

FAITH AND VICTORY

USPS184-660

Church of God Servant



Volume 82, No. 9 82nd Year Guthrie, Oklahoma \$5.00 Per Year Dec., 2004

GOOD NEWS

Midst Judah's hills one starry night
 To a little shepherd throng,
 From heaven's portals angels came
 To sing their lovely song.

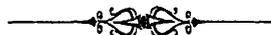
Attended by a messenger
 With good news from above,
 To prove to all the world around
 The goodness of God's love

Good news, glad tidings, and great joy
 The angel did proclaim;
 For unto you a Child is born,
 And "Jesus" is His name!

You'll find Him wrapped in swaddling clothes,
 Laid in a manger low.
 And to the town of Bethlehem
 The Shepherds then did go.

Inspired by that heavenly song
 That rang throughout the hills
 Of "Glory be to God on high"
 And "Peace on earth, good will."

Let men of every race and tongue
 Help keep the music rolling;
 Of "Peace on earth, good will to men,"
 The Saviour's name extolling.
 —Bro. Ulysses Phillips



TO-DAY

Do we realize the importance God puts upon *to-day*? His warnings and His promises are for to-day. Not a word or promise is for tomorrow. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the day of provocation." Let us look at a few of God's promises to His people for today that we may be encouraged and strengthened and that we may realize that God's "to-days" are eternal. In Exodus 14:13 we find one of God's "to-days."

The Israelites had started to escape from the bondage of Egypt and now found themselves hedged in on all sides with no possible chance of escape as far as human eye could see. Apparently their enemies had them in their power but what says God? "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you to-day." Then their enemies were swept away as chaff before the wind. Again we read in Deuteronomy 29:10-13 that when God makes a covenant with His people, He makes it for to-day. "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord

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your God;...That he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God."

Let us give today the same importance God does and "exhort one another daily while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." It is thus plain to be seen that God's time is now as He says in another place, "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." II Corinthians 6:2. Help us, Lord, to realize the importance of today and we shall never need to be troubled about tomorrow. —F. J. Kiefer

Rest In The Lord

I have long derived great benefit, in times of trouble or perplexity, from taking a sheet of paper and putting down any thoughts, whether new or old, general or particular, that seemed to bear upon the case. I was doing so lately and the main result of it was to impress upon me the necessity of persistently keeping in view the following objects.

1. To "rejoice in the Lord always," to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," altogether irrespective of outward circumstances so as to draw a constant and abundant supply of happiness from that unfailing source, the "well of water," which every one in whom the Spirit dwells possesses within himself.

2. "In everything to give thanks," and even to "glory in tribulations," as a necessary part of the training required to "work out for us" that "eternal weight of glory," by enabling us to bear it.

3. To remember that whatever God gives us, which is itself at all enjoyable, He "giveth us to enjoy;" and therefore, if we let satan prevent us from even trying to enjoy it because of what is withheld—especially as we are assured that "no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly"—we are directly opposing the Divine will.

4. When troubled with doubt as to the action we ought to take under any difficult circumstances, to trust implicitly such promises as: "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him;" and to maintain this trust unshaken, however apparently disastrous may be the immediate result of the course we have been led to follow.

5. To "take no thought for"—give way to no anxiety about—"the morrow," remembering that "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

"If each day upon its wing
Its appointed burden bring,
Load it not beside with sorrow,
That belongeth to the morrow,
When by God thy heart is riven,
Strength is needed, strength is given;
But fordate the day of woe,
And alone thou bear'st the blow."

Thus will our feet be "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." We shall be enabled to obey the divine injunctions: "Fear not"; "Fret not"; "Faint not"; "Be careful for"—anxious about—"nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." We shall be "content with such things as we have," even though perhaps we had reasonable ground to expect more, or may once have actually possessed more, and we shall be saved from the suicidal folly of saying, or feeling with Haman, "All this availeth me nothing, so long as"—some desired object is denied us, or some burden is left pressing upon us.

But in order to win these spiritual victories, we must be "strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power unto all patience and long-suffering and joyfulness." And we must remember that the Spirit, who alone can impart such strength to us, is given "to them that ask him." —Selected

Discouragement

The one who stands brooding over his trials and difficulties is sure to meet with discouragement. One of the greatest strongholds of the devil is to discourage the soul and bring in his depressions and floods of opposition. Any one can let down the shield of faith and give way to discouragement if he will, or he can, in the midst of the greatest opposition, face the enemy with a positive declaration of his rights in the name of Jesus and the devil will flee with all his discouragement. The Word says "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," and we are to resist him steadfastly in the faith. A fervent trust in God and a real shout of victory will cause him to flee before you and you can feast upon the riches of the glory of God.

—Selected

The Family That Prays

By Bro. Toney and Sis. Jeanie Samons

XI. ENGAGEMENT AND EARLY MARRIAGE

Cultures change and so has the word “es-pousal” which today’s church has often compared to our present day “engagement.” However there has always been a time set aside in most cultures when it is determined that a couple is in love, to declare it and plan for their future together. This wonderful feeling of love and new awakening causes this to be an intimate time in the sense of truly getting to know one another. However it is not a time for a couple to let down barriers in physical behavior toward each other. It is a very vulnerable time because of the love that is pointing and progressing to physical union and it can be very easy to cross lines that you hopefully have made previously. Often relationships that are beautiful and pure are damaged before they have a chance to blossom. Respect that has been gained can be lost very easily during engagement and resentments often begin there and become building blocks for a problem marriage. Because physical attractions are so great in this period of time, lengthy engagements are not advisable.

If at all possible the relationship with the parents should be a healthy one. If the couple has proven themselves trustworthy throughout courtship and they have gained the confidence of the parents, then the next step of seeking the father’s consent for his daughter’s hand in marriage should not be difficult. If, for any reason, there is a problem or some instability in the relationship it should be a warning signal to draw back and try to work through it before you pursue engagement. “In-law” problems can be a real threat to young marriages. It is true that not always can you have a working relationship with all involved and this doesn’t necessarily prove that the couple’s union isn’t ordained of God. But a couple should do everything possible to gain the approval and respect of prospective in-laws. This respect is needful because you will be directly connected with these people for the rest of your lives. If you are endeavoring to seek God’s blessing on your marriage, you will seek and pray for a good relationship with the family. Once permission has been granted and the young man’s proposal is accepted then marriage should be on the not-too-distant horizon. The engagement period should be a time of working together to understand priorities and goals you each have. By this time, hopefully,

you have established a solid enough financial plan (job, home and means of transportation) that you can support the marriage. If not, you should have never gone this far! This is not to say a couple should have everything that their parents have; they should not be burdened down with large debt and should be willing to accumulate like all other couples must do at the beginning of marriage. However, a young man should be financially capable of supporting a wife and the wife should be capable of helping to plan the budget as well as being trained in spending money wisely, cooking and keeping a household efficiently within a budget. Statistics prove that a large percentage of marriages break within the first five years because of financial instability.

A word of caution—many couples will burden themselves with debt from an outlandish wedding. Remember that the wedding is a celebration of your union and will require extra planning and cost. But Scripturally it should be done to the glory of God. “Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Colossians 3:17. Your wedding should be kept within these limits and reflect simplicity and spirituality, not social status or show. Your first step together can cause you much stress or it can be blessed. Let it be kept simple and not a disgrace.

Consider the scripture: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” Genesis 2:24. There is always a place for loving, close family relationships but the ties that are never severed when you marry can become one of the major causes of stress on a new marriage. The allegiance and devotion given to a family is transferred to the wife. Young men, your wife’s cooking is the food you should be eating and complimenting. Your new home is where you spend your time. Young lady, be home when your husband comes home to eat with appetizing meals to keep him home and don’t be running to Mama’s frequently with every little problem. Work devotedly together, excluding the input of family that has had so much to say before the marriage. The first two years are always the hardest in this capacity. It is a re-training period with what sometimes feels like strangers. You should give up the
(Continued on page 16.)

**FAITH AND VICTORY
16 PAGE HOLINESS MONTHLY**



This non-sectarian paper is edited and published in the interest of the universal CHURCH OF GOD each month (except August of each year, and we omit an issue that month to attend camp meetings), by Willie Murphey, and other consecrated workers at the FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 4318 S. Division, Guthrie, OK 73044 (USPS184-660).

(Periodical postage paid at Guthrie, OK)

Notice to subscribers: When you move or change your address, please write us at once, giving your old and new address, and include your zip code number. The post office now charges 60¢ to notify us of each change of address.

Dated copy for publication must be received by the 18th of the month prior to the month of issue.

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Single copy, one year \$5.00
 Package of 5 papers to one address, one year \$20.00
 Larger quantities are figured at the same rate.

This publication teaches salvation from all sin, sanctification for believers, unity and oneness for which Jesus prayed as recorded in John 17:21, and manifested by the apostles and believers after Pentecost. By God's grace we teach, preach, and practice the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ-the same gospel that Peter, John, and Paul preached, taught, and practiced, including divine healing for the body. James 5:14-15.

Its motto: Have faith in God. Its object: The glory of God and the salvation of men; the restoration and promulgation of the whole truth to the people in this "evening time" as it was in the morning Church of the first century; the unification of all true believers in one body by the love of God. Its standard: Separation from sin and entire devotion to the service and will of God. Its characteristics: No discipline but the Bible, no bond of union but the love of God, and no test of fellowship but the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Through the Free Literature Fund thousands of gospel tracts are published and sent out free of charge as the Lord supplies. Cooperation of our readers is solicited, and will be appreciated in any way as the Bible and the Holy Spirit teach you to do or stir your heart. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Read Ex. 25:2; I Chron. 29:9; II Cor. 9:7; and Luke 6:38.

Freewill offerings sent in to the work will be thankfully received as from the Lord. Checks and money orders should be made payable to Faith Publishing House. All donations are tax deductible.

A separate Missionary Fund is maintained in order to relay missionary funds from our readers to the support of home and foreign missionaries and evangelists.

In order to comply with Oklahoma laws as a non-profit religious work, the Faith Publishing House is incorporated thereunder.

The *Faith and Victory* (USPS184-660) is published monthly, except August, for \$5.00 per year by:

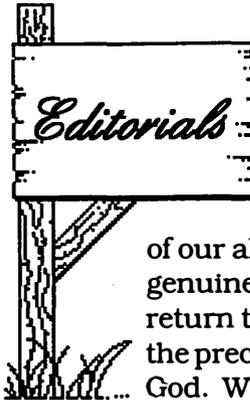
FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE

P. O. Box 518, 4318 S. Division, Guthrie, OK 73044
 Office phone numbers: 405-282-1479, 800-767-1479;
 fax number: 405-282-6318.

Internet address: <http://www.faithpublishing.com>

(Periodical postage paid at Guthrie, OK.)

Postmaster: Send address changes to: *Faith and Victory*, P. O. Box 518, Guthrie, OK 73044.



"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:" Galatians 1:6. It is sad to observe those who have partaken

of our altars and seemed to obtain a genuine experience with the Lord return to the ways of sin and give up the precious faith they received from God. Why have they not esteemed their redemption more highly and held on to the One who bought them? Surely each one could give a reason why because we know the Lord is faithful to deal with each heart. It grieves the Lord and it is not His will that any should perish. We are given the promise that God is faithful and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able. Therefore we must conclude that the fault of failure lies with each individual.

But we do not have to be one that goes away. By God's grace we can succeed. Let us look at some ways we can be strengthened in our Christian experience.

God has laid out a plan for man to follow to receive salvation and that plan must be followed to have a secure foundation on which to build. That plan, given briefly, requires one to believe there is a God and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. One must recognize their sinful, lost condition and with godly sorrow repent and confess their sin to God. They must be willing to turn away from and forsake their sins and be willing to make restitution as the Lord would require. They must forgive those who have sinned against them and believe that the blood of Christ was shed to atone for their sins. When their faith grasps the pardoning grace of God a change takes place in the heart and their spiritual eyes open to behold the wonderful glory of God. Old things pass away and a new life begins to live in their heart. Once this spiritual birth takes place, by the power of God, one must begin obeying the Word of God and the voice of His Spirit. They should begin by confessing Him with their mouth and following Him in baptism.

Salvation is more than simply repeating some sayings and praying some simple prayers, it is an experience that must occur in one's heart. As was previously noted too many who come to this place do not maintain the experi-

ence in their heart. When a child is born into the world we clearly understand it is just the beginning of their life. The enemy of our soul would like for many to believe that when a person is saved it is the end of their life instead of the beginning. It is only the end of the dead state of sin.

Spiritual growth must begin immediately. The first requirement for growth to occur is that there be life. It would be fair to say that there are probably many who profess an experience of salvation and have never really obtained a spiritual life. Someone still in a dead state of sin with only a profession could not be expected to grow spiritually. For the benefit of someone in that condition you must go through the door, which is Jesus Christ, otherwise you are considered, in the words of Jesus, to be "a thief and a robber". (John 10:1.)

Nourishment is a requirement for any type of growth to occur, including spiritual growth. I Peter 2:2 says, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Our spiritual growth is dependant upon us feeding upon the Word of God. The Scriptures were written for our learning and admonition and it is necessary for all Christians of all ages to continue to draw strength from the Scriptures.

It is also important for us, if at all possible, to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. Jesus spoke to Peter and told him to "Feed my lambs." The primary responsibility of a minister of God is to feed the sheep. If the Lord has gone to the trouble of calling, qualifying, blessing and feeding His true ministers, He also is expecting His sheep to assemble themselves for what He has provided. Failure to fulfill your part, by not participating with an open heart, will cause your spiritual growth to be injured.

Prayer is a vital ingredient in a Christian's life. A child of God must learn to cast their burdens on the Lord and that is done through prayer. Unless there is communication with God the cares and pressures of this life will cause one to fall beneath the load. It is through prayer that our burdens are transferred to the shoulders of Almighty God. Prayer and meditation is also an avenue for us to understand the Scriptures about God and His plan for our life. We can learn much about the nature of God and we can receive many blessings from God through prayer.

Thanksgiving must be woven into our life and expressed to others and to God through our prayers. Thanksgiving is important because it causes one to be aware of what God has done. Counting our blessings and giving thanks will build our faith in God and will cause us to see His form when we are in the fiery furnace of trials, temptations and persecution. In times of loneliness giving thanks to God for blessings that are past and present will cause us to know that we are not alone.

Patience is a quality that every Christian must possess. Many souls will be eternally lost because they did not have enough patience to endure what was permitted to come their way. It is a bridge that spans the gulf that is created by disappointment, sorrow, distress and trouble. It enables one to wait until God intervenes, answers prayer and brings deliverance. Spiritual growth cannot progress without it.

When one has had their sins washed away by the blood of the Son of God and they begin to live free from sin, they soon realize the need of power that is beyond their strength. They become aware that they need the Holy Spirit to enable them to live a holy, sinless life. We may obtain the Holy Spirit by diligently seeking Him to fill our life and presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which* is our reasonable service. (Romans 12:1.) Upon making a complete consecration of our soul and body to the service of God and believing that we are sanctified by the blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit will make His abode within our heart. This mighty work of God equips one to live a holy life. It is not an experience that one grows into. It is an instantaneous work that will cause us to have victory over self and will eradicate the sinful nature from the heart of man. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thessalonians 5:23.

Once this blessed experience is obtained we cannot with ease sit down. It is true that it brings great joy, peace and rest into the heart of man, but one is then equipped to enter the battle of righteousness with conquering power enthroned in their heart. It is necessary for one to continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (II Peter 3:18.) With Him reigning in our life we begin to produce the fruits of the Spirit. The Lord wants us to be outfitted with the armor of

God and when we take the shield of faith and grasp the sword of the Spirit we are able to stand against the powers of darkness and the forces of evil that come against us. As we gain victory after victory it will cause us to no longer be spiritual children that are tossed to and fro by the enemy. By exercising ourselves in the service of God we will find a need of strong meat as noted in Hebrews 5:14. "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

It is wonderful that we do not have to continually be a loser and suffer from an up and down experience. God's plan is glorious and brings victory to every soul who will press their way into the kingdom of righteousness. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Ephesians 6:10.



We are thankful that the Lord has blessed us to be able to print several books this last month. They include, *The Bible, The Inspired Word of God, From Darkness To Light, Bible Humility* and *Himnos de Gloria*.

The Bible, The Inspired Word of God, by Earl B. Bliss is a 16-page booklet that encourages a heart belief in the truths of the sacred Scriptures. It is priced at 50¢.

From Darkness To Light by Bro. Mart Samons is a 20-page booklet bound in a heavy paper cover that tells of God's dealings in his life calling him from the bondage of sin into the glorious light of salvation. His life was a shining proof of the Savior's ability to change a lost sinner into a saint of God. It is priced at 50¢.

Bible Humility by J. W. Byers explains secrets that only a few will be willing to receive. But those who will make this a part of their lives will find a pearl of great price. This 33-page book is bound in a heavy paper cover and is priced at \$1.00.

Himnos de Gloria contains the words to 137 Spanish songs. It is bound in a heavy paper cover and is priced at \$2.50.

Let us know if you would like to order copies of these books. Standard shipping charges apply to mailed copies. It is our sincere desire that God would make these books useful in His kingdom and give hope and direction to those who are seeking Him.



We are thankful that God granted the ones who went to Germany a safe trip and wonderfully blessed their visit. It is encouraging to

know that God is drawing His true followers together into sweet fellowship after years of separation brought about by barriers that were imposed by kingdoms of this earth. May God cause all barriers to crumble that separate His true people. See the Germany reports printed in this issue.



Thank the Lord for those who have been taking the time to write about how God has been manifesting His power by working, dealing, convicting, healing and blessing among His people. It is encouraging to me personally to receive these testimonies and articles. May others be inspired to also make the effort to write what God lays on your heart. You might be surprised at what a blessing it would be to you and to others that may be in far away places of the world needing the strength to overcome a battle that God has given you victory in. Please pray about it.



Bound volumes of the 11 issues of the *Faith and Victory* paper for the year 2004 will soon be available. The price is \$5.00 per book, plus \$1.40 for postage and handling. The junior *Beautiful Way* yearbooks will also be available for the same price. These include the 52 weekly junior Sunday school papers for the year 2004. There is a limited supply of these yearbooks and they will be sold on a first-come basis.



Our hearts have been warmed by the love that the saints have shown for this work of the Lord over the past year. The expenses here at the Print Shop are great and the cost of postage, supplies and expenses might be hard for an individual to imagine but I'm thankful that the assets of our God are far greater and He is causing His people to carry the burden of this work. I know my feeble words cannot express the true feeling of gratitude that wells up in my heart for those who are supporting us in this effort of faith. But I trust God will convey our appreciation to you and that your life will be richly blessed for your sacrifice of love. It is encouraging and causes us to know the hand of the Lord is still on this work when an expense comes due and God has burdened one of His people to send an offering that covers that expense. There have been times that it arrived the very day the expense was due and I know it was the Spirit of the Lord that prompted them to send it at that time and I know that they obeyed

His voice. Now I confess that sometimes I would have liked for the Lord to speak a few days earlier, but I am learning His way is best and I am thankful to report that He hasn't failed us yet. It is no doubt in those difficult times that your prayers were holding us up. I truly appreciate the saints of God and I am thankful that through the Lord's mercy and grace He has permitted me to be a part of that blood washed number.

I believe God has great things in store for those who will follow Him faithfully and I am excited about the way He is moving among His people. May each one be encouraged to hold fast to the Rock of our salvation.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey
wemurphey@yahoo.com



LA—We send a special thank you to all of the saints and friends who have and are still helping us at this time. May God forever bless you. Gratefully,

—Bro. and Sis. Roy Brown

WV—Keep me in your prayers. My health is in God's hands. I try to care for myself the best I can. God bless you.

—Sis. Melba Powell

MO—Please remember Sis. Beverly Chrisman. She is in much need of prayer and is severely afflicted.

—Sis. Leta Inman

OK—Continue to remember Bro. Michael Smith in prayer. He is still suffering with an affliction resulting from a back injury.

Philippines—Pray for my grandmother (Sis. Martina Sarmiento). She is sick with a uterine infection. I have an affliction on my right eyelid. Pray for me.

—Sis. Margerie Sarmiento

OK—Sis. Lillian Eck is suffering from shingles and is in need of the saint's prayers.

OK—Bro. Joe Sorrell is in need of prayer. He is suffering from the effects of a stroke and other afflictions.

Standing Prayer Requests

Carlos Arriago
Sis. Mamie Butcher
Sis. Helen Carson
Sis. Waneta Creel
Sis. Charlotte Dilliner
Sis. Elaine Dunn
Sis. Evelyn Fredrickson
Bro. Troy Gentry
Bro. Jeff Gutwein
Bro. Robert Hetland
Bro. Lee Hilton
Bro. Doyle LaCroix
The Lounds Sisters
Sis. Ruth McMakin
Sis. Marie Mitchell
Sis. Melba Powell
Sis. Anna Severs
Sis. Catherine Shaffer
The Mitch Taylor family



MEETING DATES

Oklahoma State (Guthrie)—Dec. 25, p.m.-Jan. 2

California State (Pacoima)—Dec. 26-Jan. 2



MEETING NOTICES

OKLAHOMA STATE ASSEMBLY MEETING

The Oklahoma State Assembly Meeting of the Church of God will be held at Guthrie, OK, from December 25 to January 2. A hearty welcome is extended to all to attend this annual gathering of God's people in the central area of the U.S. The first service will be held Saturday evening, December 25, at 7:30 p.m. Daily worship services throughout the remainder of the meeting will start at 10:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. There will also be morning prayer services and youth services, the time of which will be announced at the meeting.

The campgrounds are located east off of Sooner Road on Lake View Road, which is a little over four-tenths of a mile south of the intersection of South Division and Sooner Road. All who come will be cared for. The expenses of the meeting will be met by freewill offerings.

We especially urge the saints in Oklahoma and the surrounding states to attend this meeting. Come praying with a burden for the unsaved and for all those who need help in soul and body.

Please send all contributions for the coming State Assembly Meeting directly to the State Treasurer. Sis. Brenda Wilkins, 1023 E. Prairie Grove Rd., Guthrie, OK 73044.

To obtain further information about the meeting, contact the pastor. Bro. Stanley Dickson (405) 260-8822.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY MEETING

The California State Assembly Meeting will be held this year from Sunday, December 26, 2004 to Sunday, January 2, 2005 at the campgrounds located at 12312 Osborne Place, Pacoima, CA 91331. Please note the meeting this year is from Sunday to Sunday. There will be three services daily. For more information, please contact either the Sunset Guest Home at (818) 899-2022, Bro. Paul Phillips at (661) 251-6956, or Bro. Herbert Clay at (818) 897-1396.

SPECIAL NOTICES

CD's AVAILABLE

Two CD's of songs in the German language are available. One is of the young people in the Roetgesbuttel, Germany congregation. The other one is of Bro. Juri Haehm singing four parts. Both CD's are \$3.00 each. Please direct all requests to Harlan Sorrell, Rt. 1, Box 118A, Myrtle, MO 65778. Phone (417) 938-4336. E-mail address: hSORRELL@ORTRAKM.MISSOURI.ORG



LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

CA—Dear Bro. Willie and saints: Christian greetings. Psalm 92:1 tells us, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High." Truly we have so much to be thankful for, most of all for salvation, which includes so many extra benefits.

This past summer we were blest to attend several camp meetings which gave us encour-

agement through the preaching of the Word and the fellowship of the saints. Many of the messages were for the saints, exhorting us to be awake, alert and on guard. I find this to be so needful as the day of reckoning approaches.

The Lord also has given us special encouragement through His written Word which contains direct promises to His children.

We had been in a lingering trial for which we were beseeching the Lord for Divine help. He so clearly directed us to the scripture found in Philippians 4:6-7. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." We felt we had come before the Lord in this manner. Verse seven was the Lord's to do. Praise the Lord! He did not fail. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Our faith took in the promise and the peace and release from the burden was ours. We sure do thank the Lord for the fulfillment of His Word. It is like a spiritual recipe which, if followed, will bring the promised results. May we so live that we may hear and be sensitive to His leadings at all times is our desire.

—Sis. Olive Davenport

AR—Dear ones: I always enjoy the *Faith and Victory* paper and the *Bible Lessons*. I especially enjoyed the *Bible Lessons* the last quarter about the people who met Jesus and He healed and helped them.

Please remember us here in prayer. Christian love.

—Sis. Wanda Evans

KS—Dear Bro. Willie: I am well and very encouraged to live for our great God and precious Savior. I am grateful for our new chapel and give praise to God.

The year is slipping away rapidly and we must all stay ready for we know not the day nor the hour that Jesus will come again.

—Sis. Shirley Knight

AL—Dear Bro. Willie and all workers at the Print Shop: A few months ago I had something come on my body that looked like it could be something serious. I prayed until I knew what I wanted to do—I wanted to trust God completely.

Two or three weeks after I made that decision and turned it over to God my infection started draining. It is now gone. I have a spot

where it was but it is gone. Thank God! He is still in the healing business.

God bless all of you. Remember us in prayer.

— Sis. Betty Herron

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MO—Dear saints: Greetings in Jesus' name; the One who means so much to me. I am so thankful He visited me one day and I knew that I needed to be forgiven of my sins. He has helped me through many things and gives me the grace that I need to keep pressing on.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the saints for their concern and prayers when my purse was missing at Monark this year. Truly the Lord heard your prayers as my purse was found the last Sunday of the meeting. Dear saints, not one thing was missing. What a lovely Father that takes good care of His children. Your love and concern means so much to me. Many thanks.

Continue to pray for me. I want to make Heaven my home. Love to all,

—Sis. Wanda L. Atnip

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LA—Dear loved ones at the *Faith and Victory* and everywhere: God has been so good to me; even in the small things—like finding furniture and miscellaneous things on the roadside. One special thing was His answer to my prayers concerning my move to the new home that my son, Tom and wife, Ashley, had built for me.

The Scripture in Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,..." is the way I feel about my new life in Prairieville with my 14-month-old grandson and family.

This past summer I promised the Lord to send my testimony to the *Faith and Victory* and tell of His goodness if He stopped the rain from ruining a stained wood project for my son. What an awesome God!

I heard a message lately on God's love. Sometimes life's knocks have affected me but the famous speech, "Never, never, never give up!" gives me courage. And the knowledge that we are not separated from God's love and that He wants good for us is so encouraging.

Love to all, —Sis Catherine Bhramayana

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OK—Dear Bro. Willie: Greetings to you in the name of Jesus, the One that loved us, died for us and rose again. He is alive forevermore and is at the right hand of God where He makes intercession for us.

I have been thinking of the Scripture that says, "Rejoice evermore." (1 Thessalonians 5:16.) Also in Philipians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." And in Habakkuk 3:18 the prophet said when all natural help failed, "Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation." And Romans 14:17 says, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

I am some better in my body but wife and I both still need prayer for our bodies.

Your brother in Christ, —T. V. McMillian

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KY—Dear saints: "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." I want to give praise and glory to the Lord for what He has done for me and for my family. When I was a little girl growing up in Guthrie, OK, I remember how Bro. Willie Murphey would say in his Wednesday night testimony, "The Lord's treatin' me real good." Well, I feel the same way. Living for the Lord, serving Him, obeying Him—it gets better day by day!

When my husband and I married twenty years ago, the Lord gave us a special promise that we could fear no foe, with Him at hand to bless. God has seen fit, over the years, to try our faith through many different afflictions. His promises have been sure—He has always been "at hand to bless."

The summer of 2003 I accidentally hit my head, hard, on my right temple and began to suffer what seemed to be symptoms of mild concussion. Well-meaning and concerned friends begged me to be checked out and have the proper medical intervention to relieve the pressure, but I earnestly sought the mind of the Lord about it and He inspired me with this Scripture, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." Psalm 20:7. Shortly afterward we traveled to the Monark Camp Meeting. I was still having problems but the Lord answered prayer and took away the pain and pressure. It is such a blessing to trust the Lord!

In March of this year a severe migraine headache seemed to re-injure my right temple and I began experiencing problems and pressure again. In the months before Monark it really began to concern us that something was wrong. After arriving at the meeting I asked the Lord if He would have me be anointed and

prayed for. One morning He impressed me to seek for healing. I asked Him to give me a Scripture to verify His will to me. When you have His WORD, you can ask with all confidence! He very clearly showed me Hebrews 10:19. 22-23. "Having therefore boldness. . . let us draw near with...full assurance of faith,. . . for he is faithful that promised." I had no doubt but that it was God's will to heal me.

First, however, I needed to obey the Scripture that says, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." (James 5:16). You see, I knew full well why this whole trial had come my way. It was a purging that I had asked for. No, I didn't ask for the Lord to hit me in the head! But He had shown me that I had been proud of my mental abilities. I earnestly begged Him to send what was necessary to refine that out of me. Less than a week later I hit my head. Now I was suffering some memory loss from the injury. What used to be just a breeze to remember the Scriptures the Lord would give me in a message, now became a real struggle. I was learning to depend on the Lord through this affliction. So I needed to confess my weakness to the ministers.

Thank the Lord, the presence of the Lord came down during the agreement of prayer. I felt a physical touch to that side of my head and a strength, or a tightening together, inside my head. We began to praise and thank the Lord. Every day since that time I have felt the difference. I have had several headaches since July but none have been as severe as before. And what's even better, my headaches don't even seem to hurt on that side of my head. It's like the Lord put up a "No Pain Allowed" sign on my right side.

He has left me depending on Him for memory. Like Jacob, I will have to lean on my "staff" the rest of my life. I don't really mind. "The will of God is sweetest when it triumphs at my cost." Truly "Thou art good, and doest good;...it is good for me that I have been afflicted." (Psalm 119:68, 71.)

The meeting at Monark this summer was so special. There were several times when I would just sit and weep with the blessing of what was going forth, in singing, testimony, prayer or preaching. The ordinance service was especially blessed. During the feet washing service with the sisters there was such a sweet flow of love

and humility as sisters of different color, age and location washed each other's feet, sang songs of love to Jesus and each other and embraced with tears, whispered love and gratitude. I just wished all of humanity could experience what we experienced. Then we went over to partake of the Lord's Supper. Usually we sit in reverent silence while the bread and grape juice are being served, and this is fine, but this time someone in the congregation began singing a verse of song. As it quietly finished, someone else began another song and on through the service we worshiped, sang, wept and raised our hands. Again, I wished the whole world could know the love and spiritual blessings we were experiencing as we sat together in heavenly places.

Friend, if you are seeking full salvation, deliverance from hindering faults, healing of the body, sweet fellowship of the Spirit and true spiritual worship, God still has a people in the world where God's Spirit comes down and works with our hearts. When we begin to go astray, as sheep sometimes do, He deals with us. He chastens us and sends us His rod. He binds us together with His sweet, melting love and delivers us from selfishness and sectarian divisions if we will but humble ourselves to His Word.

I feel so grateful to have experienced these blessings. Truly I owe a great debt of gratitude and service to the Lord and His people. Pray for me, that I will be faithful and true.

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

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KY—Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord: Greetings to each one! I hope all are well and encouraged. Our enemy is out to discourage, but Jesus is the answer and better way.

I recently went through a trial and told the Lord that if He would bless and bring me through I would write and encourage my brothers and sisters to trust in the Lord.

I am learning to lean on Jesus and trust in Him. While going through this trial of affliction the Scripture came to me in I Peter 1:6-7, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

Last February we were permitted to go through a very severe affliction. But God permitted it with a reason and a very real purpose. God revealed to us why and showed us our need of full consecration to Him. Praise His holy name! He won't fail us, leave us, forsake us, or beat us down if we stumble. (Hebrews 13:5, Proverbs 3:11-12 and Hebrews 12:5-13.)

Jeremiah 31:3 says, "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jesus really and truly loves us with an everlasting love. He sees our downsitting and our uprising and loves us still. He is ever so patient with us.

Brethren, continue to trust in the Lord. It is the best and only good way. Please pray for me; I need so much more of Jesus. I truly love Him and want to be what He would have me to be.

Keep encouraged! Heaven will be worth it. Love and prayers, —Sis. Sarah C. Howard

AL—Dear Bro. Willie: About a year ago God gave me the Scripture in Psalm 40:1-3. It reads, "I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."

I was reading this Scripture again recently and it suddenly struck me of how I had always placed more emphasis on Him setting you on a rock and establishing your goings. I unknowingly had twisted around what the verses were really saying. Instead of a guideline of how I should handle my trial by being patient, I was making it a deal with God. "I'm being patient, now You take me out of this trial!"

The verse said, "I waited patiently." What does patient mean? Well, it doesn't mean you are demanding God to get you out of where you are. You are quietly waiting for Him to bring you through.

When the Psalmist wrote the third verse it was after the trial; God had already helped him out. It is often easier for us to sing praise to God after He has done what we wanted, but what about before He has done it?

God can give you a song to sing in the midst of trial. When everything is going wrong and you

are worn out from fighting, God is still there, loving and comforting you. Should you not praise Him and thank Him for that?

This meant a great deal to me for God to open up these verses in such a new way. I want to live my life so that, even in trial, people will be able to see praise and thanks to God in me.

"Many, O LORD my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou hast done, and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered." Psalm 40:5.

In Christ, —Sis. Amanda Herron

From England...

Nov. 16, 2004—Dear friends, brothers, sisters at Guthrie, OK: Greetings in Jesus wonderful name! I do thank you for the *Faith and Victory* paper you send me so faithfully. My friends enjoy the paper as well, so it gets passed and I don't know how far!

I would like to testify to a healing I had a short time ago. I had been suffering for years with polyps in the nose. They caused much embarrassment. Sometimes they were so big my nose looked unusually wide and they were almost showing as they hung in my nose.

A few weeks ago the Lord completely delivered me from this affliction and I am very thankful for His goodness.

About 25 years ago I was down in the valley of death, in the darkness. I had been suffering from bronchial asthma for years. I was just setting on my settee, closed my eyes and was going down in the dark. (My husband was present and another brother. Since then my husband has gone to be with the Lord but the other brother is still alive and he would testify to what happened.) It seemed I was on a lift, you might call it an escalator. I went down, then came back up (maybe they were praying, I don't know) and stepped out, saying "Jim." I was so thankful I had returned to the land of the living and to my husband, James. He was American, born in Mississippi, and then a barber in Los Angeles.

I'm looking forward to the Lord Jesus coming again. The Lord bless you folks.

Your sister in Christ Jesus, —Muriel Ard

GERMAN MEETING REPORTS

MO—Dear Bro. Willie: Greetings of Christian love to you and the staff at Faith Publishing House.

Two years ago, with a party of U.S. saints, I visited Rötgesbüttel, Germany and was blessed to hold a short revival meeting there. On that occasion we also visited two other congregations and I asked permission to come and be in extended services with them. They asked for a "get-acquainted visit" first.

On Nov. 3-17 Roberta and I, Nick and Kyra Probst, and David Bell were privileged to make that visit. We were hosted by the Church of God congregation at Oberkollbach, which is in the Black Forest, by the Brose family and from there were in services in six congregations. We all are deeply thankful to the Lord for His blessings and the saints for their prayers in this effort.

The congregations we visited are all primarily composed of ethnic Germans who had lived in Russian-controlled regions until 13 years

ago, when the Berlin wall was brought down and migration to Germany became possible. The Church of God work there was originally established largely through the missionary efforts of Bro. William Ebel, who was a contemporary of our pioneer ministers. Apparently his efforts were quite successful as there are today thriving congregations in various parts of former Russian territory; one in Kazakhstan has 250-300 members!

Much of our time was spent in discussions with pastors and other congregational leaders. We were all most anxious to compare doctrines, for they have had contacts from many U.S. groups claiming to hold the "old-time truth" who proved disappointing, and we anticipate many of them will come to us to participate in our services, so we wanted to be as sure as possible of their beliefs. It is very gratifying to report that in almost every particular we found ourselves teaching precisely the same way. We usually began by agreeing on the validity of such books as *What the Bible Teaches*, thence to

Bro. and Sis. Otto Brose are shown holding books that are very dear to their heart. The Bible he is holding is over 100 years old. It was handed down secretly. When brittle pages had pieces broken off, people rewrote the texts from memory and fixed them into the book. The book Sis. Brose is holding is a hymnal she wrote by hand from a rare, borrowed, printed copy.



issues of modesty, divine healing, handling of church monies, Holy Spirit leadership, marriage and remarriage, etc. In all these areas we are substantially agreed.

Their congregations endured persecution while under Russian authority. One pastor showed me a pocket-sized hand-written copy of one of C.E. Orr's books. He had painstakingly made it himself and made it small so it could be easily concealed from casual eyes, for the penalty for its possession was a 25-year prison sentence. Three ministers from the congregation where he was were given that sentence, along with a number of congregation members. Some of them simply disappeared. Besides the sentence, the ministers could not be released without signing a document stating that they would never again try to convince anyone to become a Christian. Of course they would not, could not, do that. They remained imprisoned until the

death of Stalin. When we understood how these beloved older brethren had carefully maintained their faith as the source of their courage and strength in the face of such opposition, it was easy to see why they wanted to be sure of us before giving us liberty to work in their services.

Many of these saints expressed an interest in being in our general meetings (as some from Germany have already done), and a number of the young people wish to have e-mail correspondence with our young people. We now have tentative permission for a revival meeting at Oberreichenbach, with other congregations willing to consider a meeting as well. Thus we feel our mission was a success and we are very thankful. Our fervent prayer is that God will bless this budding relationship between the German and American Churches of God to be a spiritual "morale booster" to us all.

Christian love,

—Bro. Ed Wilson



OK—Greetings of Christian love to one and all! We are rejoicing in the blessings of the Lord that we experienced in our recent visit to the congregation of saints of the Church of God who worship at Rötgesbüttel, Germany. The Lord surely worked in a wonderful way to make it possible for a group of us to make this trip by air and be in services with these precious families so far distant from us in time and space but very close to us in the Spirit of Christ. Besides my wife, Sis. Sylvia Busbee and myself, the group consisted of Bro. Harlan Sorrell, of Myrtle, MO.; Sis. Elizabeth Murphey, Sis. Julie Benson, Sis. Sherie Benson, Bro. Rodney Sorrell and Bro. Kevin Sorrell, all of Guthrie, OK; Bro. Ron Zacharias and his daughter, Sis. LouCinda Zacharias, of Spooner, WI. Several of the saints and brethren in Germany have been to some of the camp meetings of the saints in America and had given us a warm invitation to visit them in their country.

We landed in Frankfurt, Germany on the morning of Wednesday, November 10. Two of the brethren met us there to take us about 200 miles north to where we were to meet the saints. They were Bro. Harry Zimmerling and Bro. Alen Laukert. By the help of the Lord and their skillful driving they carried us up the busy Autobahn to the little village of Rötgesbüttel. There we found a warm and loving welcome into their homes and hospitality.

The services began that night at 6:00 p.m. There in a roomy and lovely chapel we found a large congregation of godly people who were hungry for the Word of God. After a beautiful song service and prayer we were given liberty to bring a message from the Word of God with our dear Bro. Artur Herter as translator. We started out with what was said about Jesus and the two men on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24:27, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." This was the burden and inspiration that the Holy Spirit had inspired my heart with when we first realized that the Lord wanted us to make this trip to Germany. The various prophecies of Jesus found in the Old Testament and how Christ fulfilled them and how the New Testament writers applied them was to be the main theme of the messages, and we had held the matter in earnest prayer daily for the Lord's guidance, inspiration and anointing upon us in the ministry of the Word of God. And the Lord was right there with us in every service, and we could see the earnest attention of those dear people as we brought forth the message. For every service throughout the meeting the Lord inspired us with messages from the various prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament.

The first message was from Genesis 49 and the blessing of Jacob to his sons before he died.

Verse 10 says, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh (Rest giver) come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." There were other things Jacob mentioned that are prophetic of Christ and the true Israel of God in Him. After the service we found a great joy in greeting the brethren, rejoicing in the joy of being in the service with them. Every one seemed so happy to meet us and we, too, were overwhelmed with joy in the Holy Spirit to greet them. Throughout our visit we were showered with hospitality and expressions of warm affection and welcome. We were invited to several homes and enjoyed their loving company as well as the wonderful and delicious meals that they spread before us. We appreciated our dear Bro. Artur Herter and his wife, Olga who took us into their home and so graciously ministered to us while we were there.

For each service the Lord sent fresh anointing. Our young people found much joy and fellowship with the others and they joined together different times in singing special songs in the service. Since English is taught in their schools, several of the young people speak fairly good English. This helped our young people so much. Bro. Ron Zacharias, one of our visiting

group, had known and spoken German as a child and the Lord helped him to be able to speak very well with the German brethren and was a great help in translating conversations from them to us. The children also were all so sweet and pleasant and we enjoyed making friends with them.

On Thursday night, November 11, the message was the prophecy of Christ found in Psalm 2, frequently quoted and referred to in the New Testament. The November 12 Friday night message was from Isaiah 55. On Saturday night, the 13th, the message was from Habakkuk 2:1-4 with special emphasis on verse 4 which declares that "the just shall live by his faith." Sunday morning's message was on the marriage of Christ and the Church from the prophecies in Psalm 45, Isaiah 54 and 62, Hosea 2, Romans 7:4, Ephesians 5:25-27 and Revelation 19:7-9. In the afternoon we were given privilege to be in service with the young people, with a number of older ones attending, and spoke to them on being sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit, being willing to learn, and to not be accused or confused by the devil. The Sunday night message was from Isaiah 8:14, Isaiah 28:16 and Psalm 118:22-23 concerning Christ,

Young people's service in Rötgesbüttel, Germany.



the sure foundation of the Church, and how we must build our life and experience on Him, and also the danger there is of Him becoming a Stone of stumbling and Rock of offense.

On Monday night the message was on "the Kingdom of God" with scriptures from Daniel 2:44-45 and several references in the New Testament, including the glorious declaration of Romans 14:17, "...The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

On Tuesday, November 16, three cars of us traveled to the city of Berlin and made a short tour downtown around the Berlin wall. It was touching to think how this city once was so divided, as was Germany so divided (East and West Berlin: East and West Germany), but that today the Berlin wall is past and it is a united country once more. The message that night in the service was on the sufferings of Christ from Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. The Lord was so real to us in all of these precious times with these dear saints in Germany. We felt such liberty and rich anointing on our souls! In our last service on Wednesday night, November 17, the Lord helped us bring forth the truth of Christ being at the right hand of God, interceding for us and His second coming, when all things shall be subdued unto Him. The Scriptures were Psalm 8:4-6, Psalm 68:18 and Psalm 110:1-4 with the New Testament Scriptures being I Corinthians 15:23-28 and Hebrews 2:5-9. Afterward several testified of their gratitude for the blessing of being together with us in the meeting. As we stood at the back of the chapel the dear ones passed by, shaking our hands, and expressing their love and concern for us. It was all so sweet.

Bro. Harry Zimmerling and Bro. Alen Laukert picked us up around 3:30 a.m. and transported us back to Frankfurt. These dear brethren! My heart melts with love and appreciation for their sacrifice and service of love to us. The Lord gave us a safe trip back to the United States and each to our homes. Since then we have thought constantly and fervently on our wonderful visit to Germany. It is so wonderful that we are all endeavoring to follow the same truth and faith that was taught by our early saint brethren of old. We are so thankful for the privilege of meeting the dear saints in Germany and being with them in the service of the Lord.

—Bro. Leslie and Sis. Sylvia Busbee

A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

There is a treasure you can own
That's greater than a crown or throne;
That's richer than a diamond field,
Or all the pearls the oceans yield;
That's grander than the praise of men
That they might give by word or pen,
Yes, sweeter to the heart than song,
Though sung by some angelic throng.

This treasure is a conscience clear
That brings the sweetest peace and cheer;
A conscience free from guilt and stain,
That doesn't trouble, last and pain;
A conscience that can rest in ease
When God beholds what no one sees;
A conscience good with which to live,
That only God Himself can give.

—Walter E. Isenhour



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"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,
we are CHANGED . . ." II Cor. 3:18

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