The Gospel Trumpeter

JUSTIFICATION — SANCTIFICATION

UNITY & TRUTH

"So will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." Eze. 34:12 Jer. 32:39

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished. Rev. 10:7 Matt. 24:31

SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 48 November 2018 No. 11

Church of God Tabernacle in Newark, Ohio

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

Psalm 122:1

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

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PRAYER: If you need prayer, please phone or write:

Roger L. Decker, Pastor
83 Decrow Ave.
Newark, OH 43055

Email: **pastor@church-of-god-online.com**
Phone: 740-344-2543
Fax: 740-344-4737
Print Shop Phone: 740-345-1312

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

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

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

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

SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH

Jesus organized it (Matt. 16:18)
On a good foundation (Eph. 2:20; I Cor. 3:11)
Christ governs it (Eph. 1:22-23; Isa. 9:6)
God admits members (I 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)

We reserve the right to edit and/or decline any material for any reason. Not responsible for unsolicited articles or items.

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Vol. 48 November 2018 No. 11

Guest Editorial

"Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works."

1 Chronicles 16:8-9

Give Thanks Unto God

This is the season when the United States once again celebrates Thanksgiving. It is a time when we are reminded to be thankful for the many blessings that God has given to us. American families reverence and honor God for the goodness that He has shown to us. Expressing gratitude and appreciation is our responsibility. We are the most highly prosperous people on earth, and we are blessed beyond measure. America is endowed with great quantities of natural resources, education, and technology, which far exceeds other nations. The greatest blessing and privilege we have is being free to worship God without the fear of being molested. We must never forget His blessings bestowed on us or fail to give Him the thanks that is due Him.

Have you ever stopped to consider how blessed you really are? Acts 17:28 tells us, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." Because of Him, we are alive and able to breathe in fresh air. He gives us the strength to go about our duties, and He provides food for us that brings nourishment to the body. We have eyes to see His beautiful creation and ears to hear the delightful sounds of nature. All these physical blessings come from the hand of God. It is so sad that His goodness is taken for granted too often. Multitudes are ready to receive, but never think of telling God thank you.

During Jesus' earthly ministry, ten lepers met Him, desiring to be healed of their leprosy. In His kindness He miraculously healed all ten from this dreaded disease. They all went on their way happily, but only one "turned and with a loud voice glorified God" (Luke 17:15-16). Only one stopped and considered what the Savior had done for him. This leper "fell down on his face at his feet, giving Him thanks." He offered heartfelt gratitude, saying, "Thank you for Your loving-kindness and mercy shown to me." The other nine received healing but never thought to offer any praise or thanksgiving in return. You need to be careful and not allow a spirit of ingratitude to get into your heart.

Forgetting to thank and honor God for His generous blessings is a dangerous mistake. You can so easily become as the nine lepers who received help and then neglected or refused to give praise

[continued on page 7]

1 Chronicles 29:1 Furthermore David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the LORD God.

2 Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance.

3 Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house,

4 Even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal:

5 The gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?

2 Chronicles 29:25 And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the LORD by his prophets.

26 And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.

27 And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel.

28 And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished.

29 And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped.

30 Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

31 Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free heart burnt offerings.

32 And the number of the burnt offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, and two hundred lambs: all these were for a burnt offering to the LORD.

33 And the consecrated things were six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep.

34 But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt offerings: wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them, till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

35 And also the burnt offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings, and the drink offerings for every burnt offering. So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order.

36 And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.

Are You Truly Consecrated?

Brother Roger L. Decker

The Life of Consecration

Consecration refers to the act of consecrating things, persons, or objects, separated to or belonging to God. They are sacred, holy, and set apart for service to God. The word *consecrate* means "to fill His hand; to anoint for service." J. R. Thomson once said that salvation is the substance of what God gives, but consecration is what God demands. Salvation is from past sin, and consecration is for future life and service. It has been said, "It is not what God can do for me, but what I can do for my God." To be consecrated for service is to deny self.

The story was told of a missionary named James Calvert. He was quite a man. He was a missionary to the cannibals of the Fiji Islands. When he was on his journey there, the captain of the ship tried to turn him back, saying, "You will lose your life and the lives of those with you if you go among such savages." Calvert replied, "We died before we came here."

A Roman coin was once found with a picture of an ox on it. The ox was facing two things: an altar and a plow. The inscription read, "Ready for either." The ox had to be ready for either the supreme moment of sacrifice on an altar or the long labor of the plow on the farm. Surely that depicts the life of consecration. We must be ready for whatever the Lord desires. We must be ready to do His will. I read a quote by Henry Varley, and it really touched me. In speaking to D. L. Moody, he said, "Moody, the world has yet to see what God can do with a man fully consecrated to Him."

There is a cup for the Christian to drink, and that is to follow Christ wherever He may lead and to be like Him in whatever situation life may bring. It is not easy. Consecration is not always easy, but it is obtainable through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit witnessed to Paul at one time that bonds and afflictions awaited him in Jerusalem. You can read his response in Acts 20:24, which states, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

There is a great work to be done in the Kingdom of God. Nehemiah recognized that. God used these great prophets. Nehemiah is considered a minor prophet, but to me he was an outstanding man. Nehemiah 6:1-3 reads: "Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;) That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief. And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"

Building up the Kingdom of God is a great work. It is much easier for people to tear it down, but the great work is in building it up. Putting the needs of the kingdom as a priority is a great need. In Matthew 6:33 Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [What things? The Gentiles seek after a place to live, clothes, and so on, things needed for a normal life.] shall be added unto you." Too many are leaving the work of the kingdom and visiting the Sanballats and the Geshems. They are letting the work that could be done go undone. Jesus and the Apostles gave their lives for the Kingdom of God.

The Lack of Full Consecration

There is a reason that people leave the work of God or do not consecrate fully to it. One reason is, the kingdom does not hold the greatness to them as it once did when they first got saved. Now they are satisfied to come to the services and just relax. They can say they went to church, but the thrill of working in the kingdom does not hold the priority it once did. Something else has replaced the work of God in their lives. No one can make it into God's Heaven and be idle, unconcerned, and indifferent. Nehemiah held the work of God in high esteem. He considered it to be a great work, and he was not about to let the enemy of their souls detour him from his vision.

God is still looking for those who will put the work of God first in their lives. It is becoming harder and harder to find such individuals. Many people become so comfortable and so satisfied in their daily routine that God cannot move them. The Prophet Jeremiah said in Jeremiah 5:1, "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it."

Why do you think some congregations are without a pastor? There is more to it than just a divine call. People become comfortable, and they do not want to upset their comfort. We all are faced with that. I was faced with

that when I became a pastor. I did not have many years to go until I would have received a full retirement with good benefits and insurance, an outstanding pension, and social security. It could have been a time of relaxation. However, my desire was and still is to labor as never before in the kingdom. I want to see the Kingdom of God flourish. I want to see congregations where Truth is going forth to flourish. The Kingdom of God, or the Church of God, has the ultimate Truth. In some people's lives, the equation is wrong somewhere, and there is a reason: they lack full consecration.

It takes a deep consecration to work in God's vineyard, to go to the mission field, to pastor, or to evangelize. Obstacles are always going to be in the way, and only faith in God can remove them. Anyone who is called to a real work of God has to face obstacle after obstacle, human thinking, and human thoughts. For example, one may think, "I cannot do that because of this and this." They forget all about God. If God calls, He equips and makes one a useful vessel, or else God would not call that one. There are going to be obstacles, as there were in my life, that will upset your comfort zone.

Many people get so caught up in the everyday activities of life that they could not hear God speak if He shouted at them. Consecrating your life to the work of God is seeing the souls of men just as God sees them. How does God see them? Joel 3:14 tells us, "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision."

Answering God's Call

We read in Ezekiel 34:11-16: "For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

"I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment."

How is God going to seek out the lost? He works through you and me as Christians. We are His feet, His mouth, His hands, His mercy, His love, His compassion, and His justice. God is looking for that one who will willingly consecrate, or set apart his life, for whatever service God would call him to. God is looking for that one who will willingly answer the call to pastor, the call to evangelize, the call to teach, the call to be a soul winner, and so on. God has greater things for the church if we are willing to answer His call.

The Prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 6:1-8: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

"And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."

Not everyone is willing to go where the Lord wants to send them. Some are satisfied where they are. Are you? God knows the hearts of all men.

Having a Divided Heart

In Acts, Chapter 8, you can read that a great revival broke out, but who did God call to the desert? He called a man who was already busy preaching in that revival. He was called to the desert to deal with one man. I believe that we are in a gleaning time. The Scripture says in Luke 17:26, "And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." Was there a great revival during those times? I do not believe so, not according to what we read in the Bible.

If you have things in your life that ought not to be, you need to be cleansed and purge them from your life. You cannot hear the voice of God and have a burden for the work of God if there are

things in your life that should not be there. You cannot hear the voice of God with other voices crowding out His voice. Isaiah did not hear the voice of God until there was a purging. You cannot tell others until you have first experienced it yourself.

The Psalmist David said in Psalm 51:10-12: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

Some people do not have a message to tell anyone because they are continually overhauling their own experience. They do not have the backbone to talk to others because they feel condemned. Not everyone is going to be called to go to a mission field, to pastor, or to evangelize, but God wants people who are available to do as He bids them and to be in a place where they can hear His voice when He speaks. Some get involved in problems, and they are going to be lost because they fail to keep their garments clean. Some are so depressed that they could not be impressed by God.

God is not concerned so much with your ability as your availability. What has to be consecrated first? The heart, the center of your affections, must be consecrated to God. First Kings 18:21 reads, "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."

Your heart cannot be divided. Too many people have wavering judgment. They vary in their practice. Some are not fit for service because God cannot trust them. Jesus said in Mark 12:30, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." I want you to notice that he said to love the Lord with *all* your heart, not most of it. You must love Him with *all* your soul, mind, heart, and strength. Being consecrated shows that you are not your own.

First Corinthians 6:19-20 says: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Romans 12:1 states, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Are you willing to consecrate your service to God? Your service is the role of a servant, where the will of another rules.

Being a Cheerful Giver

What about your possessions? Acts 4:32 reads, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common."

There is a great work to be done. There needs to be greater consecration to the will of God and a greater realization that we are here to serve, not to be served. Who is willing to consecrate his service to the Lord? It has to be done willingly.

God will not force you or push you; He only asks you. Are you willing to do whatever God wants you to do? Second Corinthians 9:7 says, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." I know this Scripture is often used in reference to offerings and financial giving, but I am talking about more than just money. I am talking about the whole person.

Look at the results of this consecration. Second Chronicles 29:24 says "to make an atonement for all Israel." Hezekiah was attempting to bring all Israel together. There was praise in the midst. Second Chronicles 29:27-31 reads: "And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished.

"And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped. Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped. Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free heart burnt offerings."

Verse 36 tells us, "And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly." They did not consecrate themselves because they had to, but because they were willing.

The Necessity of Giving All

Again, 1 Chronicles 29:5 says, "The gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers [when David did that, it encouraged the people to care]. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?" Are you willing to consecrate your service this day to the Lord? There could be ones who are willing but who are holding on to something that they esteem, and it hinders them from giving all as they would like to.

I am going to finish with a story called, "Take All the Keys, Lord." It is about a minister. It reads:

Dr. F. B. Meyer came to a crucial, transitional time in his ministry. He sat dejectedly in his study. "My ministry is unfruitful, and I lack that spiritual power."

Suddenly Christ seemed to stand beside him. "Let me have the keys to your life," Christ said. The experience was so realistic that he reached into his pocket and took out a bunch of keys! "Are all the keys here?"

"Yes, Lord, all except the key to one small room in my life."

Christ said: "If you cannot trust me in all rooms of your life, I cannot accept any of the keys."

Dr. Meyer was so overwhelmed with the feeling that Christ was moving out of his life because he was excluding Him from one interest in his life that he cried out, "Come back, Lord, and take the keys to all the rooms in my life!"

I want you to read a poem entitled "I See Myself" It says:

One day I looked at myself, at the self that Christ can see;
I saw the person I am today and the one that I ought to be.
I saw how little I really pray and how little I really do;
I saw the influence of my life, how little of it was true!
I saw the bundle of faults and fears I ought to lay on the shelf;
I had given a little bit to God, but I hadn't given myself!
I came from seeing myself with a mind made up to be
The sort of person that Christ can use with a heart He may always see.

Jonathan Edwards was a great man of God. He is known especially for the sermon entitled "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," where people throughout the whole auditorium trembled in their seats. He was anointed so fully that some cried out for him to stop preaching. Jonathan Edwards' "View on Life" reads: "I claim no right to myself, no right to this understanding, this will, these affections that are in me. Neither do I have any right to this body or its members, no right to this tongue, to these hands, feet, ears or eyes. I have given myself clear away and not retained anything of my own." How is your consecration to God?

(Compact Disc TR-1868)

[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]

and thanksgiving to the Lord. When people conduct themselves like this, it grieves the heart of Almighty God.

In this world of materialism and humanism, so many have the idea that they do not need God. Satan has deceived men and women into thinking they are capable of caring for themselves with no need of help from above. Nothing could be further from the truth and reality. Jeremiah 10:23 reads, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Without God's tender hand being extended, as weak mortals, we would be unable to do anything.

Considering the spiritual aspect of God's blessings, we well know that America has been given greater light and understanding of God's Word than any other nation. In many countries there is either no light of Truth at all or the light is shining very dimly. We are greatly blessed to have this knowledge and understanding; therefore, we are responsible to others. Jesus said in Luke 12:48, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." God expects us to be thankful for these spiritual blessings and to verbally express our gratefulness to Him. It is equally important to express our thankfulness by living a life of obedience to Him. We show honor and thankfulness to the Lord walking in the light. Thankfulness is more than mere words from our lips; it calls for righteous action in our daily living.

In Exodus 20:5 we are told, "I the LORD thy God am a jealous God." He demands all mortal humans to worship Him above all else. Never forget the blessings God has given us physically, financially, and spiritually. You need to demonstrate your thankfulness by living to please Him and by serving Him continually.

Selected

God's part we cannot do; our part He will not do.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

The Substance of Our Faith

Brother Richard Talbot

What Makes Faith Work?

We have no physical evidence that the worlds were formed by the Word of God. We were not here when it happened, but by faith we believe it. We perceive in our hearts and souls that the worlds were framed by the spoken Word of God. I know that to be true because I know how God spoke to my soul one day. He spoke to me and released me from my sins. By faith in Him, God changed my entire world. He turned me around and made me a brand-new creature. Therefore, it makes sense to believe that what the Word of God says is absolutely true, because what He said happened to me as well.

Through faith, we believe and understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God so that things that are seen were not made of things which do appear. God took nothing and made something. For man to make anything, he has to have something. However, God took absolutely nothing and made the world.

When I read verse 1 of our Scripture text, those first two words, "Now faith," reminded me of a message that Brother Emerson Wilson preached many years

ago. He preached on those same two words. Immediate faith is faith right now. Faith can do things for you and me immediately.

Faith is there for us to get hold of. In Psalm 78:7 we read, "That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." Verse 1 of our Scripture text reads, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence [or the proof of the conviction of reality] of things not seen." In this consideration of faith, I want you to consider what makes faith really work.

When faith fails in your heart, your spiritual life will begin to crumble. You must have faith and hope in God to make faith effective in your life. First Peter 1:21 tells us, "Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." The most common problem with believing faith is that which concerns your hope. When hope is lost, faith is also lost. The three constants in your spiritual life are faith, hope, and charity. The word *hope* means, "to believe, to desire, or to trust." It is the thought of expectation that is to be desired and can be had.

In my younger life, my mother thought I was hopeless. She told me different times, "Son, if you don't get yourself straightened out, you are going to be totally hopeless." I was heading that way until God got hold of my heart and brought hope into my soul. He also brought hope to my mother, and she took courage. When hope is gone, there is nothing to lay hold of or to grasp.

The definition of hope is filled with words such as, expectation, desire, confidence, trust, and expectation with fulfillment. We hope for things that we believe we can really have. There is no sense in hoping for something you do not think you are ever going to get.

The reason we approach God is that we have hope. We trust, we believe, and we have confidence in Him. Satan knows that if he can destroy your hope, then he is destroying your power with God. Faith cannot work when hope is dead. If you can see no hope in your situation, then there is no operating faith to change anything.

Have Hope in God

Proverbs 13:12 states, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Beloved, the heart cannot operate when hope is turned aside. The lost, the backslider, and the child of God need hope for situations of life. You must have hope for the mountains ahead of you, hope for the trials that are to come, and hope for victory in every situation and circumstance.

God will never let you down, child of God. He will never disappoint your soul. He is the author of hope, and He is the beginning and the end of your faith. He is the very God that inspires hope in the soul of man. You can hope when there is no reason to hope. You can hope when things are lost from your view. You can hope in God when there is no outward evidence that anything can be changed. Hope is inspired in the heart and soul by the Spirit of God.

Sometimes you may be in a place where you deal with people who have lost all hope of being healed or of getting better. There are those who have lost the hope of salvation and feel as though they have no real hope of ever seeing anything change in their lives. They are lost without God and have no hope in this world. We need to realize how sad it is to be without hope. That is where the Christian comes in as being a light in the world.

The children sing a song entitled "This Little Light of Mine." God needs your light to shine in this dark, sinful world so that you can inspire hope in the lost, the backslider, and those who are without. You can inspire hope in those souls and cause them to have an earnestness and a desire to take hold of something, just as a drowning man will grab for anything he sees to help him hold his head above the water. Some individuals need someone to give them a ray of hope and to tell them that God can bring hope back to the soul.

To be without hope is to sink away into nothing. How sad to have no hope that light will ever break through your darkness! Faith is made up of the substance of things that are hoped for. Hebrews 11:13 says, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." They died in the faith, or died believing, but never having received the promise, yet they held right on until the end. I want you to consider the thought of dying in the faith, but never losing your perseverance or persuasion. This world is not our home.

The patriarchs of old set before us a beautiful example. Had they lost hope, then the place that they left behind would have been able to entice them to go back. They had hope for a better country, and that hope became the substance of their faith.

How to Lay Hold on Hope

Romans 10:17 teaches, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." What is it about hearing the Word of God preached or read and mediated upon that develops this faith? There is power in the Word of God. Psalm 78:1-7 in-

structs: "Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments."

It is so important that every one of us realize what a great responsibility we have to inspire this hope in those who are following our trail. We must inspire the hearts of the young people and encourage them to lay hold upon hope in God. God will not fail you. You can trust in God for everything you need. God is the God of hope, and it is our duty as saints to testify, to praise God, and to inspire this message of hope to all who come along.

One thing that I really appreciated growing up in the Church of God was seeing the older saints rejoice in the Lord. That did something for me. Certain ones always had a testimony, a song, or praise. When they stood and testified, you could feel the Spirit of God in those people. That strengthened my soul and encouraged me as a young person.

When the congregational song "Joy Unspeakable" was sung, I could not understand it because I did not have that experience yet. I remember how it challenged me and moved my heart. I began to desire that joy unspeakable. I wanted those spiritual things, and I sought after them. God brought me to a place where I could find that experience for myself. God is real; He is genuine. How does all of this come about? It comes about by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. It lies in the fact that the preaching of God's Word inspires man's hope.

Sometimes God will speak to you in your private devotions. As you read and study the Word of God, God will speak to you and inspire you. Sometimes you may read a Scripture that you have read before, but then when you read it another time, you might see something there that you did not realize was there before. It will strengthen your soul and cause you to praise the Lord.

At times I have thought, "I read that Scripture and even preached from it, but I never saw it like that." The Word of God will bring hope to your soul, encourage you, and inspire you. That is the reason you need to be a student of the Scriptures, not just read them. You need to let them feed your soul. It is better to read one or two verses and get something out of reading the Bible than to read four or five chapters and get nothing at all out of it. God's Word is true, and you can count on it and have hope in it. Preaching God's Word is necessary because it brings encouragement in troubled times. It reminds us of what God has to say about situations of life.

Cling to the Author of Hope

You may get into very difficult places and go through some very hard trials, to the place where you almost lose hope. I remember years ago when God used two brethren to really encourage me. My wife was having some serious physical problems, and we had some other hard situations as well. I received a phone call from Brother Decker, and he said: "Brother Talbot, I heard you are having some difficulties. We want you to know that we are praying for you. We want you to be encouraged. Hold on, brother." Then he said, "Keep your chin up, brother, both of them." That conversation encouraged my heart, and that little thing of "keep your chin up, both of them" stayed with me all these years. I think about it many times. "Come on, get your chin up, both of them," I would tell myself.

I received a call at a different time from Brother Larry Dishman. He was calling to encourage me, and he talked to me for a little while. Before he hung up, he said, "Brother, make sure the light that you see at the end of the tunnel is not a light on the front of a locomotive." Wow! I said, "I will do my best to make sure that light is not on the front of a locomotive."

There are times that hope has to be inspired. Then you can turn from despair, uselessness, and heaviness to being able to really get a prayer through. You can turn and grasp hold of God afresh, fall on your knees, and get a prayer through those dark clouds. God will come down and lift your soul. I thank God for the reality of hope. Faith is the substance of things hoped for. You have to keep your hope alive.

Romans 5:5 says, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Such hope is never disappointing. It never deludes or shames you because God's love is shed abroad in your heart. God loves you, and He sent His Son to die on your behalf. He shed His blood to cover your sins. He rose again to bring you newness of life and to

make life worth living. He can change your nature and your being.

As a child, I was a little fellow who needed a lot of inside help. Outside, I was not altogether that bad, but I was surely bad on the inside. I had lots of problems. I had hatred and bitterness inside as a child growing up, and I developed some hard feelings, mostly family related.

Many times my father told me, "You have a talent that God never listed in the Scriptures." I thought that was pretty good. I threw my shoulders back in front of my dad one day and said, "What is that, Dad?" I was really excited to hear, and he said, "Son, you are God's self-appointed salvation tester." That did not go over well with me. I was expecting something good, but that was the kind of fellow I was until I was about fifteen or sixteen years of age and God got hold of my heart.

I tried to get saved. I made efforts and went to the altar often, but until I was willing to get rid of self, I could not get any help from God. Self had to go. In other words, my will, my way, and my wants had to go. I lived a life in my lower teen years of selfishness. I had a temper, and I had a strong streak of stubbornness. My mother tried to beat it out of me, and my father tried to talk it out of me, but God took it away one day.

It was God who brought hope to my life, because He is the author of hope. There is hope in the precious Word of God. Look at what the saints of old held on to. You should read Hebrews, Chapter 11, verses 7-39. They lived by faith. They were not being stubborn or foolhardy. By faith, they stood against the world. By faith, they stood against things that were coming against them that they knew were wrong. They were a minority; they were without crowds of support.

Today we have lots of support. I have lots of things going for me. God has been good to me. He is good to all of us. We have a fellowship that is strong and vibrant for the Lord. We still have struggles, problems, and difficulties. The enemy is constantly putting troubling thoughts and feelings and attitudes in our minds, because he wants us to lose hope.

Fresh Hope With God

God wants positive responses to His Word. He does not want you to say, "Oh, what is going to be, will be" or "What is going to happen, will happen." No, God has given His people faith, the substance of things hoped for. There is evidence and power in the Word of God. The Spirit of God needs to come alive in your soul. You will see all things differently when God is alive in your life. Hope is being able to see there is light despite all the darkness around you.

Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Rahab all worked and maneuvered by hope and by faith being the substance of the things they hoped for. Abraham's faith was tested on two very important occasions. The first one you can read about in Romans 4:16-25, concerning the birth of Isaac. He looked at that situation. Verses 18-21 read: "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."

I am glad that Abraham was able to get hold of that promise and make it his own. When it was impossible for Abraham and Sarah to have a child, he believed he was going to have one. He believed, he trusted, he had confidence, and he was fully persuaded. God said it, and it happened; however, years went by before it happened. Perhaps some people came around and said, "Abraham, do you still believe that God is going to give you a son?"

"Yes, I do. He surely will."

"But, Abraham, you are one hundred years old now. How in the world do you think you can do this?"

"God said so." Abraham never staggered at the promise of God. He did not stumble at the thought or wrestle with it; he accepted it. That is what real faith is. It is not a struggle. It is an acceptance in peace. I believe Abraham's heart was fully at peace with the situation, and, lo and behold, it happened. Sarah gave birth to Isaac.

When Isaac was a young lad, Abraham was tested again. God woke him from sleep one night. In so many words, God said, "Abraham, I want you to take your son Isaac up to Mount Moriah, and there I want you to offer him as a sacrifice to Me." Abraham could have said: "Lord, You promised me this son. Why are You telling me to go and offer him for a sacrifice? Why do I have to kill my son?" We have no record of such a conversation. The Scripture says he rose up early in the morning, got things ready, and journeyed to Mount Moriah. God said to do this, and he was convinced in his heart.

Some people have made moves, but they are not convinced in their hearts that they are making the right move. People have made moves saying, "Well, God told me to leave" or "God told me to do this," but down deep inside, they are not fully convinced. They have

doubts. Some have made decisions to leave the Truth or to leave a Church of God congregation. The devil will make you feel that you are doing the right thing, but there is a hunger that exists down in the depth of some of these souls. Friend, there are many souls who wish they could reverse their decision, but pride has hold of them now. They have made their move, and they feel that they are stuck where they are. Friend, there is still hope.

I made a wrong decision a number of years ago. I was convinced in my own heart that it was the right thing to do, but God showed me that I was wrong and needed to make that wrong right. God brought hope back to my soul, and that hope materialized into a tremendous blessing. I found that the true saints of God have much love and forgiveness. I praise God for true hope!

You can change your decision and the moves you have made. You can reverse things and take hold of fresh hope with God. Do not waste any more time. You need to get hold of God, move out, and grasp that ray of hope when God is speaking to your soul. Hope speaks of optimism. You need to be optimistic. Also, you need to be positive. You need to have the assurance that, even if no one accepts you, God will accept you. If you are right with God, the saints of God will welcome you. I praise God for His goodness!

Faith Brings Peace to the Heart

The psalmist, in Psalms 42 and 43, had a conversation with himself as he was going through some hard times. I can picture in my mind that he sat down and groaned and moaned, feeling sorry for himself. Sometimes you need to stop and talk to your soul. He said in Psalm 42:5a, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" I have been cast down and discouraged. Sometimes the devil will jump on you with both feet and with his pitchfork, jabbing you in the back, and you will think, "My soul, what is the matter with you?" You need to get hold of your thoughts and hope in God. Greater is He that is within you than he that is in the world. Sometimes you can talk to your soul and turn things from negative to positive by reaching out to the optimism that God wants you to have.

We all have been in situations where it seemed that everything was against us, and we had no idea how it could ever get any better. Abraham was in such a situation. In a practical sense, he realized that his age and Sarah's age made their situation seem hopeless to the natural eye, but Abraham believed in hope because he had the promise of God.

The Bible is full of the promises of God. Those promises need to come off those pages and get written into the heart. They need to become more than just words. You need to allow them to become living words that reach into the depths of your heart and say, "God, that promise is mine." Through the Holy Spirit, God can witness to your soul a promise for your need, and God will fulfill it. He will take care of that need. Just having the promises in the Book and quoting them is not letting God write them upon your heart. You need to make those promises yours personally. Romans 15:13 states, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing [exercising faith and trust], that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Years ago a brother came down with a serious upper respiratory infection. He became critically ill, but he still wanted to trust the Lord. We fasted and prayed, believing in God. He was anointed and prayed for, but he kept getting worse. He lost a lot of weight. One morning his wife called me and said, "My husband wants to go to the emergency room to see if he can get some help."

I said, "Okay, but before you leave, let me come and have prayer for him one more time." I knew if he went to the emergency room, the devil was going to battle him.

When I arrived at his house, he could hardly talk. Perspiration was pouring off him, and he was clammy and pale. He said, "I'm just going to tough this out." In other words, he had decided not to go to the emergency room. I said: "The attitude of toughing it out is not faith. You need to go get some help. You do not have the faith to hold this," and so he went and got some help.

You cannot tough things out or trust God through stubbornness; that is not faith. Faith brings peace and rest. Abraham did not tough it out. He accepted what God said, lived with it, and believed it. He was never troubled by it.

One time a sister asked for prayer for healing in her body and said, "I want you to pray for me, because it is a lot cheaper than going to the doctor."

I said, "Sister, that is not faith." Trusting God is not a bargaining business.

Let God Inspire Your Hope

If you are going through a trial, a tribulation, or a difficulty, when God speaks faith to your heart, that hope becomes real. It will bring peace and comfort to your soul. Some people may ask, "How are you doing today?" You can look back with a smile on your face and with calmness and say, "I am very thankful for what God is doing." You do not have to lie about it and say, "I'm doing well," when you can hardly get your next breath, but you can

say, "I'm thankful," because God has inspired your heart.

Faith is not for show. You should not trust God because you feel that you are under peer pressure to do it. You need to trust God, but everyone may not trust God in the same way that others trust Him. Sometimes faith has to be inspired. You may need to pray, "God, help my unbelief."

Every situation brings you to a new battle of faith. You may have faith for one thing yet struggle with something else. Remember this: if God gives you a promise, you can rest in peace on that. If you get the Scriptures written into your heart, you can rest on that promise. You can trust that God will not violate His Word.

God speaks concerning trials, darkness, the battles of life, and difficulties. Isaiah 41:10 instructs, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Why did he say this? There will be times when you are going to be fearful in your life.

The Prophet Isaiah said through the Spirit of God, "Fear thou not." How can you not fear? God said you do not have to fear because God is with you, so be not dismayed. You do not have to be dismayed. Why? ". . . for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

Remember that to those who have made wrong choices or wrong decisions in life, to those who have backslidden and lost their place with God, God is married to the backslider. He can heal your backsliding and restore your soul. You can read those things in Jeremiah, Chapter 3. God does not want you to stay in a hopeless position. He does not want your heart and soul bound in despair and downcast. He wants you to receive inspiration and hope.

You could pray: "Yes, Lord, I did some things that I should not have done and let some attitudes get hold of me that I should not have allowed. I let bad feelings take over my thinking and got myself into a real mess, but God, I'm so sorry. If You will give me real hope, I will take that and turn these things around."

You can save the rest of your days for the Lord. Haven't you wasted enough time? You need to get things turned around. There is hope! In essence, God said: "I have never broken my vow with you. I am right here waiting on you. If you will come back to me, broken and contrite in heart and spirit, I will receive you." God loves you so much that it is not His will that any should perish, but that you should come to repentance; that is God's will.

If you are caught up in situations that seem hopeless to you, you need to let God inspire hope in your heart. Do you need to pray and renew your covenant with God? Freshen up that spirit within you and let God freshly inspire hope in your soul. When God is in charge, things can be turned around. Some people never get saved because they are bound by habits or by terrible things. Only God can inspire their hope and awaken them to the deadness of their souls. God is saying: "Come to Me. I can break that chain and set you free." There is hope, friend. There is hope for your need, hope for your trouble, and hope when you are up against the wall, so to speak. God has hope for your soul.

(Compact Disc TR-1952)

The Sun of My Soul

It is said that Tennyson was walking one day in a beautiful flower garden where many flowers were blooming, and a friend said to him: "Mr. Tennyson, you speak so often of Jesus. Will you tell me what Christ really means in your life?"

Tennyson stopped and pointed to a beautiful yellow flower and said, "What the sun is to the flower, Jesus Christ is to my soul."

Recent Ordination Services

Acts 14:23 reads, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." The words "ordained them elders" means there was a setting apart by the laying on of hands of those whom the ministry plus the church recognized that God had called for a special work. Jesus, speaking in John 15:16, said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

In our day and age, it is necessary for a minister to be formally ordained to perform certain duties within their state, such as, visitation to certain jails and prisons, conducting a wedding ceremony, and in some cases, visiting within hospitals and healthcare facilities. Prior to being ordained, however, he must first be saved and have proven himself within the congregation and have a good name outside the congregation as well. First Timothy 3:7 says, "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." Any minister being considered for ordination needs to have a good reputation with nonbelievers as one who is definitely a Christian. The world should be able to see the life of Christ being lived before them, and although they may not agree with the Christian way of life, they cannot deny the working of Christ within. (Verses 1-13 list additional qualifications of one who has been called to the ministry.)

In the Bible, there is what is called a gift of "helps." This is a much-needed gift. First Corinthians 12:28 states, "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." (A congregation would really struggle without gifts of helps.) Those who are called to the ministry offer tremendous help within the congregation in many areas, especially filling in whenever the pastor is away.

First Timothy 5:22 instructs, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." Over the past few months, the Church of God ministry has ordained three young ministers who have proven to be helpers within their local congregations: Brother Reggie Stegmeier of Canby, Oregon, Brother Michael Wilks of Newark, Ohio, and Brother Steve Strelecky of Newark, Ohio. These brethren have been faithful helpers within their local congregations, work well with other ministers, and have acknowledged their allegiance to the doctrine of God's Word. When they preach, they are in full support of their pastor, making it plain when they speak that they themselves are not the pastor. This is so necessary, as it keeps them separate from anyone in the congregation who is disgruntled, who otherwise might come and complain to them about the pastor. It is important to note that a minister's wife also plays an important part in their ministry because she must share her companion, and that is not always easy.

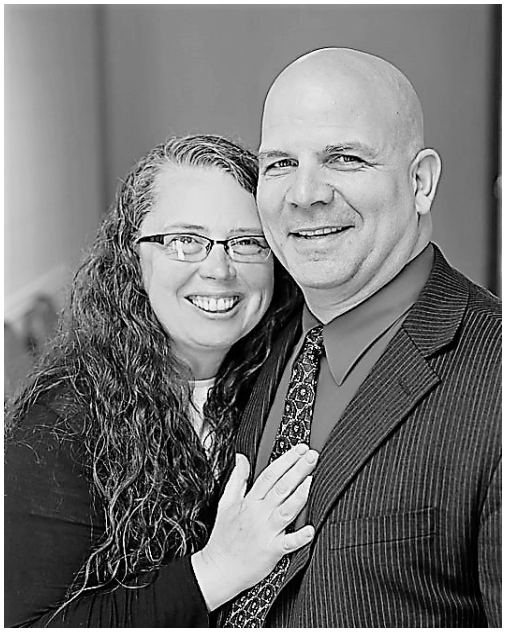
Following is a summary of the details regarding these three ordinations:

Brother Reggie Stegmeier was formally recognized by the body of Christ at the Church of God in Canby, Oregon, on Sunday, July 15, 2018. In the Sunday morning service, Brother E. David Stegmeier, Brother Abraham Burton, and Brother Roger L. Decker each spoke about his call to preach the Gospel, God's special anointing upon his life, and his faithfulness to the work of God.

Brother Reggie Stegmeier, the son of Pastor David and Sister Millie Stegmeier, first felt God's touch when he was saved at an early age. He was faithful to serve in his local congregation for fifteen years, preaching in services at home, working in prison ministry, holding revivals in other congregations, and speaking in rest home services. His ordination was a formal recognition of the work that God started many years ago. When he was just a child, Brother Kroeker, an elderly saint of God, said, "This boy is going to grow up to be a minister." Many other saints have recognized God's hand on his ministry as well. We ask that you please keep Brother Reggie and his companion, Sister Jill, and their three children in your prayers as they continue to seek the will of God in their lives and labor for Him.

Brother Steve Strelecky and Brother Mike Wilks were formally recognized by the body of Christ at the Church of God in Newark, Ohio, on Sunday, August 5, 2018, following the last morning service of the camp meeting. Brother Roger L. Decker spoke concerning the meaning of ordination and the qualifications a minister should possess. Several of the ministry laid hands upon Brother Strelecky and Brother Wilks while Brother David Stegmeier prayed. The ministry was acknowledging what God had already made evident to their pastor, to the local congregation, and to those who have worked in close relationship with these two brothers.

Brother Steve Strelecky and his companion, Sister Sheri, have been a tremendous asset to the congregation at God's Acres. Having been saved in his early teens, Brother Steve Strelecky began teaching Sunday school in the late 1980's. Down through the years, he has filled in for the song leader, worked as an usher, and served as a dining hall cook during the camp meetings. Brother Steve and Sister Sheri Strelecky became youth leaders in 2012, the same year in which Brother Strelecky began working in the ministry, both in the local congregation and other congregations. Brother Steve and Sister Sheri Strelecky are the parents of four adult children. We ask that you please keep them in your prayers as they continue their work for the Lord.



Brother Mike Wilks and his companion, Sister Renae, have also been a tremendous asset to the congregation at God's Acres. Brother Wilks was saved approximately twelve years ago on October 29, 2006. He preached his first message in 2007, and from that time, God has used him more and more in the work of the ministry. Brother Mike Wilks felt the call of God on his life on May 23, 2009. Over the years he has been faithful to the work of God, working as an assistant Sunday school teacher of the young married class, working in the lunch stand during camp meetings, preaching in the prison ministry, and filling in as chairman during the church services. In addition to his ministry within the local congregation, he has preached revivals in other congregations. We ask that you please keep Brother Mike and Sister Renae Wilks and their three children in your prayers as they continue their work for the Lord.

It is our prayer that God will bless these three young men in strength, grace, and wisdom as they continue to work for the Lord and use them greatly in the furtherance of the cause of Jesus Christ and the Church of the Living God.

First Peter 5:8 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.

Be Strong in the Lord

Brother Leamon Whitehead

The Key to Living for God

My burden is to try to shed some light on the devices of Satan and how he works on anyone who gives him time and a place in his life. My friend, I want you to realize that the key to being an overcomer is to be strong in the Lord. The stronger you grow in the things of God, the less the devil can find to use against you. He is looking for weak people who have not followed through with what they promised God they would do.

Again, verse 8 reads, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil [now, he is not an actual lion roaring, but he is], as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Satan would like you to believe that he has full range to do anything he wants to do, but he cannot do much with spiritually strong men, women, boys,

and girls. Satan is looking for people who are spiritually weak and slothful, those who have not been doing their homework, those who have not been praying, those who have not been reading the Bible, those who have not been getting strong in God. That is the secret to living for God and being faithful. The way to have victory day after day is to stay strong in the Lord. If you will stay strong in Him, the devil does not know what to do with that. Nevertheless, the Bible lets us know that he is walking about, looking for a weak one. He is looking for someone upon whom he can jump, just as a wild animal looks for prey that is straying from the fold. He does not have full range to do what he wants to do, but he is still walking about trying to find someone. I repeat, the key is to be strong in the Lord.

Now, Peter said that our adversary, the devil, is *as* a roaring lion. The lion is the great beast of the jungle, but the roar that he has will not kill anyone. He uses that roar to intimidate. The devil will make you think he can knock you out of the race, but you must stay strong in the Lord. You do not have to be pressed down, not having any joy. That is not how the Christian life is supposed to be. In the Christian life, you are supposed to be an overcomer, having victory day after day and staying strong in the Lord.

This does not keep the devil from coming around with his temptations. He knows that as long as you stay with God and the longer you stay close to Him, you will do those things that you know you ought to do. You will read the Bible, pray, be in every service that you possibly can, do everything you know to do, and leave the rest to God. He will take care of you. The devil does not have full range to do whatever he wants to do. If he could, he would knock out every one of us, and we would not even be in the service. Christian friend, you must have the determination to go on with God, because He set you free from a life of sin, put His Spirit within you, and gave you power to tell the devil no. Praise God!

I pray that I can drive that thought home to you, that the devil is walking around seeking whom he may devour. If you are not careful, you will crack the door open for the devil. My friend, if you do that, it will be easy for him to get in and bring discouragement and cause you not to have that joyful feeling that you ought to have. You know, when you are happy all the time, it causes people to wonder why. Out in the world, they may wonder what is wrong with you. They may want to know what you have up your sleeve or what you are thinking about, because the world does not know anything about having real joy down inside.

Again, the devil is looking for the weak one. My friend, did you know that the devil has to get permission from God to trouble you? He cannot come down your street and get in your sandbox and stay there week after week. No, the Lord will let him know, "That is enough; go on down the road."

Keeping Victory in Your Soul

I am glad that we can live this Christian life as it is to be lived day by day and keep victory in our souls. Satan is going to tempt us. I thought about the song that my wife and I sing entitled "That's Him." The devil likes to stir up envy and strife, where people are gossiping and cannot get along with one another. Does that sound like Jesus? No, that sounds like the devil. The song reads:

If you meet a stranger on the Jericho Road,
That's Him, that's Him.
And if He walks beside you freely sharing your load,
That's Him, that's Him.

If someone calls you in the still of the night,
That's Him, that's Him.
And if you feel a yearning for a life that is right,
That's Him, that's Him.

If somebody watches with a tear or a sigh,
That's Him, that's Him.
And if He says, "My child, I need you," never ask why,
That's Him, that's Him.

If you do not feel a yearning for a life that is right and you want to do the wrong things, that is the enemy of souls, not God. God is all about everything that is good. He is about everything that has a good influence and influencing people for good. Let us be an influence for good. Let us be all that God would have us to be.

I endeavor never to let anyone learn from me how to miss church or how to be unfaithful. There are at least two reasons that you ought to attend every service that you can possibly attend. The first reason is for yourself. The second reason is to be an example to others. Faithfulness carries a high priority. I want to be a good influence on people and be at the house of God whenever possible. I want to work for Him, live for Him, and do my best to show people that salvation is real. It is not something that comes and goes.

When I got saved at an altar of prayer, Christ came into my life to stay and to give me victory over the cares of life. Jesus gives me victory, praise God! I do not want to give the devil any praise or any glory, but I want to give it all to God.

If you will always do what Jesus would do, you will always do right. What would Jesus do? My friend, He will let you know if His Spirit lives in you. He wants to direct you and have an influence over your life, to move you to the things of God.

Have Faith in God

Since the enemy is walking about to devour you, you are to resist him steadfastly in the faith. Therefore, you need strong faith. The way you can get strong faith is by hearing the Word of God. The more of God's Word you hear, the more of God's Word you can retain in your heart and life, and the stronger your faith will become. The Bible says in Hebrews 11:6 that without faith it is impossible to please God. You see, God's ways are so much higher than our ways and beyond our thinking because we are earthlings. We cannot get beyond the flesh, but to believe what God has done and what Jesus has done, we must have faith to believe.

When the disciples and a crowd of people needed something to eat, they found a little boy who had a few loaves and some fish. Perhaps one disciple said: "Well, that does not amount to enough. I could eat that myself. That would not be enough for everyone to have even a little." Nevertheless, Jesus blessed it, gave it to His disciples, and they gave it to the people. They did not say, "I hope this lasts you until you can get to town. The Bible tells us they all ate and were filled, but the miracle was not over yet. Jesus told His disciples to gather up the fragments so that nothing would be lost, and they gathered up twelve basketfuls. Praise God, He is the greatest! He is able, but it takes faith to believe that. Lots of people mock it. It takes real faith in God to believe.

If you are convinced that God can do anything, then you will have no trouble believing Him. My friend, you must have faith in God. It takes faith to be saved, and it takes faith to walk with God. Some walked with God for a while and then became weary. They got tired and fell by the wayside. They lost faith and confidence in God, but faith must increase because we refuse to give up. We believe in God, and we must trust God. We must grow in the things of God. The devil does not want you to grow and get strong. He does not mind your going to church if you do not get your mind on the service and do not listen to the Word of God so that God can prick your heart and get hold of you. Therefore, you have to resist the devil steadfastly in the faith.

Romans 4:20 reads, "He [Abraham] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." My friend, we do not have too much trouble with things that we understand in this world and the work of physics and such things, but when it gets outside that realm, we need faith in God to believe in His promises. Again, the Bible says it is impossible to please God without faith. Those who come to God must believe that He is God and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

The devil will tell you that you are wasting your time going to church, in making a profession to serve God and in the giving of your finances. You must put God first. He will take care of you if you will put Him first. The world thinks we are just wasting our time. If they could feel and know what we feel and enjoy in serving God, they would probably beat some of us to church. They would be here early to get what God had for them, but they do not know that. They are lost and undone without God. Satan has those people, but he is out to hinder you and me.

The key is to stay strong in the Lord. When you have a need, you need to see Doctor Jesus; do not put it off. The devil will bother you and ride your case. Perhaps you do not have the faith that you would like to have. Maybe you do not have the victory that you would like to have. Do not put off having a talk with Doctor Jesus and get it all cleared up so that you can be strong in the Lord.

Stay on the Firing Line

The devil wants to hinder people. He is after those who are weak, not the strong. He is after those who are straggling along, not really into serving God. Satan is seeking the weak, the slothful, and the lazy. We have to war against becoming lazy in the things of God. We do not have it made. Satan is after those who are unoccupied. Have you ever gone to your pastor and asked: "Is there something I can do? I would like to do more for God." Satan cannot do anything with that because you are busy working for God, living for God, and giving your time, your talent, and your all to Him.

If you have an up-and-down Christian experience, that is not the experience that God wants you to have. Maybe you just cannot seem to be consistent in your experience. You need to get hold of this and stay with it. You must put your all into it. God *can* keep you, and He *will* keep you if you will let Him. Satan is looking for those who are idle. We have a song in our hymnal entitled "I Cannot Be Idle." It reads, "*I cannot be idle, for Jesus says, 'Go, And work in My harvest today.'*"

Serving God is not just Sunday or Wednesday night business, but it is all the time. Your prayer should be, "Lord, lead me to someone whom I can help to-

day on the job or while shopping; open a door." You need that on your mind all the time. You ought to try to win others. You do not have to preach them a sermon. The main thing is, live right and be a light. If God gives you an opportunity, tell them what God has done for you, how He saved you, how He lifted you up out of the quagmire of sin, and how He makes you happy day by day and gives you victory in your soul. The enemy wants to cool you off, but you need to be faithful in the things of God.

Again, Satan is walking about seeking whom he may devour. I want you to get that, because he does not have free run of things. He cannot knock you out of the race unless you allow him to do so. He is going to tempt you. He does not want you to listen to the message in the church services. You need to keep your mind on the things of God. You need strength that only God can give. My friend, do you know what the key is to staying on the firing line and being what God would have you to be and to make it all the way? It is to stay interested in the things of God, to get your portion when you are in a worship service, because God has a portion for you.

You might not know what you will face tomorrow or the battles that are ahead, but God will prepare you. You need to give yourself to Him. Do not let anything distract you from the things of God. The enemy wants to occupy your time. He wants to keep you from getting what God would have for you.

My friend, these days you hear a lot about bullies in the schools. That bully is not seeking a strong macho man to pick on, but he seeks someone who is timid and lacks self-confidence or self-worth. They find the weaker ones. They find those who have no strength to really fight back, and they pick on them. Unless you do what God would have you do, when old Satan comes around, you are not going to have strength to resist him. On the other hand, if you are prayed up and you have done everything that God has told you to do, you can tell him: "Get out of here! I do not have any time for you. As for me and my house, we are going to serve the Lord." You must have something to resist him with.

People do not backslide when they are on top of the mountain with God. They backslide when the enemy works on them and they lose ground. As they lose ground, they lose their defense. The devil works on them and brings them down to the place where they have no defense, and then they fall away. He knows there is no need to pick on one who is strong in the Lord. He knows he cannot do much with them, so he picks on others.

Stay Close to God

In Daniel, Chapter 3, when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were cast into the fiery furnace, the devil found that the fire could not burn them. Someone may say, "Well, that was down in Babylon." That was part of the devil's works down there. He finally got them thrown into the fiery furnace. No doubt, he said: "Ha-ha! They are gone now!" However, the fire could not burn them. The fire only burned off that which had them bound. When the king looked in the furnace, he said, in so many words: "How many people did we throw in there? I thought there were only three. I see four men, and they are not bound or lying down. They are walking around, and the fourth man looks like the Son of God!" Praise God! The devil found out that the fire could not burn them.

Some people brought false accusations against Daniel and got him thrown in the lions' den. It was not empty. There were hungry lions down there. After all the devil had done to influence those evil men to get Daniel thrown in there, the devil found that the lions could not eat Daniel. Praise God!

The Red Sea could not drown the people of God. If you have God on your side, you have nothing to worry about. If God be for you, who can be against you? With God on your side one man and God are always a majority.

If you are on God's side and He is on your side, you are a winner. The devil knows that. That is the reason he wants to try to break the fellowship that you have with God. He wants to weaken that fellowship and weaken you. As long as you stay close to God, doing all He would have you to do, Satan knows that he needs to bide his time and wait until he can get you over around the fence and talk to you. As long as you stay strong in the Lord, you will not have time to listen to him.

In Luke, Chapter 4, you can read that the devil was tempting Jesus with all the kingdoms of this world. The Bible lets us know that Jesus resisted him steadfastly. Verse 13 states, "And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season." Even Jesus was tempted, but when you are on fire for God, when you are prayed up, when your faith is high and your zeal for God is great, you will be able to tell the devil no. Jesus had an answer for everything the devil showed Him. He said, "It is written. . . ." We all need to learn more about what is written in the Word of God. It gives us something to fight the devil with and to keep the victory, because he would like to cause us to be up and down like yo-yos.

A person is not really any good for God or to God when he

is up and down in his Christian experience. We have to be strong in the faith. In Ephesians 6:10 Paul wrote, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." How are you going to do that? You have to put on the whole armor of God. Becoming a Christian is not something that you merely add to your life; it becomes your life. You should not have the attitude: "I am going to try it for a while and see how it works out. I will give Him a little place in my life."

Friend, you might as well not start serving God with that kind of attitude, because that is not going to work. You must sell out to Him completely and go all the way with Him. Your life must have a complete turnaround. Did you know that the average sinner out in the world says he does not have time to attend church? His life is filled with other things. People need to start making time for Jesus.

Sunday seems to be the only day that some people feel they can mow their lawns. They have no thought of going to church, and no thought of praising God. Their lives are filled up, and the same thing happens when people backslide. The time they used to spend for God and give for His service begins to fill up with other things, and they become too busy for God. This is how life is for many people.

When it comes to the service of God, I tell people, "I do not have the worship service times marked on my calendar." No, I have it in my mind all the time. In other words, the church service times are always reserved for the worship of God. There is no need to call me and say, "Could you help me out with this or that on Sunday morning?" I would say, "No, I can catch it Monday, but I can't be there on Sunday; that is the Lord's Day." I am talking about normal circumstances. A lot of people say, "No, I can't go to church because we are too busy."

The Answer to Winning This Race

You have to give all to God. When you lived in sin, your whole life was wrapped up in the things of this world. How can you come to the Lord and be a real Christian when you do not go all the way? You must sell out to God and let Him clean you up. Your life has to take on a complete change. Lots of people profess to know God, but they are not really sold out to Him. They have not really given all to God because it does not leave much time for themselves.

My friend, the answer to all these things is to stay strong in the Lord. The Apostle Paul said to put on the whole armor of God. I want to win this race. I want to make Heaven my home. My old body does not serve me as well as it used to. It is letting me know that it is wearing out, and I want to finish my course. I want to run the race with patience. I want to go out with a shout in my soul, walking with God. Now, I do not know when it is going to take place, just as you do not know when you are going to go. This is the reason that I am so particular to make sure that I am on God's side. The blessings from yesterday will not suffice for today. God's help will not help you tomorrow if you give up today, so you do not want to give up. You need to stay strong in the Lord.

My friend, the enemy is walking about seeking whom he may devour. He is working on every one of us. Often he comes around to check us out to see if we still mean what we said. You can get up and testify and tell the church: "I love the Lord with all my heart. I love Him better than anything," but the devil is going to come around and check to see if you really mean it.

Dear one, the devil never does anything good, but he is good at what he does. He tries to keep people in sin and hinders them from coming to Jesus Christ. Then after they come to the Lord, he keeps working on them, trying to hinder them along the way. That is the reason we need to hear the Word of God. We need to eat it and make it a part of our daily diet to keep us strong in the Lord.

In order to stay strong in the Lord, you need to stay prayed up and ready to go up. When we go to a worship service, let us lay aside everything we can and listen and put our all into the service. As long as I live, I am not planning to give up. If you are saved, you have a spiritual appetite that God gave you. You know right away when you lose your appetite to eat. Peter said in 1 Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." You should desire food from Heaven. It makes you feel like you have been to church when you eat and drink from the Lord's table. You must have strength in your soul. If not, you are going to get weak, and you will not have the desire to do what you know you ought to be doing. You have to stay spiritually fit and strong in your soul. May God bless you.

(Compact Disc TR-1950)

Do you spend more time reading the newspaper than you do reading the Bible?

1 Kings 17:8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

9 Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

11 And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

12 And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

13 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

14 For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

15 And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

16 And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.

Little Is Much

Brother Allen Borders

God Only Asks for What You Have

The Prophet Elijah asked the widow woman for some food, but she had only enough for her and her son to have one last cake, and that was it. When she did as Elijah told her to do, God blessed her, and she never ran out of food until the drought was over. God took the little that she had and blessed it because of her obedience and her willingness to listen to God's man. Even when you do not have much, if you will put God first, He will supply your needs.

Another example in 2 Kings 4:1-7 states: "Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou know-

est that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.

"And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest."

In this text of Scripture, we read about another widow woman whose creditors were going to take her sons for payment of a debt that she owed, which was a common practice back then. I want you to notice that she did not question God's man; she simply obeyed. I do not know about you, but if someone were to tell me to take my empty gas can and fill up my car and my neighbor's car and his neighbor's car, I probably would be a little skeptical. However, she did what she was told without question and without hesitation, and her obedience paid off. She took the little that she had, and the little faith that she had with obedience, and an amazing thing happened. She obeyed, and God took care of her needs. Verse 7 tells us that she sold the oil, and she and her children lived off the rest. What a miracle! This woman had only one pot of oil, but with God that was enough.

Matthew 15:33-38 reads: "And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children."

This crowd had been following Jesus all day long, and they were very hungry. Jesus asked His disciples, "How many loaves have ye?" He did not ask, "How much do you think we need?" or "Do you think we have enough to feed all these people?" God only asks for what you have; that is all He requires. As with the loaves and the fish, when you give Him what you have, He can bless it and do miracles.

Little Things Are Important

Some things may not seem like much to you at times, but they can be very important to others. Luke 11:5-13 tells us: "And he [Jesus] said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Christ was speaking a parable, saying that a man had received a visitor late at night and did not have food for him. So he went to his friend to borrow food, but his friend was already in bed for the night. Because he did not quit knocking, his friend gave him what he needed. This man was hesitant to help because it was inconvenient, so it took some persuasion, but finally he gave his friend what was needed.

Sometimes you may be asked to give or help or to give of yourself. It will not always be convenient, and you may be hesitant. In this parable the three loaves were not a lot, but they were just what this friend needed. Many times the things that people ask of you may not be a lot, but it may mean a lot to them. Verses 9-10 let you know that God will answer when you knock, and He will hear when you call. You can come boldly before the Lord and ask Him for whatever you need. What may seem to be a giant problem to you is easy for the Lord.

Sometimes you may feel that what you have to offer the Lord is too little, but you have to remember that God is not a big tyrant holding a club over you,

wanting to beat you down. He is a loving God. His greatest desire is to see His children flourish. What you may feel is too little, when placed in God's hands, is always enough. Back when the Lord gave the law of purification from leprosy to the Israelites, He knew that not everyone, especially a poor leper, would have the ability to bring a lamb for sacrifice, so He made provision for them.

Having a Willingness to Give of Yourself

Leviticus, Chapter 14, contains some very encouraging words. Sometimes you may feel that you do not have much or that what is being required of you is just too much or you may feel that what you have is not enough. Verses 21-22 read: "And if he be poor, and cannot get so much; then he shall take one lamb for a trespass offering to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering, and a log of oil; And two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; and the one shall be a sin offering, and the other a burnt offering."

God allowed them to bring a tenth deal of flour mingled with oil in place of a meat offering or two turtledoves or two young pigeons, or such as one was able to give. God is not going to require something that you cannot give. It would be of no benefit if the Lord were to require a sacrifice that you did not have or did not have the ability to obtain. He works on an individual level and accepts what you have to give. You need to be willing when He asks you to give of yourself, to give of your time, and to give of your talents. You ought to pay your tithes. What if you were to tithe your time? What would a tenth of your week be? Are you willing to give of your time? You should be willing to give of whatever God asks you to give.

God still has requirements of all of us, regardless of our means, although the requirements may vary based on each person's situation. He never asks for what you do not have. If you give willingly, God will bless it. Mark 12:41-44 states: "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

Jesus saw a widow put two mites into the offering, which equaled one farthing. In today's money that would be approximately 3.75 cents, not quite four cents. Back then people worked a whole day for a penny, so that was a lot. It was her entire living, yet she gave her all. Many people put in much more money than she did, but it touched the heart of Jesus when she gave all she had. Her gift was not much when compared to the others, but when she gave her all, it got the Lord's attention. When you give of yourself, or give your all, it gets God's attention.

You may think: "I don't have anything to give to Christ. What I have is too small, and it would be of no use to Him." That is not true. In Matthew 10:42 Jesus said, "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." Your giving does not have to be something big. What you have to give may not be a lot. It may be as the Scripture says, just a cup of water. However, if you give it, it can be a blessing.

Doing as Jesus Would Do

Matthew 17:20 reads, "And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." The mustard seed is one of the smallest seeds, and if you serve God and have faith as a grain of mustard seed, great things can be done.

The sacrifice that you make, the gift that you give, or the work that you do, large or small, may be the springboard that God needs to do a great work. Looking at a seed, no matter what size the seed is, you can never tell what its potential will be until it is planted. You may look at what you have and say that your gift is just so small, but God can take it and make a wonderful thing.

As I was studying, I thought about how many trees might be in an acorn. If you were to plant one acorn and it grew a tree, that tree would have many more acorns that would drop, and they all could produce trees, all from one seed. God is not asking you for something that is way out of your range. When He asks something of you, it is for a specific purpose.

Many people like to sit back and let others do the work while they say, "Others are better at that than I am." Not only are you missing a blessing from the Lord, but others may miss a blessing that the Lord could give them through you. For example, one who does not normally sing much may feel inspired to sing, and God will move in a wonder-

ful way. Inspired service is always much better than service through duty. Sometimes people only do things because it is their duty. There is nothing wrong with that, but if God is inspiring you to do something for Him, you should do it. The results of your obedience will be great.

Your congregation does not have to be great in number. Some small congregations may get discouraged because they feel they are so small in number. You do not need to be the largest church in town to do an amazing work for God. All you have to do is to be willing to do all that God asks of you, and it will make a difference.

In Acts, Chapter 17, Paul and Silas had done such a great work for God. They followed the Lord, and He used them in a mighty way. Verse 6 tells us that those two men turned the world upside down. This was not talking about all the disciples. Two men were willing to do what God asked of them, even if they had to face being thrown in jail, face a beating, or face being thrown out of town. If two men had that much willingness to serve the Lord, imagine what more than two people could do if they had such willingness to serve God no matter what. God could amplify that through a whole community and do a wonderful work.

This reminds me of a book written years ago entitled "In His Steps." In that book the challenge was given to live your life with the thought in mind that every decision you make would involve the question, "What would Jesus do?" If every Christian were to put that into practice in his or her life, it would turn the town upside down. Jesus said in Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." It would not take a lot of people; it would just take a clean, willing vessel that is ready to work for the Lord.

When I was younger, my mother always used to tell my siblings and me stories. She used to tell us the story about the biggest not always being the best. It was a story involving farm animals. The goat always thought he had to have the biggest of everything because "The biggest is always the best," he would say. One day a hen went out and picked a bushel of apples and told everyone in the barnyard that she was making apple pies for them.

When the goat heard this, he told her that his must be the biggest, because the biggest is always the best. When all the pies were done, the hen called them all together. The goat saw a very large pie among the others and demanded that he have that one. The hen said okay, and gave it to him. The goat immediately started eating, and to his horror found that his pie was filled with mud and not apples. He turned and looked at the hen, and the hen said to him, "The biggest is not always the best."

There Is a Work for All to Do

You may think that you must have something big to do for God, but the biggest job is not always the best. It could be something simple. You may feel that God is asking too much of you. It reminds me of the Scripture in 1 Corinthians 10:13 where it talks about temptations, stating that God will not put on you more than you can bear. He is not going to ask of you more than you can do. God is always fair.

Some people say, "If that church was not so strict on the standard, it could really grow." God wants quality much more than quantity. If you let down the Bible standard, you will be in sad shape, and you will not have anything to offer the world.

When I think of the physical body, there is not any part of the body, even though it may be small, that is unimportant. Every child of God is a part of the body, and we all need one another, and we all need to do our part. Many Scriptures in the Bible let us know that God took a little and made a lot. God knows what you are capable of doing. Again, he is not going to ask of you more than you can give. If you put God first, He will take care of things.

The song came to my mind as I was studying entitled "Little Is Much When God Is in It." It reads:

In the harvest field now ripened
There's a work for all to do;
Hark! The voice of God is calling,
To the harvest calling you.

In the mad rush of the broad way,
In the hurry and the strife,
Tell of Jesus' love and mercy,
Give to them the Word of life.

Does the place you're called to labor
Seem so small and little known?
It is great if God is in it,
And He'll not forget His own.

Are you laid aside from service,
Body worn from toil and care?
You can still be in the battle,
In the sacred place of prayer.

When the conflict here is ended
And our race on earth is run,
He will say, if we are faithful,
"Welcome home, My child – well done!"

Little is much when God is in it!
Labor not for wealth or fame;
There's a crown, and you can win it,
If you go in Jesus' name.

Some feel they cannot witness because they are backward or shy, but if you pray, "God, lead me to some soul," He will put someone in your path. If you pray, "Give me a circumstance

where I can let You shine through me," God will do it. It is amazing how God works. Sometimes you do not even have to say much if anything.

Sometimes God speaks to people when they observe the way you live day after day. Living right will preach a whole sermon all by itself, thereby giving people the Words of Life. If you live consistently in front of those with whom you have dealings daily, the effects are amazing. Before you know it, the swearing in front of you will stop. They will begin to watch what they say. Some of us are the only Bible that some people will ever read.

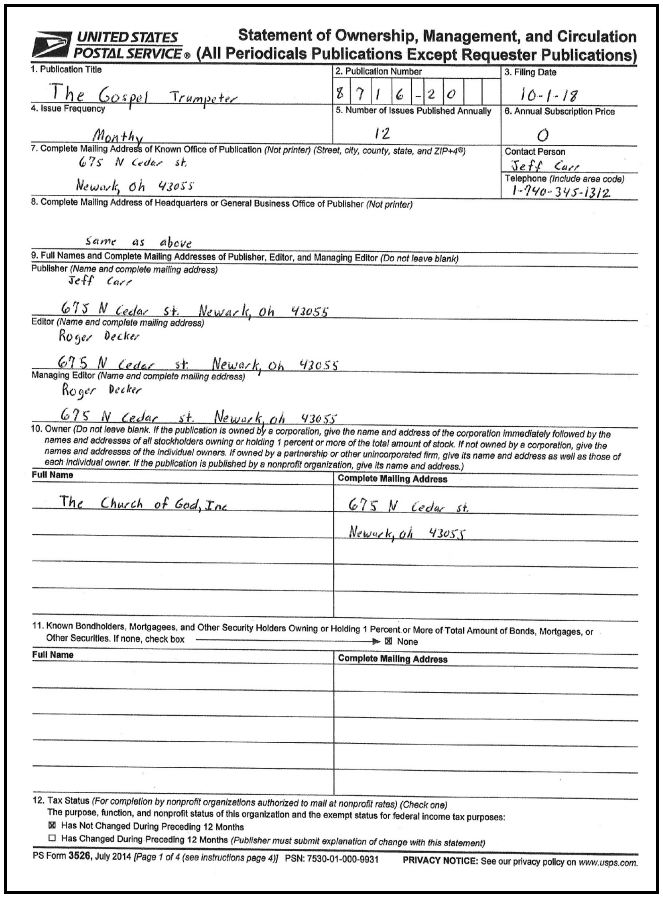
Our first priority is at home. Some people say, "I want to be a missionary," but they do not even go across the street to talk to their neighbor. We each have a mission field of our own. We have a surrounding community that only we deal with. I work with people that no one else gets to work with. You have a sphere of influence of people that you get to work with. If you put God first and use the influence that you have, God can be greatly glorified. Do not let the devil tell you that you are useless or that you cannot do anything. No matter what your circumstance is, you can still do something for the Lord. God can take anything that you have and turn it into something great.

(Compact Disc TR-1162)

Within Calling Distance

A story is told of two men, the elder of whom was urging upon the younger the claim of Christian work and encouraging him to follow the call of the Lord. The younger answered with an excuse that had a familiar ring, "But I have never felt any compelling call to give my life in that way."

"Are you sure you are within calling distance?" was the somewhat disquieting reply.



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® **Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)**

1. Publication Title	2. Publication Number	3. Filing Date
The Gospel Trumpeter	871620	10-1-18
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Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
The Church of God, Inc	675 N Cedar st. Newark, Oh 43055

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box → ☒ None

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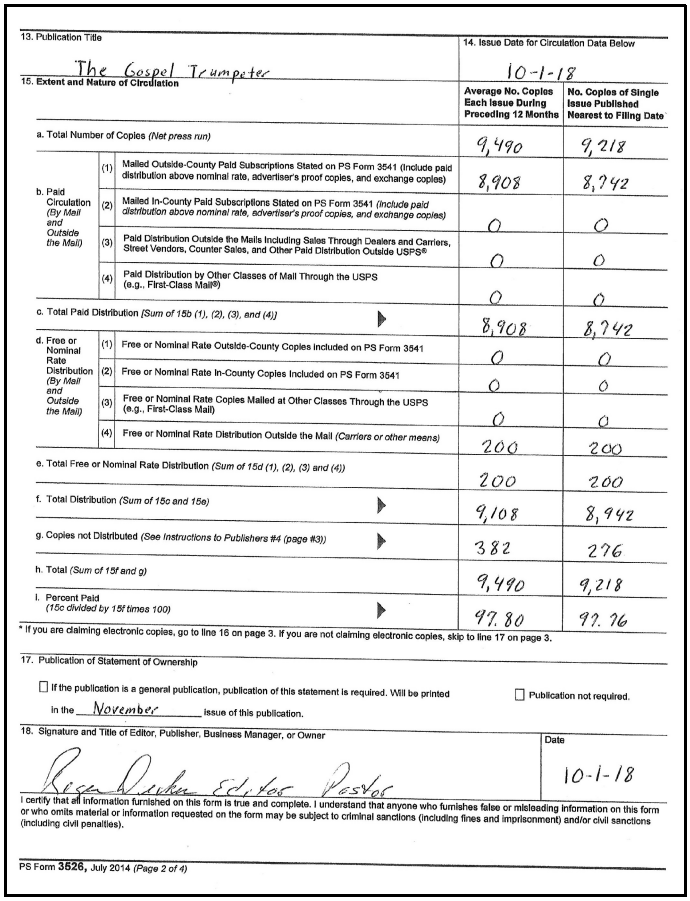

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			Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)			9,490	9,218
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1)	Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	8,908	8,742
	(2)	Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	0	0
	(3)	Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	0	0
	(4)	Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)	0	0
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))			8,908	8,742
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1)	Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	0	0
	(2)	Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	0	0
	(3)	Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)	0	0
	(4)	Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	200	200
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))			200	200
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)			9,108	8,942
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))			382	276
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)			9,490	9,218
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)			97.80	97.76

* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

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☐ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the November issue of this publication. ☐ Publication not required.

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner — Date

Roger Decker Editor Pastor — 10-1-18

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

PS Form **3526**, July 2014 (Page 2 of 4)

Meeting Announcements

Canby, OR
November 20-25

Annual Thanksgiving & Fellowship Meeting: Church of God, 522 NW 2nd Ave., Canby, OR
Services times: Tuesday-Wednesday 7:00 p.m.; Thursday-Saturday 10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.; and Sunday 10:45 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.
For further information contact: Pastor David Stegmeier,522 NW 2nd Ave., Canby, OR
Telephone: 503-266-9297

Newark, OH
December 26-30

Camp Meeting: Church of God, 675 N. Cedar St., Newark, OH 43055
Three services daily: 10:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. The first service begins Wednesday evening. The afternoon services will be teaching services. For lodging reservation, please call Bro. Dave or Sis. Ruby Bush at 740-345-1213.
For further information contact: Pastor Roger Decker, 87 Decrow Ave., Newark, OH 43055.
Telephone: 740-344-2543

2019 Camp Meeting Dates

June 16-23

August 4-11

December 26-29

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We hope you will plan your vacation time so that you can join us for these old-fashioned camp meetings.

We welcome everyone!
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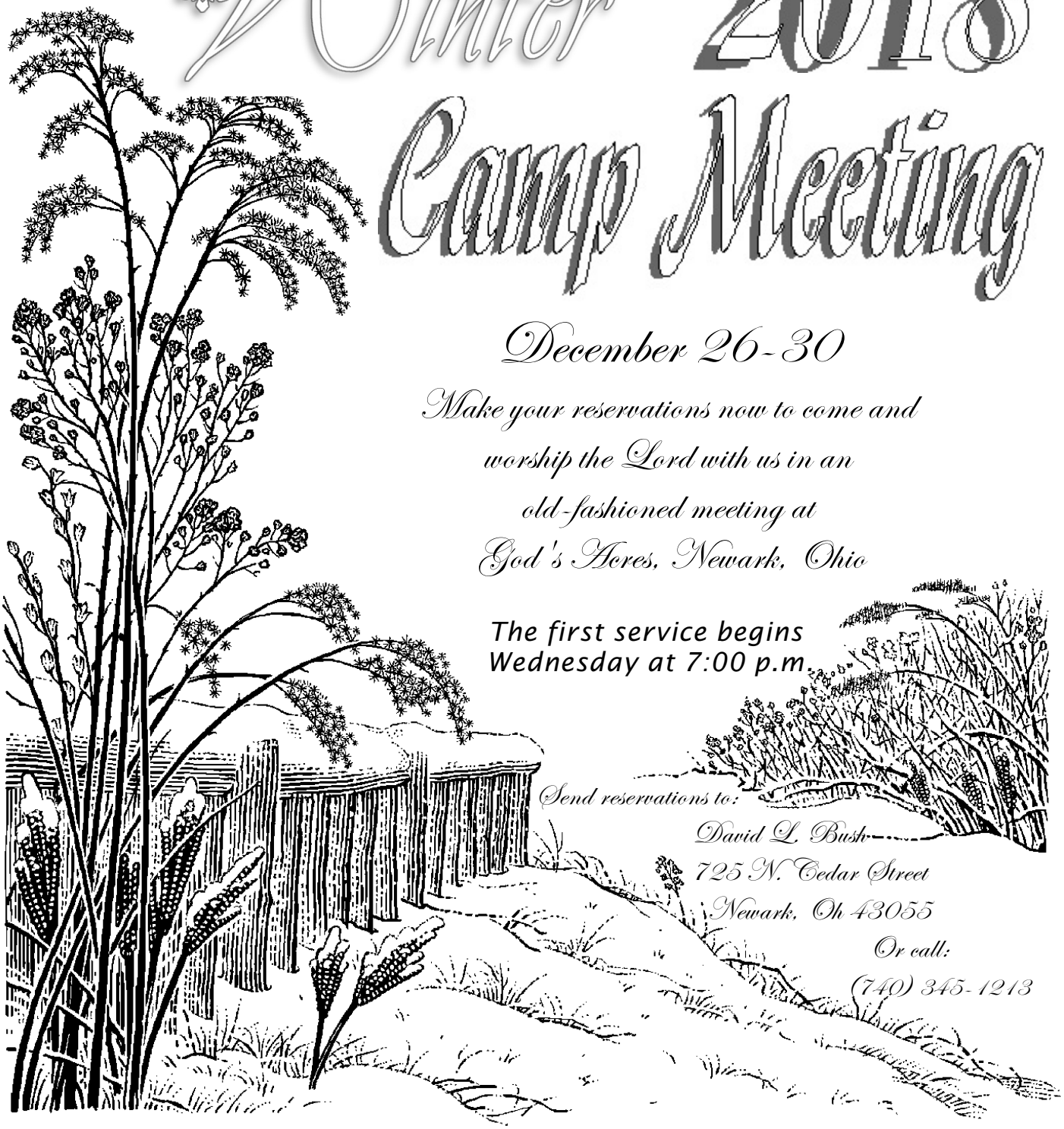
Winter 2018 Camp Meeting

December 26-30

Make your reservations now to come and worship the Lord with us in an old-fashioned meeting at God's Acres, Newark, Ohio

The first service begins Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.



Send reservations to:

David L. Bush

725 N. Cedar Street

Newark, Oh 43055

Or call:

(740) 345-1213

Postman send form 3579 to:

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