

File

# Bible Lessons



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

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

Vol. 13, No. 1  
Jan., Feb., March  
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# Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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Volume 13

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No.1

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Jesus Christ and His Church  
Edited by Mrs. Marie Miles, and other co-workers**

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## Theme for First Quarter, 1981

Here is a series of Bible Studies for this quarter that we shall entitle *The Fundamental Truths of the Christian Faith*. These are vital, indispensable doctrines, foundation stones sealed by the Almighty for the preservation and promotion of His great cause. These are truths that every child of God should know, understand, and be persuaded of. These are truths that Satan would have men in confusion and ignorance about. And these are truths that should not be tampered with or taken lightly. God would have us to look into these subjects with interest and concern. May each one of us prayerfully consider these things and seek to know what it all means to us. We will begin with the study of God and the creation, and proceed in an order that we feel will link each lesson to the next one, thus producing a chain of truth that we can all get hold of.

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January 4, 1981

### GOD ALMIGHTY, THE CREATOR

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: He layeth up the depth in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

9 For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 For He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Psalms 104:1 Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.

5 Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever.

Isaiah 40:12 Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

13 Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him?

**Memory Verse:** Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. Revelation 4:11.

**Central Thought:** The Almighty God created the heavens, the earth, and everything therein. He created mankind for His pleasure, and upholds all creation by the power of His Word.

**Word Definitions:** *Create:* to make something out of absolutely nothing. *The Spirit of God Moved:* The Hebrew word for "moved" is that which means to overshadow or to "brood." What a beautiful and encouraging thought that God created the earth and mankind with a love and kindness and much forethought!

## LESSON BACKGROUND

What a difference there is in being fully persuaded that the earth and the heavens were the work of the great Jehovah God, and in thinking, or theorizing, that all these things came about through a process called evolution! It makes all the difference in the world. When we really look at everything as being backed by a God of love and tender mercy, and when we can be persuaded that we ourselves are the handiwork of a God so just and righteous that we need not be afraid to come to Him and accept His goodness, it gives us great consolation and courage to face life and live successfully. Perhaps we take for granted this thought—believing in God is the foundation of our church faith. But let us today give new and more earnest consideration to the value of our faith concerning the creation. What if we were *not* the creation of God? What if there really were no God? Think how different life would be! Think how empty and meaningless everything would be. What if there were no uniform and faithful force upholding and controlling everything? How uncertain and shaky would be our existence! From the various writers in Holy Scriptures, we have taken several clear-cut decisive statements concerning the truths of God in the creation. These writers wrote under

the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Open your heart, and let your very inmost being feel the weight and the impact of these words. Visualize the Spirit of God brooding over the vast, empty chaos of space and waters. Think of the words: The deep, darkness, without form, void. What a hopeless mass! But look! Something is moving. See in the distance a light beginning to spring forth. What is that light shining in the darkness? See if you can compare this to the new creation that is brought forth when God recreates a soul that has been marred by Satan and sin. Think of the decline of the law system and the apostasy of Israel. Look at the darkness overshadowing mankind in the dark days of the captivity in Babylon. But a light is beginning to shine. The Sun of righteousness arises out of the dark sea of human despair. Oh, how we can rejoice in a creating God! How He can take the broken pieces of our lives and make them anew!

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. What assurances can we have that God did create the heavens and the earth?
2. In what way did God's Word function and perform in creating all things?
3. In what way did the Lord found the earth upon the seas, and establish it upon the floods?
4. Who directed the Spirit of the Lord or taught Him as His counsellor?
5. What should the firm belief in the creation of God mean to a Christian today?

### ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

When we behold the vastness, the magnitude, the order, the beauty, and the blessedness of nature found in the earth and the heavens, we will have to be honest enough to admit that it was all surely fashioned by a MASTERMIND of intelligence, love, goodness, and wisdom. We must admit that if all of this just happened to wind around haphazardly, it surely did so in a wise and orderly manner. If in our hustle-bustle way of life, that seems to have taken hold upon so many people, we overlook the immensity and wonderment of the world around us, we will miss a great value and benefit to our eternity bound souls. It is sad that many take the natural realm of life for granted, and never really give serious thought

to what it is all about. If one would go out on a starlit night, away from the artificial lights and encumbrances, and look up to gaze into the azure splendor of the vaulted skies, it is enough to take one's breath! The profound glory of the heavens are spread out so majestically! On a bright summer day behold the beautiful white fleecy clouds set in the background of the loveliness of the blue sky. Behold the green carpet of grass, and the spreading arms of the trees. Stop and get quiet enough to hear the songsters sending up their praises of joy from every side! Does all of this just happen to be? Look at man. Note the wonder of his body and the spacious capabilities of his mind. See what he has wrought with what God put into his hands. It should not elevate man in his pride to see what he has done. It was God who gave him the material to work with. The fullness of the earth belongs to God, but He has given man the jurisdiction and keeping of it. We, as mortals, need to reckon with this thought! We need to realize the greatness of God shown in His creation. It has been the folly of men to tamper with this truth and try to offset its value with theories and assumptions that arise because men will not accept the fact of God's miraculous powers to create. Other qualities of pride, vanity, and wickedness are seen in the lives of those who dare to dispute the authority of the Bible. Faith in God helps to produce goodness, righteousness, and truth in the hearts and lives of people. How we rejoice today in the sweet awareness that what the Bible teaches about God's creating the earth is true, without a doubt!

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Down through the ages there have always been men who denied the existence of God. The Psalmist said, "The fool has said in his heart that there is no God." Surely it must be a very blind person who would deny the existence of God. Just one sincere look upon the life of things that we see around us should convince anyone of God's existence. The world standing around us in all of its grandeur, is a most emphatic assertion of the Being of God. Every flower is a denial of atheism. Every star is evidence of a supreme Being. The sun that rises in all of its glory is evidence of a God. The life in the seed that is planted came from no source but God. The huge tree that we look at came from that seed. What a mighty God we serve! How our souls are blessed as we look at the life all around us! When we think of the fact that every leaf is

different, every grain of sand different, every finger print is different, and every blade of grass is different, it is hard for our minds to comprehend the greatness of God. As we look out upon the beautiful sky, and think of its vastness and see the myriad stars that go on even beyond our sight, we only have to stop and think how utterly great must be the Author of the vast solar system!

The devil hates God and is doing all he can to destroy confidence and faith in Him. Our schools are filled with those who are trained to destroy faith in God. Our children are influenced by those teachers and by the children around them whose parents do not believe in God. Our world is being filled with a disbelief in God. May God help our young people to hold fast their faith in the true and living God. It is the means of their eternal salvation.

—Marie Miles

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January 11, 1981

### THE HOLY THREE IN ONE

Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

1 John 5:7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Matt. 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

**Memory Verse:** Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Matthew 28:19.

**Central Thought:** There are three Persons in the Godhead. They are one in purpose, aim, duration, mind, and nature, yet they are individual and distinct in office, function, and position. They are the Father, the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit.

**Word Definitions:** One of the Hebrew words for God is *Elohim*, which is plural. The term Holy Ghost means *Holy Spirit*. The word *Trinity* means Three in One.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Remember our theme for this quarter. We are studying the foundation truths of the Christian faith.

Although the Scriptures are very plain on the Trinity, it has been a matter of dispute and speculation with many people. There are those who emphatically declare that there is no such thing as the Trinity, affirming that Jesus is the Father, as well as the Holy Ghost. A very simple approach to this question could be put this way: "If I saw an individual perform or appear three different times in different forms and manifestations, it might be possible for someone to tell me that these three are really the same person, just dressed up differently, etc. But if I saw all three of them appear and manifest themselves individually at the same time, it would be very difficult for anyone to make me believe that they are the



same person." If in speaking of Himself, God uses a plural term such as "us," it would be a good indication that there was more than one individual on hand. As Jesus spoke of His Father, talked and prayed to His Father, worked with His Father, and constantly referred to His Father, I would be persuaded that His Father was a different Being than Himself. And if Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as coming from the Father to testify of Himself, and if He makes this assertion a number of times, it would be wise for us to recognize that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct Third Person in the Trinity. We could have used many other Scriptures, but these are sufficient to show clearly the separateness, and yet the harmony, that there is in the Trinity, the three Persons of the Godhead.

—Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did God say, "Let US make man"?
2. What are the three Persons of the Trinity?
3. Name the function of each.
4. Can you think of other Scriptures that will help to verify this truth?
5. What is the relationship of the Father to the Son? What is the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Father and to the Son?
6. How do all three work together for the salvation of mankind?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

One of the most beautiful relationships in the Bible is found in the association and harmony between Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and His Heavenly Father. There was a fellowship there and a union that manifested such a vital part in the salvation of man. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made by Him." John 1:1, 2. Jesus Christ was the Word before He came into this world. God created all things through Him. He was the Means by which God made the world and mankind, and He was the Means by which redemption has been offered for the souls of men. Jesus prayed in the 17th chapter of John that all of His disciples would be one even as He and the Father were one. His disciples are individuals, distinct and separate persons. Yet they are to be united in heart and mind just as the Father and the Son are united. One other striking statement that Jesus made that shows the

individuality of the Father and the Son is found in Mark 13:32 in His discourse concerning His second coming. "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Now if we are going to believe the whole of the Bible, we had better believe this Scripture, also. It is not a misprint. It is a fact. God the Father and God the Son are individual enough that the Father can withhold information from the Son if He sees fit to do so. If they were one and the same Person, this would be impossible. But laying aside the controversial aspects of this subject, let us think of the blessedness of the Holy Three in One. The Almighty alone could not have effectively produced a plan of salvation for mankind. He chose to work through the avenue of His Son and His Holy Spirit. The Son took on a human body and wrought the atonement for man's sin. He wrought reconciliation, paying the ransom for mankind. The Holy Spirit is sent into the world to draw, enlighten, convict, teach, guide, inspire, bless, and comfort the souls of men. All of this is done to please the Father and to accomplish His supreme will. The three that bear record in Heaven are the same three that appeared simultaneously at the baptism of Jesus. These three work in perfect harmony and agreement. They are to be honored and glorified together, worshipped and praised forever.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We are living in an age when people want to figure everything out. They do not want to just accept a fact as it is. When we deal with the Godhead, we have to admit that there is a great mystery in it, yet we see the Godhead at work. We do admit that divine titles are applied to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and are represented as special persons distinct from each other, yet they are classed together as the Godhead. We do admit that each have divine attributes that are ascribed to each and divine works attributed to each. "Since the exact manner of existence in the Godhead manifestly lies above and beyond the range of mortal mind, the basis of our theology respecting God should be laid solely in what is revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. And if we appeal directly to them, we find it is impossible to avoid the doctrine of the Trinity taught therein, without doing great violence to scores of plain texts bearing on the subject."

We can say that man is sort of a trinity. He has a will, an intellect, and possesses sensibility, yet these three are distinct

from each other and unexplainable, but they blend together. This of course doesn't explain the Godhead, but it should lead us to expect the Infinite One to be held in a greater mystery than what exists within ourselves.

To some the Trinity may seem unimportant, but if Christ is not God, then He has only succeeded in showing us the great gulf between us and God, which would be impassable without His being God. Christ is truly the divine One and is truly "God manifest in the flesh" for the very purpose of bridging the gulf between us and God, the Father. Christ came to this world and took on the flesh of man so He could transform sinful man into His own image, through His death and resurrection. What a wonderful Saviour! We also have the indwelling Holy Spirit to lead, to guide us into all truth, and to give us power to live according to the commands of God.

—Marie Miles

## AT THE CROSSROADS

Clive Holloway lived down an off-street of evil notoriety. He had not sunk as low as some others, but he was a sinner without doubt, without excuse, and without hope.

Drink and a cruel temper were his undoing. His wife suffered at his hands, and was half distracted at times owing to his behavior. The family numbered four—tiny tots, hardly two years between each.

The crisis came one night when Mrs. Holloway entered a saloon, placed her youngest child at her husband's feet, and hurried home—a ruse to lure him from the bar. He saw through it, and was angry. He caught up the child in his arms, and on reaching home thrashed his wife for "the game" she played. It was the last straw. Tightening her coat about her, she left the house for the canal near by, intending to end it all. By some intuition, Clive guessed what was in her mind, and rushing off intercepted and brought her back, at the same time promising to mend his ways.

Half afraid and conscience stricken, he saw the woman he was pledged to love going to pieces through his misdemeanors. His soul was aroused. Concern, deep and wholesome, succeeded indifference and neglect. He pulled himself together, vowed not to touch the drink again, and for six months the vow was performed.

It was New Year's Eve. Unable to resist temptation any longer, Clive was at home drinking the Old Year out and the New Year in. At least that was his intention.

He listened. A city missionary and his helpers were singing at the street corner, inviting people to a midnight meeting. "What of the night? Is it to close down on a life of sin? Are you carrying your own guilt and wretchedness into the New Year? Get right with God now! Plunge by faith into the crimson river of Christ's atoning blood and be saved ere the New Year dawns!"

Clive pondered the appeal and was impressed. The broken pledge had not brought happiness. Instead, conscience smote him again and conflict raged within. He heard the invitation to the meeting. Should he go? He knew that moral wonders had been wrought at "watch-nights"; was there a chance for him? Thus he reasoned, and "the still small voice" prevailed.

He left the house with a friend and made tracks for the meeting. They stood by the door hesitating. Strange thoughts and feelings seemed to block the way and hold them back.

"Won't you come in?" said a pleading voice. It was the missionary's wife who persuaded them to "step in and make yourselves at home." The midnight message, simple yet imperative, closed with a burning appeal. "We stand at the crossroads. On one hand—sin, weariness, despair, the road to ruin; on the other—Christ, and in Him forgiveness, peace, eternal life! Whither goest thou? Who will trust and follow Jesus and crown Him King?"

"I will," shouted Clive, who walked to the front. In a little room in the small hours of the morning he was loosed from his sins and made aware of his salvation. On bended knee his soul flowed out in prayer and confession and penitent trust. He had almost broken his mother's heart, and had stifled every call to higher things. Now, at midnight, like the jailor at Philippi, he called on the Lord and was heard "in that he feared." Drink and other evils lost their hold. Divine power entered the life once defiled and destroyed. So great was the change that within two weeks his wife also yielded to the Saviour, conquered by the love that had transformed the wolf into a lamb.

Years have passed since the midnight visitation, and during that period Clive has been much with his Bible. He is now in middle life, with missionary enthusiasm that may yet carry him afar. No longer at the crossroads, he marches bravely with the people of God, heaven-born and heaven-bound. **How about you?**

—A tract

**January 18, 1981**

## **THE ETERNAL PURPOSE**

Ephesians 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.

11 According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.

2 Tim. 1:9 [God] who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began.

1 Peter 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

**Memory Verse:** Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Acts 15:18.

**Central Thought:** God purposed, planned, designed, and fashioned His creation to be to His glory and praise. He willed a people in His own image who would love and obey Him in unblameable holiness and love. He ordained a plan of redemption and had it all ready to be executed in the event man should fall from His favor. In this plan of redemption He purposes to gather all who willingly serve Him into one body unto Christ. This is all to be done in cooperation with man's will.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

When light from Heaven shone into the heart and mind of Paul, he was made aware of the great eternal purpose of the Lord God of Israel. He saw that the Jesus that he and the other Jews had been persecuting and trying to destroy was the real fulfillment of the will of God for mankind. Those earnest words he wrote to the Ephesians were the fruits of the divine revelation that God had given unto him. The apostle Peter joins Paul in our lesson today magnifying the eternal purpose of God. He recognizes that Jesus was foreordained before the dawn of creation to do what He did. It was all the carrying out of God's gracious plan, a plan that had been in His great loving heart from everlasting. It was the design and the blueprint that preceded all things. His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Micah 5:2. Every great invention of man is completely programmed and engineered on paper before it is ever put together. First is the idea, or the thought. Much contemplation and study follows. Then comes calculation and planning. Every angle and aspect is considered. Then the idea is drawn to scale and a projection of assembly is made. Finally after many cooperative hands have been employed in its fulfillment, the finished product rolls off the assembly line. It is thus with God and His eternal purpose. The work of creation was not a haphazardous adventure. It was pre-planned, pre-calculated, and filled with definite and clear-cut objectives. And this was all done before man ever came on the scene. Many today live careless and pointless lives; not so with the real Christians. The Christian's life has a great objective. It is to let the will of God and the eternal purpose of God, be done in his or her life. Knowing that the Christian endeavor is backed by the great eternal purpose of God, great courage and determination are employed to carry it through to the end of the way.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why was Jesus Christ such an important agent of the creation?
2. Why does the general run of humanity live in ignorance of God's eternal purpose?
3. What was Paul's desire concerning the dispensing of the knowledge of these things?
4. What depth of vital meaning is found in the words "fore-ordained before the foundation of the world"?
5. How can we successfully allow God's purpose to be fulfilled in us?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

As the great loving Spirit of Almighty God brooded over the dark abyss of emptiness and void, there burned in His great loving heart an intense desire and a loving purpose. Although mankind was not created until the sixth day, it was surely in His mind. All that He did in creating the world and all things therein were for the benefit and welfare of that ultimate gem of His creation—humanity. Even now, all that He does for His human family is done with that same tender loving purpose of blessing and care. It was, and is, that God willed great favors and prosperity to His creation all bound within the scope of His wisdom and righteous boundaries. His loving and compassionate nature scored every move that He made for the profit of His creatures. He wills that men serve Him willingly and freely. He seeks not violent force or crushing pressure to accomplish His divine ends. The consequences of refusing to serve God are self inflicted and not without cause. Yes, He is righteous to recompense tribulation to those who are rebellious, but the wicked shall be holden with the cords of his own sins and the wickedness of the wicked shall take himself. Prov. 5:22. Satan has contested this will of God through his sinister and crafty approaches to the natural mind of man, using it as a counterpart to the plan of God. He has sought to hide it, and for a time he succeeded in bringing great darkness upon the earth. But now God will wink no more at ignorance. Jesus Christ came to bring to light the eternal purpose of God. Through the message that He declared and the acts of obedience to God for the atonement of men's sins, access to the throne of grace and deliverance is afforded. As one believes and obeys the gospel, repenting with a contrite and broken heart, seeking the Lord with all the heart, the real purpose of life will come clearly to understanding. Oh, how sad to live in darkness concerning the perfect will of God.

What is the greatest value? If a man were assured that coming to a service of the church would net him a million dollars, he would be there at any cost. But there is something of much greater value there, yet it is lightly esteemed. The things that men place value on here are very cheap when compared to those things that silver and gold cannot buy.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is much controversy over the doctrine of eternal predestination. Yet it need not be so.

"It may be necessary to examine the meaning of the term predestination that those who do use it may employ it according to the sense it has in the oracles of God. The verb *proortizo* from *pro*, 'before,' and *horizo*, 'I define, finish, bound, or terminate,' when *horos*, 'a boundary or limit,' signifies certain bounds or limits; and is originally a geographical term, but applied also to anything concluded, or determined, or demonstrated. Here the word is used to point out God's fixed purpose or predetermination to bestow on the Gentiles the blessing of the adoption of 'sons' by Jesus Christ, which adoption had been before granted to the Jewish people; and without circumcision, or any other Mosaic rite, to admit the Gentiles to all the privileges of His Church and people. The apostle marks that all this was 'foredetermined' by God." (Clarke)

The mystery of the election is somewhat a puzzle to some. But we must remember that those who are willing are always the elect; those who will not, are not elected. No need to be puzzled over this fact. These are truths belonging to God alone. If you are troubled about them it is only because you are troubling about something that does not concern you. God has never set aside our free agency and final accountableness; nor must we so explain away God's sovereignty and grace as to exalt man to a state of independence. To imagine that God chooses some to eternal life without regard to their faith and holiness is to suppose that some are saved without these qualifications or saved contrary to his purpose. If we admit that we are sinners and insufficient for our own redemption, then our salvation must ultimately be resolved into God's own pleasure. There is no other source from which it can be derived. The plan of redemption is offered without respect of persons to all who will hear the gospel. "Whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely."

—Marie Miles



January 25, 1981

## SINFUL STATE OF MANKIND

Psalm 51:1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

Titus 3:3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

Isaiah 59:1 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

**Memory Verse:** His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. Proverb 5:22.

**Central Thought:** Because of the disobedience of Adam, sin came into the world. With sin came death, or separation from God. This produced a sinful condition upon the whole human race. God gave the law to Moses to help man to sense

his guilt and the grossness of his sins. No man is good and clear before God in his own ability. Our nature is sinful, and it will take the deliverance that God affords to save our soul from sin and its binding clutches.

**Word Definitions:** *Sin:* to miss the mark; to err. *Iniquity:* that which is not right or equal. *Transgression:* Disobedience or departure from prescribed rule or conduct. *Justified:* made just and rendered innocent.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

The background of the 51st Psalm is David's repentance. David had been raised up from the sheepfolds to become the King of Israel. All seemed to be going well and prospering with him. God had blessed him richly. One day as he walked on the roof of his house, he saw a woman bathing across the way. His natural passions were inflamed, and sin began to take hold. He had the woman brought to his house, and later she sent the message back that she was with child. After an unsuccessful attempt to get her husband (who was one of his trusted soldiers) to come home to her, David ordered his general to place him in the heat of the battle and then get away. Uriah was thus killed and out of the way. David took the woman to be his wife, and all seemed well. But sin had been in this case. God was displeased. Great sorrow and trouble came into David's life because of this awful sin. No doubt he prayed like our lesson reveals, and was made aware of the awfulness of his sinful condition. The apostle Paul quotes from different places in the Old Testament as he declares the terrible sinful state of men. Man needs a Saviour. He cannot save himself from sin and its consequences by his own strength. For this purpose Jesus came that all men might be saved.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## QUESTIONS:

1. What is sin?
2. Who is offended by sin?
3. What percentage of mankind has sinned?
4. When does sin enter a man?
5. Do we need to sense and realize our sinful condition in order to be saved?
6. Is it possible for one in his own strength not to sin?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Sin is a universal subject. Anyone who is honest with his own heart will have to acknowledge that something is wrong with mankind. Only a foolish optimist can deny the stark realities of the plight of mankind buried and drowned in a sea of iniquity and wrong. The Bible deals explicitly with sin. We are going to have to acknowledge it also. It is a problem that every man must grapple with, a matter that every man must face up to. To deny or to be unaware of one's sin is a great tragedy and deception. To condone and excuse one's sin is yet worse. To fail to realize one's need of a Saviour or to be indifferent to the issue is a pathway to damnation. God has done no wrong. He has not changed His position or attitude toward man. His arm is not short, nor his ear heavy. But it is sin and transgression unrepented of and unwilling to be exposed that keeps His gracious presence from embracing the souls of men. Everyone has sinned. No one has escaped the awful snare. God has concluded all in sin, so that He can have mercy upon all. We have nothing to boast of. One sin brought the condemnation and wrath of God against man. We inherit this condition by birth, or nature. When we are born into this world, we have a sinful disposition, or nature. We have a natural inclination to do wrong. As one gets older, the principle of sin begins to increase and grow. Very early in life it takes form in lying, pride, covetousness, jealousy, and other things. The older one gets, the greater the magnitude of sin. Sin is no respecter of persons. Satan works in all mankind. One must feel the wrongness of sin, its weight of condemnation and woe before he can really appreciate the Saviour. God gave the law so that sin could be exposed and be made to seem even more sinful. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Christ has come to break the binding chains of sin, that we need no more be under its domination.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"Why does M— ask the Lord to forgive him of his many sins every time he prays?" a teen-ager asked her mother. The mother replied, "He calls mistakes sins, and we don't." "What is the difference then between a mistake and a sin?" asked the teen-ager.

Was the mother's reply right in reference to those who believe that they commit sin in word, thought, and deed? And what is the difference between a mistake and a sin?

different noblemen should entertain the company by singing, accompanied with music on the piano. She was chosen as one of the number. It was a moment of trial for the young believer. If she complied and joined in singing the songs of the world, her testimony for Christ would be wrecked and her communion with God broken. If she refused, her father had threatened to expel her from his house. She would be publicly disgraced and lose her place in society. The gay company were gathered together, and one after another performed their part. At last the name of this young lady was announced, and the eyes of all were turned toward her. The crisis had come, and every one wondered how the scale would turn. She arose, and with a calm and dignified composure, took her seat at the instrument.

Her father thought he had gained his point. After a few moments of silent prayer, then, with a voice of unearthly sweetness and solemnity, she sang:

"No room for mirth or trifling here,  
For worldly hope or worldly fear,  
If life so soon be gone;  
If now the Judge is at the door,  
And all mankind must stand before  
The inexorable throne.

"No matter which my thoughts employ,  
A moment's misery or joy;  
But O, when both shall end,  
Where shall I find my destined place?  
Shall I my everlasting days  
With fiends or angels spend?"

When the singing ceased, the solemnity of eternity was upon that gay assembly. Then, without speaking, they dispersed; one after another slipping from the room. The father wept aloud; and when he was left alone with his daughter he asked her prayers for his soul's salvation; and her prayers were not in vain, for the proud man was humbled before God to confess himself a sinner, to accept by faith the Saviour of the lost as his own, and to follow and live for Him. His life, his wealth, and his talents were henceforth the Lord's.

Unconverted reader! it may be the fear of man that is keeping you from Christ. You dread the frown of relatives, who, like yourself, are without Christ. You need not; if you claim the Lord Jesus as your own and only Saviour. He will

The mother did not give exactly the right answer to the question. The majority of so-called Christians today believe that they sin all the time. They will dwell on the verse of Scripture, "There is none righteous, no, not one." We need to take the context of the Scriptures where the Apostle Paul is treating this subject. He is first bringing out the fact that God concluded all under sin so that He might save them from their sins. If all were righteous then there would not be any need for Christ to die on the cross to save them from their sins. So our lesson in Romans ends: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The next verse tells us what the plan of God was in stating this fact: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3:23, 24) We cannot take out a verse from the context and build a theory on it, as some have done in wanting to believe that we cannot live without sin but must ask God to forgive us of our sins every day.

Let us see what the definition of mistake is. "A mistake means to understand or perceive wrongly; a fault in understanding." In other words, a mistake is to not understand what we are to do and therefore we do not do it. But sin is the "breaking of religious or moral law, especially through a willful act." So, there is a big difference between a sin and a mistake. The Bible says, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17.

—A. Marie Miles

### THE NOBLEMAN'S DAUGHTER

The daughter of an English nobleman, worldly proud, ambitious and fond of pleasure, was brought to know Jesus as her Saviour. Her conversion was manifested in her life and ways. Her father, who was a thorough man of the world, was greatly displeased, and sought in every way to lead her into the world, in the hope that she might give up her "foolish notions."

Temptations in worldly society, extravagance in dress and traveling in foreign countries were all tried to drag her down again to the level of the poor world. But her heart was fixed. Jesus was more to her than all the earth could give, and to Him she was resolved to cleave. Baffled and disappointed, her father resolved upon one last desperate effort, by which his end should be gained, or his daughter's earthly prospects ruined.

A large company of nobility were invited to the house. It was arranged that during the festivities the daughters of

strengthen you and give you courage to own Him before friend and foe as your own and only Lord.

"How long halt ye between two opinions?" Choose this day between Christ and the world. —Selected

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February 1, 1981

## THE EXPECTED MESSIAH

Deuteronomy 18:15 The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. (Acts 3:22)

Psalms 2:7 I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (Acts 13:33)

Psalms 110:1 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. (Acts 2:34, 35)

4 The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. (Heb. 5:6)

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. (Luke 1:32, 33)

Isaiah 53:3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Matt. 8:17; 1 Pet. 2:25)

Isaiah 28:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. (1 Pet. 2:6)

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the

meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Isaiah 61:2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn. (Luke 4:18, 19)

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. (Matt. 21:4,5)

**Memory Verse:** And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob. Isaiah 59:20 (Rom. 11:26)

**Central Thought:** Through the prophets, God promised and foretold a Saviour that would come and bring about the great plan of salvation for the souls of men. Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled all of these prophecies and met every qualification that the Scriptures demanded.

**Word Definitions:** *Messiah:* Hebrew word for *The Anointed One*. *Christ:* the Greek word for *The Anointed One*.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We are studying the foundation truths of the Christian faith. These doctrines are vital and serious to handle or study. The lesson we have today concerning the prophecies of the expected Messiah is very important because of the contents which were explicitly fulfilled at the appearing of Jesus Christ into the world. It is to be realized that the main stream of fulfillment of these prophecies was of a spiritual nature. The reason why a large number rejected Christ in His day is the same reason that many today place the fulfillment of a lot of prophecies into a future age. It is because the spiritual aspect of Christ is not visualized nor understood. From Moses through Malachi are a great many utterances of divine prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah. We have chosen just a few, all of which are either quoted or referred directly to in the New Testament. We can safely say that all of these prophecies were directly fulfilled in the first advent of our Lord into this world. As an aid to this study we have added at the end of each prophecy the Scripture that was quoted or referred to in the New Testament. These are rich veins of gold for study, meditation, and understanding. Once

comprehended in their wondrous value, these Scriptures remain alive and so inspiring to the earnest student of the Word of God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Can you think of any purpose or reason for Christ being prophesied of by the Holy Spirit?
2. Name the different titles and aspects that these prophecies give to the coming Messiah.
3. Which of these prophecies have inspired you?
4. Are you persuaded that Christ fulfilled all of these prophecies?
5. In what way are these foundation truths of the Christian faith today?

### ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The promised Messiah was a cherished hope of the nation of Israel. Although their comprehension and understanding were darkened and warped by error, yet the bright anticipation of a coming King meant much to them. Doubtless, many a mother yearned that she would be the mother of this Holy One. The old man Simeon was promised by the Holy Ghost that he would see the Christ before he died. What joy filled his heart as he took Jesus up in his arms that day in the temple! "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." This was a true expression of the joy that was felt in the hearts of those who truly recognized and welcomed the Messiah. We do not live in that day, but we are living in the day of grace that the Messiah brought. We can enjoy the fulfillment of all of these prophecies. Christ can be our wonderful Counsellor and King. He is the foundation that every believer builds his experience with God upon. We can partake of His atonement and healing. He can now bind up our broken hearts, and how many souls have found that liberty and deliverance from Satan and sin! He is our High Priest in an everlasting priesthood. He is at the right hand of God interceding for us. Unto us therefore that believe, He is precious and we need not be hasty or unbelieving. The government of the Church is upon His shoulder. We can leave that with Him, and we need not fear. We are looking forward to that day when God will make His foes His footstool and He will come in the clouds of heaven to reward His saints and punish the wicked. We enjoy the acceptable year of the Lord,



the privilege to come to God and be accepted in the Beloved through Him. And just think—all this was foretold hundreds of years before Christ was born! It proves the truth of God and the unfailing trust that we can have in Him and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Man was created in holiness and happiness, and was placed in the Garden of Eden. He had access to the Tree of Life, the very source of peace. But he let sin enter into his heart. He was driven away from the source of his peace and happiness. No man in heaven or earth could help him return to the source of his peace. God looked down upon sinful man and saw the heavy load he carried. When man cried unto the Lord, He promised to send them a "saviour and a great one," to deliver them. Isa. 19:20. Man was in the prison house of sin. God promised to send them a deliverer "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa. 61:1. Those who heard the words of the prophet received a dim vision of the Deliverer's greatness. They received a dim vision of His coming, and some broke out into strains of music. Isaiah in speaking of that expected day says, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. 60:1-3.

That day seemed far away to those righteous men, but the thought awakened songs of praise in their hearts. They were not speaking of a supposed millennial age, as many today think of Christ's coming, but they were speaking of the day when Jesus was to be born and was to live, die, and arise for the salvation from sin of all believers. It takes only two texts to prove this fact. Isaiah of old said, "Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee." Isa. 49:8. Then in the New Testament, after Jesus' ascension, we hear the Apostle Paul saying, "Behold now is the accepted time: behold now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2.

The Old Testament writer said that in that day God would send a Saviour. In the New Testament it is recorded that "unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

—Marie Miles

February 8, 1981

## THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST

Luke 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of His father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Matthew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Memory Verse: For with God nothing shall be impossible.  
Luke 1:37.

**Central Thought:** Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour was the Son of God, born of Mary who conceived by the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. Almighty God was His Father and Mary was His mother.

**Word Definitions:** *Espoused:* engaged or promised to marry. "*Not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.*" Joseph loved Mary very dearly. When she was found to be with child, which could have meant the sentence of death, Joseph thought how he could secretly break off their engagement, so that the public would not be aware of the matter.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Let us remember again that we are studying in this series the foundation truths of the Christian faith. These are truths that help support the structure of our faith in God and His great plan of salvation. It had been prophesied that a virgin would bring forth a son. This Scripture was well known in Jewish minds. It is a well known subject today, but there is much doubt and speculation about it. Many renowned religious leaders doubt it and question its really being so, and there are some who flatly deny its possibility. If we doubt or deny the plain Scriptures that we have in our lesson today, we may as well throw the whole Bible away. It, along with the truth of the resurrection, draws upon the supernatural power of God for verification. As the angel said, "With God nothing shall be impossible." To believe that God can do the impossible is vital to our faith in Him. If we limit His working to natural means and procedures, we are taking out of the truth of God the most vital ingredient there is. If God created the world from nothing, He can create anything and do anything from nothing. It is His Word that upholds all things, anyway. The same God that quickened Sarah's aged body to enable her to conceive and bear her son Isaac of Abraham whose body was in that sense dead also, is the same God we trust in today. Being fathered by God, Jesus Christ was pure and holy to begin with. He was not defiled with sin.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it important that we believe in the virgin birth of Christ?
2. Why was it necessary for Christ to be born of a woman?

3. What would be the objection of men to this teaching?
4. Is the possibility of Christ's being born in this way consistent with the rest of the Bible?
5. What happens to the rest of the Bible and what it teaches if we deny the virgin birth of Christ?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

God's ways are above our own ways. When Joseph was faced with the report that the woman he was engaged to marry was with child, he was doubtless shocked beyond words. Here was something that he had not anticipated. To him this meant but one thing—Mary had been with another man, and was not true. This meant that she was not worthy to be taken to be his wife. She was defiled in his judgment. Steps would have to be taken, secret and careful steps, to dissolve their engagement. Yet it must be done in a way that would protect her from public reaction, whatever it might be. It could be serious, and it could even mean her life. These were doubtless the serious thoughts that filled Joseph's mind as he pondered the situation. When the angel of the Lord visited and spoke to him and explained the matter in God's sight, it made all the difference in the world. Now if we leave God and His supernatural workings out of anything, we are going to be faced with impossible situations. If we deny the miracle of the creation, if we deny the miracle of prophecy, and if we deny the miracle of the virgin birth, we are denying the existence and the reality of God himself. We will fall under the category of those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. 2 Tim. 3:5. Oh, let us trust in God! Let us make it our motto: "With God nothing shall be impossible." For every phase of the Christian life, let us hold fast this confidence. God will allow us to get into impossible situations where we will come to our wits' end, for the purpose of making known to us His wonderful, miraculous working power.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

A village maiden, of whose previous history we know almost nothing, had the calmness of her life suddenly changed when she was quietly approached by the angel Gabriel. Tradition asserts that she was one of the many descendants of David who had been lost in obscurity and poverty. This of course is true, as we read the title, "Son of David" given to Jesus, in a literal sense. We know, as we are afterwards told of

her, that she was a devout student of the prophetic Scriptures, given to "hiding" and "pondering in her heart" any Divine work of hidden worth. It seems that she especially pondered on the Messianic prophecies, as she cherished the hope, in common with other Jewish women, that she might be the mother of the "Son of the Highest." She was one of those pure and saintly women who was utterly devoted to a Divine life and service. She must have been spiritually prepared. When she understood the angelic message, she was conscious of all the pain and shame it would bring upon her, even to the loss of her maiden name and honor. Yet she meekly submitted herself to the Divine call and will of God by saying, "Be it unto me according to Thy word." Being betrothed and standing on the verge of her new life with Joseph, the humble virgin, after the angel's departure, remained in her sweet humility the same. With perfect readiness of trust she received her Divine commission, and surrendered herself in lowly meekness to the Divine call. Oh, it is beautiful! All of it is precious, as it displays the purity of an angel who is speaking to the purity of a virgin. Yet not even one word too much was spoken for the delicacy of a maiden's ear, nor a word too little used to indicate the wonderful and miraculous process by which the Incarnation was affected.

We notice that the angel said, "that holy thing," which implies a distinction between this child and all others. From the very first of His earthly existence He is holy in Himself.

When Adam and Eve sinned and were cast out of the garden, God gave a promise to Eve that through her the world would be blessed and redeemed from sin. God said to the serpent, "her seed: it shall bruise thy [Satan's] head." Gen. 3:15.

—A. Marie Miles

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February 15, 1981

### GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH

1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

2 Cor. 5:19 God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Hebrews 10:5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body

hast thou prepared me.

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.

**Memory Verse:** For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. John 6:33.

**Central Thought:** The Almighty God took human form in the personage of His Son Jesus Christ to make a way for mankind to be delivered from sin and that they might behold His glory and the love that He had for them.

**Word Definitions:** *Without controversy:* Confessedly, beyond all question and dispute. *Manifest:* made to appear or to be seen. *Thought it not robbery to be equal with God:* The Greek literal rendering of this passage is thus: Though Christ was in the form of God, He counted not equality with God to be the thing to be grasped or held to, but emptied himself. *The darkness comprehended it not:* The light shone and the darkness did not prevent or hinder the light.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

From several New Testament quotations we have a clear, definite teaching concerning God's being manifest in the flesh. The apostle Paul, who at first discredited Jesus Christ as

being from God, affirms the solemn persuasion that the whole thing was a visitation from God. Of all people who had a chance to be sure of what Jesus really was, John was very emphatic and clear in his declarations that Jesus Christ was the very Word by which the heavens and the earth were made. Christ was with God. This makes Christ a separate person. He was God. This expression shows that all that God did, He did through Christ. There are mysteries about this sort of thing, but it is no secret that God came down in human form to accomplish man's salvation and deliverance from sin and death. John was able to see His glory. We also can see His glory as we view the sacred accounts of Christ's early ministry, His power, beauty, and love. Here faith can be stronger than sight. As we read and visualize in our minds the Holy One of God in His advent into this world, it can mean as much and even more than it did to those whose vision took in only His natural bearing.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did God have to come in the flesh to save us?
2. What was God's attitude toward man in His being manifest in the flesh?
3. Why did Christ count equality with God as not to be held on to? What greater issue was at stake?
4. In what way is the life of Christ the light of men?
5. What was the great benefit of God's manifesting Himself in the flesh?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

There are several worthy lessons to be seen in the truth of God's being manifest in the flesh. First we see the interest, the love, the concern, and the outreach of God's great heart for His creation. He was willing to take upon himself the same infirmities and temptations that man was bearing, and exert power and grace that would enable man to overcome and have the victory. It shows His willingness, not only to offer help to mankind, but to actually carry out a plan of salvation with Himself being the victim in man's place. It shows that He was willing to make the first gesture of reconciliation. He was willing to take the first step in the direction of the restoration of harmony between God and man. It shows that He held no grudge or malice, but that He was willing, not only to forgive, but to bear the punishment for man's sins. This put Him down on man's level, to make clear His attitude and disposition

toward us. This He wanted to do, to clarify any doubts or fears on our part, so that we could have a great consolation as concerning our acceptance with Him. It showed His fairness and His good will. He not only showed us what was right, but He took upon Himself the bands and limitations of our mortality and actually did what was right, thereby supplying grace and ability for us to do the right, also. There was no other way. No other human could have accomplished this. His own arm brought salvation to Him. There was no man, no intercessor, or Saviour, other than Himself. In doing this, He set a fair example that He wills that we follow. It was His humility. It is the same humility that we are to engage in our lives toward one another and toward our fellow-man. His was a splendid example of humility and self-denial. He showed us how to bear the cross. Through the sorrows that He bore in our stead, He became a perfect Saviour, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and close to our lowly lives.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The first verse of our lesson has many wonderful thoughts in it. It's proof that Jesus did come and was truly God manifested in the flesh. We think about how he was "justified in the Spirit." John saw "the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him." (John 1:32) This was a witness to John that Jesus was "God manifested in the flesh." John saw this happen when He baptized Jesus (Matt. 3:16,17.)

When Jesus arose, the angel descended from heaven and rolled back the stone. So, we know that Jesus was seen of angels (Matt. 28:2).

We read that Jesus "preached unto the Gentiles," at the well of Jacob. There the woman believed on him and told others who also believed on Him. So, the Gentiles heard him preach (John 4:19).

After the day of Pentecost, we read in Acts second and third chapters, that the world heard the gospel, and over 3,000 souls were saved. So, Jesus was "believed on in the world."

What a glorious thought that Jesus was "received up into glory" and is now sitting on the right hand of God interceding for us. In Heb. 12:2, we read that Jesus "endured the cross," thinking of the "joy that was set before him", of yours and my salvation and of all those who will believe. He wanted those who would love Him and commune with Him to have glory and praise within them. Today we are glad for the wonderful



plan of salvation and that God loved us so much to make a way for our salvation.

—Marie Miles

### **“THE ANSWERED PRAYER”**

“That was an underhand trick,” Fred Stone declared as he faced Gus Raymond. “You know I didn’t break those tools found in my desk.”

“How will you prove you didn’t break them?” Gus inquired in an even voice. “The only way you can clear yourself is to produce the guilty party, which won’t be so easy.”

“No, it won’t be easy,” replied Fred, looking Gus squarely in the eyes. “The evidence has been covered for the present. I know who broke those tools and placed them in my desk, but I haven’t any proof with which to convince others. But we both know the guilty party.”

“I told you I’d get you,” Gus declared, a malignant look in his eyes. “You are such a goody-goody Christian around here! We’ll see if you are so much better than I am. Why not tell the foreman I broke those tools?”

“No, I’m not telling anyone. I’ll bear the blame until I’m cleared of guilt. This matter is between you and me. I’m taking the matter to God in prayer, and in due time it will be settled. You have taken revenge in your hands, trying to make it appear that I do not possess the Christian character I profess. I’m willing to leave this matter in the hands of God. Some day it will be settled.”

With these words Fred turned and left Gus. The subject of conversation was some missing tools which had been found in Fred’s desk broken and useless. The animosity which Gus bore toward Fred was due to the fact that Fred would not lower his Christian standard to the level of Gus and his cronies who worked in the same shop. All attempts to entice Fred to engage in questionable games and worldly entanglements had failed. Each failure angered Gus more and more until nothing would satisfy him but revenge. He would destroy that Christian testimony! Cleverly he laid his plans, leaving Fred in a position equivalent to having stolen the tools to hide the fact he had broken them.

Fred refused to defend himself by denying the guilt. Excuses would make others think he was guilty. He was extremely sorry over the attitude Gus had taken, but he felt the assurance that prayer would be answered and the matter settled in God’s time and way. He awaited a call to the office to explain the discovery of the broken tools in his desk.

The next day was Saturday, when the factory was closed. Fred took his fishing rod and started for a good pool a few miles up the river. The day presaged a storm, the atmosphere being hot and sultry. Thunderheads poked their noses above the western hills. However, Fred was not worrying about a storm, for he knew of a log cabin where he could find shelter in case of necessity.

The morning hours passed into noon. Fred stopped his fishing long enough to eat his lunch. Several beauties reposed in his creel, but he desired a few more.

**BOOM! B-O-O-M!** These peals of thunder warned Fred of the nearness of the storm. Taking one look at the sky, he hastened to the cabin to save himself a drenching. From his place of refuge he saw the darkness deepen as the heavy clouds rolled nearer. The wind whipped in great fury, bending the trees before its power. Lightning split the darkness in angry tongues of fire, while thunder reverberated throughout the valley, causing the earth to tremble. Rain descended in torrents.

"No more fishing today," Fred declared. He stretched full length on an old cot and closed his eyes. In a few minutes he was fast asleep. When he awoke the rain had ceased. But the low murmur of the river had increased in volume, the dull roar indicating the rise of water from the cloudburst.

"Help! Help!"

Fred leaped to his feet, and dashed into the open as this frantic cry reached his ears. He ran to the river as he tried to locate the source of the cry. Again it came to his ears, more desperate than before. It came from across the river. Fred realized at once what had happened. Some person, fishing in a boat, had been caught in the sudden rise of water. A tree trunk had crushed the boat against the opposite bank, pinning the occupant fast. Fred saw that the head of the imprisoned man was barely above water. It was a question of minutes when the rising water would submerge the man to drown him. Fred gave a start as he recognized the helpless individual.

"I'm coming, Gus," he shouted. "I'll get there if I possibly can."

He prayed for help that he might save a life, for if a life was saved in this crisis, a soul might be saved later. Gus was not prepared to die.

Fred ran upstream and plunged into the river. The strong current tossed him about like a cork. With strong strokes he edged toward the farther shore with the sweep of the current

carrying him at tremendous speed. The muddy water filled his eyes and nostrils. Questions assailed him. Would he reach the wrecked boat? What could he do if he did? That he would decide when he got there. He was about to give up in despair when the eddy which had swung the tree ashore caught him and shot him in toward the tree. With a clutch of desperation he seized a limb and followed it hand over hand to shore.

In vain he struggled to free Gus from his imperiled position but every effort failed. The water was on a level with Gus' chin, creating a desperate situation.

"Don't give up, Gus," Fred cried, fighting like a tiger to free his enemy. "I think I have the solution."

Getting a running start, he jumped with all the possible force into the branches of the lodged tree. The weight of his body plus the force of the current moved the tree from its wedged position. As the tree rolled over in the water, Fred jumped to escape the twining branches. In a desperate struggle he reached shore again just as Gus climbed to safety. Two exhausted men sank to the muddy ground.

"You saved my life at the risk of yours," Gus gasped with deep feeling in his voice. "I sure thought I was a goner."

"Better thank God that you're alive," Fred replied. "Now you have a chance to repent of your sins and accept Jesus Christ as your Saviour. If you had died in your unsaved condition, it would have been too late."

"That makes me all the more indebted to you for my life," Gus said.

"I only helped save your physical life, which is the least important. Jesus died to save your soul from eternal death. That is the question for you to settle. While you are thanking me for saving the life of an enemy, you had better thank Jesus that He died for you while you were His enemy."

On the way home a lengthy conversation took place. The matter of broken tools would be settled as soon as Gus could get in touch with the proper officials in the factory. More than that, when Fred continued his witness for Jesus Christ, he would have another witness alongside him.

"You told me God would settle this matter in His own way," Gus said. "Now I believe it. And I'll always thank Him that He did it His way."

—L. L. Wightman

February 22, 1981

## THE BLOOD OF JESUS, THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN

Matthew 26:27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sin.

Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Hebrews 9:11 But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

**Memory Verse:** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1:7.

**Central Thought:** The sin of man in his separation from God demanded a just price of atonement. Nothing but the precious blood of the Son of God would qualify in God's sight for retribution for sin. The blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse a person from all sin as he or she walks in the light of His Word.

**Word Definitions:** *Atonement:* Reconciliation for men to God. *Testament:* a disposition, a will, a contract (Greek). *Conscience:* moral consciousness, co-perception of right and wrong (Greek). *Hyssop:* a leafy plant used like a brush to dip into a liquid and sprinkle.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Surely no Christian should be in the dark about the part that the blood of Jesus Christ plays in the plan of salvation. It does seem, however, that at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus, his disciples were quite unaware of just what was really taking place. About all they could comprehend at the time was the suffering death and loss of their dearest Friend. The awful scene of Calvary with its writhing, groaning victims crudely fastened by nails to the Roman crosses was such sorrow and anguish, that no doubt they wished to blot it from their memories. But after Christ was resurrected and had opened up their understanding of the Scriptures and the real plan of God in it all, they became conscious of the value and virtue of that fountain of blood they had seen flowing from the wounds of their Saviour. As time went on, the theme of the blood emerged more and more in their writings. They realized that all that had happened to the Lord Jesus was actually God's divine method of procuring for them and for all the souls of men an atonement for sin and a deliverance from its bondage.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## QUESTIONS:

1. Why did God choose the blood to be the atonement for sin?
2. Can you determine why the blood of Jesus was the only means for the remission of the sins of mankind?
3. What part did the blood of goats and calves have in all of this?
4. Of what value is the blood to us today?
5. When will the blood of the Lamb lose its power?

## ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

When Jesus died on Calvary's cross, God looked upon the travail of His soul, and was satisfied. Isaiah 53:11. It satisfied that demand that God was holding for the penalty and punishment that He deemed sin and departure from Him to be worthy of. God was offended and at a distance from man because of his sin. God cannot pass by iniquity and overlook sin. There must be something to make up for its destructive effects. There must be a victim to suffer and die, thus exemplifying God's awful distaste and anger for sin. But there were other purposes involved, also. When we catch a vision of Jesus' suffering and dying on that awful cross, and when we realize that it was our sins that nailed Him there and that He was doing this for us, our hearts will be broken and won to come back to Him and serve Him. It will not only bring forgiveness and the mercy of God near to cover our sins, but it will cause a real hatred and an abhorrence to rise up in our hearts against sin and its ways and practices. It will cause us to fall in love with the One who died for us. Thus we are saved by His blood, and the sight of the scene of Calvary takes on its real purpose, and we glorify Him who died and suffered so for us. If God would have just spoken the word of forgiveness, we as human beings would have a battle with the devil concerning this. He not only spoke the word of His forgiveness, but He worked out and accomplished its blessed reality. We can point to the blood. We know that this was the reason for Christ's coming. We know that He did shed His blood. That gives us who have fled for refuge great consolation to lay hold on this blessed hope that He set before us.

—Leslie C. Busbee

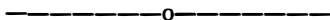
## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We read that from the beginning of time blood is the life of a person or animal. God commanded man not to eat the blood (Gen. 9:4). After the law of Moses was given, we read that the Israelites were commanded "not to eat blood" (Lev. 3:17). Then in the letter that the ministers sent to the Gentile church it was stated that they were to abstain from eating blood (Acts 15:20). Blood is life.

Under the law of Moses, bulls, goats, and lambs without blemish were chosen to be offered for the sins of the people. Part of the blood was taken into the holy place and sprinkled there. This was a type of the blood of Jesus that was to be given in time to come for the sins of the people.

Today, we look at the cross of Jesus and see the blood coming from His precious hands, feet, and head. We look again and we see His side pierced and the outflowing of blood and water. It causes our hearts to be filled with love for Him. He did not have to give His life's blood, but He freely gave it for our sins. Someone had to die for our sins. That One had to be without sin. Jesus was the only One who could do it. He was willing to come here to this world, live, and die for our sins. Oh, how we love Him! His heart was broken for our sins. We must let our hearts be broken and freely give ourselves to Him. We want His desires in our lives to be fulfilled. Why? Because we love Him. Love brought salvation to us. Only love in our hearts for Him will keep salvation for us. Love seeks to please the Lover whose first spark of love was planted in the heart. We love Him because He first loved us.

—Sis. A. Marie Miles



## WHAT SHALL THE HARVEST BE?

In the winter of 1876, Mr. Moody and I were holding meetings in Chicago in a large building owned by John V. Farwell, one of Mr. Moody's first and most valued friends in that city. It was our custom to hold temperance meetings on Friday afternoons. At one of these meetings the following testimony was given:

"At the breaking out of the war in 1861, I enlisted in the army and was soon appointed a first lieutenant. I was not yet eighteen, and had never been away from home influences. I had never tasted liquor, and did not know one card from another. The regiment to which I was assigned was principally officered by young men, but many of them were old in dissipation.

"This new life was attractive to me, and I entered upon it with avidity. I was soon a steady drinker and a constant card player. I laughed at the caution of the older heads, and asserted with all the egotism of a boy that I could abandon my bad habits any time I wanted to.

"I soon found that my evil desires had complete control over my will. In 1870, being a physical wreck, I resigned, and determined to begin a new life. Time and again I failed; and at last I gave up all hope and abandoned myself to the wildest debauchery, speculating with reckless indifference on how much longer my body could endure the strain. In anticipation

of sudden death, I destroyed all evidence of my identity, so that my friends might never know the dog's death I had died.

"It was while in this condition that I one day wandered into this tabernacle and found a seat in the gallery. There I sat in my drunken and dazed condition, looking down upon well-dressed and happy people.

"I concluded that it was no place for me, and was just about to go out, when out of a perfect stillness rose the voice of Mr. Sankey singing, "What Shall the Harvest Be?" The words and music stirred me with a strange sensation. I listened till the third verse had been sung:

"Sowing the seed of a lingering pain,  
Sowing the seed of a maddened brain,  
Sowing the seed of a tarnished name,  
Sowing the seed of eternal shame;  
'Oh, what shall the harvest be?"

"These words pierced my heart. In desperation, I rushed downstairs and out into the snowy streets. I soon found a saloon, where I asked for liquor to drown my sorrow. On every bottle in the barroom, in words of burning fire, I could read, 'What shall the harvest be?' When I took up my glass to drink, I read, written on it, 'What shall the harvest be?' and I dashed it to the floor and rushed out again into the cold, dark night.

"The song still followed me wherever I went, and finally drew me back to the tabernacle two weeks later. I found my way to an altar and was spoken to by a kind-hearted, loving brother. With his open Bible, he pointed me to the Great Physician who had power to cure me and heal me of my appetite, if I would only receive Him. Broken, weak, vile, and helpless, I came to Him, and by His grace I was able to accept Him as my Redeemer; and I have come here today to bear my testimony to the power of Jesus to save to the uttermost."

We were all deeply touched by this testimony, and there was scarcely a dry eye in the audience. A week later the man came into our waiting room and showed me a letter from his little daughter, which read about as follows:

"Dear Papa: Mamma and I saw in the Chicago papers that a man had been saved in the meetings there, who was once a lieutenant in the army, and I told Mamma that I thought it was my Papa. Please write to us as soon as you can, as Mamma cannot believe that it was you."

This letter was received by the man at the general post office. The mother and her two children were sent for, and with the help of Mr. Moody a home was soon secured for them



and employment for the man. He was asked to go to many places to give his testimony, and he soon became very effective in his ministry. His name was W. O. Lattimore. He wrote a hymn for me, entitled, "Out of the Darkness into Light," which I set to music.

The author of "What Shall the Harvest Be?" was a frail, delicate woman, always an invalid, never having known, as she once said, an hour of good health in all her life.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. 28:13).

—Ira D. Sankey

**NOTICE:** If you have not placed your order for the next quarter, please do so immediately. We must have your order for the second quarter of 1981, by March 1.

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—L. D. Pruitt, Publisher

**March 1, 1981**

## **JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH**

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Romans 4:4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

20 He [Abraham] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Memory Verse:** Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1.

**Central Thought:** To be justified, one must be forgiven of all of his sins. This renders him innocent before God, and can only be attained through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ which He shed for that purpose.

**Word Definitions:** *Justification:* being made innocent, freed from guilt. *Propitiation:* Atonement. *Staggered not:* stumbled not.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

How can a man be just before God? The law has concluded all under sin. This makes a breach between man and God. How can this breach be healed and the gap between God and man bridged so that once again God and man can be reconciled? Our lesson today has the answers for these questions. Although it seems so very plain in Bible teachings, we must remember that in ages past this was a dark issue in the minds of people. The throngs were led to believe that being made justified in God's sight required severe works of penance and self-denial. Martin Luther was in the act of doing penance climbing on his knees up a long flight of steps, when a voice spoke to him saying: "The just shall live by faith!" Light from heaven broke through all around his soul. The doctrine of justification by faith began to unfold before him. In taking his stand on this issue and other truths revealed to him and others, the great Reformation of the 1500's was ushered in. It is still an important doctrine of the Church, and a very important foundation truth of the Christian faith. It is very important that every child of God have a good understanding of this truth. The apostle Paul declared justification by faith in contrast to the Jewish traditions of keeping the law. It brought him much persecution, but he stood true.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## QUESTIONS:

1. Why can no flesh be justified by the deeds of the law?
2. How can the righteousness of Christ be applied to our need for justification?
3. What other course can a sinner take to be saved?
4. Why does it take faith to be saved?
5. What does being justified before God bring to the soul?

## ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

In justification one's sins are forgiven and washed away. In Christ, God provided the means for man's justification on Calvary. Until a person turns from his sinful ways and fully repents of his grieving God and sinning against Him, he is still unsaved and lost. One must truly repent with a godly sorrow for his sins. He must come with a broken heart to

Christ, confessing his need of a Saviour, and pleading for mercy. It is an experience so wonderful and real when one comes repenting and turning to God with all the heart. For God sees the soul that is reaching out to Him, and He comes to meet him with welcome arms of love. In a glorious moment the load of sin is gone, and gladness and peace fill the soul. A witness from heaven fills the heart and makes that one know that his sins are truly forgiven, and that he is a new creature in Christ Jesus. This is justification. This is being born again. This is an experience for the sinner who comes. His faith and confidence anchor in Christ. He accepts the blood as the sacrifice for his forgiveness, and he is therefore justified, having peace with God. He is a new creature, born from above. Old things of sin and the world pass away, behold, all things are become new. He is born into the family of God, quickened by the Spirit, and raised up to heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Right then and there he becomes a member in the one true Church of God, which is the bride of Christ, and his name is recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life. This is justification by faith, and it is an experience not to be had by turning over a new leaf, making New Year's resolutions, or joining a church and shaking hands with the preacher. It is not gained by keeping the law, but it is laid hold of by faith in response to the gospel of Christ, which is the power of salvation to every-one that believeth. It changes one from sin to righteousness, from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to the power of God. Its effect is a new life with new desires and purposes. Praise the Lord for justification by faith!

—Leslie C. Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Adam sinned. He and Eve were cast out of the garden. Man had lost his heavenly state and communion with God. Sin had separated him from God. God looked at the awful condition that man was in. He was lost in sin and headed for hell and misery in all eternity. God began to teach mankind about His great plan that He had made to save man from hell. He taught them to offer a sacrifice of an animal on an altar, and to pray to Him. This animal was offered for their sins. God sent prophets to teach the people about Him, but the devil worked very hard to destroy God's plan. Many people believed the devil's lies. Soon, most in the world were sinners. But God found a righteous man and his name was Noah. Noah preached to the people, trying to help them. He knew

that God was going to destroy all of them by a great flood. They did not believe Noah. Finally, the day came when all were in the ark and God shut the door. All others on the earth were drowned. Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives began a new world, but the devil worked hard to bring as many as he could under his power. Many did fall. God chose Abraham to become the father of a nation. Through this nation God wanted to bring a Saviour to the world. Abraham believed in God, and although he and Sarah were old, he "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief." God gave them a son. God promised Isaac that if he would obey him that through his family God would send a Saviour. Then through his son, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons, God made the same promise. All of them held fast to the true and living God. Their families were taught about God, and Moses led them out of the land of Egypt. Later, they lived in the land of Canaan. As time passed by, God sent Jesus to the world and He tried to teach the Jews that He was the Son of God. Some believed, but most of them rejected Him. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Holy Spirit came upon the believers and they went forth into the world teaching all to repent of their sins and believe the gospel. Many did believe. Today, all who believe on Jesus and repent can be saved from their sins.

—Sis. Marie Miles

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March 8, 1981

## SANCTIFICATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

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

Luke 24:49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.

**Memory Verse:** 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. Romans 12:1.

**Central Thought:** After a person is forgiven of his sins he becomes eligible to receive the Holy Spirit, which will cleanse and purify his soul of all dross and carnal elements and give him power to witness for God and to work the works of Christ.

**Word Definitions:** *Sanctification:* Moral and spiritual purity, consecration to God for divine service. *Holy Ghost:* Holy Spirit.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is surely another great fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, yet it has been one of the most controversial topics ever. It is surely true that Satan hates the truth of the doctrine of sanctification. He knows that if he can get some confusion befogging people's minds concerning this precious truth, it will keep people from obtaining the experience. In keeping people from obtaining the experience, Satan will keep people from the ultimate victory and success in the

Christian life and will eventually rob them of the grace of God. Woe to the darkened-hearted people who have trifled with this precious subject. Sanctification is a vital truth that the Church needs to really uphold. Jesus came not only to bear the sins of mankind so they could be forgiven, but He also wrought sanctification for us. The power and root of evil can now be cleansed from the heart of man. Man will still be tempted through the avenue of the natural senses, but there will be power to overcome and conquer in the heart of every one who has consecrated his life on the altar for God and has received the Holy Spirit. Friend, this lesson today is most important. Give it much thought and consideration in prayer. It will mean the difference in your having success or defeat. Give no heed to the rubbish from those who seek to argue contrariwise to the truth. Sanctification is a Bible doctrine, and a real experience for every child of God to have. We have selected a chain of Scriptures that very clearly points to this. There were many other Scriptures that we could have included, but these are sufficient. We started with John the Baptist's foretelling the coming of the Christ who would baptize with the Holy Ghost. Then we have some of Jesus' last words before He ascended, concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit. His prayer to the Father fully shows His desire that His disciples be sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit. Then Peter called the Holy Spirit the promise which is for all. Paul said to the Ephesians that after they were saved they would receive the Holy Spirit. It is all so plain, and what is more, it is all so wonderful! Oh, the glorious plan of salvation!

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. To whom was John referring that would baptize with the Holy Ghost?
2. How was the Holy Ghost to "thoroughly purge his floor"? What does this mean?
3. What is the "promise of the Father"?
4. What does the Holy Spirit have to do with sanctification?
5. What is the benefit of having the Holy Spirit in one's self?

### ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

"For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." What deep and weighty words! Christ sanctified himself in meekly obeying the Father and resigning himself to go to the cross for the sins of mankind. It

was the act of obedience in submitting and consecrating His all to the will of the Father that meant so much. It was the subduing of self and its desires—the willingness and resignation to do all the will of God. This was sanctification for Christ to perform for us. If we would be sanctified, we must follow suit in like manner. We must consecrate our hearts and lives to all the will of God. We must have all our natural lives and what pertains thereto unreservedly on the altar for God. It is a definite act of our wills. It dissolves and destroys all stiffness and hardness in the soul. It will not condone and tolerate strife and vain glory. As we present our bodies to the Lord for His service and His will, we must be assured that He is faithful that promised, and that we can lay hold by faith to receive the promise of the Father, which is the Holy Spirit. It is the Canaan land to the soul. It is an experience that flows with milk and honey. It is entrance into the "Most Holy" for the Christian. Through Christ we have the privilege to enter in through the second veil and live in the presence of God. We are sanctified by the Holy Ghost. We are sanctified by the blood of Jesus. We are sanctified by the Word of God. These three agents combined, work together for the glorious experience of sanctification for the soul of man. The Holy Spirit seals us from sin and error; it preserves us in the love and grace of God. It is the crowning experience which elevates men's desires to a supreme love for God and His blessed will. How sad that Satan has succeeded in spreading so much darkness and confusion concerning this glorious theme of the Bible! He has found hearts to work through. May God help us to see this wonderful truth, gain the experience, and stand in His sanctifying grace unto the end. —Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The whole teachings of the New Testament are written to those who have been justified and sanctified. We learn, by reading about the experiences of people in the Old Testament, how they strove to please the Lord and failed. Why? because Jesus had not come and died on the cross, returned to heaven, and sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in their hearts. They failed again and again, and had to ask forgiveness yearly. But thank God, we have something much better today! We should seek all that God has for us. We can have power to live a clean, holy life! But we must have that cleansing of the nature before we can live the kind of life that is acceptable in God's sight—a life that satisfies our soul. How sad that so many today are living



under an old law experience! They seem to think that they have to ask forgiveness for their sins daily. They are living far beneath their privileges. God has a plan, and if we live according to that plan, we can have power to live victorious and without sinning. Praise God!

I told some men who wanted to give me some tracts on their false teaching, that I lived without sinning every day. They acted as if they were amazed. They said that no one could live without sinning. But I declared that by the grace and power of God working in my soul, I did. When they were leaving, one said that he was afraid that by my making the statement I had made I had sinned. Dear ones, it's sad today that the devil has so many deceived, when they could enter into that blessed experience of sanctification that seals our justification and gives us power to live holy before God each day. We thank God for the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith.

—Sis. Marie Miles

### THE MOTHER'S STEADFAST FAITH

Years ago a man and his wife moved from New England to Western New York. The husband was intent upon adding to his farms, his cattle, and his sheep; the wife, upon securing the true riches and serving the Lord. The nearest church was ten miles distant, and on Sundays the horses were always too tired to take her, so thought the husband. The believing wife somehow found the way to God's house, if only once in months. As children were born to them, she resolutely persevered in training them for a future and holy life. In these duties also she was opposed: "All such reading and singing and praying took too much time." Twelve children were the fruit of this union. Seven were sons, and as they grew older they delighted to gratify their mother by assisting her to enjoy religious privileges, and the father ceased in a measure his opposition.

In her fiftieth year the Master called her. Some of her children had embraced the truth, the rest were still in unbelief. To die and never meet again, it could not be. She called her family around her, and bade them "take heed to the Word of life," and "follow me as far as I have followed Christ."

"I am going home, and I am happy. Here in my heart God has given me an assurance that you, my husband and children, will all join me in the company of the redeemed. Not one of you will be left out; sooner or later you will lay down

your unbelief and rebellion, and serve Him who died for you. Do not put off that blessed day, but hasten to prove that God hears and answers prayer. Thirty years I have taught you and prayed for you. Some of you, I feel, will stand before men and preach the gospel of Christ, and souls will be converted through your means." Firmly as in days of health the dying woman spoke to her family. When the message was given, with a smile on her face she sank to rest.

The mother's assured trust was fulfilled. Her children all professed their faith in Christ, and five out of the seven sons became preachers of the gospel. The father lived as he had done until his eighty-second year, when in a powerful revival in the place which had grown from a forest to a town under his own eyes, he became convicted of sin. Humbly lamenting a long, wasted life, at the eleventh hour he entered the vineyard. Four years only were added to his days, and for two of these he was scarcely able to walk. But his was a true regeneration; every word and act revealed that he was born of God. He lived lamenting the past, and holding up his long life of rebellion as a beacon to others. God is merciful, and graciously received the servant who came at the eleventh hour.

—*Sketches from Life*

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March 15, 1981  
**THE CHURCH OF GOD**  
**Part I**

Matthew 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Acts 2:47b And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

1 Cor. 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and

another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

1 Peter 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

**Memory Verse:** But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 1 Timothy 3:15

**Central Thought:** Jesus Christ built His Church, a structure that is spiritual in composition and eternal in duration, upon the solid Rock of His eternal essence to be revealed to the souls of men by the Holy Ghost. Every person who is truly saved from sin through faith in Christ is a lively part of the Church of God.

**Word Definitions:** *Gates of hell:* It is evident that by the term "gates of hell" Jesus is speaking of the hand of death that quenches the hope of living again. Hell is translated from the Greek word *Hades* which means *the unseen*. There may be various other thoughts one can gather, but the fact that Jesus conquered death and affords His disciples the same victory is paramount. "*The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*" The Greek Diaglot renders this thus: And the Lord was adding those being saved every day to the Church.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

An understanding as to what the Bible teaches about the Church is truly an important foundational doctrine. A good

and accurate understanding of God's plan for His Church is vital for the child of God in these days. With so many different kinds of churches and organizations in the name of Christianity around us, we can keep ourselves from much confusion and error by adhering to the plain teachings of the Bible concerning the structure, nature, and workings of the Church of God. Our lesson today dwells on the Church of God pictured as a building, or house. This is such a common object with which we all are acquainted that it is very fitting and proper to show a comparison as such. Divinely built, divinely operated and controlled, the great Church of God is unique. It is what it is because of the guidance and administration of the Holy Spirit. Christ as the foundation and the Holy Spirit as the framing structure build together men and women into one building, which is a habitation of God through the Spirit.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the Rock that Jesus said He would build His Church upon?
2. Who is it that is added to the Church?
3. With what was the Church purchased?
4. How are the members of the Church framed together?
5. What does it mean to be a "lively stone built up a spiritual house"?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENT**

For a building to meet the demand for its use and purpose it must have a good strong foundation. For the great soul-saving institution that God purposed and planned that His Church should be, there must needs be a good solid foundation. It must be built upon a solid unmoveable substance, outwearing and enduring the storms and turbulence of the ages of time. In the midst of much corruption, error, great apostasy, and ruin, the holy prophet Isaiah foretold the building of the Church: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." Then he added the great promise and declaration: "He that believeth shall not make haste." Isa. 28:16. Christ Jesus was to be that Stone. It was the same stone that Daniel saw smiting the earthly kingdoms and becoming a great mountain, filling the whole earth. Jesus Christ was the Son of the Living God. Peter was confident and sure of this. Jesus said that this was revealed to Him by the Father in

heaven, and not by flesh and blood. This is an important point. Close observance of many professed Christian churches today reveals the great lack of Holy Spirit inspiration and revelation. Members and converts are taught the doctrines of the respective churches by "flesh and blood." Man, in some form or another, rules the church. Laws and rituals are taught and enforced. Souls are not granted the great and wonderful opportunity to be led and inspired by God in their individual lives. Many professed Christian churches today were started through the efforts of godly, Spirit-led men, but were formulated into cold, lifeless organizations through the departure of the followers from Holy Spirit discipline and guidance. This is what makes the Church of God what it is. It is governed and controlled and operated by the Holy Spirit. Each member is responsible to live close to the Lord so that the Holy Spirit will inspire, anoint, and direct. Against such a church the powers of sin, darkness, and death have no power. It is truly triumphant and possessor of the divine risen life of Jesus Christ, its founder and Head. —Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The early morning Church is symbolized in Revelation as a beautiful woman, clothed with the sun. Her glory shone out to all the world. Every nation under heaven had a representative present when her great power and glory were made manifest. (Acts 2:5-12) She is "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; . . . (is) holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:27) She is "arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." (Rev. 19:8, 9) There was such power in her beauty and cleanness that many fell at her feet asking, "What should I do to be saved from my sins so I can be clean and beautiful?"

In Revelation 12:1 and 2, we read that the early morning Church was delivered of a man child. When the Church went forth with power and carried a deep burden for souls, many were saved and added daily to the Church. Thus the man child was the early morning converts. This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah who said, "Before she travailed, she brought forth: before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." (Isa. 66:7,8) We read that after the power of the Holy Spirit fell upon the 120 on the day

of Pentecost, three thousand souls "gladly received his word" and "were baptized." (Acts 2:41) Thus the beautiful woman was delivered of a man child. A nation was born in one day. How glorious are the workings of our Lord and Saviour, who is the head of the Church! Jesus built His Church upon a rock, and we are thankful that the "gates of hell" cannot prevail against it. God has had a church ever since He set it in motion on the Day of Pentecost in 33 A. D. Praise God for those who are pure and holy, living sinless lives through the power of the Holy Spirit and are the Church of God in the world today!

—Sis. Marie Miles

### THE TWO HUSBANDS

Two young wives were deeply anxious about the souls of their impenitent husbands. They were intimate friends, and often conversed together on the subject so near their hearts. At length they resolved to spend an hour each day in prayer for them. Months rolled on, yet there seemed no change in the careless worldlings. They could still laugh lightly at their wives' concern for their souls. They could still turn carelessly from all their entreaties. Thus seven years rolled on, and still these Christian women prayed and labored. At that time they met, with spirits much depressed, and asked each other the question, "Must we give up all hope; must we see those so dear to us go down to eternal destruction?" Their resolution was formed never to give up that hour of prayer while life should last, but henceforth to redouble their earnestness.

Three more years had rolled away, when on a never to be forgotten evening one of the praying friends was awakened by the agonized groans which burst from the bosom of her husband. He was on his knees praying for mercy, and entreated her also to pray for him.

"The day of grace," said he, "is almost over, and the door of mercy will be shut against me for ever."

His distress in view of his sins continued to increase, and his devoted wife felt that God was about to answer the prayers she had offered for ten years in his behalf. With the morning light she sought her friend to communicate the glad tidings; and what was her surprise to find that she was preparing to come to her with the same joyful intelligence!

In the same day were these two men brought to see their condition as sinners, and at about the same time they were led to accept of the mercy so freely offered in Christ Jesus.

Christian wife or husband, do not be discouraged though a season of revival passes by and your companion is still without

the fold. Still labor and pray for his or her conversion as long as you live, or until you see them at the feet of Jesus. "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

Is an hour a day too much to spend in prayer for such an end? You will not think so in eternity. —Sel.

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March 22, 1981  
**THE CHURCH OF GOD**  
**Part II**

Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

1 Cor. 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

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

28 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.

**Memory Verse:** For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being

many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Romans 12:4, 5.

**Central Thought:** The Church of God is pictured in comparison to the natural body with many members, each different in function and office, yet united in one body by the Holy Spirit that works in each one according to His will.

**Word Definitions:** *FIRST* apostles, *SECONDARILY* prophets, *THIRDLY* teachers: first, second, and third. The apostles planted the truth and were followed by the prophets and teachers. *Members in particular:* each member a separate part. *Vocation:* calling.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

The success of any organization depends largely on its foundation or backing, and the relationship that its members have with one another. It is a proven fact that confusion, lack of control and discipline, and factions and divisions can disrupt and ruin any organization. What stopped the work of the building of the tower of Babel? It was the confusion of tongues and the division that followed. They could no longer work together because of the lack of communication. Frustration comes with dividing and pulling asunder. Paul at one time disrupted the council that was arrayed against him because he declared that he was in question concerning the resurrection. The topic of a resurrection was a controversial issue. It threw the council into an uproar. God has designed His Church to operate as a body in unity, with no division or confusion. This calls for a mind, attitude, and spirit of co-operation and humility. No greater likeness of what God wills that His Church should be is found than that of the physical body. Each member functioning and operating in its individual place is a perfect picture of the Church of God functioning in this world with all the members working in perfect harmony.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Why is unity of Christians such an important thing in the Church?
2. How is this unity brought about?
3. Is agreement among members needful? What happens when disagreement arises and is not handled rightly?
4. What really is the factor that makes the members of the Church of God one?



5. Why cannot all the members have the same office?
6. Who sets the members in the Church?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

We are called to a great vocation. We are called to be saints of the most High God and members of the greatest organization in the world. The Church of God is the most perfectly organized body on the face of the earth. Each member has died to his own ideas and desires, and has given himself over to know and to do the will of God. All strife and vain desires are quenched and guarded against. Lowliness and meekness with longsuffering is supreme. Each one realizes the value of unity and therefore will endeavor to keep it. Each one realizes the damage that division and pulling apart can do to the work of God. There is but one body. There is but one Church. All the members of that one body or Church are members one of another. A clear line of communication must be kept up. Many of the divisions and problems that arise in the work of the Lord come from a lack of real communication. We must all be heart to heart. God works in different ways with each of His children. He entrusts each one of His servants with a particular and a unique gift. It is error to look on another and condemn him because he is not just like us in every way. The hand, the ear, the eye, the foot and the tongue all have different functions in our natural bodies, but each is important. God endues His ministers with different burdens and gifts. God wants us to recognize and respect these various offices. By keeping an humble attitude and a desire for the preservation of unity, the Church of God can move on in good order and cooperation. God burdens His ministers along various lines of truth to be preached and taught. They have various mannerisms and methods of delivering their messages. Some are more talented, some seem more comely, but God has tempered the Church together to make up for this difficulty and fine difference. Divine love and humility must reign in each member; otherwise, the friction will build up. This is the plan for the Church of God. It is for each child of God to seek to know his or her place in the great body of Christ, and faithfully function and labor in that capacity until God calls them to their reward. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The truth that "God set the members every one of them in the body, as it pleased Him," is very important and should be

acknowledged by every child of God. If every one would recognize this truth and accept it, I feel that much more could be done for God. For instance, God sets one member in the body to hand out tracts. This person has a burning desire to get out as many tracts as he can, and it seems he knows just where to put them and how to give them out so they will be the greatest blessing. Now, this could cause some friction if each child of God did not look at it rightly. The one who did not have a burden to give out tracts, but was laboring in another capacity, might look on the other one's efforts as not being very valuable. He might say, "It's just a waste to give out those tracts. Most of them are torn up or thrown away." The one who gives out tracts might say about the ones who don't, "I wonder why they don't give out tracts. They must not have any soul burden at all or they would give out tracts." Both have wrong attitudes. The one who is called to give out tracts should labor in his calling and pray for others who do not have that calling but are burdened in another direction. The one who does not have the calling to give out tracts should pray for the one who gives them out, and it might even help if he would give that one some money with which to get more tracts to give out. This is the working in harmony of the body—one member working with another.

A certain sister had a burden to go from neighborhood to neighborhood teaching the children. Another sister said, "She is just wearing out her life doing that, because those children do not have any training at home." This sister didn't have any burden for teaching children, so that was her thought about it. The attitude should be: "I do not have a burden or calling to teach children, but I am glad that Sis. B— is doing it, and I am praying for her." Oh, how beautiful it is for each member to supply the other and pray for each other as they labor in the calling God has given to each!

—Sis. Marie Miles

### **"IT'S MORE TO ME HOW HE LIVED."**

Charles Baker was fifteen years older than his only brother Edwin, who seemed to him more like a son than a brother. Charles, during his childhood, knew no mother's care, but in his fourteenth year his father married again, and Charles welcomed to his heart a baby brother, and was permitted to name the darling Edwin.

The father of these boys was not a Christian, though his strictly moral life had led the pious woman whom he married

to think him one. When she discovered her mistake she was greatly grieved. Her regrets were increased when she perceived that he made morality his idol, and that he had trained his only son to his own views. She hoped at first to induce them to change their opinions, but soon found that all her attempts would be firmly and persistently repelled. When her little Edwin was born, she commended him in faith and prayer to God, and her fond hope was, that through him she might be able to reach the hearts of his father and brother. She trained him in the knowledge and ways of the Lord, storing his memory with hymns and Scriptures, and constantly seeking the divine benediction upon her efforts.

Mr. Baker and his eldest son, in the pursuit of their business were most of the time absent from home, but their return was always greeted with joy by little Edwin, who delighted to climb upon their knees and repeat the pretty verses and beautiful Bible stories which his mother had taught him. Neither father nor brother could or wished to repulse him, his affectionate and winning ways taking their hearts by storm. Fondly the mother saw and hoped, yet she was not permitted to witness the consummation of her wishes.

When Edwin was ten years old and his brother twenty-five, an epidemic carried to the grave in one day both father and mother. Charles was overwhelmed by the blow, yet his first consolation came from the little one for whose sake his regrets had been keenest. As he was pressing the child to his heart in the anguish of their sore bereavement, Edwin gently whispered, "Don't cry so, Charlie; I know a beautiful verse which I think was written on purpose for us: 'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.' Isn't that good, Charlie?" The weeping young man could not answer, but he folded the darling boy closer to his breast and was comforted.

Years passed on. Edwin never forgot his mother and her God. Through her prayers he had a tenderness toward God from his cradle, and his life was a daily picture of constant, yet unobtrusive piety; for "even a child is known by his doing, whether his work be pure and whether it be right." Charles almost idolized the young brother so worthy of his love, yet was strangely blind to the secret of his rare worth. He saw that his mind was one of no common order, and resolved to bestow upon him an ample and liberal education. For this purpose he pursued his calling with untiring diligence, their father not having left sufficient means to carry out such a

plan without his utmost efforts. Love for Edwin made every burden light, and he pictured to himself a brilliant future when he should see his young charge an orator or statesman, at the bar or in the senate chamber.

The first check to Charles' ambition was when dear Edwin, in his fifteenth year, publicly presented himself to profess his hope and purpose to be the Lord's.

Charles still held his father's views of the sufficiency of worldly morality, and he felt that with these, his brother's profession of the gospel wholly conflicted. Yet he could find no cause for complaint against Edwin, who, aware of his brother's notions, was doubly careful in seeking by divine help, to live consistently with the higher standard which he had taken for the law of his life.

Three years more passed away, and the young Christian, now partly through his college course, announced to his brother his desire and hope to prepare for the gospel ministry. Charles had never anticipated such a calling for his brother, and his heart rose in stern opposition. Edwin meekly avowed his own convictions of duty, but finding his brother inflexible, felt it right to delay his final decision until his college studies were ended. Saying kindly but firmly, "Then, Charles, I shall be a man, and the responsibility of deciding what my heavenly Father requires of me will rest upon my own conscience and heart," he patiently "bided his time."

Charles could no longer be blind to the reality and the beauty of his brother's piety. He looked at Edwin with keen eyes, for if he could see any glaring faults or inconsistencies, he could found upon these unanswerable arguments against the profession which he wished to follow. Edwin was not perfect; he had shortcomings sometimes to mourn over, but they were so humbly confessed and so heartily lamented, that his penitence and humility were so many cumulative proofs of his sincerity.

The period now drew nigh when Edwin must decide for himself the weighty question which he trembled to approach. He sought the counsel of Christian friends, but more than all he asked the aid and guidance of the Spirit of God. His decision was at length reached. He said to his brother with trembling and tears, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel"; and though Charles did not consent to his plans, he ceased to oppose them.

But neither Charles nor his brother foresaw the issue. Edwin never had a strong physical body, and the long conflict

of mind and suspense in which he was with regard to his future course, made serious aggressions upon his health. Charles was the first to feel alarm, but shut his eyes to the progress of the malady. Death, however, waited not for Edwin's hopes or Charles' fears. With cheerful submission the young Edwin bowed to the king of terrors, while Charles felt that with his young brother's removal from earth every ray of hope would be for ever quenched. He had no ears for the song of victory which the dying child of God shouted even amid death's waves; Charles felt as if his own heart were dead. But when he looked upon that peaceful face beneath the coffin lid, the memory of Edwin's consistent Christian life, the picture of his daily walk with God, rose vividly before him. Stronger witnesses for Jesus were these than even the radiance of the closing scene. With Edwin's Bible in his hands, and the remembrance of Edwin's piety in his heart, upon his knees beside those marble features, he sought, and there is reason to believe, truly found the Saviour. Thus it was, that when the earth fell upon his brother's coffin, and a friend tried to soothe his grief by bidding him remember *how triumphantly Edwin died*, Charles earnestly replied in the words at the head of this narrative, "It's more to me *how he lived!*"

—*Sketched from Life*

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March 29, 1981

THE CHURCH OF GOD  
Part III

Isaiah 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

62:4 Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

5 For as a young man marieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

Isaiah 54:5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

Romans 7:4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

**Memory Verse:** For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Ephesians 5:23.

**Central Thought:** We that believe, love, and obey Jesus Christ are united to Him in one body as His holy Bride, the Church of God. The relationship of a man and his wife is a likeness of the close union of Christ and His Church.

**Word Definitions:** *Hephzibah*: delight. *Beulah*: married. *Husband*: from the word *House-band*, one who holds the household together with love, ingenuity, wisdom, and honour. *Wife*: from the word *Weave*, which means one who weaves the various cords of domestic life into one strand of happiness. *Nourish*: to rear up or train (Greek). *Cherish*: to warm, to brood, to foster (Greek).

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Today we will study the Church of God in the spectrum of being the Bride of Christ. It is a most sublime and inspiring thought to think that the saved ones can have an association with the King of kings like unto that of husband and wife! It was prophesied thus to be. From Isaiah's writing, we see it foretold that the Church would be united to the Lord as a precious and holy Bride. We are persuaded that when God instituted holy matrimony in the beginning, it was to portray to us this truth. God would have us to know how dear and

precious we are to Him. We are joined to the Lord in one spirit. That is our relationship with Him. The fact that this association brings to us His care and provision, nourishing and cherishing us, should comfort and inspire us in the hard battles and temptations of life. The law that God gave on Mount Sinai failed to bring mankind into this happy experience. Christ gave himself for us on the cross to blot out the old law, so that we could be married to Him. This is the land of Beulah.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Who is the Bridegroom? Who is the Bride?
2. Why is the Church in relation to Christ likened as to a Bride to her husband?
3. What should this mean to us? If Christ loves us as a husband, should we ever want to leave Him?
4. How did Christ prove His love for us?
5. How close is our union with Him?
6. How are we members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones?
7. How do you feel toward someone you cherish? Does Christ feel that way about us?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Think of the joy that a young man has when he takes a young woman that he dearly loves to himself! Think of the happiness and bliss a young woman feels at that time, also. You are looking at a picture of something far more precious than that. Jesus Christ has assumed the nature, disposition, attitude, and responsibility of a Bridegroom in His association with the souls of men. He is the lover of the soul. He nourishes and cherishes us. He takes advantage of every opportunity to work for our eternal good. In the bosom of the love of this wonderful Bridegroom, we have no fear. We rest in His love. We are assured of His constant care and attentive watchfulness over us. Because He has betrothed us to Him in righteousness forever, He will never leave nor forsake us. If anyone leaves, it will be us. He will not forsake us unless we forsake Him. Christ has but one bride. This bride is made up of all the redeemed who have turned from sin and found this blessed Bridegroom of the soul in being born again by the Spirit of God. This brings us into one. This makes us the Church of God, His body. He wills that His Church be pure, spotless, and blameless. He shed His blood that this might be.

For this to be, the lives of His saints must be pure and spotless. It works an experience in the soul. He gave Himself that we might be sanctified. Every trace of sin must be swept away through the agency of the blood of Christ, the Spirit of God, and the Word of God. This will bring us to the place of purity and freedom from the world and all its defilement. We can rejoice with Christ in a marriage that will last forever and ever.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We have the beautiful Church of God in all of her glory portrayed in our lesson. But there is another woman symbolized in Revelation that is the very opposite. She is not pure and holy as the beautiful woman that is without blemish and is pure and clean. In Rev. 17:3-6 we read of the Apostate church. This woman was decked out in pearls and precious stones. She held in her hand a cup, but it was "full of abomination and filthiness of her fornication." On her forehead was written, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." She rode on a scarlet colored beast. The woman was "drunken with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." The scarlet beast symbolizes the Roman Empire, or Papal Rome. The woman symbolizes the Catholic church. The Catholic church was establishing away among the Church of God. Many rose up and brought in false teachings, and drew away many after them; thus the Catholic church was started. The true Church "fled into the wilderness," or went into hiding. Those who would not become Catholics were killed. History tells us that 60 million were killed for this reason.

We notice that this apostate church has some daughters. About 1530 A.D., Martin Luther, as well as others, rebelled against the Catholic church. The time was ripe for the fulfillment of this prophecy. God began to work, and much of the real truth of the morning church was being taught. People began to get saved, but those who were saved were mixed up in the Apostate churches, which were the daughters of Babylon. About 1880, or a little over one hundred years ago, God sent out D. S. Warner and others to preach the whole truth. They said, "Come out from among her and be ye separate." The true children of God heard the call and came out. Today God has a people that are living to all the truth and are holy, without sin, pure and clean. That is the true Church of God.

—Sis. Marie Miles



## "THERE'S ROCK AT THE BOTTOM."

When my Willie was sixteen, he accidentally dropped a valuable watch into the well. His father was absent from home; and without consulting me, he resolved to recover the treasure. Providing himself a long-handled rake, he gave it in charge to his sister Jennie, two years younger, and bidding her lower it to him when he called, he stepped into the bucket, and holding fast by the rope, commenced his descent. The bucket descended more rapidly than Willie expected, and struck heavily against the side of the well; the rope broke, and he was thrown into the water.

"Mother, I shall be drowned," was his despairing cry; which Jennie reechoed with a wail of anguish. But I knew the depth of the water, and shouted to him as calmly as I could, "Stand upon your feet, Willie; the water isn't over four feet deep." "But I shall sink in the mud," said the poor boy, still striving to keep himself afloat by clinging desperately to the slippery stones. "No, Willie, *there's rock at the bottom*. Let go of the stones, and stand up."

The assurance of a hard foundation, and the impossibility of holding much longer to the slimy surface of the stone wall, gave him confidence. He felt for the rocky bottom, placed his feet firmly upon it, and to his great joy found that the water scarcely reached to his shoulders. I sent Jennie to the house for a new strong rope, and fastening one end of it securely, I lowered the other to him to be tied into the bucket, and we drew him safely up. "O Mother," said the dear boy when he was rescued, "those were precious words to me, *'There's rock at the bottom'*; I shall never forget them."

Two years after, in a commercial panic, my husband's property was swept away, and we were reduced to poverty. At first I bore bravely up. I did not prize wealth and luxury for my own sake, neither did I covet it for my children. I chiefly mourned for my husband's disappointment and his crushed hopes, and strove by unflagging cheerfulness to chase away the gloom which settled so heavily upon him. I endeavored to assist him, not only by the utmost economy in household expenses, but by devising plans for the future. Willie and Jennie were old enough to earn their own support, and even to assist in the education of the younger children. I succeeded in putting them in the way to do this. I felt strong and brave, and almost wondered at my husband's despondency.

But new reverses came. The bank in which Jennie had deposited her quarter's salary, which might partially meet our

necessities, suddenly failed, and her money was lost. I could bear this too; she would soon be able to replace it. Next, the school in which she taught was disbanded, and Jennie had to take much lower wages; but she still earned a little. I said cheerfully, "We will not murmur; half a loaf is better than no bread." Next Willie's hand was disabled by an accident, and he lost his job. My courage began to give way; but rallying myself for one more effort, I resolved to brave the reproaches of friends and the world's dread laugh, and seek remunerative employment for myself. It sorely tried my womanly delicacy, yet it brought the needful aid, and I battled with my wounded sensitiveness, and again boosted my failing courage. The last blow came—sickness suddenly laid me prostrate. "I shall give up, now; we must all sink together," was the language of my despairing soul.

"Dear Mother," said Willie, when he heard my lamentation, "do you remember what you said to me when I was at the bottom of the well? I have often thought of it of late. I know we are in deep waters, but God has promised that they shall not overflow us. And is not His word a solid foundation? Let us plant our feet upon His promises, and stand firmly. We cannot sink, for *'there's rock at the bottom.'*"

I heard, and took the lesson to my heart. I saw that I had been clinging to the slippery stones of human strength and self-dependence; and so, when the providence of God bade me let go my hold, I was in despair. But the bank of heaven had not failed; God was able to redeem His promises, and though I stood in deep water, it should not overwhelm me, neither should I sink, for "there's rock at the bottom."

So from the chamber where pain and illness still hold me prisoner, I send to each burdened and weary child of God who is tempted to feel that all is lost, the key-note of my new and grateful psalm, Whatever your sorrow or strait may be, plant your feet trustingly upon the Rock of ages, and with me, "thank God, and take courage." —*Sketches from Life*



