things that could entangle us. Paul said, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight [everything that impedes progress for God], and the sin which cloth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). Dear one, you need to get to a place where you are satisfied with the size of your home, the kind of vehicle you drive, and the clothes you wear. You should not be wanting more and more and better and better. There are far more important things than the clothes you wear, the house in which you live, and the vehicle

you drive. The welfare of your eternal soul and the souls of your children should 'be given your greatest concern.

I thought of Solomon in his final analysis of life. Solomon concluded that everything is vanity except serving God. Solomon said this: "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit" (Ecclesiastes 1:14). Often people cannot attend camp meetings because they have to paint the house, take care of the car, tend to their animals, and so on. However, they ought to lay aside other things and attend the camp meetings.

Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 7:18, ". . . he that feareth God shall come forth of them all." Then, in Ecclesiastes 12:13, he wrote, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." When mankind follows the entire counsel and will of God, God has promised to supply him with the earthly necessities of life. The spiritual welfare of your soul and the souls of your loved ones ought to be at the top on your list of priorities. You should give preference to things that pertain to the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

Have you heard the old adage, "Like father, like son"? Father, your example as a godly man can have a very powerful influence on the life of your son. The greatest legacy that you can leave your children is your godly example. Have you ever noticed that young children want to be like their parents? Often when they become teenagers, they no longer want to be anything like their parents. Then, when they become adults, they become just like their parents. Parent, it would behoove you to walk a straight and narrow path.

Father, you must be the right example in your home, and you should treat your wife right. If you do not, your prayers will be hindered. Peter said in 1 Peter 3:7,

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

### **The Wisdom of Going God's Way**

Going back to the ancient sage, Solomon wrote in Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Your best teaching method is by way of your example. Will your children ever have problems? Oh, absolutely they will. They may even think they have to taste the things of the world for a while, but eventually they will come to the realization that nothing out in the world can satisfy the longings of their hearts.

Parent, you ought to make regular church attendance a top priority. My children know where I will be Sunday mornings, Sunday nights, and Wednesday nights. The Apostle Paul said in Hebrews 10:24-25: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 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." One man wrote, "Church attendance is a discipline worth promoting," and it is.

You might have heard this fundamental principle stated in this way: "If you hear, you forget; if you see, you remember; and if you do, you understand." You should not merely send your children to church; you ought to take them. The church and the home work together; they are interrelated. The church gives guidance, stability, and encouragement to you and your family. Someone wrote this: "When we are on our deathbeds and we look back upon what we have accomplished, will we wish to have earned more money, worked longer hours, or received greater

promotions? Or will we wish to have spent more time with the people we love--our sons, our daughters, our grandchildren, our wives, and God's people?"

Father, if you want your children to respect your authority, you must respect the authority that is over you. In all institutions of life, there is government and authority, whether they pertain to businesses, schools, factories, or whatever. God has government and authority in the church. It is beautiful, and it is for our good.

You must be careful to honor those over you such as your boss, your pastor, and law enforcement agents. You should be careful of how you address them and of how you treat them. As a father, it is important that you take a firm and strong stand for what is right. Doing so gives stability to your wife, your children, and whoever is watching. One songwriter stated, "Be strong and valiant for the truth." Noah, Abraham, Daniel, Joseph, and the three Hebrew children were all of strong character. Father, may God help you to take a firm and strong stand.

How much encouragement did Noah receive from his peers? None. Often parents really get on their children for succumbing to peer pressure. By the grace of God, I want to do what is right and stand with Him, though I get little or no encouragement from my peers. Noah led his family in the ways of God and remained faithful though no one else in the land did. He listened to God's instructions, and God blessed him.

Parent, you need to weigh every action of your life in the light of eternity. I did not say much about mothers, but motherhood is the highest and the most noble profession in the world for a woman. The home is the first institution to touch the lives of your children, and the home is usually the last institution to touch the hearts and lives of loved ones as they depart to the other world. You

should want to have a healthy, wholesome, strong home.

If you want to see your children saved, you must stay with God's people and refuse to listen to any other voice. Also, you ought to obey the voice of the man of God over you. You should do what he says, because the Bible says he is watching for your soul. He speaks to you from a different vantage point,

and he sees things that you may never see. God has placed him on a different level. Sometimes he may have to rebuke you very strongly. If you are wise, you will benefit by it and love him for it. On the other hand, if you are a scorner, you will hate him for it. God's way is always best.

*(Cassette C-4136M)*

### **Same As Father**

"What will you have?" said a clerk to a man who had just entered a cafe' with a little son.

"A glass of beer," said the gentleman.

"And what can I get for the little boy?" asked the clerk.

"Same as Father," quickly replied the lad.

"Wait," said the father, "I will not take the beer."

There are little eyes upon you, and they're watching night and day;

There are little ears that quickly take in every word you say;

There are little hands all eager to do everything you do,

And a little boy who's dreaming of the day he'll be like you:

You're the little fellow's idol, you're the wisest of the wise.

In his little mind about you no suspicions ever rise;

He believes in you devotedly, beholding all that you say and do:

He will say and do in your way when he's grown up just like you.

There's a wide-eyed little fellow who believes you're always right,

And his ears are always open, and he watches day and night::

You are setting an example every day in all you do

For the little boy who's waiting to grow up to be just like you.

It makes no difference whether you are a father or a mother, you are responsible to God for children. You must stand someday before God and give an account of the things you have taught your children and the examples you have set before them.

Will the examples that you are setting before your children lead them upward or down that broad way to eternal destruction? Do you pray for them and teach them about Christ or are you anxious about their "social advancement"?

When I see a little boy or girl the thought comes to me, "Will he or she ever reach Heaven?" Then I look to see what kind of father and mother he or she has, and that usually decides it.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

Selected

# Evangelistic Revival Report

Grand Cayman-February 29-March 5 Hamilton, MT/Canby, OR-March 23-April 2

After several months of prayer and preparation, Brothers Roger Decker, Silvio Serra, and Fred Barrows left for Grand Cayman, British West Indies, Tuesday, February 29, 2000. Brother and Sister Esau Brooks were awaiting our arrival and received us very courteously.

When they arrived at the church, the singing had all ready begun. Those dear people really put their whole hearts into their singing and worshipping. Brother Decker did an outstanding job of preaching to the needs of the people. His messages were on *Building Right, Church Attendance, The Way of the Transgressor, Backsliding, and Drifting*. God manifested His presence in a mighty way in each service, touching the hearts of the needy. As the Spirit of conviction settled on hearts, many yielded to His call and were blessed. Two young men weighted down with burdens came into the services on different nights. A brother went to these men and talked to them about their souls, and one man went to the altar and gave his heart to the Lord. Thank God for all who got their needs supplied. Your prayers for those dear people are encouraged.

There are two congregations on Grand Cayman. The revival was held every night at West Bay. The Sunday morning service was held at Breakers, which is approximately twenty miles away on the other side of the island.

The Lord saw to it that our efforts were very fruitful. Souls were encouraged, sinners were saved, and backsliders were reunited with God. We met many precious saints while we were on the island. Surely God did bless, and we are thankful to God for His goodness. We trust that God will continue to bless the congregations on the island and the efforts the brethren put forth. Thank God, the brethren returned home safely on March 5, 2000.

A few weeks later it was time to

prepare to leave again. This second trip began on Thursday, March 23, 2000. This time the brethren traveled to Hamilton, Montana, to be with Brother and Sister Mullen and their congregation for a few nights of revival. Then they traveled to Canby, Oregon, with Brother and Sister David Stegmeier, for a weeks revival. Joining Brother Decker on the trip were Brothers Ron Cummings, Max Smith, Pete Bollinger, Silvio Serra, and Fred Barrows. This mission was to be an encouragement and a help in every way possible.

Upon arriving in Missoula, Montana, the brethren were greeted by Brother Stegmeier. Missoula and Hamilton are surrounded by the beautiful Rocky Mountains. The day the brethren arrived, the weather was clear, but in the mountains you could see it snowing. The mountains were snow capped and made for a beautiful site. It drew my mind to Psalm 19:1, where David penned the words describing God's handiwork. The heavens and the earth are part of God's beautiful workings, and He made it for man to enjoy.

Every afternoon Brother and Sister Mullen, with several of the saints, prepared wonderful meals for everyone in attendance. They offered quite a variety of mouth-watering dishes. Brother Mullen has been a great outdoorsman throughout his life, so much of the food was from the wild.

Brother Stegmeier preached Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday evenings, and Brother Decker preached the other nights. The meeting was fruitful and the hearts of the people were lifted and encouraged.

Monday morning, March 27<sup>th</sup>, the saints departed from Montana for Canby, Oregon. The first service in Canby began at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday. Brother Decker opened the revival with the message asking the question, "Do You Really Want Re-

vival?" In the next service he asked, "Is it necessary to attend every service?" Thursday he preached about *The Peril That Defiles*, Friday he preached, *Are You a Builder or a Destroyer?* and Saturday he preached on *The Danger of Putting Off the Most Important Thing in Your Life*. Sunday morning the Lord gloriously moved in before the preaching, and several souls received help. The evening message was on *Gethsemane*.

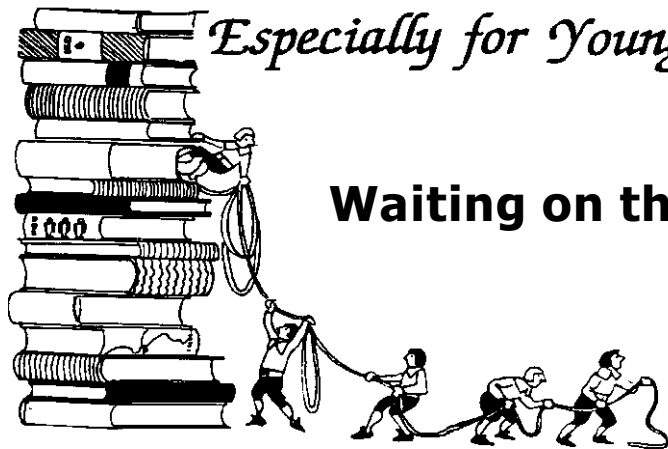
Much good was accomplished during this weeks' endeavor. Several souls received help. Some who were away from God returned and the saints were lifted and encouraged. One of the real highlights of the meeting was a dear sister who drove several hundred miles from the state of Washington and gave her heart to God. This dear sister and her husband had been communicating with a brother from the Newark congregation over the Internet, and he encouraged them to attend the revival. This sister was able to attend with her son, but her husband is afflicted with a serious disease and was unable to attend the services. Your prayers are coveted for her as a newborn babe in Christ and also for her husband's affliction.

The time came again for parting with the saints and the sadness that parting brings to the heart. Early Monday morning Brother Stegmeier took us to the airport, and the plane departed from Oregon and headed for Ohio. There is much more that could be said of the trip concerning the joys and the blessings received.

Brother Stegmeier felt that this meeting was very beneficial to all in attendance. We trust that the good accomplished and the blessings received will not end, but rather keep multiplying. Thank God for the privilege of being able to go and be a part of God's great work.

Brother Fred Barrows

*Especially for Young People*



## Waiting on the Lord



Looseness in courtship and lying in each other's arms and kissing and kissing is not good. Many a precious young person's downfall has started in being too free with a friend. Keep yourself in your place, and if you get married, you have a lifetime to love each other. If you do not get married, you are better off not to have played around. Young people need to know how to control their affections.

I want to say to the young and the old—it pays to wait on God. Do not get in a hurry. When you get in a hurry, it is often lust instead of love, and that will not stand the storms of life, but love will. If you are a Christian, you may say, "Oh, there are so few Christians." The question should be, "Is God in it?" If not, wait on the Lord. If you are a Christian, you are not your own and should be willing to submit your life into the hands of One who sees and knows the future.

Some say, "I do not want to be an old maid." You had better be an old maid if God does not have it otherwise than to marry some unsaved man who may one day desert you for another woman. In that case you would be left alone anyway, and you may backslide and lose your soul.

When you choose your way on any line, you cannot have the favor of God on your life as you would have if you let Him choose. You are better to live twenty years together and be happy than to be together fifty years with the wrong companion and be unhappy.

Let me quote Brother C. E. Orr in

*The Instruction of Youth in the Christian Life*: "When two are in love, it is difficult to determine the will of God. There needs to be a perfect yielding to the will of God. It is one of the most difficult periods in the history of man for him to yield his will to God. Many have thought they had but were mistaken. A young man once said, 'I thought I had my will entirely surrendered to God, but when I prayed and my lips said, "Lord, Thy will be done," my heart said, "but give me Mary."'

Watch your heart, young Christian. Do not give too much heed to what the lips say. Listen to the heart beats. Does it beat in perfect unison with the will of God? God wants you to be guided, not by your feelings, but by His providence, by the counsels of true friends, and by the good, sound mind He is willing to give you."

I want to relate an incident that happened much later in my life for the encouragement of others. After I became pastor, a girl in our congregation grew to the age of desiring a companion. She was a good Christian girl, and we all loved her. There were very few young people in California at that time who were saved, and if one got saved he or she almost had to stand alone as far as young people were concerned.

One day she came and talked to me about her burden. She wanted to live for God, and if she did, it looked as though she could not have a home of her own, for there were not any Christian boys locally.

After talking with her I said, "Sis-

ter, put God first." She said that was what she wanted to do. I said, "God knows the future, and when He saw Adam needed a companion, He created one for him. He can save one just for you if you keep all submitted to Him." She said that was just what she meant to do, and she did. We had prayer and asked God to help her and provide for her future life for her good and to His glory.

Time went on and she continued to live for God. One day her brother came to town to visit them. He had with him a young man who was practicing to be a prize fighter and had come to town to take lessons for fighting. Prayer meeting night came, and her mother asked them to come to the meeting. They did, but the young man had never been in a meeting like it. Her mother, being a great hand to invite folks to the services, asked him to attend the Sunday night services. He enjoyed attending the services and began to attend regularly. When we held a revival meeting a short time after that, he got saved, gave up his training, and really lived for God. Later his affections were turned to this young sister, and in time they got married.

As he grew spiritually and learned of the doctrine of the church, the Lord called him to the ministry. Later she came to me and said, "You said God could give me a companion if He had to save one just for me, and it seems that He did just that."

Selected

1 Corinthians 12:20 *But now are they many members, yet but one body.*

21 *And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.*

22 *Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:*

23 *And those members of the body,*

*which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.*

24 *For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:*

25 *That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members*

*should have the same care one for another.*

26 *And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*

27 *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*

# The Body of Christ and How It Must Function



*Brother Esau Brooks*

## **Understanding God's Great Plan**

I thought of how unnecessary it is that anything else should be said regarding that which Paul wrote to the people at Corinth. However, God wants us to carefully reflect upon these glorious and wonderful truths. I want you to focus your attention on verse 27, which states, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members [collectively we are the body of Christ; individually we are members] in particular [of this body]."

I have marveled often at how God has striven to bring us understanding concerning His great plan.

I am particularly concerned and motivated with the thought of how we, as the body of Christ, are to function. Notice the positive expression of our Scripture text: "Now [not later or after you have gone to Heaven, but right now] ye are the body of Christ." Note the comparison that the Apostle made between the body of Christ and the human body. We each have a body. We are not spirits floating around in the air that people cannot see, but we have real bodies.

The Scripture teaches that we each are composed of a body and a soul. Jesus said in Matthew 10:28, "And fear not them which kill the

body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." The body is separate from the soul: the body is not the soul, nor is the soul the body.

When the wise man was speaking of the end of the physical life, he stated that the body goes back to the dust, but the spirit (or the soul) goes back to God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7). In reading that, many people have said, "Since my soul is going back to God who gave it, then I have nothing else to do." You need to realize what happens after the soul goes back to God.

Let us suppose that after the

soul has gone back to God who gave it, it is unfit to dwell in His presence; then it will be consigned to hell, which is God's best for those who refuse to go His way. We have it set out before us in clear language: the body is one thing and the soul is another. In like regards, Christ is one thing and the body of Christ is another. However, the soul and the body are so closely united that one can hardly separate the one from the other. In fact, the Bible says that the body without the spirit, or the soul, is dead. So also is that which calls itself the body of Christ.

Again, verse 27 of our Scripture lesson reads, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." The writer was setting forth for our consideration a great and profound truth. You cannot see the soul, or the spirit, with your natural eyes, but you can see it through the manifestation of one's body. How do you know that a person is alive? He shows signs of life. Why is it so difficult for people to understand that it is the same with the body of Christ?

If there is life in the body, there are signs of life. Since we are the body of Christ, it stands to reason that we act Christlike. You will not find my body acting like someone else. My body acts as Esau Brooks does because it is Esau's body. Therefore, as the body of Christ, we should act Christlike: we should live, walk, and talk as Christ would. Is that asking too much? If I were to start acting like someone else, you would soon question, "What's wrong with Brother Brooks? He's acting strangely. He's not the Brother Brooks that I know; he resembles So-and-So." You may say, "That could never happen," and I agree, because we each are individuals.

### **Actions Foreign to the Body of Christ**

In our Scripture text the great Apostle Paul was striving to show that Christians, collectively, comprise the body of Christ, not each his own body. As a member of Christ's

body, I do not have any right to act independently any more than my right hand has the right to act independently from my left hand, because I have only one body. Therefore, if the head were to say, "Hey, body, I want to write a letter," you would not see the feet crawl up on top of the table and say, "I am going to write it." Also, you would not find the right hand saying to the left hand, "Well, I have something else to do, so it's up to you to write that letter." No, if one is right-handed, the right hand reaches out and takes the pen, and the body sits down, and the right hand writes the letter. What harmony!

The principle is the same for the body of Christ as it is for the human body. Read what Paul wrote in verse 21: "And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee." That is what is taking place in the body of Christ all around us, from every point of view. The eye is saying to the hand, "I have no need of you." So the eyes are running off, leaving the rest of the body to carry on. Do you have the picture? I pray that you do. If ever there was a time when these things needed to be considered, it is today. All these movements and actions that are taking place are foreign to the body of Christ. One cannot have a body with the feet and the legs in one city and the head and the hands in another city. What a mess that body would be! Church, let us work together. We have a job to do.

When it comes to the body of Christ, some feel that they have the privilege and the right to leave and have nothing to do with another part of the body. They need to wake up! God wants to teach us some things. Many people feel that as long as they are not cheating, smoking cigars, or going to the honky-tonks, they are on their way to Heaven. Friend, there is more to it than that. The body must stick together.

Once I heard a story told by Brother Emerson Wilson about two fellows who were out fishing, and their boat overturned in the sea. One

could swim, but the other could not. The one who could swim got on top of the overturned boat. The fellow who could not swim was out there beating the water, so he cried to his buddy, "Save me! Help me! I can't swim." The other fellow maneuvered the boat over to his friend and reached out and took hold of his head, or what he thought was his head, to pull him up on top of the bottom of the boat, but he was wearing a wig, so all he had in his hand was the wig, and his buddy was still beating the water and crying, "Help me!"

He said, "I had better make another attempt." Next, he went over and got hold of his leg. He was going to pull him up leg first, but it was an artificial leg, so it disconnected. He had the leg, but not the body. Meanwhile, the man was still there going up and down and despairing of life. The man on the overturned boat was frustrated, but he decided to make another attempt. He maneuvered the boat around and got hold of him by his arm, but that was an artificial arm, and it let go in his hand, and the man went down. When he came back up, he kept crying, "Save me! Help me!" His buddy looked across to him and said, "I will if you stick together."

That is the way it is today with the body of Christ. We can only be saved if we stick together. The arm or the feet cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you." We need each other, brethren.

Since the children of God compose the body of Christ, we are to perform in the same way that the physical body does. One part cannot say, "I am not going to have anything to do with another part of the body." Why? That would hamper the operation of the body. To perform well, we have to stick together. If you are truly part of the body, you will not do as you please. You may, but by doing so you cannot be a part of the body of Christ. The very moment you settle on that disposition and frame of mind, you cease to be a part of His body. The body of

Christ performs the wishes of Christ, because it is His body. That is what stands between one's own actions and the actions of the body of Christ. You can tell what each individual is by how he performs in his body. Without the body, there would be no action physically, and it is the same spiritually.

### One Body and One Lord

Let us get a little better understanding about this business of serving God. To be the Church of God, we must have not only the right name, the right doctrine, and the right song book but also the same actions. You can no more act independently of Christ's body than my body can act independently of me. You see, my body and I are one; likewise, we and Christ are one. This is the way it is with Christ and the church. We all must act and perform for Christ, for without this there is no expression of Christ. Neither, the Baptists, the Catholics, the Nazarenes, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, nor any other religious sect can do it. They are not the body, because the Bible lets us know that. If we are going to be honest, we must apply that Scripture to whom God is applying it. To whom is He applying it? First Corinthians 1:1-2 tells us: "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, Unto the church of God . . ." Notice that he did not say, "Unto the church of the Baptists." I have never belonged to a church that God did not regard as being important enough to put in His Bible.

You may say, "Yes, but don't you read in the Bible about John the Baptist?" Yes, I do, but I also read that when John's father, Zacharias, was asked, "What are you going to call the boy?" He did not say, "Baptist." He could not speak, but he motioned for something to write with and wrote, "He shall be called John"; therefore, John was John Zacharias. However, because he was engaged in the work and the minis-

try of baptizing, people nicknamed him "John the Baptist." Now, John was no Baptist (speaking of the denomination).

Someone may inquire, "Which Church of God?" There is only one, and that one is the body of Christ. If you want to be Church of God, you have to act godly through Jesus Christ. Paul went on to say in the latter part of 1 Corinthians 1:2, ". . . which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified [or set apart] in Christ Jesus, [Church of God people are set apart. We do not act as the Baptists, the Methodists, the Pentecostals, or any of the other sects act. We act godly, separated in Christ Jesus, and they are.] called to be saints, [The saints are not called to be trouble makers, tale bearers, or strife makers. Jesus said in Matthew 5:9, 'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.')] with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours."

We have only one Lord, and He places the members in the body as it pleases Him. You see, I would not doubt that many left-handed people would like to go back to God and say, "Why don't You make me right-handed. I don't like being left-handed." Well, I think it is kind of awkward too; nevertheless, I am a left-handed individual, and that is what I am going to remain. Some have taken that idea out of setting and have tried to mix it into religion and said, "He is to the left, and we are to the right." There is only one way the church goes, and that is right. There are no liberal saints, and there are no conservative saints; we are only children of God. Without this there is no expression of Christ. We do not do the things that we do

merely for show. or because we just want to do things, but we do what we do because Christ is working through us. Paul wrote to the church at Philippi and said, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). When one lacks and fails to do His will, it is because Christ is not working in that person. Jesus said in John 8:29, "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." That is the way the body of Christ performs. There is no phantom body of Christ. As far as Heaven and God are concerned, there is only one body, and that body is real.

The Christian is to please God; that is the reason we are called the body of Christ. Now, the question is this: Are you really a part of His body? Are you truly performing as His body would? If you are not, you are just using words. Second Timothy 2:4 says, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." The child of God has but one consuming desire, and that is to please God. Should someone try to talk you out of attending services where God placed you, you need to reply, "I must find out from God first, because I have to please Him. If He tells me, 'Stay where you are,' that is where I am going to stay."

Dear heart, there is much to being a Christian and getting to Heaven. Therefore, you must arm yourself with the mind to obey God at any cost to make Heaven your home when this life is over. God bless you.

*(Cassette C-4259E)*

**God never intended  
that we do as we please,  
but as He pleases.**

*James 4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

# Do You Want to Be a Better Christian?



*Brother Robert Mullen*

## **Sincerely Seek God and Persevere**

When you serve the Lord, you must turn a deaf ear to the devil, boldly take a stand for God, and by the grace of God, do what God wants you to do. When you are in His will, your faith works better. I am glad that I am in the will of God and that I enjoy the work of God. You know, I would hate to preach just because I had to, but it is something that I enjoy. I do not serve God only because I think it is the right thing to do altogether, but I want to serve God. He wants willing service. For example, you might invite some people to eat with you, but if you begrudge the groceries they eat, you are not going to enjoy them or receive much of a blessing. One older fellow said he never tried giving because receiving was so good. He never went any further than that. Christian friend, is there any place in your experience where you can move up? Would you like to be a

better Christian? God wants to perfect you so that you can enjoy serving Him more and be a better example to the world. Do you want to be more spiritual? There is room for all of us to improve.

Sometimes you can get in a stagnant condition and need revival. You need to be determined to go on for God. You may even need to make a fresh start and say, "I want to love the Lord more." You need to tell the Lord that you love Him; He listens to that. Often I say, "Lord, I really love you." As a Christian, sometimes you need to renew your covenant with God. You need to say "Lord, I want to go all the way with You," not from your lips but from your heart. God hears what you say, and He knows whether you mean it. Although you need to tell Him that you will serve Him and that you love Him, at the same time you need to show Him that is your intent. As Christian people, there is room to serve God in a better way. If you do

not want to improve, you will not improve. Also, if you do not think there is any room for you to improve, you will not improve. If you are a sinner and you do not want to go to Heaven, you probably will never serve the Lord. On the other hand, though in your sins, if you would like to go to Heaven, I believe there is hope for you. You must have that desire.

When I lived for the devil, I thought that if I died, I wanted to get inside the gates of Heaven. I remember once when I was in the hospital and my left arm was as big around as my leg. It was broken, and they had to operate on it. They tried to set it and could not because it had a loose piece of bone. I began to realize that I was in a dangerous condition. They said they had to operate and wire it together. I began to think that I might die, so I prayed and told the Lord that if I did die, I wanted to go to Heaven. However, I did not follow up on my prayer

when I got well. I forgot all about God, even before I took the sling off my arm.

God knows if you have a desire to serve Him better and go to Heaven. We each need to improve as we go along in this Christian life. How you come out at the end of this Christian life is between you and God. You must have a lot of grace and lot of grit, as one person said. You must sincerely seek God and persevere. The Bible lets you know that you must be faithful and endure to the end of the race. If you slip a little, get right back in the center of God's will. He will take care of you and help you. James said, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." As you draw nigh to God, He will give you a special blessing. You will feel His nearness, but your prayer must be from the heart. The Bible says from the heart come the issues of life.

### **The Seriousness of Living for God**

To love God, you must love Him from your heart, not just say, "I love God." He likes to come really close to you so that you can feel His presence. Love has to be a two-way thing; God loves you and you must love Him. Likewise, in a godly home, the husband loves his wife and his wife loves him. So it is between you and God. You must have that vital connection. His love is great and pure, and you must love Him with a pure heart fervently. He wants you to be on the right track.

James 4:10 says, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." You need to humble yourself before God and say, "Lord, I need You to help me today, and I need You to help me tomorrow. I need You in my secular job and in the work of God." You should never get to where you think "I have it made, and there is nothing more to attain in my Christian experience." Living for God is serious business, and you need Him every step of the way. You have not passed over death's line yet, and you

will need Him when you die; you will need His nearness then. When death comes upon you, it will not matter so much whether your wife or your father or mother is there, but that God comes to your rescue as you leave this world. He said He would be with you even to the end, but you have to hold on.

Sometimes you have to stir yourself to pray; do not just fool around, but pray earnestly. You may have to stir yourself to go to the house of God. You may feel lazy and sleepy, and then the old recliner may feel very good. Also, you have to stir yourself to get into all the revival services. You may need new determination. You need to climb higher. Today is the day, friend, for you to get a greater hold on God, like you have not done in the days gone by. Do you want to get a tight hold on Him?

I am glad that God is holding my hand, and I want to hold His. Glory to God! He is my Savior; He is an Eternal Father. My earthly father will not be around when I die, because he has already gone; but Jesus can be there. You may be alone, but if Jesus is there, it is all right. You dare not die without Him, and you dare not miss Heaven. Christian friend, if you lose out with God, hell will be torment after torment of the worst kind. Feeling the power of God, the glory of God, and the reality of God is wonderful. He is more real than this material world, because He is forever. God is true, and He is on His throne. He is in the hearts of His people, and He fills the whole earth. God is a great God, Creator of Heaven and earth, and He owns it all.

Someday God is coming for His people, and His bride is making herself ready. Friend, if you are not ready, you need to get on the wedding garments. I expect to see Him face to face some day, and I want to be ready. You need to keep your garments clean and white, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. To sell your soul for a mess of pottage, or for some little thing the

devil has brought into your life, would be awful; you would miss Heaven. You need to watch and pray so much more in these last days. Things are happening so fast, and you can get your mind on too many things. Keep your mind upon Christ, and look full to His wonderful face, and I am sure He will see you through.

### **Letting God Have Full Control**

The Bible warns us not to speak evil of one another. You have to watch your tongue. Your tongue can leak all the grace of God out of your heart. Some people who claim to be Christians seem to have no control over their tongues. God's Word says much about the tongue. He said it is a deadly evil, and it is set on fire of hell. We all need help in controlling the tongue. I am talking about being more spiritual and being more what you ought to be. You have to learn to watch your tongue. Ask God to help you. Often we do not know what we ought to say or do unless God helps us.

Often I pray, "O Lord, help me to know how to behave myself in the house of God, in the Church of the Living God." We do not know how to behave ourselves unless the Lord helps us. God can show you how to behave yourself in the family of God. He wants you to behave, and He will help you.

Once, when speaking of the tongue, someone told of a lady who was looking for the Holy Spirit to fill her heart, and someone said, "Don't fill there, Lord, it leaks out faster than it goes in." Have you ever said things you should not have said and felt the grace of God shrink? Friend, you need to get back to higher ground. Women do not do all the bad talking. Some men fail to control their tongues too.

Gossip is not good. A little boy once heard some people making some comments, but they must not have been good, because after they all had their say, he said, "Now do you feel more spiritual?" If you are

not careful, you will do things that will destroy your spirituality. You must listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit and allow Him to check you. God is so good, and often He will warn you of danger. He may tell you to pray a little extra today and caution you.

Do you find yourself being critical? There is too much criticism. It is not a gift of the Spirit to sit back and criticize. Do you criticize the song leader, the preacher, the preacher's wife, or the preacher's children? You can get a wrong attitude and become critical.

A Christian must not be a grumbler. That is not conducive to spirituality. Some people grumble about the preacher and grumble about the singing, and if you go home with them, they will feed you "preacher's hash." If you eat that, you will not be spiritual. You should not become critical and complain about things. Your talk will either edify or tear down the Church of God. If you meet someone who has sour stories and is down on everything, you should not listen to that person because he or she will affect you. You need to listen to things that are uplifting. The songs of Zion will lift your soul, give you determination, and help you to live a more righteous life.

### **Guard Your Thought Life**

You need to consider God when trying to plan your life's work. Some people get jobs where they have to work on Sundays, but that is not conducive to spirituality. You should try to get a job that will not draw you away from having time to serve God. The devil wants to wean you away from the house of God so that you starve spiritually. You may not realize how spiritually weak you are. You need food for your soul. Seeing how close to the line you can go without backsliding is not a good policy. The deeper you can get in the things of God and the more the Word of God becomes a part of you, the better off you will be. Also, the

more you can quote of the Word of God, the more the Holy Spirit can bring to your mind the promises of God so that you can get hold of them. God will help you to be strengthened.

Whatever you say ought to be of a positive nature. God's Word is quite positive. It says to "Ask, and it shall be given." If you ask God anything according to His will, He will do it for you. Some people have asked me, "Do you still believe that hell doctrine that you preach?" I say, "I surely do." Others have asked me, "Do you still believe in divine healing?" and I say, "Yes, praise God!" People know whether you are sincere. At your place of employment, people know whether you are on the job or loafing.

If you are ashamed of God, He is ashamed of you. Are you ashamed to carry the Bible? God's Word is powerful. Philippians 4:8 states, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." There are many good things to talk and think about. When the things of God occupy your mind, the devil has no place to throw his trash, because it is full of meditating on God and doing things for God. Then the devil does not have much chance. On the other hand, the devil can fill an idle mind that is not upon God. Why fill your mind with trash?

You need the things of God in your mind. You should meditate on good things. If it lifts people up or if there is any virtue or praise, think on those things. That is good admonition. Your mind can become polluted, similar to a room becoming dusty. That is where the enemy works on you. No one knows what is on your mind, but God does and you do. Though people around you do not know, you should get rid of evil thoughts. You need to get a spiritual broom and get the evil

thoughts out of your mind. They will come into your mind and want to stay, but you have to drive them out with the help of God. You need to have a clean mind.

I used to be wicked, but I did not want to date a young woman who told dirty stories; that just made me sick. It is sickening to pollute your mind with dirty stories. Mind pollution is terrible. It makes people cheap and worthless. Some people seem to thrive on filth. The dirtier the story is, the more they tell it. I have seen people tell filthy stories with great bravery, as if they were really something. After it is all said and done, what is it doing? It is polluting the mind.

Sometimes we need our pure minds stirred, and we need to put more effort into serving God than we have in the past. We can learn how to serve God a little better in many ways. Friend, if you want to be a better Christian, you must listen to God. He will help and strengthen you the areas in which you are weak. Aren't you glad for that?

### **Godly Conduct**

You must develop a pattern of regular Bible study. A fellow who does not read the Bible is a weak Christian. Also, if he does not read it with sincerity and an open mind, he is going to lose out some place. You need to study God's Word with all your heart and say, "O God, I want to understand what you really said here." You should read the Old Testament and the New. You need to balance it. We have the two witnesses, the Word and the Spirit, and we must find the will of God and center on that. You can come to the knowledge of the Truth. God wants you to know the Truth, and He will give it to you day by day if you will put your heart into seeking it.

Little children like to hear Bible stories. I have not seen a little child who did not like to have Bible stories told to them. They enjoy hearing them read at night. Their little minds are open to the Word of God. What

a wonderful chance it is for them to start in the right way.

God wants you to come to Mount Zion, where you will find higher standards and true holiness. Some people might have a "holier than thou" spirit, but that is about all the holiness they have. Holiness takes in not only your thought life but also your motive for doing things. Be sure your motives are pure.

You need to learn how to conduct yourself in different circumstances. Men and women ought to behave themselves with the opposite sex. I believe that is very important. God will help you. Many people fall over that. We are living in a "free love" world today. You should know how to conduct yourself with the opposite sex.

Some people who do not know how to keep their hands in the right place. God can help you. It is a natural desire to be drawn to one another. That is what marriage is about. You need to keep the bed and the marriage relationship pure. Also, you need to keep yourself pure before God. In many places, it is becoming quite common for the men to hug the women, but that is not conducive to spirituality. Some say it does not mean a thing, but it does not look good, and these things are a temptation. You have to overcome temptations and keep your hands where they ought to be and keep your thoughts in a better place. God will help you. Now, temptation is not sin, but lust is sin. These are things that God looks at, and they are very important in His sight.

I do not want other men to hug my wife, and she does not want other women to hug me. It is a shame to see such things as that. God has a better way of living. Though the brethren appreciate the sisters, they are not for us to misuse. We need to live holy in all manner of conduct. I say again, we are living in an almost "free love" society. Many people seem to think nothing of these things, but in the sight of God, if we are going to perfect holi-

ness, we must keep ourselves pure and shun the very appearance of evil.

If you have made a resolution that you are going to serve God and pray more, then you ought to do it. He is looking for you to gain higher ground. He will give you a chance. You may say, "Oh. I am going to pray more and read the Bible more." Well, do it then. God will help you. If you tell the Lord that you are going to love Him more, He expects you to show that. You cannot fool Him, because He knows. If you love Him more, He will manifest Himself to you in a greater way. These are ways to advance in your Christian life.

I have mentioned things to cut off and things that you ought to do. Remember, God looks at little things, and people notice little

things more than you think they do. For example, you can have a perfectly clean shirt except for one little spot on it, and half a dozen people will see it right away. Similarly, you can have one weakness in your Christian experience, and people will see it. We are living epistles, read and known of all men. As Christians, we are supposed to be examples before all men. God has a clean people. His people are clean minded and clean in their actions. They are honest and sincere, and they like to talk about good things. They are pure in their looks, their actions, and their dress. That is edifying to God. Holiness is something that you can enjoy. Praise the Lord forever!

*(Cassette C-2619E)*

## A Father's Prayer

Give me, O God, the wisdom that I need  
To mold the tender lives within my care;  
Give me the power that I may subtly lead  
Them into righteousness—true joy is there.

I ask for them no rainbowed path of ease;  
I ask for them no store of wealth or fame;  
I only ask that by their lives they please  
Thee and the church with an untarnished name.

I know that man is weak and life is strong.  
And sometimes honest roads look very drear;  
That winning laurels often takes too long  
And luring vistas from all sides appear.

But while my young are still beneath my wing.  
God, help me guide them right in everything.

Author unknown

# The Lonely Cabin on the Forty Mile



The story opens in Iowa with an old farmer by the name of J. Conlee. He was a father of twelve children, six boys and six girls, who grew up with every promise of becoming splendid citizens and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some of the children had grown to adulthood. One of the sons had become a lawyer and another a doctor. Still another was a professor in one of the seminaries, and when the babe about whom we are to speak arrived, the father and mother did what they had done with every other child—they dedicated him to the Lord. In his boyhood days the mother said, "I hope my little Joe will be a preacher of the Gospel like two of his brothers are."

The years rolled by, and Joe was a good boy and a credit to the home. One day, when his high school days were over, the father came to him and said, "Joe, have you decided what you will be?"

"Yes, Father," said Joe, "the course I have taken in high school has fitted me for civil engineering. I think I will be a civil engineer."

A cloud came over his father's face as he said, "Oh, I am so sorry. We hoped you would enter the ministry. Are you sure you haven't heard the Lord's voice?" He said he would pray about it, and after two weeks he came to his father and said, "Father, my mind is made up. I will enter the ministry."

His father embraced him and kissed him and said he would send him to the University of Iowa. When

he had received his B.A. degree, he went for three years to school at Fort Dodge to fit himself for the ministry.

One day a professor said to him, "You know there is a lot of superstition mixed up with what we originally believed. You are a brilliant fellow. I heard the President say he considered you one of the most brilliant students we have. Weigh everything carefully. Apply yourself to the study of books. I want you to read Darwin, Renan, and Huxley, everyone of them; philosophers." When Joe Conlee came out of that school, there was a battle of reason against faith, and reason was winning in the great war.

He accepted the pastorate in a little church in Iowa, and while there he married a splendid Christian girl, the daughter of a preacher in an adjoining town. After three years, because of his friendship with the Bishop, he was transferred to the First Methodist Church of Santa Ana.

He spent two years there, but they were years in which he was fighting a tremendous battle within his soul. Greater battles are fought within the confines of the human breast than were ever waged at historic Gettysburg or Ypres or the Marne.

They gave him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity and he progressed in his ministerial aspirations, yet all the time he was drifting into modernism, looking at the Scriptures from the Modernist's standard, interpreting them, not

from the basis of faith, but from the basis of reason or intellectualism.

He had been told that in order to be well-balanced he should see both sides of the question and should not be swayed by emotionalism. The Methodist Conference met in Los Angeles and the Bishop complimented him on his excellent work. Soon he became pastor of the First Methodist Church of San Diego, one of the largest on the Pacific Coast.

After two years of successful ministry there, he moved to Pomona, California, and it was during that time he built the lovely Methodist church of that place, a beautiful example of Spanish architecture. It was there the seeds that had been sown in his heart in the past began to bear fruit, so Joe confided to his wife that he was beginning to feel a little hypocritical, that he did not believe the things his congregation demanded that he preach, and finally he said, "I am going to quit. I cannot stand it."

He denied the virgin birth of Christ and the miracles. One day Joe Conlee went into his pulpit and said, "My friends, I am about to make a confession. I cannot believe the Bible. There has been a battle in my heart for years. Now I feel I will regain some of my self-respect. This is the last time I will preach."

He was a gifted writer and soon got a job. He went back to Santa Ana and became the editor of the local newspaper. For years his name was at the head of the editorial column. However, he commenced to smoke

and drink and gamble a little. He went from bad to worse. In time he left Santa Ana and went to Los Angeles, and for some time he was editor of the paper there. He moved to Covina and founded his own newspaper. He sold it for a small fortune and became an editorial writer for two other papers, both positions he lost through drink.

His pen never lost its brilliancy. It seemed to be dipped in the very ink of inspiration. There were many days he could not report for work. Tramping around from one place to another, the man who had been the pastor of the a church of San Diego and of a church at Pomona became a dissolute, drunken inebriate shuffling around in his rags; you could find him any night in the back end of the Mineral Saloon.

Blaming his old life for his downfall, he started, in his antipathy toward God, a series of open air attacks on Christianity. He became President of the Free Thinkers Association of California, and for twelve years he did not miss one night in the back of the Mineral Saloon, giving lectures on atheism and drinking himself to death. He would raise his hand and defy God to strike him dead, and when nothing would happen, he would say, "You see, friends, there is no God." He would collect a few dimes and quarters and go into the saloon to again drink himself almost to death.

He would be carried off night after night to a praying wife, while delirium tremens seized him again and again. He became emaciated, a hollow-eyed, blaspheming, cursing, swearing, and carousing man; he had gone down into the very mud and scum of things, but every night his wife prayed for him. I wonder what the professor who gave him those books would have thought if he could have seen him at Los Angeles, dirty, ragged, holes in the knees of his trousers, beard grown and matted, a poor, old, drunken sot!

One day, going down the street, he accidentally bumped into a man.

Dr. Conlee was drunk as usual and said, "Can you give a fellow a dime?"

The man looked at him and recognized his old pastor. He said in amazement, "You are not Conlee, man? Tell me!"

"That is my name, Conlee," said the drunkard.

"My old pastor! What are you doing like this? I cannot believe my own eyes." And the kindly, Christian doctor, for he was a M.D., took him to his house, gave him a bath, a new suit of clothes and took him to a hotel not far away, explaining to the clerk what he was doing.

Dr. Conlee pawned that suit of clothes and spent it on drink. The doctor interested his friends, and they tried their best to salvage the old drunk, but could do nothing with him. Every penny he got went for drink until he got as low as a human being could possibly get.

At last everybody gave him up but the doctor, and he said, "If we could get him away from the Mineral Saloon, it might help him to pull himself together."

It was at the time of the great gold strike in Alaska, and men were climbing over the Chilkoot Pass like a lot of ants on their way to the gold fields in a mad rush for the yellow metal, and his friends thought if they could get him in a change of environment that his life might be changed.

The old drunk said he would be willing to go. So they packed his little trunk, bought him another suit of clothes, and put him on the boat bound for Skagway. His wife and little daughter came to see him off. His little girl, Florence, put her arms around his neck and said, "Daddy, dear Daddy, Mamma put in a little medicine chest that she thought you might need if you should get hurt there. Do not forget, Daddy, we will pray for you, and Daddy, inside the medicine chest I have put my little Book. I wouldn't give it to anybody else in the world but you, Daddy. You will read it?"

That little Bible meant every-

thing to Florence, and on the flyleaf she had written the words, "To my darling daddy. With love from Florence."

"Do not forget, we love you." The whistle blew and the old steamer plowed its watery way; and in the bottom of his trunk was the little medicine chest with the Bible inside.

In a few weeks he was in that great seething, cursing, surging mass of humanity—prospectors en route to the Yukon. The very first place he found was a saloon, the biggest in town. He got a job in that vile hell hole. The Reverend Joseph Conlee was sweeping up the floors and cleaning out the cuspidors, and his pay was "all he could drink" and food just enough to keep him alive. One day the owner of a big place came to him and said, "Doc, I want you to go over to the Forty Mile. We have struck gold over there, and I am the first man to hear of it, with the exception of the man who made the find. I have bought the old log cabin, and I want you to go out and hold the place."

"Not me," said Joe. "I will not leave here. You know my little weakness." He wasn't going where he couldn't get whiskey. But the man said, "Joe, you can have all you want to drink. We will send supplies out for two weeks on the dog team. You'll have nothing to do but to sit in the cabin and have a wonderful time."

So Joe Conlee found himself out in the lonely cabin on the Forty Mile with nothing to do but to drink. He had laid in a good supply as winter was coming on, and he wanted enough to last. He laughed and laughed as he sat down to drink himself to death.

The whiskey barrel was a quarter empty when one day in October there was a knock at the door of the cabin. There stood Jimmie Miller, a Roman Catholic, who said he was cold and hungry. The latch-string is always out in Alaska. You dare not turn a man away, so Conlee said, "Come in, Pard. There's grub and a whiskey barrel."

Jimmie Miller laughed as he entered the cabin door. So the two of them sat down to drink. They were there over two weeks, drinking themselves to sleep every night—never missing a night—when there came another knock at the door, and Wally Flett, a spiritualist medium from San Francisco came. When he saw the liquor, his mouth commenced to water, and he said, "Wouldn't you like me to stay with you?" They said, "Yes," and there were three of them now in the cabin. Their ribald laughter, their filthy jesting, their obscene story-telling, their drinking and carousing was unspeakable.

November came and went. They made three trips to Dawson with the dogs for whiskey and grub. Then the constant drinking got on their nerves. The three of them drank, drank, drank until they cried and cringed in torment with delirium tremens, night after night. Then for fun they had a spiritualistic seance, and Wally Flett, the old medium, told how he used to fool people. He showed them how the slate writing and the tapping was done. Night after night that was the program for the three in the lonely cabin.

Then one night one came very near the border of death. Jimmie Miller had delirium tremens and a fever. In great agony he cried, "Get me a doctor. You cannot let me lie here and die." But they were forty miles from Dawson City; it was forty below zero, and the snows were deep. The delirious man kept screaming, "Get me a doctor." Then Dr. Conlee remembered that down in the old trunk was a medicine chest, so he brought it out, opened it, and out fell a little black book on the floor. He opened it and read, "From Florence to Daddy."

Wally Flett said, "What have you got, Conlee?"

"It's a Bible, curse it!" and Conlee strode over to the stove, but as he lifted up the lid to throw it in, Wally Flett shouted, "Don't throw it in, man. Don't you know we haven't a thing to read in this God-forsaken

country? Your only magazine I have read twenty times," and he snatched the Bible from the hand of Joseph Conlee.

Dr. Conlee said, "If you want to read that you may, but I will not. What was that written on the front page? 'To my darling daddy, with love, from Florence.'" He was a little more sober now. "My little girl! I am glad I did not burn the Book my little Florrie gave me."

The medicine commenced to work. Jimmie Miller began to recover, and as he was convalescing, he started to read the Bible. Jimmie had a habit of reading out loud. Joe used to tell him to shut up, but Wally Flett was interested. He would say, "What was that you read, Jimmy?" Then Jimmy would read it again. Wally said, "I had no idea there were things like that in the Bible. What do you say if we read it just to pass the time away, not to believe it? Joe was once a preacher; he tells us what fools the preachers are."

So they took turns in reading, and all unknown to them a change was coming into the Lonely Cabin on the Forty Mile—and the whiskey barrel went down more slowly. Some days they would read five, six, and seven chapters, and when they came to the New Testament, the curses became fewer, the whiskey barrel began to be let alone, and Wally Flett said, "Haven't you noticed a change coming over us? I haven't heard swearing now for three or four days. I wonder if it is that Bible that is doing it?"

January came, and they started reading the Gospel of Saint John. Then there came that eventful day—February 14th. It was Wally's turn to read, and Joe got back of the stove: "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." Joe's hand brushed across his eyes. "What's the matter, Joe?"

"Nothing!"

"Were you crying, Joe?"

"Yes, go ahead. I am thinking about my little girl. I am not crying because of that Bible." Then Wally said, "I'd like to know if this Book is true. For the last five days I've been wanting to pray, and I was scared you fellows would laugh at me, but I will not be scared anymore. I shall ask God, if there is a God, to speak to me."

Joe said, "Well, since you have committed yourself, I will tell you that my heart has been broken for the last week. I can hear my mother back in Iowa praying—though she is now in Glory. What about you, Jimmy?"

"If you fellows want to pray, I will pray with you." Three old drunken sots in the lonely cabin got down on their knees to pray. Their prayers rose higher and higher. Suddenly, Wally Flett jumped to his feet, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Jesus heard me!" While he was shouting, up jumped Jimmie Miller, and then Joe Conlee, the third man in that cabin, arose shouting glory. It was two o'clock in the morning when they arose from prayer. Into that cabin had come the Man with the seamless robe. I can see Him standing in Spirit by the old Yukon stove, as He put His hands on their heads.

Then Joe took the whiskey barrel and rolled it to the door. Wally took the hatchet to it, and the cursed liquor ran out into the snow amid shouts of glory. The angels were looking over the battlements of Glory as they saw what happened in the lonely cabin. Jimmie Miller, Joe Conlee, and Wally Flett were born again by the Spirit of God.

Young friend, be careful what you read. There is no book like the Bible, and if ever a battle starts within the confines of your heart and life, say, "Lord, while I cannot understand, I will believe Thee; and where I cannot reason, I will walk in faith; and where I cannot see, I will trust."

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[Guest Editorial-continued from page 2] truth, but only for the truth (2 Corinthians 13:8). God has foreknowledge of everything that everyone has ever tried to do to thwart His plan and had it incorporated in His plan. Nothing takes Him by surprise.

Genesis 1:28, which was prior to the fall, states, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." The word *replenish* means "to make full or complete again as by furnishing a new supply." Why did God command to fill the earth complete again, or furnish a new supply? Hebrews 9:27 says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die . . ."

You may ask, "How can you bring Hebrews 9:27 back in the Genesis account, at the very dawn of Creation, when it was penned centuries later?" We must recall the words of the Psalmist in Psalm 119:89, which says, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." Notice that this was written in the present and continual tense. The words "for ever" take in eternity past and eternity future. We are in a little space called time, but before time was eternity, and after time is eternity.

Psalm 90:2 says, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting [this means from everlasting past to everlasting future], thou art God." This is just a space cut out called "time" when He set the earth in place and formed the mountains, but before that was everlasting, and after time ends is everlasting. His Word was forever settled in eternity past. In other words, before a word of it was ever penned, it was already settled in Heaven.

Jesus prayed in John 17:5, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was [eternity past]." John 1:1 states, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Scriptures teach that God inspired men to write

them and bring them to men (2 Timothy 3:16). The Book of Hebrews was settled in Heaven before the world began; Therefore, it reveals that physical death was always in God's plan.

Man's physical composition did not change after the fall of man. The Apostle Paul called our bodies corruptible in 1 Corinthians 15:53, which reads, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." It was corruptible and mortal to begin with; that is the reason man was told to replenish the earth before there was a commandment and before he fell. This body was always designed for death and decay.

The tree of life that our lesson speaks of in Genesis 3:22 was not to sustain physical life, for Adam continued to live after he was denied access to the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:22 states, "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." How can one live forever? In John 11:26 Jesus, speaking on the occasion of Lazarus' being dead and in the tomb, said, "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Eternal life is in Jesus Christ. What type of living forever has always been in God's plan? Spiritual life, or eternal life, in Jesus Christ.

Second Timothy 1:9 says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." His purpose and grace was before the world began. Before God ever created a man (Isaiah said He knows the end from the beginning), He knew what would occur. Therefore, He made a plan of salvation and slew in His mind's eye the Lamb, Jesus Christ, before the foundation of the world so that grace would be available to mankind and he could have spiritual life and live forever.

Too many people cannot see salvation any further back than the Cross of Calvary in A.D. 33, but God instituted it in His mind before the world began. Again, 2 Timothy 1:9 says, ". . . which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." It was implemented in the mind's eye of God in eternity past. Verse 10 says, "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." God's plan is that man might have life, and He made that life available through the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He brought down God's purpose to man and the grace whereby to secure it.

Now let us look closely at what our text denotes as "the tree of life." In Genesis 3:22 we read, "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." Up to this point, man had not been a partaker of the tree of life; however, he disobeyed God's command and became a partaker of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, so God was saying, "lest he also" partake of the tree of life.

Adam, up to this point, was innocent, so there was no need for him to partake of the tree of life, no more than little babies need spiritual life, because they are in a state of innocence. God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). He works it with everyone who comes into this time world the same way He worked it with Adam. After Adam partook and evil, he was no longer innocent. Spiritually, he was "dead in trespasses and sins," as Ephesians 2:1 says. Therefore, he needed life, and it was vested in that tree. One cannot have life when he has sin; they are opposites. Once sin entered the picture, Adam was not in a condition for life, because certain conditions must be met.

Every person who comes into this time world enters in the same

state in which Adam was created. Someone may say, "Don't you know that a person is born with a sinful nature? Don't you know that man has inbred sin that needs to be cleansed?" The Scriptures do not teach that. What do the Scriptures teach? Many years after the fall of man, Solomon penned in Ecclesiastes 7:29, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." The Hebrew word for upright is Yashar and means "righteous, or in right standing." Each child who comes into this world enters in an upright state, or a state of innocence. Remember, God said, "All souls are mine," and He does not put sin in a soul. God is not the author of sin. Where does the burden of sin lie? Again, Ecclesiastes 7:29 says, ". . . they live sought out many inventions. When an individual comes to an age of accountability, as when Adam was given a

power of choice, and he exercises the choice contrary to God's known will, then sin is conceived.

Ezekiel 28:15 says, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." This Scripture also shows us that every child who comes into this world is created perfect and upright, or without sin. "The tree of life" was in the midst of the garden, the Paradise of God, and because of man's innocence, he had no need to avail himself of it. However, after sin came into the picture, he was not in a condition to access life, because he had sinned.

What is the tree of life? What can give sinful man life? Proverbs 3:18 says, "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." What was Solomon speaking of in this text? Verse 13 tells us, "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom." Here he let us know that the tree of life is wisdom, but what is wisdom? Wisdom is not

a thing, but a person. First Corinthians 1:24 says, "But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Christ is wisdom, and wisdom is the tree of life. Proverbs 3:19 says, "The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth." Ephesians 3:9 states, "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." The Lord by wisdom, or by Jesus Christ, founded the earth. The tree of life was a type of Christ. Everything that was lost through Adam was restored through Jesus Christ.

In the next issue we will look further into the tree of life and what it represents, where it is, and how man may access it.

Brother Earl R. Borders

## We Owe Them Something

So many little children are never taught about our precious Savior. I cannot remember ever hearing my mother's voice in prayer. It is a child's rightful heritage to be taught about Christ and His way of salvation and to have Christian parents. How can young people possibly know how to live right and keep their lives clean if they are reared in homes where wickedness and sin are flaunted before their eyes day after day.

Do not parents sometimes forget the reason God has entrusted little children to their care? God has always had a reason, a definite plan, for everything He has created. He still has. Those who thwart His plan and Divine will for mankind are guilty in His sight.

The world is full of foul, sordid, completely wicked things to trap our young people. Is it not the grownups who are responsible for these evils? The larger percentage of the adult population never thinks about men and women, boys and girls, who might be watching their conduct and

patterning their young lives after them. Young folks are mimics; they naturally imitate their elders. Parents who go on in their wickedness will have to account for not only their own souls but the souls of boys and girls whom they have led astray by their bad example. How great is our responsibility to youth!

It behooves us as Christian adults to tenderly and carefully show our young people the way of the Lord. And when they make mistakes, let us lift them lovingly, gently again to the Highway of holiness, having compassion on their young and tender hearts, helping them to grow strong in the Lord. If you are an adult, living away from God, think of your own welfare and also that of the precious children and young people who may follow you down the path of worldly living. Do you not owe them something?

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