

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

Guest Editorial

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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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"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."

Hebrews 3:12-14

Heart of Unbelief

Our Scripture text exhorts us to "Take heed" lest we fall into a condition of unbelief, as many others have. We want to remind you that none of us has it made! There is always the possibility of losing out with God. You may be saved today and be in good spiritual condition, but that can change if you fail to watch and stay alert. If others have lost out, it can happen to any one of us. There is an enemy who is ever seeking an opportunity to turn the child of God away from righteous living.

You need to take heed to yourself, be serious, be sober, and be diligent about the things of God and your soul. Why? Lest you become faint in your mind and begin to think that serving God is too difficult. Beware of becoming weary in the battle for Truth and right, thus entertaining the thought of laying down the armor. Consider the pitfalls that so many have fallen into and, thereby, lost out with God. We must realize that one day this life will come to an end, and the race will be over. Only those who have been faithful to God, those who have stood firm and endured to the end, will obtain the final reward – Heaven.

In the Old Testament there are many examples of the children of Israel failing and going back on the Lord. Oftentimes they provoked Him to anger with their unbelief. They did not believe that He would carry them through and supply all their needs. When in the wilderness, the Israelites complained and murmured against God and His man. They complained of having no food to eat. God sent them manna from Heaven, but that soon became distasteful to them. They murmured and complained because they had no water to drink. God sent forth water from the Rock. When the Israelites came to the place of entering the Canaan land, which God had promised, they did not believe He would destroy the giants who lived there. Their unbelief caused them to send out spies to seek out the land. God's wrath was stirred to the degree that He said in Hebrews 3:11, "They shall not enter into my rest."

Unbelief working in the heart stirs the wrath of God. There is no sound reason for anyone not to believe God. The Lord performed many mighty miracles before their eyes back then, and He is still doing great things today. Yet, there are ones who grow careless in their souls. Because things do not go the way ones think they should go, or because God does not answer as quickly as some feel He should, they are ready to give up on God. A desire to turn back to the old life of sin seems to overtake them. Entertaining the thought of turning back to the old sinful life and the things one was once delivered from arouses God's displeasure. Unless those thoughts are quickly cast aside, one may find himself in serious trouble with the Lord. Jesus stated in Luke 9:62, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the

[continued on page 26]

Matthew 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

5 Then went out to him Jerusalem,

and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children

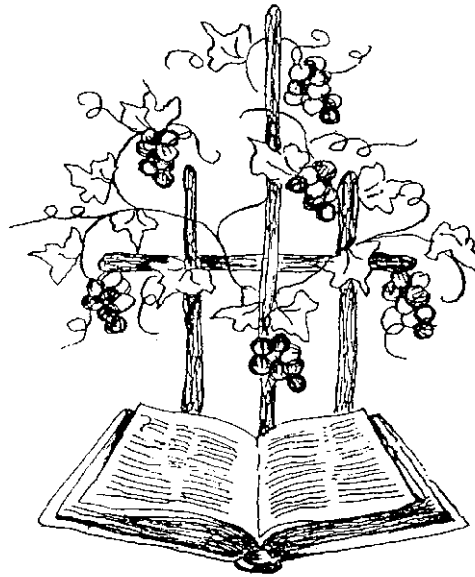
unto Abraham.

10 And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Fruits of Repentance



Brother Roger L. Decker

Making Ready a People Prepared for the Lord

In our Scripture text we have the entrance of John the Baptist. You need to remember that the voice of God had not been heard for more than four hundred years. From Malachi to Matthew, the voice of

prophecy had ceased. In John the Baptist, the voice of God was heard once again throughout Judea. The first verse says that John appeared in the wilderness of Judea. John was a special messenger sent from God, and he was sent to prepare the way of the Lord.

In the Book of Malachi, the last

of the minor prophets and the last of the prophets in the Old Testament, we read in Chapter 4, verse 5, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD." John was the fulfillment of that prophecy. Luke 1:17, speaking of John the Baptist, states, "And he

shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

John went in the spirit and the power of Elijah; in other words, he had the same spirit and the same power that Elijah had. John came on the scene similar to the way Elijah did. As you read along in the Book of 1 Kings, the next thing you know, you read about Elijah. You do not read an introduction of Elijah, and you are not told that he was coming.

Jesus said in Matthew 11:11-15: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

John the Baptist was the "Elijah" mentioned in the Book of Malachi; he was the "Elijah" that was to come. When John came, the voice of God rang out once more through the wilderness. John fearlessly denounced sin and evil wherever he saw it. When the religious hierarchies of that day, the Sadducees and the Pharisees, were involved in wrong, John did not hesitate to tell them. John did not show respect of persons; all the people were on one level. He was making straight paths for Jesus Christ. In John the prophetic voice of God began to ring out as a light in a dark place. He was as a wind that swept the voice of God throughout the country.

It was not John's appearance that drew the people. He was not dressed in the fine attire of that particular day. Matthew 3:4 says that his raiment was of camel's hair, and that was a rough covering that was common among the prophets. Elijah

was clothed in the same type of garment. Second Kings 1:8, describing Elijah, reads, "And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite." John prophesied just as Elijah did. John possessed the same spirit, the same qualifications, and the same habits. Also, he lived in the same state of self-denial.

A Message of Deliverance

When it comes to Christianity, some shy away from judgment, but it is still a necessary part of the Gospel. Many people hunt for preachers who speak smooth things, things that will not stir them, upset them, or question their motives. Nevertheless, judgment preaching is what God sends. Isaiah 1:27 says that "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment." God did not send smooth things. He sent a voice crying out in the wilderness. What did the voice say? "Repent, turn from wrong, and turn to that which is right."

One writer said this: "He who has never offended anyone never did anyone any good." If you live for God, you are going to offend someone. Isaiah 9:6-7 says: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." John came from God. He did not study in the priesthood. He did not summon people to the temple, but rather his pulpit was in the desert, or in the wilderness. He was a voice from God. John denounced sin and told people they were wrong, and he also told them what they ought to do to correct it.

One translator said that John

was "a voice of a crier in the wilderness." He had something to cry out: "Repent ye, for the kingdom is at hand" (Matthew 2:3). He quickly put out the call for men to come to righteousness. The first word mentioned in John's message was very simple: repent. He did not write up long sermons and look up every Greek word. He said "repent" to people who needed to repent. The Sadducees and the Pharisees were in that crowd, and they needed to repent. This shows you that people can be wrapped up in religion and still not have salvation. He was a voice that brought men back to the moral standards of God. He did not go into the wilderness as a little boy and grow up, but rather he went as a full-grown man with a message of deliverance.

A Generation of Vipers

Verses 7-8 of our Scripture text say this: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism [the religious hierarchy of that day], he said unto them, O generation of vipers, [How would you like to hear a preacher like John on Sunday morning?] who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." In other words, John was telling them, "Bring forth evidence that a change has taken place in your life." To whom was John speaking? According to verse 7, he was speaking to the Sadducees and the Pharisees.

There were three main sects that the Jews were divided into: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Out of these three came smaller sects: the Herodians, the Galileans, and the Theraputes. John went on to call them a "generation of vipers." A *viper* is a poisonous snake whose venom is deadly. That which came from these groups of Jews without repentance was a deadly poison that immediately killed the souls of mankind.

We have a picture of a fire breaking out in the wilderness, and

the religious hierarchy fleeing from the wrath to come. They fled from the wrath, but they still lacked the fruits of repentance. John let them know in verse 9 that it would not do them any good to bring up Abraham. If you study about the Sadducees and the Pharisees, you will find that they always brought up Abraham. Theirs was a generation of vipers, and being descendants of Abraham did not change that. John was rebuking the haughty spirit that they manifested.

A degenerate age cannot claim goodness from one in the past who lived close to God. Family members cannot claim goodness because of a godly mother or a godly father or because someone else in the family lived saintly. That does not mean that everyone in the family is saintly. Abraham was a good man, but John let them know that the descendants of Abraham (the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes) were a generation of vipers. They were like poisonous snakes. They thought they needed no repentance. They planned to bypass repentance and go straight to the baptism, but John put up the stop sign, so to speak, and said, in essence, "You fellows are not ready for baptism."

What Are Fruits of Repentance?

You must have a change in your life first to bring forth fruits of repentance. What are some fruits of repentance? One is, the haughty spirit will be gone. In place of a haughty spirit will be a humble, thankful spirit. You cannot go to Christ with an attitude that you have repentance coming to you, as if to say, "Give me repentance; You have given it to everybody else!" No, you must have a humble, thankful spirit to gain an experience of salvation with God. In reality, the thing we have coming to us is the wrath of God. It is only by the mercy of God that any one of us is saved. John could discern no difference in the spirits of the Sadducees and the

Pharisees.

What else accompanies repentance? One is ready to follow. John 10:4-5 tells us: "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." One who is ready to follow Christ will follow Truth and that which is right.

Revelation 14:4b, speaking of the firstfruits or those who took a stand against false religion, says, "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." The child of God follows that which is right and will follow right wherever right goes; he or she will follow Truth wherever it goes. The child of God will not separate from Truth and will stay away from wrong.

How did John know that the Sadducees and the Pharisees had not brought forth fruits to show repentance? He had discernment, and God showed him what they were thinking. He said in Matthew 3:9, "And think not to say within yourselves [they did not say it audibly; they said it within themselves], We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

They were still tied to the fact that they were Abraham's seed, so they thought they did not need repentance. If one was a Jew in those days, he thought that he would automatically go to Heaven, no matter what he did. The Jews of that day always claimed to be descendants of Abraham. Therefore, John said, in essence, "Do not say that; do not even think it."

John would not baptize one if he had no fruit to show forth repentance. Today that is contrary to what most sectarian churches teach. They teach that when you are baptized, that is when you bring forth fruit. Contrariwise, John taught that one had to bring forth fruit to show that a change had taken place before he would baptize that person. John

came from God, he said one must repent and bring forth fruit first. In other words, he was saying, "Let there be a change in your life first." Water baptism is not repentance; it is for those who have repented and changed their lives.

Those who have repented are easily entreated, or easy to get along with. They are different than they used to be. They begin to smile once in a while. Oh, they still get worked over, but their reactions are different. Sometimes that can get really close to you, especially if someone should come to you about one of your children. Parents often say, "Oh, my child? No, I know him. He wouldn't do such a thing. He loves everybody." Well, your child can get in problems just the same as anyone else's child can. A child needs a mother and a father who will step up to the problem instead of making excuses. You need to teach your children right.

Earthly Wisdom Versus Divine Wisdom

James wrote in James 3:17-18: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." What was James talking about? You cannot take Scriptures out of context. In the previous three verses, James described another type of wisdom. He said in verses 14-16: "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."

James was describing two types of wisdom. He said one wisdom was earthly, sensual, and devilish. There is bitterness, and it is the type of wisdom that is arrogant; it is very different from the wisdom that comes from above. James described

it and its effects. Its standards and sources are earthly, and it measures success in worldly terms; its aims are worldly aims.

Today people do not believe you are successful unless you have a fine job, a good marriage, a nice home, and a college education; however, God does not measure success in earthly terms. You are successful when you know the Lord. You are successful when God guides your life and comforts you and when He is the source of your life. That is true success. If you are saved, you may not have much of this world's goods, but you will pass through the gate of Heaven when the billionaire who relies on his money cannot. One form of wisdom is earthly, and the other is the wisdom that comes from above.

I repeat, earthly wisdom is sensual and devilish, and its characteristics are of the natural man. Its source is the devil, and it produces the kind of situations that the devil delights in. It does not bring people together, but it drives them apart. Instead of producing peace, it produces strife.

One writer said, "There is a kind of person who is undoubtedly clever, with a sharp brain and a skillful tongue, but his results, nevertheless, wherever he is, whether he is on a committee, in the church, or in a group is to cause trouble and disrupt personal relationships. The wisdom he possesses is devilish rather than divine."

Making Restitutions

Another fruit that lines up with repentance is the desire to straighten out anything that one possibly can concerning his or her past life. When I got saved, I had to straighten out some things. If you are saved, undoubtedly you had to straighten out some things. I had to straighten out a bar tab that I had forgotten about in upstate New York. I no longer lived there, but it came to my mind. So I sat down and wrote a nice letter

and sent the owner money. The next thing I knew, I got a nice letter in return, along with the money that I had sent, saying I did not have to straighten that out. They had forgotten about it and were just thankful that I was a Christian. It is amazing what God will have you straighten out. When you are saved, you have a desire to straighten things out.

If you have severed relationships, God expects you to try to put those relationships back together and restore what you have taken wrongfully. The Prophet Ezekiel said in Ezekiel 33:15-16: "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live."

Friend, you need to restore the pledge. If you have past due bills, you need to pay them. You should not run from your financial obligations. You should not charge things and then fail to pay for them. If you owe money, you are duty bound to pay it. Suppose someone owed you money and did not pay you. It matters if somebody owes you something, doesn't it? You are to restore the pledge. If you have stolen something, you need to take it back or pay for it. Some people borrow money when they know they cannot pay it back. Oftentimes they buy things they do not need. It is greed instead of need.

You are not going to like to do some things. You may feel that doing certain things would be humiliating; nevertheless, the grace of God will help you. If He lays something on your heart, He will help you to do it. I had to go to an individual with whom I had gotten in a fight. I thought I was in the right, yet I had to go back to him and apologize. I did not want to do that, but I did. God will turn those situations around for His glory and for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

What does it show? It shows that a change has taken place in an individual's life. Joining church will not bring about this change. You could join every church on the face of the earth and still be lost. You cannot join the Church of God; you must be born into the Church of God. When one is born into the church, there are fruits of repentance.

Clearing Yourself Before God and Man

Do you know the story of Zacchaeus? He was of little stature, so he went ahead of the crowd and climbed a sycamore tree. He wanted to get a glimpse of Jesus because he heard that He was passing that way. Luke 19:5 says, "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house." Somewhere between that limb and the ground, a change took place, because he was a different man.

Verse 8 reads, "And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor [he had been covetous]; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation [he had been a thief], I restore him fourfold." Zacchaeus was willing to overdo it. The Law did not command that, but he was ready to give fourfold. Having real salvation will bring things to your mind that you need to straighten out. It will produce fruit in one's life. There will be righteousness.

Real repentance will change a filthy tongue. One will not tell smutty stories. That comes from the heart, and the heart of one who is truly saved has been changed. Salvation will clean up an individual from the top of his head to the soles of his feet. It will clean up your entertainment. You will not watch or read anything that would offend God.

The fruit of righteousness will change the things you listen to. You will not be bound by "rap" music. It

is filled with foul language, and it is anti-American and anti-government. Where does it come from? It does not come from godly saints. It comes from ungodly musicians on drugs. Children of God have something better to listen to. They have better things to watch. That which comes from rap musicians and Hollywood caters to the flesh. It does not cater to the Spirit.

That which comes out of Paris is the same way: it caters to the flesh. Its fashions expose more flesh. A child of God is in style no matter what styles Paris promotes. God help those who claim to be Christians to wear their clothes modestly. I would question the spirituality of those who would not. God's people bring forth fruits of repentance. You can tell something has happened to them. They do not have to broadcast it. No, just their presence draws fire, by the way they conduct themselves and by the way they act. There is a definite change that takes place in the life of one who has been born again. You are going to want to straighten out some things in your past life. In fact, you cannot wait to get them straightened out.

Zacchaeus wanted to correct the wrongs that he had done, which were brought to his mind through repentance. The child of God wants to correct all that God brings to his or her mind to straighten out. Now, there may be some things that one cannot straighten out. Maybe you wronged someone who has since died or moved to another country. However, you must have a heart that is ready and willing to straighten things out. Sometimes people, even saints, say things to others and

offend them. Someone may say, "Oh, he had that coming." Well, maybe he did, but God can handle that; He does not need you to handle it. People can offend others with their words, and then God speaks to them to straighten it out. What clearing of yourself!

Are You Bringing Forth Good Fruit?

The Lord has to help you when it comes to straightening things out. When you get saved, you cannot just arbitrarily jump on everything and go with it. You are liable to make a mess, but God will help you. If you talk to God, He will make a way for you to straighten things out, and He will turn it around for His glory.

In Matthew 3:10 John the Baptist was speaking, and he said, "And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

What was He saying? He mentioned trees. The root is the lifeline of the tree. God laid the ax, or the Word of God, to Israel as a nation. He was no longer dealing with Israel as a nation. He was dealing with individual "Israelites."

God deals with each of us as individuals. He will still deal with you individually. God uses the ax, or the Word of God, which can cut you down or trim you back, to make you more like Christ, and He lays it to the root of the tree. The root of the tree symbolizes the heart, and that is where the ax is laid. He said that every tree that does not bring forth

good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire. Not everyone who bows at an altar of prayer and repents brings forth good fruit. Then what happens? The ax is laid to the root of that tree, and it is cut down and cast into the fire.

Have you produced fruits of repentance in your life? I am talking about more than confessing and carrying a Bible. I am talking about having a definite change in your life. If there has not been such a change in your life, you are lost. If anything should happen to you, you know that you would not go to Heaven. You would be lost if you have no fruits of repentance.

John, as harsh as they say he was, surely had good discernment. He could tell when people came in their religious garbs that they still had not repented. They thought they were special people because they were Abraham's seed. However, God is no respecter of persons. He commands all men everywhere to repent.

Are there fruits of repentance in your life where you work, in your home, in your community, in your family? Can others see definite fruits that show you have repented? If not, you need to repent. The Sadducees and the Pharisees wanted to escape the wrath of God, but they wanted to do it another way besides the way of repentance. Friend, you cannot escape the wrath of God until you come through the office of repentance first. If you have a need, won't you obey God? Won't you do what you know is right and take care of your soul?

(Cassette C-5248M)

The best way to know God's estimate of sin is to realize the tremendous price it took to atone for sin: the death of His Son.

1 Peter 5:6 *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:*

7 *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion,*

walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

9 *Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*

10 *But the God of all grace, who*

hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

11 *To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

Defeating Our Enemy the Devil



Brother Burton Cheney

Put on the Whole Armor of God

Verses 8-9 of our Scripture text state: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." When it comes to the devil, one of two things will happen: you will defeat the devil or he will defeat you. I am a World War II veteran, and our unit did not go out and play around with the enemy. When we went out to battle, we were determined to win. We did not play around in wartime; we got right down to business.

You may think you are getting

along well; nevertheless, the devil is after your soul. When I see people out jogging along the road, sometimes the thought comes to my mind, "Right behind them is death." It is on their trail no matter how far they run, where they go, or what they do. Friend, the devil is on your trail. He is out to get you. It is only by the grace of God that you can have victory over the enemy of souls. If you do not defeat him, he will get you. He is on his way to hell, and he wants to take you with him.

Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:10-18: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood,

but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication

for all saints." This is a warning. If you do not have on the whole armor of God, you will be defeated.

When I served in World War II, I never saw anyone who was ready to go out to battle leave his rifle and his helmet and say, "I don't need those." No, when we went out to battle, our lives were on the line, and we wanted the best equipment that was available. It is the same way in this spiritual battle. We should want the best equipment that God can give us.

Again, in Ephesians 6:10 Paul admonished, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." To be strong in the Lord Jesus Christ, first you need to know Him as your personal Savior, not just know about Him; then you need to put on the whole armor of God. Why? Verse 11 tells you, "That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Friend, if you do not put on the whole armor, you will get hurt unto death.

Do Not War After the Flesh

Ephesians 6:12 tells us that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood." When I got saved, I worked in a shop, and the union steward had a foul mouth. I had been saved for only a short period of time, and one day I was feeling pressed down. It seemed that the devil was throwing everything at me. I thought, "These fellows are pouring it on me." Then the Lord spoke to me and said, "It's not you they're after; they're after Me." That was one of the best lessons I ever learned. Before that day was over, the Lord and I were having a good time, because I realized they were not after me. Had I backslidden and gotten away from the things of God, they probably would have left me alone, but it did not work that way. I learned that they were after Jesus.

If you are truly saved, your persecutors are after Jesus Christ. The devil is after the Lord. That is the reason verse 12 says that "we

wrestle not against flesh and blood." If you are being persecuted, you are not fighting the sinner, but you are fighting the devil. The devil is not after you as an individual; he is after Christ in you.

If you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and have lived for Him any length of time, I am sure that you will agree that this old world can be a really tough place to live at times, but I thank God that we can cling to the Scripture in Philippians 4:13, which says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12:10, "For when I am weak, then am I strong." If God is with you, you can get all the help you need.

We read in James 3:13-16: "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation [or good conduct] his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." You need to remember that confusion is not from God. It comes from the devil.

James 3:14 states, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth." In other words, if you have any of those things in your heart, you should not pretend that everything is fine. All those evil things proceed from the heart. You need to get your heart right with God. When I lived in sin, my old sinful heart caused me to do many things, but thank God, when I got a new heart, everything changed. When one gets saved, God will put a new heart within him and never leave a scar. He will then have a heart to serve God.

We find in James 3:15, "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." If a person has strife in his heart and is trying to stir up trouble and running

down the people of God, destroying the works of God, that comes from an evil heart. Friend, if that is your condition, you do not need to live that way. You can live holy unto God.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Often when trouble occurs in a congregation, it is due to people having carnal minds.

Do Those Things That Please God

The Apostle Paul admonished in Philippians 2:5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Paul was saying that you can have the same mind, or the same intent, that Jesus Christ had. What was His intent? Jesus stated in John 8:29, "I do always those things that please him [the Father]."

Jesus had a fleshly body, and He could be hurt, but thank God, He had a mind to serve the Father. If you are truly saved, you, too, will have a mind to please God. Again, 2 Corinthians 10:3 says, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh." As Christians, we live in a fleshly body, but we do not operate according to this flesh. When you get up in the morning and look in the mirror, you are looking at your worst enemy. Romans 12:3 warns a person "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." A person who has no respect at all for himself will have a problem going through life. If you have respect for yourself, you will present yourself before the public as God would have you to.

Second Corinthians 10:4 tells us that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal." A saint of God does not fight this Christian warfare with carnal weapons. He does not use a

club to get even with people. Also, Romans 12:19 says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Anytime you get an idea in your head to take revenge against someone, you are taking something that belongs to God, and you will get yourself in trouble. The Bible lets us know that we are not to use carnal weapons. That word *carnal* means "in the flesh." It refers to a person with a fleshly mind.

God's people have spiritual weapons that are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (2 Corinthians 10:4). The devil has strongholds that he uses to try to get you and me. You may say, "Well, I've lived for God for twenty or thirty years, and I know all the tricks." You should never think that you can fight that devil on your own and win, because you cannot do it. He will whip you every time. Many good men of God who once preached the Word and lived it fell because they got in the flesh and went by the wayside.

"Set Your Affection on Things Above"

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 10:5, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." This is what the Holy Spirit can do for an individual. He can cast down every imagination and surmising spirit. It is a terrible thing to allow a surmising spirit to get hold of you. Before you know it, you will surmise this and surmise that.

Have you ever felt that, because of something about a person, you just did not care for him? You were looking at that person through the natural eye. Then, maybe a month or two later, you started getting acquainted with that individual and realized that he was really a nice fellow. The devil was working on you to cause you to imagine things that were untrue.

The devil works on God's people to get us to imagine things against other saints of God. You

need to remember that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [you should not use carnal weapons to try to bring someone down], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." If someone has a wrong attitude toward you, the best way to handle it is to show kindness to that person. Paul said in Romans 12:20, ". . . for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." When someone has wronged you, kindness breaks down that wrong attitude.

The Apostle Paul, writing to the church at Colosse, penned in Colossians 3:1-4: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above [in other words, spend time on spiritual things: spend time in prayer and reading the Word], where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. [If you are not careful, your affections can get set on the things of the earth. I was a businessman, and it would have been easy for me to have gotten involved in making a big pile of money. I thank God I did not do that. I used that business as a means of livelihood and let it go at that. I never set my affections on it. Read the reason why.] For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

Friend, setting your affections on earthly things will cause you trouble. You need to remember that your fleshly body came from the earth. The devil will dangle his little allurements before you, and the flesh will want to go after them. Thank God, you do not have to do that.

Friend, if you are saved, you are dead to the things of this old world. They do not hold a big attraction for you. If a man is physically dead, and you were to wave a one-hundred-dollar bill before him, he would not reach out and take it, no matter how much he loved money while he was living. A dead man is not interested in those things.

Why do people run after the things of the world? They are not dead to those things. An opossum will play dead. You could kick it around a little, and it would lie still; then if you were to walk away, it would get up and run away. God does not want you to do that kind of playing dead. You need to be dead to the things of this old world. Too often the attractions of the world mean too much to people. God's people need to be completely dead to sin, because "your life is hid with Christ in God."

"Abstain From the Very Appearance of Evil"

Colossians 3:4 tells us, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Christ is coming back for those who are dead to the things of this old world.

First Thessalonians 5:21-22 reads: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. [That is good advice. You ought to get rid of anything that is bad, but if it is good, hold on to it.] Abstain from all appearance of evil." Many people do not realize how serious it is to live for Christ. They need to "abstain from the very appearance of evil." If anything evil is around you, you need to get away from it. Do not play around with it, because it is as a snake. Some snakes charm their prey until it becomes hypnotized, and then they will eat it. The devil likes to charm individuals the same way with the things of this life, but you should not let him do it to you. First Thessalonians 5:22b says, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." If something looks evil, in any way, you should get away from it. You may say, "God never showed me that particular thing is evil." Did you ask Him? James 4:2 says that "ye have not, because ye ask not." You need to do more asking. Often a persistent child who keeps asking for a certain thing ends up with it. Likewise, you need to be persistent in your asking God to help you to

walk holy before Him.

We read in 2 Timothy 2:15-16: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness." Paul said to abstain from the very appearance of evil. Verse 15 tells us how to be fortified to fight that devil. You may say, "Well, I'm not a good fighter." Friend, you had better become a good fighter, because you are in a spiritual warfare. You are fighting against the devil.

Do you want to be approved unto God? Then you must pray and read the Bible. You need to read the Bible, believe, and study it with a desire to know more about God and to be a better citizen in the Kingdom of God. If you claim to be a Christian and do not read the Word of God, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. By studying God's Word, you can rightly divide the Word of Truth. Through the preaching of the Word, I have learned that Babylon is a terrible institution, and we had better not hold hands with it.

God's church does not have the traits of Babylon. If you want to be better equipped to fight the devil, you must study to show yourself approved unto God. If you will do that, you need not be ashamed and you will be able to rightly divide the Word of Truth. That will help you to stay true to God and defeat your enemy, the devil. You must defeat the devil or he will defeat you.

Light and Darkness Do Not Mix

First Corinthians 10:20-21 reads: "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." God does not want you to fellowship the things in which the devil is involved. Child of God, He wants

you to love the saints of God and love to be around them. You are not going to spend eternity with your unsaved relatives or ungodly friends. If you remain true to God, you will spend eternity with the saints of God. So why not start practicing it now? Why not love and appreciate the saints of God here in this life?

Again, the Apostle Paul wrote in verse 21, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils [that would be like trying to mix water and oil together; it will not work]: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." If something has a bad taste or a bad smell to it, you should get away from it. The same is true spiritually. Young person, if you want to be a sweet, older person someday, you need to get saved and stay true to God; then you will end up being a sweet, older person.

Christian friend, the devil is out to get you. By the grace of God, he will not be able to get away with it if you will keep your hand in the big hand of God. I love to warn people about what the devil is up to. I love to point out the tricks of the enemy. The devil is real, and he is out to get you.

Second Corinthians 6:14 says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" I have never seen physical darkness and light mix with each other. When the light goes out, the darkness comes in. Verse 15 reads, "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? [In other words, what communion has Jesus Christ with the devil? They have no communion at all; they are enemies.] or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" How can a child of God, who loves the Lord and whose sins have been washed away in the blood of Jesus Christ, keep company with one who opposes Christianity?

Verses 16-18 tell us: "And what agreement hath the temple of God

with idols? [Remember, saint, the temple of God is not a building, but you are the temple of God.] for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

If you want to be a child of God, you must turn to Jesus, walk with Him, and get rid of all sin in your life. I have heard people say, "If God wants me to get rid of the cigarette habit, He'll take it away." Friend, God did not give you the cigarette habit; that was the devil, so He will not take it away from you. He will help you, but you must do some things.

Seek God First

In 2 Corinthians 7:1 the Apostle Paul admonished, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, [What are the promises? God will be with you. He will help you if you will obey, read the Word of God, believe, and trust in Jesus Christ.] let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

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 [or the unsaved] 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."

I have learned that anytime I need to make a major decision, I must seek the Lord first. (I am not speaking of going to the store to buy bread and milk.) When you make a major purchase or a major decision in your life, you should be sure to

pray and get the mind of God concerning the matter. If you do that, then whatever the devil throws at you, you can rest assured that you have done the right thing.

No matter what you do, you need to seek God first. If you do not, that devil will get you involved in something that will cost you. Making the wrong decision may cost you money, your health, or your reputation. If you seek God first and know it is the will of God, it will save you much grief.

Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 6:11-12: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

When I got saved, I thought that the war would be over, but I got into the biggest battle of my life. I have been battling the devil ever since. Thank God, I have been true to the Lord. A few times I have had to back up and make something right. Every saint of God needs to have a reverse. If you do not have one, you had better get on your knees and ask God to help you.

The devil will start with just a little thing and cause you to become shipwrecked. When a ship first sails the sea, she is clean, but as time goes by, barnacles build up on the hull and cause a drag on the ship. You do not want that to happen in your spiritual life. You must "fight the good fight of faith [and], lay hold on eternal life." This spiritual walk is a fight. You might be in a wheelchair or on a sick bed, but you can be a prayer warrior. It is through prayer that you become a good fighter in the Lord's army.

Paul said to "lay hold on eternal life." In other words, you must get hold of it and do not let go. One trick of a bulldog, when it gets in a fight, is to nail the other dog and not let go; it just hangs on. As a saint of God, you need to be just as determined and say, "I have hold of God,

He has hold of me, and I am not going to let go. I am going to hang in there."

Take Heed

Hebrews 9:27 tells us, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." One day you are going to leave this life. You do not have to be gray-headed to die. Young people die too. No matter how old you are, you need to fight the good fight of faith.

Young person, you should not allow the devil to get hold of your mind and cause you to rebel. Many young people become rebellious during the teen years. They will not listen to their parents, and they want to go their own way. The devil tells the young people not to obey authority. Young person, you need to submit to authority.

I did not get up one morning and decide, "I'm going to be a preacher and preach the Word of God." The Lord called me to preach. Once the Lord laid it on my heart, I submitted to the will of God. The pastor's wife has a place to fill. She could get out of order (if she should, the devil would use that). No matter what age you are, you need to submit to God-given authority.

I want you to know how the devil operates. He even goes to church. Have you ever gone to church feeling good and right after the singing, you became sleepy? The devil will lull you to sleep during the preaching if you are not careful. I hate the devil and his works. If you love sin and patronize it, you are in trouble with God.

First Timothy 4:16 states, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." You need to be indoctrinated in the doctrines of the Word of God. Every Babylonian institution has a doctrine, and one thing they endeavor to do is to get people indoctrinated with their doctrine, and then the devil has them.

We need to know what "thus saith the Lord" concerning the Church of God. This verse in 1 Timothy warns you to take heed. In other words, you need to take a good look and be ready to serve God through the doctrines in the Word of God. Once you learn the doctrines, then you need to "continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

Do you want to stay saved and make Heaven your home? If so, you must stay with the true doctrines of the Word of God. Then you can help save your family, friends, and acquaintances. If you get away from the Bible doctrines, you will destroy yourself and lose out with God. If that happens, you cannot show others the Truth. Dear one, if you do not stand true before your loved ones, family, friends, and acquaintances, then who is going to help them? You might be the only one who could help them.

Having a Good Conscience

Paul penned in 1 Timothy 1:18-19: "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; [You should not allow your conscience to become defiled. To have a defiled conscience and commit ungodly, sinful acts is a terrible thing.] which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." Some have lost the keenness of their conscience. The best way to keep a tender conscience is, when God speaks, do something about it. Your conscience is important. That is the way God speaks to you. If you have seared your conscience, you are in trouble. What good would it be for someone to send a radio signal to you if you had no receiver? It would not do you any good at all. On the other hand, if you have a good receiver, you can receive important messages. You need to keep a good conscience so

that you can understand what the Lord has to say to you. Again, 1 Timothy 1:19 reads, "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." Shipwreck is a terrible thing. Many times when a ship wrecks, the whole crew is lost. Entire congregations have gone down because the people lost the keenness of their consciences. They fought against Truth and true men of God. What happened? They seared their consciences and became shipwrecked. Verse 20 tells us, "Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." It would be a terrible thing to be turned over to a reprobate mind and to believe a lie and be damned. It is necessary to keep a clean conscience, and when the Lord speaks, you need to answer.

You Can Do All Things Through Christ Who Strengthens You

James 4:6-7 reads: "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." You do not have to entertain the devil. If you will resist the devil in the name of Jesus, he will flee from you. All of Heaven is behind you, and the Word of God is behind you. Isn't it wonderful to have those promises? I have used them many times. Thank God, you do not have to entertain the devil.

Paul said in Philippians 4:12-13: "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need [Paul was pointing out that no matter how bad things were around him, he still had victory]. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." I have used that Scripture many times.

The Word of God can strengthen you. The Psalmist David wrote in

Psalm 119:11, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." David also "encouraged himself in the Lord" (1 Samuel 30:6).

If you read the Word of God, believe it, act on it, and trust God, you will win over the devil every time. Child of God, you need to hang right in there. Paul could do all things through Christ, and so can you. You can do all things through Christ, no matter what it is.

We are living in perilous times, but God can keep you true to Him if you put your faith and trust in Him; then you can make Heaven your home. John 16:33 tells us, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Jesus told the disciples that He was coming back, but He said until then, the Father would send the Comforter in the form of the Holy Spirit. When you have the Holy Spirit in your heart, you have Jesus Christ living in you. Child of God, when you go to the supermarket, you are taking Jesus with you. When you visit a friend, you are taking Christ with you. Jesus has overcome the world, and He can give you overcoming power.

Keep His Commandments

First John 5:1-5 tells us: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. [You do not have to learn to keep His commandments. If you are a child of God, according to this Scripture, you automatically love the saints. You might not understand their ways of doing things, but God did not make us all alike.] For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born

of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

If you want to overcome the world, you must believe these Scriptures. If you want to overcome the devil, you must believe the Word of God and act upon your belief. You may say, "I've got all kinds of faith." Do you have works to go with it? There is such a thing as dead faith. If you want to defeat the enemy of your soul, the devil, you must obey what the Bible says. Do that, and you will make Heaven your home. In the Old Testament you can read that Joshua had it settled that no matter which way Israel went, he knew which way he was going.

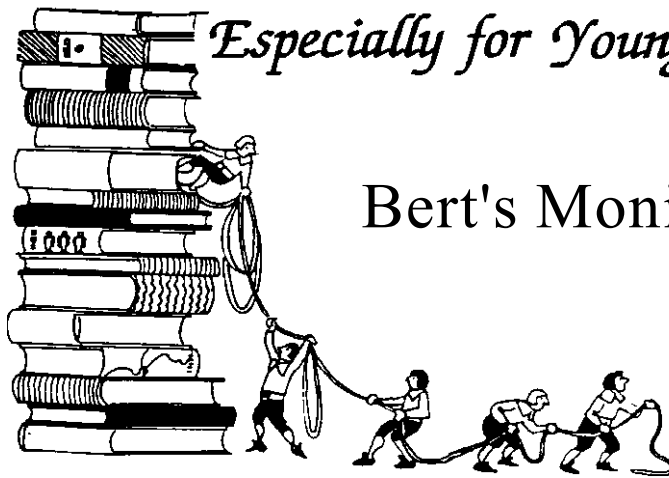
Dear one, you need to have it settled in your heart that if your husband or your wife loses out with God, you are going to stand true to God. If that were to happen, you would be the only hope of winning your companion to the Lord.

Joshua 24:14 reads, "Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth." All the Church of God has is Truth. We do not use other means to get people in. Verse 15 tells us, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." You need to make that kind of commitment and say, "Lord, if my husband or wife, the children, my parents, or my aunt or uncle fall, I am going to serve God."

If God has shown you a need through His Word, now is a good time to get it settled with Him. The devil will tell you to put it off, but 2 Corinthians 6:2 says, "Behold, now is the day of salvation." If God has spoken to your heart, now is the time to take care of it.

(Cassette C-5257M)

Especially for Young People



Bert's Monitors



Bert was determined to go. He wouldn't ask his father, for he was very sure his father would say no. He didn't quite like to disobey a positive command, so he would say nothing at all about the matter.

Bert was thirteen years old, and it was high time that he began to exercise his own judgment, at least when his own affairs were concerned, so Bert thought.

He would like to know what harm his going down to the river for a quiet moonlight swim could possibly do to anybody. He would try it, at all events. Ned Sellars would be there, and Frank Peters. They didn't seem to care whether their parents liked it or not. Bert couldn't feel so, exactly; but still, where was the sense in a boy's going to his father every time he turned around?

He was going. He had fully made up his mind to that. He went up to bed at the usual time, however, but his mother coming into his little bedroom about half an hour afterward, was surprised to find him almost hidden by blanket and quilt, though it was a warm night in August.

"Why, Bert, you'll smother. Do let me pull off some of these bed clothes."

But Bert held them tightly down. "I ain't cold, Mother. I mean I ain't warm."

"Are you sick?"

"No'm."

Two blankets and a quilt," laughed his mother, as she turned away. "I don't know what you're made of, Bert."

"And jacket and pants and stockings and shoes," thought Bert, as he snapped his fingers very softly under the weight of bed clothes.

The beautiful moon looked in at the little window. There had been times when Bert, gazing at her pure, pale face, had marveled that any boy could have the heart to do wrong when her soft light was shining on him; but tonight she seemed to say, "Come on, come on. I tell no tales. The night indoors is warm and stifling. The river is cool and clear. My beams are there before you. Come on, come on!"

It seemed as if the hours had never lagged so heavily. Eleven o'clock was the time agreed upon.

Twice Bert found himself napping. Suppose he should go to sleep. The idea was not to be entertained for a moment. He sat up in the bed and listened, listened, listened, until at length the welcome strokes greeted his ear. He was tired and sleepy and stupid and very warm. He opened his door softly and went downstairs. He did not dare unlock the front door, for grandpa's room was just across the hall, and grandpa always slept with one eye open. He

crept through the kitchen and found himself in the shed. Was ever anything more fortunate? The outer door was open.

He took his hat from the nail, and just then a plaintive "mew" greeted his ear.

"Hush! Be still, Cuff," said he, in a whisper.

But Cuff wouldn't be still. She was very glad to see him and was determined to tell him so.

"Mew, me-aw," called Billy, the mockingbird, from his cage above.

"Dear me," thought Bert, "they'll wake Father up as sure as the world."

But it was not unusual for Billy to sing in the night. Indeed, his midnight music was sometimes overpowering. Bert stood very still for a moment, but could hear no one stirring. He walked on a few steps, Cuff purring loudly and rubbing her soft gray sides against him.

"Bow, wow, wow, wow," barked the faithful watchdog.

"Be quiet, Prince. Stop your noise!"

Prince knew his young master's voice and, like Cuff, was delighted to be near him, and so gave expression to his feelings in a succession of loud quick barks.

"Hadn't you better go down, John?" asked Bert's mother anxiously. "I'm afraid someone is trying to get in."

"They can't get farther than the shed," was the careless reply. "I left that open."

In a few moments all was quiet again. Prince lay down at Bert's feet, and Cuff stretched herself out beside him. Time was passing. The boys would surely be there before him. Very carefully, he crept toward the door, hardly daring to breathe in his anxiety.

But Prince had not been asleep. No, indeed! He started up at the first sound of his master's footsteps. It was very evident that something unusual was going on, and he was determined to be "in it."

"I must run as fast as I can," said Bert to himself. "Hit or miss, there's nothing else for me to do."

He was preparing to suit the action to the word, when Snow, the old family horse, who for a few days past had been allowed to wander about among the clover fields, put her white nose just inside the door and gave a loud and fiercely prolonged neigh.

"What next!" muttered Bert, between his teeth. "I shall expect to see some of the cows soon. I don't care if all the animals on the place come, — I'm going."

He was walking defiantly from the door, when he heard his mother's voice at her window. "I never can sleep, John, with a horse crying around. I wish you'd go down to see what the trouble is. And do lock the shed door. I have not slept five minutes tonight."

What was Bert to do now? To go forward in the moonlight, with his mother watching from above, would be foolish, indeed. To remain in the shed, to be discovered by his father, seemed equally unwise.

He had very little time to think about the matter, for at that moment he heard the well-known footsteps on the stairs. He darted over to the shed closet, shut the door, and trembling, awaited the result.

The result was that, after

standing painfully still for about ten minutes, during which Prince's significant sniffs and growls had thrice driven him to the very verge of disclosure, he was left unmolested in the dark old closet. He opened the door, but the shed seemed darker yet. No loving cat or friendly dog was there to cheer or to betray. Nothing but thick, black darkness. Was it possible that the moon was still shining outside?

He wondered if the boys were having a good time. He would open the door and go to them as soon as he dared. But while he was thinking and wondering, waiting until he was sure his father and mother were asleep again, the old clock rang out the hour of twelve. Midnight! It was of no use to go then; the boys would be gone.

So Bert crept upstairs to his room, cross and dissatisfied, feeling that the fates were against him.

He was late to breakfast the next morning. His mother laughingly inquired if the weight of his bed clothes had affected his hearing.

"Yes'm — no'm. I mean — I guess not," he replied absently.

It was a rainy morning, and the weather was disagreeably warm. After breakfast, Bert came into the shed and watched his father as he mended an old harness.

"What sort of boy is that Ned Sellars?" inquired his father at length.

Bert started.

"I don't know. I think he's a pretty good boy. Why?"

I passed his house this morning. Someone was getting a terrible flogging, and I think it must have been Ned."

"What for? Do you know?"

"Yes. They spoke very loud, and I couldn't help hearing. It was for running off last night. Going swimming, I believe."

Bert's eyes flashed.

"That's just like his father," said he, indignantly. "He never wants Ned to have any fun."

There was no reply. Some hidden feeling, he could hardly tell what, prompted Bert's next question.

"Would you flog me, Father, if I went swimming without leave?"

"That depends upon the circumstances," replied his father, looking searchingly into his face. "If my boy was mean enough to skulk out of the house at night, when I supposed him to be abed and asleep, it is possible that I might not consider him worth flogging."

How Bert's cheeks burned. He had never looked at the matter in just that light before. "Never be a sneak, my son. It is cowardly and disgraceful."

Bert made no answer, but his thoughts were busy. Was he not every whit as mean and cowardly as if he had really gone with his unfortunate friend? Yes, verily.

Then he thought of his father. How *good* he was — never denying him any reasonable pleasure; nay, often denying himself for his sake. Bert seemed to realize his father's goodness now as never before.

As he thought of this, two large tears rolled down his sun burnt cheeks.

"What is it, my boy?"

He brushed them away hastily.

"Father," said he, "I've been a sneak, but I *won't* be a coward. I was going with the boys last night."

"Ah!"

"Yes. I should have gone if it hadn't been for the dog, and the cat, and — all the rest of them. 'Twasn't any goodness of mine that kept me at home."

His father was silent.

"I wish you'd say something, Father," cried poor Bert, impatiently. "I s'pose you don't think I'm worth flogging, but" —

"My dear boy," said his father,

[continued on page 26]

Leviticus 25:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.

3 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;

4 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

5 That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.

6 And the sabbath of the land shall

be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee,

7 And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

8 And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout

all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

11 A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.

12 For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

13 In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession.

14 And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another.

The Day of Jubilee



Brother Calvin Foster

A Shadow of Things That Were to Come

I want you to consider the Old Testament Jew's worship. It is beautiful, and it shows you the heart of God. The people were instructed to work six days, and then to have one day of rest; six years of work, and then a year of rest. The fiftieth year was the Year of Jubilee, and it was a

shadow of good things to come in the New Testament dispensation. During this particular year was a special anniversary day. It was a Day of Jubilee, a day of great rejoicing. God ordained a year of rest to be observed by the Israelites every fiftieth year. At that time, slaves were set free, properties were restored to their former owners, and the land was not plowed. In addi-

tion, all debts were canceled, and every man began anew. Oh, the excitement and the joy on the Day of Jubilee!

God, in His great wisdom, devised a plan to keep distinct control of the tribes so that none grew extraordinarily richer than another. One can only imagine the joy and the celebration that took place at that time. The slaves were returned to

their own families, and no man was to oppress another. It reminds me of 2 Samuel, Chapter 6, when the Israelites brought the ark of God back from Obbedom's house. David was so glad to get the ark of God back into the city of David. Second Samuel 6:14 reads, "And David danced before the LORD with all his might. . . ." The Israelites looked forward to the Day of Jubilee, a day when the people rejoiced in the Lord and were thankful that they were free to go home and all their debts were canceled. Surely they rejoiced before the Lord with all their might.

Verse 9 of our Scripture text tells us that the Day of Jubilee occurred on the Day of Atonement, which was the day of the animal sacrifices, which were for the covering of their sins. It was a day set forth to bring man back into harmony with God. There will never be another time when animal sacrifices will be acceptable to God.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 2:16-17: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." The reality of the Day of Jubilee was manifested in the day of Christ.

Hebrews 10:3-7 says: "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he [Christ] cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." It was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming to him in the wilderness, he said in John 1:29, "Behold

the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Thank God, our Lord Jesus Christ came to take away the sin of the world.

Our Day of Jubilee

Saint of God, Jesus came to provide us a day of jubilee, a great day of celebration, of rejoicing, and of freedom from the guilt of sin. In this message I do not want to dwell on the Old Testament jubilee. I want you to consider the New Testament jubilee. The Old Testament jubilee was a shadow of things to come.

Luke 4:12-16 reads: "And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read."

Saint, you should want to be like Jesus. The Scripture says it was His custom to go into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Should that not also be your custom? Your friends and neighbors ought to know that whenever possible you will be in church on Sunday. It is my custom to be in the house of God whenever it is time for the worship services.

Verses 17-22 continue: "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted [that is what it was like on the Day of Jubilee], to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the

Lord. [I thank God that we do not have to dwell on that Day of Jubilee. We have our own jubilee! This is the reason the saints of God are so happy. Glory be to God!] And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" There is great joy in serving the Lord, and there is great zeal in praising the Lord! The saints of God are happy people.

Beginning Anew

In Old Testament times on the Day of Jubilee, the trumpet sounded, and every man was made free to begin anew. You may ask, "How do you apply that to us?" In Revelation 1:10-11 John said: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, [You should not have to come to church to get in the Spirit. John said he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. When you walk through the door of the church, you should be in the Spirit.] and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."

The trumpet signifies the voice of God speaking to us through the Word of God. In our jubilee, when the trumpet sounds, every sinner can begin anew. Second Corinthians 5:17 states, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: [Sinner friend, do you want a new life? When you hear the trumpet sound, you can begin anew.] old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

I thank God for the day I heard

the trumpet sound! I thank God for the day Jesus paid my debt! When I repented, all my debt was canceled. Jesus paid my debt of sin and gave me a new start. Isn't that wonderful? Every sin that I had ever committed was washed away through the blood of Jesus. God just wiped them all away. I thank God for that!

On the Day of Jubilee, the Israelites regained whatever they had lost. One might have lost his home, his property, or his freedom; but when the trumpet sounded, he got back what he had lost. Through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, you can regain all that the first Adam lost when he sinned. What did he lose? He lost fellowship with God. Thankfully, through the second Adam, Jesus Christ, you can receive that which was lost. You can enjoy fellowship with God once again. This should cause you to be happy and to rejoice! This is your jubilee!

Let me prove it to you from the Bible. First Corinthians 15:21-22 reads: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Verse 45 continues, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." Christ is the last Adam, and through Christ we receive what the first Adam lost, which was fellowship with God. God wants every man and woman to have fellowship with Him.

Christ Can Give You Rest

The Year of Jubilee was a year of rest for God's people. The land was left untilled and the vineyards were left undressed during that year. How do we rest? In Matthew 11:28-30 what did Jesus say? "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is

easy, and my burden is light."

My friend, if the burden of sin weighs heavy upon you, if you are trying to please worldly people and trying to find pleasure in this and that, you can come to Jesus for rest. When Jesus comes into your heart, He will give you rest, and you will be so glad for that rest!

Sinner friend, if you do not know Christ, you are missing the greatest blessing that man can ever experience. I thank God that I am resting from my labors of sin and from carrying that heavy burden. I should have gotten saved long before I did. I know a man who got saved when he was about eighty years old, and he said, "Why did you keep this from me all these years? Why didn't you tell me that this is so wonderful and beautiful?" The pastor told him, "Brother, we've been trying to tell you, but you wouldn't listen." Unfortunately, many people have this same problem. They will not listen.

When you get saved, salvation will open your eyes and you will say, "This is wonderful! Praise God! Look what I've been missing!" Words cannot express this joy that fills the heart when one gets saved.

In the Old Testament on the Day of Jubilee, slaves were set free. Friend, without salvation you are a slave to sin. You may think that you can do what you want to do, but the power of sin controls you and keeps you from having fellowship with God. I thank God that my debt of sin was canceled. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have all your financial debts canceled? The greatest debt that one can owe is the debt of sin. God wants to cancel that debt for you.

Freedom From Bondage

The Day of Jubilee in the Old Testament was a day of freedom. Likewise, our jubilee is a day of freedom from Satan's bondage. John 8:31-32 states: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye

my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Saint, you need the Truth. Truth will set you free and keep you free.

Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Jesus said in Matthew 7:13 that "broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." Jesus is the way, the Truth, and the Light. Truth is what you need to free you from sin and to keep you free from its power. Whenever possible, you ought to go to church and sit up and listen to a man of God preach the Truth and let it cleanse you.

Let us consider slavery. It is a practice in which people own other people. A slave is the property of his owner, and he works without pay. The owner, called a "master" or "mistress," provides the slave with food, shelter, and clothing. Slavery in ancient times reached its peak during the Greek and the Roman empires. It also existed in Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Persia, and other ancient societies in the Middle East. In addition, it was practiced in ancient China and India.

The United States abolished slavery in 1865. Today slavery is illegal in almost every country in the world, but it still exists in parts of Africa, Asia, and South America. No one knows exactly how many people still live in slavery.

Every unsaved person is a slave to sin, owned and controlled by the devil. Sinner friend, you may think you are doing what you want to do, but you are controlled by your father, the devil, and the desires of the devil you will do. You can imagine how happy a slave would have been upon being set free from his master! He might have said, "Master, am I *really* free?" His former master would have said, "Yes, you are free to go. This is the Day of Jubilee."

When God sets you free, He changes your life completely. You may wonder, "Am I the same man

who used to walk the streets and smoke marijuana and do drugs?" Yes, child of God, you are the same one, but you have been set free!

"To Be Carnally Minded Is Death"

After the Civil War in the United States, discrimination and the lack of education prevented most former slaves from obtaining good jobs. Discrimination also prevented them from receiving the civil rights they had been legally granted. Throughout history men have been set free from slavery and then confronted with insurmountable problems. However, the worst thing that can happen to a person when he gets saved is to be deceived by false religion. False religion preaches forgiveness for past sins, but they do not preach deliverance *from* sin. True men of God will teach repentance, deliverance from sin, and holy living. God will deliver you from alcohol, drugs, and any other ungodly habit that you might have. The freedom that I am talking about is truly being free from sin and guilt.

Dear one, allow me to expound on one thing concerning slavery. You should not sit around and hold ill feelings or grudges against the forefathers about what happened to people or your ancestors back in history. You need to beware of having a prejudiced spirit. If you are African-American, Jewish, Italian, or another nationality, you need to guard against the spirit of holding grudges.

I love God's people everywhere. Love is an action word, and if I say "I love you," I must show you by my actions. You can make your mouth say anything, but what is in the heart shows. God demands that we love all people. You should not get involved in stirring up resentment of past mistreatments.

My day of jubilee came when God saved me from sin. Romans, Chapter 5, lets you know that the love of God is put in one's heart by the Holy Ghost. The love of God causes the Christian to love every-

one. When I got saved, I was hugging the sisters and the brothers alike. The pastor informed me that the brothers should only hug the brothers and the sisters should only hug the sisters. First Peter 1:22 reads, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth. . . ."

Jesus is the way, the Truth, and the life. Romans 8:6-7 states: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." I praise God for His love and mercy and for blessing us with a day of jubilee.

We often sing the old song that says, "*Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see.*" The man who wrote that song was once in the slave-trade business, but he got saved, and later he penned those beautiful words. While living in sin, many of us were very wicked and mean. I thank God for His amazing grace.

Becoming Servants to God

Romans 6:14-22 tells us: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace [so many dishonest people in the religious world do not want to be saved; they refuse to give up the sinful way of living]. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were [notice this is past tense] the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

"I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your

members servants to uncleanness [The flesh wants to play around with the sinful things of the world. That is the reason the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:27, 'But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.' The flesh must be kept under subjection to God.] and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

"For when ye were [past tense] the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. [You may be a good moral person, a member of a club, and treat your fellowman right, but without Christ you are a sinner. Regardless of how good you are or how many good deeds you have done, you cannot make it to Heaven without being saved.] What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God. . . ."

Friend, sin is very deceiving, captivating, and destructive. It does not care how long you have been married, how long you have been saved, or how good of a life you live. Sin is out to destroy you. It will destroy your marriage, your home, and your eternal soul. Do not play around with sin! Sin will never be your friend. The devil loves to involve young people in drugs, causing them to destroy their health, end up in jail, end up killing someone, or end up doing something else to ruin their lives. I repeat, do not play around with sin!

Keep Yourself Pure

God's Word says that children are to obey their parents, because it is right. Young person, God said it, and if you obey it, He will bless you and give you a long life. However, if you are determined to be hard-headed, stubborn, and disobedient, you will get in trouble. Look around you at the many young girls who

have babies they did not want. So many are in jail who never intended to be there. Often when you visit them in jail, they are so humbled and want to pray. Sad to say, jail-house salvation rarely lasts. Young person, you do not have to go through that if you will serve God early in life. You will not have to bear the reaping that many go through if you listen to God while you are young.

I plead with you, young person, please surrender to God while you are young. At every opportunity, you should attend church, be in prayer meeting, go to camp meetings, and serve God. You should also pray and read your Bible. If you will do that, as the years go by, you will see many wonderful blessings come your way. God will open doors for you that seem impossible to open.

One song says, "*Great is thy faithfulness . . . Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside . . . Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.*" If you are married, you ought to be faithful to

your spouse. Do not play around with sin. You should respect your spouse. You need to beware of getting too involved in things with people who are not Christians. Refrain from being too friendly with the opposite sex. If you are single, you should keep yourself pure. Watch where you put your hands, and watch how you talk to others. Keeping your soul clean enables you to rejoice in your jubilee. You need to keep your life clean and protect your virginity.

Romans 6:22-23 reads: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Dear lost soul, if you fail to obey the Word of God, you will be sorry forever. You have a dear friend if you have a godly pastor who preaches the Truth.

Stubbornness and rebellion are rampant in our day; therefore, many people refuse to be pastored. They

do not want to follow godly leadership. Unfortunately, many people go around whispering and spreading gossip and bad news much of the time, causing grief and destroying their own souls. Child of God, you need to be faithful to God and raise your family to love and serve the Lord. Stay true to God. He cares for you.

Unless you have been saved, you cannot understand the unspeakable joy that salvation brings to the heart. There are no words that can express it. It is joy unspeakable and full of glory! When God puts the saints together, He wants us to stay together. However, the devil is continually working to undermine that. Again, Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Sinner friend, won't you come to Jesus and repent and enjoy your day of jubilee?

(Cassette C-5261E)

Radio Log



LOCATION	STATION	DAY	TIME
WELLSTON, OHIO	WAJB-FM 92.5	THURSDAY	8:05 A.M.-8:35 A.M.
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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!

Luke 6:46 *And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*

47 *Whosoever cometh to me, and*

heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like:

48 *He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the*

foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

Having a Deep Experience With the Lord



Brother James Lovingood

A Place for God to Dwell

I want to talk to you about digging deep and living where God wants you to live. I want you to consider Jesus' words in the Scripture text, which speaks of two builders. You are building either on the Rock or on the sand. So many people are unwilling to pay the price when it comes to Truth. You should not settle for just anything. God's church is what she is by the grace of God, and she is built on Truth. The Bible lets us know that Jesus is the foundation of the church.

According to Ephesians 2:20, He is the Chief Cornerstone. Jesus does not save people collectively but individually. As Christians, we each have a unique experience with God,

and we must work on that relationship daily to draw closer to Him. The Bible lets us know that God came down from Heaven and desired the church for His habitation. Many people do not realize that back in the counsel halls of eternity, God's plan was to build the church. He created man for His pleasure. Jesus does not get any pleasure from man living in sin. He came to save and to deliver man from sin.

Zechariah 13:1 says, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened . . . to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." Christian friend, you are living in the new Jerusalem, spiritually speaking, where God dwells, right next to His throne. God has cleansed and delivered you from all sin, and as a

result, you can please Him. The new Jerusalem is a place for God to dwell. He dwells in your heart when you are saved and delivered from sin. When Jesus went to Calvary, the Bible lets us know that He was the fountain that was opened on the Cross.

John 19:34 says when the Roman soldier pierced Jesus' side, "forthwith came there out blood and water." The blood was for the remission of sin, and the water was a type of the water of life. The blood can cleanse men and women from all sin. In Revelation 14:6 we read that John saw an "angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach . . . to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The Gospel needs to be

preached to let people know that God has something better than false religion has. Nothing in this world can compare to God's church. She has no sisters, and she is the only one of her mother. Jesus bought her with His own blood; therefore, she belongs to Him. I am glad that we can live in the realm of God's holiness. We are not holy because we have made ourselves holy, but when God moves in, we become holy. God is holy, His Word is holy, His Spirit is Holy, and the church is holy. The new Jerusalem is a holy city. What wonderful things God has done for us!

Count the Cost

John let us know that Jesus went to Calvary and shed His blood for us. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The sins of the world were laid upon Him. We read in Luke 22:44 that as He began to pray, "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." He did not suffer for Himself; He suffered for you and me.

I remember my life before I was saved, and I remember how far down sin had taken me. The world is in the depths of sin, and it continues to go down. I remember contemplating the thought of suicide. I am glad that God found me. He has workable answers for every hard question in life. The Word of God has the answers. Many people think that the Bible is just a book among books, but it is the Book of all books. It is the recorded Word of God, and when it is in your heart, it is the Living Word. It will uplift you and give you the courage to live.

The Queen of Sheba was like everyone else. She was looking for some answers to life, so she traveled for seventy-five days on the back of a camel to find answers to the hard questions in life. I am glad to be a part of the church of the Living God.

Man has laid many foundations

today; however, the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Christ is the Chief Cornerstone. We are building upon Him with the truths of God's eternal Word. God's wonderful plan will still work if we will just build according to His Word.

Sadly, many people are not counting the cost. I have known many people in my life, even preachers, who are not in the church anymore. They did not count the cost. The wages of sin is still death, and it never goes unpaid. We reap what we sow, and when the reaping begins, sometimes the reaper overtakes the sower. Therefore, it is important to count the cost. Jesus said in Luke 14:28, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?"

In Matthew 5:3 Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." It takes the Word, through the Spirit of God, to build you up and enhance your spiritual life. When you are building this spiritual house, you are the one who occupies it, and you will occupy it for time and eternity.

I remember a dear sister who told about a man who was a contractor, and he built houses. His future son-in-law worked for him, and the builder had his future son-in-law build a new house. Well, he built the house, but in building it, he cut corners and used inferior building materials. After the house was built, the son-in-law received it as a wedding present. Friend, you are going to live in the spiritual house that you are building for eternity.

Seek Him Diligently

You did not have any Christian character before you got saved, but God will build it in you if you stay with Him. He will make you what He wants you to be, not what you want to be. In John, Chapter 6, you can read that Jesus began to teach

the Jews how to obtain eternal life. Jesus said in verse 53, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." This offended the Jews, because they were not to drink the blood of the sacrifices. Jesus went on to say in verse 58, "This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." God had given them bread from Heaven, and Jesus was that bread. He gave His body as a sacrifice. When you eat of His flesh and drink of His blood, it is the Word of God that fills you.

Backing up to verses 54-55, Jesus said: "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." If you are a young convert, if you have a real experience of salvation with the Lord, you desire the sincere milk of the Word. It will enable you to grow; then, as you grow, you will be able to eat strong meat. In Hebrews, Chapter 5, it says that some of the Jews ought to have been on strong meat, but they were still on the milk of the Word. Jesus wants you to grow and to come spiritually mature. He wants you to be whole, complete, and sanctified in every area of your life. You must do some sanctifying and set yourself apart. As a Christian, your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and it is to be set apart for Him, because that is where He dwells.

Hebrews 11:6-7 says: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house. . . ." As you build your spiritual house, you are responsible for it. You are responsible for your influence upon those around you: your family and your neighbors.

When they lay your body in the ground, one thing they will not bury with it is your influence. Your influence will live on.

In Noah's day he preached approximately 120 years, but only eight souls were saved. Yet he stayed right with it and labored until the day they entered the ark. I appreciate the faith of Noah. God put this account in His Word as an example for us and to let us know that Noah saved his house. He prepared the ark and believed God. So many do not believe God's Word today. Unbelief is overtaking so many places, and the Bible doctrine is not preached anymore. It is not uplifted as it should be. We are no higher or no better than the doctrine of the Word that we take in and spiritually digest.

Digging Deep

Our Scripture text lets us know that Jesus likened those who come to Him, hear His sayings, and do them to a man who built and dug deep. Truth is not just laying on the surface. You must dig deep and get on the Rock, the Word of God. What are you to dig down to? The Jews needed to dig down below their religious traditions. They were holding to the old Law and their traditions. Many people are hindered from digging deep because of traditions. Some traditions are good, but when they are contrary to the Word of God, then you must lay them aside.

Jesus asked the Jews in Matthew, Chapter 15, why they transgressed the commandments of God with their tradition. That is the reason He said in Matthew 13:13, "... because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not." They were holding to the letter of the Law and would not have anything to do with Jesus, yet we read in John 13:1 that "he loved them unto the end." In Matthew 23:37-38 Jesus said: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her

chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house [He had called it His Father's house, but here He called it *their* house] is left unto you desolate."

I want you to understand what Jesus had in mind. He was going to build another house. You may say, "I thought we each were building our own house." We are laborers together with God, but we are not sufficient to build our own lives. We must have God's Word and His Spirit. There is no other revelation of God's Word except by the Spirit of God; it is sufficient. His grace and strength are what we need, and we must have Him every day in our lives.

We read in verse 48 of our Scripture text, "He is like a man which . . . laid the foundation on a rock." I read an article about the architect of the University of Indiana and those who built it. They did not take into consideration the great weight of the volumes of books that would be placed in the building. As a result, the building is sinking about an inch each year. That may not sound like much, but over a period of years, that will have a devastating effect. Each of us must count the cost of building, and then we must make sure that we are building on a solid foundation. We must make sure that we are building according to the Word of God.

Be Rooted and Grounded in the Truth

Revelation 12:15 tells us, "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood. . . ." There is a flood of false doctrine everywhere you go. Through earthly religion there is the serpent, or the devil. The second beast that came up from the earth came from the minds of men, which symbolizes the religions of men, and it needs to be put down. Nothing can put it down but the sound preaching of the Word of God; the Word will still lift up a standard.

Isaiah 59:9b says, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the

Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." There is a standard for the church, and there is only one standard; it is not a double standard. On the individual level, there are floods and storms in our lives, sometimes on a daily basis. God's Word is not an alternative; it is the answer. It is that which God intended for man to live by and nothing else.

A life of spiritual depth brings satisfaction. There is no satisfaction in surface living or in just going along with things. When you get in the worship services and the Word is preached and you hear the songs of Zion, something down inside begins to spring up. It is the Spirit of the Living God. God dwells in the souls of those who have been born again. As a child of God, you need to dig deep.

We read in Ephesians 3:16-18: "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man [we need this strength every day; we cannot afford to fail to count the cost]; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height." Friend, God wants you to be rooted and grounded in the Truth. First Corinthians 12:13 says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body . . . and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." The Holy Spirit baptized you into His body by one Spirit. The Jews who were standing around the Cross thought they were already in the Kingdom of God, but they were sadly mistaken. Jesus prayed in Luke 23:34, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

We read in Acts that Peter sat in the Upper Room where God had instructed them to wait until they were endued with power from on high. When the Holy Spirit came, the multitude realized they were wrong and saw their need of Jesus. When a person asks what he or she

must do to be saved, that person is getting serious about life."

When the Jews asked what they should do, Peter told them in Acts 2:38, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." When they repented, they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Friend, the Holy Ghost is the gift, and by His Spirit, the Truth is revealed. The day the disciples went down from the Upper Room, the Gospel of the kingdom was preached, and souls began to be saved. In one day three thousand souls were saved. The Gospel will still save men and women if they will believe it.

The Importance of Little Things

We must realize that in building a spiritual house, God is interested in the little things. Often people think the little foxes do not matter. I want you to realize that the little things grow into big things. When the devil gets hold of people, it takes the power of God to set them free.

Deuteronomy 22:8 says, "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence." You are responsible for your spiritual house. Also, you are responsible for your children and how they are raised. In many places the home life is not being preached anymore, and the home is where children get a workable foundation. Sad to say, laws have been legislated to turn sin loose in a greater way. Licenses have been issued that enhance all sorts of perversions; nevertheless, it is sin. This is a sad day in which we are living. Not too long ago, I heard about a school where the students were told to accept one another for what they were, in every sense of the word. God does not accept perversion, and the church cannot accept it either.

God's people are to lift up a standard and teach it to their

children every day. I have heard people say, "Well, I take my children to church." My question to them is, "Are you setting the right example before them in the home? Are you lifting up a Bible standard and teaching them to pray?" I remember when my son moved away. Not many months after he left, he called home and said, "Dad, my brother and I didn't know how to appreciate the home we were raised in, the parents we had, and how we were raised. I will not do certain things because of how I was taught and because I knew the consequences of doing those things." In time he finally gave his heart to the Lord. You cannot underestimate the Word of God. It will still do all that God promised it would do if you live by it. It will teach you. Isaiah 55:11 reads, "It shall not return unto me void."

God is concerned with the little things of your life. He considers them, and you must consider them. We are living in a time of change. Laws are changing the way of life that we once knew in America. For instance, when this nation began, they placed the words "In God We Trust" on our currency, but now certain people are trying to have it removed. They are trying to take God's name out of society and out of every institution. You may say, "That is such a little thing," but it starts with having a disregard for little things. God does not want you to be that way. He wants you to be rooted and grounded in the Truth, and He wants your home to be rooted and grounded in the Truth. What a wonderful privilege young Christian parents have to raise their children in the Truth! I used to tell God when I was raising my children, "God, I don't know how to do this." He let me know that I just needed to stay with the Book and I would learn. Little things do matter.

Having the Mind of Christ

Your environment and the events that take place in your life do

not have to hinder you from having a deep experience with the Lord. The Apostle Paul was taken out of prison and brought before King Agrippa. He had been in a cold, dark dungeon. Yet, while he was there, he still had the mind of Christ. Paul wrote in Philippians 2:5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Having the mind of Christ takes effort, and every day you must put forth the effort. I thought about what Paul's daily routine might have been as he sat in prison. Most likely, he could have seen a guard in armor as he began to write to the church at Ephesus and instruct them to put on the whole armor of God.

Paul addressed King Agrippa in Acts 26:2 and said, "I think myself happy, king Agrippa [he was not considering the circumstances he was going through], because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews." Paul was standing right in the face of opposition. His experience with God had to be deep, because it was not affected by his environment.

I want you to notice something as you consider digging deep, getting on the Rock, and building your spiritual house. Jesus said in Matthew 13:44, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

Jesus likened the kingdom to a treasure, and this treasure is the Gospel of the kingdom. John came preaching that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Then Jesus came preaching and baptizing with fire and with the Holy Ghost. The Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. God does not renovate your old heart; He gives you a new heart and new affections.

Saint, the longer you serve Him, the more you will love Him and the sweeter your spiritual experience will become. As you gain a deeper

experience with the Lord, your environment and circumstances in your life will not shake you or move you off the foundation. The church will never go down, but the Bible lets you know that each of us is vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy. Satan is so cunning. He perverts the Gospel in many places to draw people away. He will use any means to draw you away, friend.

A Hidden Treasure

I want to point out some things about the "treasure hid in a field" that Jesus spoke of in Matthew 13:44. You begin to obtain this treasure when you get saved. As you sit under a pastor and listen to the preaching of the Word, God begins to build character in you. You need to realize that Truth is not on the surface. It comes through the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and it takes much prayer.

It was necessary for Jesus to teach His disciples to pray, and it is necessary for each of us to be taught to pray. Paul said in 1 Timothy 2:1-2: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority. . . ." You must lift your voice to God in prayer for your brothers and sisters in Christ and for those around you. The lives of those around you are influenced by how you live and by how you build your spiritual house.

Again, Jesus said in Matthew 13:44, ". . . the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." Why did He hide the treasure? The devil is a robber, and he will rob you of Truth. He will never rob you of that which is false. Child of God, you have this treasure in your heart. If you dig down to the Rock, you will find that the joy of the Lord is your strength. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, and it will spring up in your soul. It will cause you to

go after these truths and dig and pray and seek God's face.

As a pastor, I have found that people hold onto things they ought to have sold or traded a long time ago. Proverbs 23:23 says, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." The devil causes people not to admit that they are holding things. Dear one, you need to surrender everything to God. You need to sell the things that keep you from seeing the Truth. Traditions can keep you from seeing the Truth.

When you receive Christ as your Savior, you are not your own anymore; you are bought with a price. God's church is a redeemed possession. Matthew 13:44 says that a man "sellet all that he hath, and buyeth that field." It cost Jesus Christ His life and His blood to bring the church into existence, to redeem it, and for us to get Truth. I repeat, Truth is not lying on the surface. It is only when you lay aside hindrances in your life that you find Truth. Sometimes people have personality traits that do not enhance the Word of God. Therefore, they must trade them off to keep building their spiritual house. The wonderful thing is, if you build according to the Word of God, the Lord will dwell there.

Building for Time and Eternity

Psalms 132:13 says, "For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation." Isaiah 57:15 says that He "inhabiteth eternity." He does inhabit eternity, but for His pleasure, He created man. He came to build a city, to build a church, and as saints of God, we are laborers together with God in the city. We help Him to build when we build in our lives those things that please God.

We read in Psalm 132:14, "This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it." So many people think of God as being up yonder. However, the Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:19 that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."

Jesus said in Matthew 16:18,

". . . I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The gates of hell are all the religions of men that came up from the earth, and the beast that came out of the sea. His church shall stand forever on the Rock of Ages, the Word of God. God dwells there, and it is His resting place forever.

God is a Spirit. When He moves in the throne of your heart, it is then that you begin to build for Him for time and eternity. I thank God for the Truth! Child of God, you need to keep right on living for the Lord. If you will, others will come in also. God bless you is my prayer.

(Cassette C-5229M)

Dearer Than God's Sparrow

*Just think of that odd little sparrow,
Uncared for by any but God,
It surely must bring thee some comfort
To know that He loves it—though odd.*

*That one odd little sparrow,
The object of God's tender care?
Then surely thou art of more value,
Thou need'st not give way to despair.*

*It may be thou art an "old sparrow,"
But God's eye of love rests on thee,
And He understands what to others,
Will always a mystery be.*

*Thou thinkest thy case so peculiar,
That nobody can understand,
Take life's tangled skein to Thy Savior
And leave it in His skillful hand.*

*Believe in His love and His pity,
Confide in His wisdom and care,
Remember the little odd sparrow,
And never give way to despair.*

Selected

[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]
kingdom of God."

Days of temptation can be a time of great danger. God is going to allow every person to be tested and proven to see what is truly in the heart. This time of testing is also a good opportunity for each one to see what is really motivating his or her life. Is it a true love for God and His way? Does one just follow Him for the many blessings one can receive? In Deuteronomy 8:2 we read, "And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no."

The danger in temptation is the possibility of becoming disgruntled and actually thinking that the old life was a better way to live, a time when you had more pleasure and things went better. That is what Israel thought as they faced the hardships they encountered. They began accusing God of mistreating them and making their

way hard. They also accused Moses of leading them into the wilderness just so God could destroy them. These accusations no doubt hurt God and stirred His wrath as well. The Scripture verifies the fact that Israel's unbelief and disobedience to follow God in faith prevented them from ever gaining the rest He promised.

This same condition can fall and is falling on mankind today. Ones grumble over the way God chooses to lead them. People dislike the way God requires them to live and conduct themselves. They reject His standard and His man. This is dangerous! What happened to the Israelites can happen to us yet today. God wants a willing and obedient people to serve Him. If you will do things God's way, you will be blessed and you will prosper in your soul. In Isaiah 1:19-20 we read: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

Friend, if you allow an evil

heart of unbelief to take hold of you and remain, you can end up departing from the Lord even as old Israel did. It would be well for each one to take heed to the Word of God and believe it, for that which has been sent to be a blessing and a guide through this life can become a curse that destroys if disbelieved. You must overcome all doubts and unbelief through faith and reject any thought of ever turning away from God and going back to the old life. Do not allow Satan to entertain you with the thought that you had it better when you were in sin. The Christian life is the best life to live here and the only one that will assure you entrance into Heaven! Regardless of the trials, persecutions, upsets, misfortunes, afflictions, and frustrations that may come your way, the Christ-filled life is by far the best and the only way for man to live. There is really nothing to go back to!

Selected

[Esp. for Young People—continued from pg. 15]
"I knew your footsteps in the shed last night. I knew perfectly well who was hidden in the old closet."

"Why didn't you say so?" inquired astonished Bert, tremblingly.

"Because I preferred to let you go. I thought, if my boy wanted to deceive me, he should, at least, imagine that he had that pleasure."

"O Father!"

"Yes, you should have gone, Bert. Very likely, I might have gone with you, but you would not have known it."

Bert hadn't a word to say.

"I pitied you too. I knew that, after the fun was over, there must come the settling with your conscience. I was sure you had a

conscience, Bert."

The boy tried to speak, but no words came.

"I was disappointed in you, Bert. I was very much disappointed in you."

Down went Bert's head into his hands.

"But now," continued his father, placing one hand upon his shoulder, "now I have my honest boy again, and I am proud of him. I do consider you worth a dozen floggings, Bert, but I have no disposition to give them to you."

Bert wrung his father's hand and rushed out into the rain. Cuff came running to meet him, and Prince barked with pleasure at his approach. Billy whistled and sung in his cage above, and old Snow's voice was heard in the

field close by.

Bert loved them, and they knew it. It was some minutes, however, before he noticed them now; and when he did, it was not in his accustomed merry way.

"Just like the monitors at school," said he, seriously. "Making such a fuss that a fellow can't go wrong if he wants to." And he took Cuff up in his lap and patted Prince's shaggy coat.

Bert's monitors still watched him with affectionate interest; but never again, I am happy to say, has he felt the least inclination to disturb their midnight slumbers.

Selected

Announcements

MECHANICSBURG, IN

March 14-20

REVIVAL MEETING & FELLOWSHIP SERVICE: Church of God, Mechanicsburg, IN
(The church is located just West of Mechanicsburg on US 36)

Evangelist: Brother Roger L. Decker, Newark, OH

Service times: Mon.-Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 10:00 a.m.; Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

SPECIAL FELLOWSHIP SERVICE will be held Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

A meal will be provided by the local congregation.

For further information contact: Pastor Allen Polston, 2020 Ralph St., New Castle, IN 47362

Telephone: (765) 521-8284

SUMMERSVILLE, WV

April 18-24

REVIVAL: Church of God, Armstrong Road, Summersville, WV

Evangelist: Brother Roger L. Decker, Newark, OH

Service times: Mon.-Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 6:00 p.m.; Sun. 10:30 & 6:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Pastor Earl R. Borders, Heath, OH 43056.

Telephone: (740) 788-8763

***NOTICE: THE DATE FOR THE 2005 WINTER CAMP MEETING
HAS BEEN CHANGED TO DECEMBER 25-28***

**When the Bible speaks, discussion
is useless; when the Bible is
silent, discussion ends.**