

FAITH^{AND} VICTORY

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In The Holy Land



Far down o'er the ages a promise divine
Descended to us in the fulness of time,
A seed should appear as the stars of the heav'n,
And they should inherit a land to be giv'n.

From Egypt we started, resolved to be free,
And God cast our foes all behind in the sea;
Then straight thru the wilderness onward we moved,
No halt, we determined, till Canaan we proved.

The wide severed waters of Jordan we passed,
Our lot in the land of all blessings we've cast;
The "ites" are destroyed, and the land is our own,
One King, our Redeemer, we worship alone.

This land is salvation, and holiness pure,
We find it in Jesus, our title is sure;
O sweet land of Beulah, thy glory divine
Forever and ever unclouded shall shine.

Oh, we are the seed so happy and blest,
That dwell in the land of Canaan's holy rest;
Here streams of pure love are flowing along,
And anthems of glory are sounding in song.

—D. S. Warner

Remove Not the Ancient Landmarks

By Ostis B. Wilson

(Part III)

We hear folks sometimes talking about God restoring to us certain things which they are conscious to be lacking. This is the wrong approach to the problem. We should be praying for God to restore us to the standard and place in our lives and experiences where these things are. These things—divine glory, spiritual power and blessings, etc. make up the faith which was once delivered to the saints. They were delivered once, were never taken away and consequently can never be given again. They were enjoyed by the church in the early morning time. Then when there was a decline from those standards of

the early morning church, these things were no longer enjoyed in a general sense. Then after the long reign of the beast of Rev. 13 (Papalism) known as the "Dark Ages," and the reign of the second beast (Protestantism) known as the "dark and cloudy day," when the evening light reformation broke and the saints came out into the full light of the gospel and back to the standards of Christ and the apostles and the early morning church, they found these things right there where they had been left when the first apostasy came and they enjoyed them then just as the early church did. This should be sufficient to convince us that the standard of holiness and spiritual life are closely connected with the manifestations of divine glory and power among us.

In the 26th chapter of Genesis, 12-25, we have a story related concerning Isaac, the son of Abraham, which has an important connection with my thought here. Before this time Abraham had dwelt among the Philistines in the land and had digged wells of water there for his flocks and herds which were very great. Now Abraham has died and the Philistines have stopped up the wells of water which he had dug. Now Isaac comes to dwell in that same land and he has great flocks and herds also, and he went in and dug out those same old wells which had been dug in the days of Abraham, his father, which had been stopped and filled with earth by the uncircumcised Philistines. Verse 18 says, "And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them."

Now let us realize that the common tendency is always to slacken and "let up." This must be steadfastly resisted by all of us. The natural trend is always downward and the drift is always away from God and right. We, as saints, must not give way to this tendency but must pull against the tide of the world with all the strength we have. Each generation is inclined to accept just a little lower standard than the preceding generation held. Whatever standard we hold now, the rising generation will hold just a little

lower standard and so on and on with each succeeding generation unless the heart is definitely wrought upon by the Spirit of God and a deep spirituality and deep holiness of life is maintained. Those among us who are more worldly minded and consequently less spiritual will always be ready to settle for a lower standard of life and ready to stop the wells which have been dug by our fathers.

But let us take note in the above scriptures that Isaac dug again in the wells of his father and called them by the same names, etc. Oh, how we need to dig deep in the wells of our fathers—the early brethren—those wells of deep sincerity, deep humility, deep devotion, deep spirituality, deep godliness, and deep holiness of life and deep in the well of separation from the world and worldly things. In 1 John 2:15-17 we read, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Here we have a clearly set land mark and definitely established corner stone from which to run all our land lines and set our bounds. Let us call things by the same names by which our fathers called them and let us not feel it extremism to do so. The early brethren taught strongly against the wearing of gold and all ornamentation. Plainness and modesty in dress and behavior and general conduct of life characterized the lives of those early brethren and saints. The New Testament teaches this also—1 Peter 3:3 and 1 Tim. 2:9. But I have seen entirely too many gold watches, gold bands and ornaments among us in recent years for my comfort. I see today too many short sleeves, short skirts, thin and sheer apparel, spike heels, bare limbs, etc. among us. The brethren of former years taught against all these things and many more in principle. But there is a move on foot today to remove the bounds and destroy the old land marks. Let us watch and be sober, folks.

Lewis F. Powell, President of the American Bar Association, in an address to a convention of this association in Miami, Florida on August 9, 1965 said, "An orderly society cannot exist if every man may decide which laws he will obey." Surely we can readily grasp the import of this and see that in a society where every man is a law unto himself there could be no order. But how about a church where each one is a law unto himself and where the standard is set to accommodate the individual consciences of the communicants? Could that be orderly any more than a society could be orderly on that basis? No. But God is calling for order in His church. His word says in 1 Cor. 14:40, "Let all things be done decently and in ORDER."

I readily recognize the importance of the individual's conscience and contend that he should keep his conscience clear between him and God at all cost. His conscience may not be perfect and clear but if he is inclined to trifle with his conscience, what chance

does he have? What chance would God have to deal with him? One must never reach such a point as that. But while recognizing the place of the conscience in everyone's life and relationship with God and placing proper importance upon it and keeping it clear between the individual and God, at the same time I contend that the individual's conscience has nothing at all to do with what we are to teach the church as its standard of holy living. I also recognize that God deals with people according to the light and knowledge they have, in part. But I also contend that the individual's light has nothing at all to do with determining what shall be taught to the people.

The individual's light is respected between him and God. So is his conscience. But neither is respected as a standard for the church to go by. If we just teach according to the people's light and knowledge, how would they ever gain more light? God wants us to lift up a standard for the people according to His Word irrespective of the people's light or individual consciences and let them all come to it. But, of course, while they are getting to it, their standing with Him is rated according to their light, knowledge and conscience, etc. and we should allow for that also in extending our fellowship and confidence to them while they are coming to it.

If God told us to lift up a standard for the people, would He not expect us to do that? Certainly. Would He expect us to be governed in that standard by any individual circumstance or condition? Certainly not. He would expect us to be directed by His Word and that only in lifting up that standard. But if we were to attempt to lift up a standard according to the individual's consciences, we would have many standards. But He said "a" standard.

—O. B. Wilson

(Follow closely the concluding Part IV in the next issue. This entire article of vital truth will be available at this office in booklet form in the near future.—Editor)

God Is Calling You!

Dear Ones in the wilderness: This short message of love is to let you know that God is calling you back into His fold. You have wandered long enough, you who sat and listened to the Truth preached, enjoyed it, and even accepted it to some extent. You love the saints, see their godly lives, their good deeds, but some representatives of sin have caused you to fail God, your precious loved ones, your community, and God's children. God needs your life. He is calling you to come back into His fold again. The saints accept all whom God accepts. No one knows better than you do what you ought to do. Pause—be honest! You do know right now what you should do and what God wants you to do.

Do you not realize that a day is coming—it may be sooner than you think—when you will need the prayers of the saints? Do you not realize that only God's children can pray the prayer of faith? Do you not realize that they are always ready and willing to

help anyone at any time? There is a little world around you in which God would love to have your light shine. He loves your soul and desires to put in you what it takes to give you a life of peace and joy, something which you have never experienced before.

Think on these thoughts, and don't forget all the truth in sermons you've listened to, the truth in song you've heard and helped sing, these which you have refused to measure up to. You are going to meet this at the Judgment. God and the saints love your soul.

What kind of seed are you now sowing? There is coming a reaping day. As you sow, so shall you also reap.

Consent now to come home and let's be laborers together and win precious loved ones to the Lord. Now! "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." John 4:35.

God needs dedicated lives to work for Him. Are you willing? What does Jesus want to do with your life? Only you can fill that place!

Remember Thy Creator, O Youth!

(Ecclesiastes 12:1)

"You are not your own, you have no right to yourselves. God made you; He is your Creator: He made you that you might be happy; but you can be happy only in Him. And as He created you, so He preserves you; He feeds, clothes, and upholds you. He has made you capable of knowing, loving, and serving Him in this world, and of enjoying Him in His own glory forever. And when you had undone yourselves by sin, He sent His Son to redeem you by His blood; and He sends His Spirit to enlighten, convince, and draw you away from childishness, from vain and trifling, as well as from sinful, pursuits.

"Remember Him; consider that He is your Creator, your loving and affectionate Father. In youth memory is strong and tenacious; but, through the perversion of the heart by sin, young people can remember anything better than God. If you get a kindness from a friend, you can remember that, and feel gratitude for it; and the person is therefore endeared to you. Have any ever given you such benefits as your Creator? Your body and soul came from Him; He gave you your eyes, ears, tongue, hands, feet, etc. What blessings are these! How excellent! How useful! How necessary! and will you forget Him?

"Remember Him in thy youth, in order that you may have a long and blessed life, that you may be saved from the corruption and misery into which young people generally run; and the evils they entail upon themselves by giving way to the sinful propensities of their own hearts. As in youth all the powers are more active and vigorous, so they are capable of superior enjoyments. Faith, hope, and love, will be in their best tenor, their greatest vigor, and in their least encumbered state. And it will be easier for you to believe, hope, pray, love, obey, and bear your cross, than it can be in old age and decrepitude.

"Remember Him now, in this part of your youth—you have no certainty of life; now is yours, tomorrow may not be. You are young; but you may never be old. Now He waits to be gracious; tomorrow may be too late. God now calls; His Spirit now strives. You have now health; sin has not now so much dominion over you as it will have, increasing by every future moment, if you do not give up your hearts to your Maker.

"There is another consideration which should weigh with you: should you live to old age, it is a very disadvantageous time to begin to serve the Lord in. Infirmities press down both body and mind, and the oppressed nature has enough to do to bear its own infirmities; and as there is little time, so there is generally less inclination to call upon the Lord. Evil habits are strengthened by long continuance; and every desire and appetite in the soul is a stronghold for Satan. There is little time for repentance, little for faith, and none for obedience. The evil days are come, and years in which you will feelingly be obliged to say, Alas! 'we have no pleasure in them;' and, what is worse, the heart is hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

—Adam Clarke, selected
by Bro. Leslie Busbee

Jesus Died to Save You!

I long to see my Savior,
And meet Him face to face,
And thank Him, oh, so kindly
For saving, keeping grace.

We long to see our loved ones,
But Jesus first of all,
As He has done so very much
To save us from the fall.

He paid the price that sad day
To save us from all sin,
And made a way to heaven
Where we can enter in.

So come, now, dear sinner friend,
Jesus loves everyone.
Then take up your cross daily,
And follow God's dear Son.

I know you'll not be sorry,
As I have tried both ways,
And find the way of holiness
Is the only way that pays.

—Effie Miller

"One man who had carefully made out his will was told by his attorney that he had left out his best friend—the One who had done the most for him. This attorney pointed out that God had not been remembered in the will; yet it was God who had given him all that he had. The man saw his mistake and changed the will to include the work of the church."

"Can a will that leaves large amounts to relatives and friends, but completely ignores the work of God and the Church, be called a Christian will? Can the testator be called a Christian steward?"

"FAITH AND VICTORY"**16-PAGE HOLINESS MONTHLY**

This non-sectarian paper is edited and published in the interest of the universal CHURCH OF GOD each month (except August of each year, which is campmeeting month, and we omit an issue that month to attend these meetings) by Lawrence D. Pruitt, assisted by Marie Miles and other consecrated workers at the FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 920 W. Mansur, Guthrie, Okla. 73044.

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

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Abraham Lincoln said: "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."

EDITORIALS



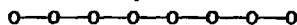
With feelings of deep appreciation to our readers, we report that each day's mail brings more of the subscription order blank envelopes with lists of names and addresses for the special three-month subscriptions. **Please keep them coming**, as it brings pleasure to us and the Lord in anticipation of reaching several thousand new people with the gospel message during the months of January, February, and March of 1967. Write us for more subscription order blank envelopes to fill out with additional names, or type, or **write plainly** the lists of names on a sheet of paper and mail them in **promptly**. A premium of your choice will be mailed to you for each list of ten names and addresses. Be a home missionary by participating in this gospel extension effort, and the Lord will bless you abundantly for your labor of love for souls for whom our Savior suffered and died on the cross of Calvary. Send in all the names by **December 8, please!**



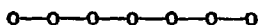
Wife and I were privileged the last week of September to visit our son and family, and the saints in the area around Loranger, La. where Bro. Herbert Probst is pastor. The Lord is blessing his labors and the congregation is moving forward under his pastoral care. We were glad to meet and worship with all the saints there again.



Sister Williams wrote on October 9 that Bro. Curtis Williams, Clearfield, Ky., was improving slowly and rests much better at nights, but still tires easily and suffers with his lung. They are very thankful for what the Lord has already done in answer to the prayers of the saints, and desire continued prayer for his complete recovery. As an evangelist, he is much needed in the work of the Lord. Their faith and trust are fully in the Great Physician.



Bro. Willie Murphey and his daughters, Kathleen and Patsy, just returned from a trip through the northeastern states where they visited a number of isolated saints and held services in several congregations.



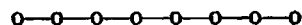
Clifford and Dorothy Wilson, our co-workers in the gospel publishing activities, made a quick auto trip to Oregon, leaving Oct. 1, to attend the funeral of Clifford's father, Bro. Sam Wilson, who passed rather suddenly though he had been bedfast for many months. May the Lord bless and comfort Sister Sam Wilson and all the children at this time of bereavement.



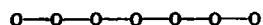
Johnny Ray, 15-year-old son of Hyrum and Geneva Ray of the Guthrie, Okla. congregation, suffered very serious injuries in a Honda-auto collision in Guthrie on Oct. 1. Near death, he remained in very critical condition for several days. In answer to the many earnest prayers, the Lord miraculously spared him, and many onlookers are amazed at his

rapid recovery. He seems to be improving very fast, though many bones need to heal yet. We trust that this event will mark a very definite turning point in Johnny's life—that he will turn and serve the Lord with his whole heart. In a much greater measure he now owes his life to God.

This tragic ordeal has been very hard on Bro. and Sister Ray, in addition to the resulting financial burden. Pray that God will give them comfort and sustaining grace, and open the proper channels to supply all their needs.



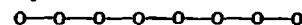
My sister, Marie Miles, editor of "The Beautiful Way," just returned from Denver, Colo. where she visited her son and family for a few days. Enroute by bus she was stalled in a snowstorm for about eight hours, but reached her destination safely.



Bro. and Sister Ira Stover returned to their home in Guthrie, Okla. from California on Oct. 15 after an absence of two months. He seems to be feeling well and preached a good message here on Sunday, Oct. 16.



The workers in the front office are keeping real busy taking care of the correspondence, filling tract and book orders, and taking care of the mailing lists. Those in the shop are reprinting tracts for stock, setting the type, reprinting, folding and binding books which have been out of print for many years. (These books just off the press are advertised elsewhere in this issue.) Yet with all this constant effort of these consecrated willing workers, we still have many more books and much more gospel literature that we would like to print and make available to the masses. In addition, we have received a number of requests that we publish the "Faith and Victory" paper twice a month. This all adds up to the fact that we are short of help to do what needs to be done. This general condition existed in Jesus' day 1900 years ago and he said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." Matt. 9:37, 38. Though many have responded to the call since that time, yet the situation remains practically the same today—that "the laborers are few" compared to the great world-wide need. Only what is done for Christ and souls will last eternally. The Lord cannot send unless there are those who have their ears and heart open to hear the call. The happiest place in life is in the center of God's will—dedicated and surrendered unreservedly into His loving hands. Many professors of religion have more or less made their own choices in life and have found their experiences very unsatisfactory. God's design, if accepted, will bring "joy unspeakable and full of glory."



The ecumenical or unity movement among the so-called churches has developed very rapidly in the last five years. Mergers and close co-operation between the denominations—Catholic and Protestant—have been increasing at a fast pace. The aim is to

organize one big church or superchurch. Even now "eight of the most important Protestant denominations have just blueprinted a merger designed to bring together 24 million U. S. churchgoers in the 1970s."

But would this proposed "United Church" answer Christ's prayer for His followers "that they all may be one"? John 17:21. Will the confederation of all the denominations produce the kind, quality and nature of the unity designed for the New Testament church? To these questions we must answer in the negative. The unity portrayed in the Scriptures can only be achieved by all partaking of that spiritual experience of the new birth—a complete regeneration of the nature of man. The unity of believers follows as a natural result of that experience. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body . . ." 1 Cor. 12:13. Salvation inducts one into the spiritual Body of Christ, and he is in oneness with all other members of that same body. Jesus built only one church, and the idea of a "plurality of churches" is foreign to the Scriptures.

The architects of the proposed "one world church" evidently are working on the premise that if a sect is a "cut off portion," then a unification of all the sects would produce the whole. The simple truth is that the sect system is no part or portion of the true church. The church that Jesus built is not a sect, but includes every true child of God universally. At best or worst, the union of all sects would constitute "BABYLON THE GREAT" in classic form.

History records what happened in the past when there existed a single religious system. Roman Catholicism held sway over the religion of Western Europe for about 1,300 years as a superchurch. The Pope exerted not only religious authority but also political power, even over rulers and emperors. Those who would not submit to that religion or bow to his authority were martyred—more than 50,000,000 of them. Will that happen again?

This trend of events in the religious world is a sign of the last days. John the Revelator foretold in symbolical language of the present scheme for the merger of all false religious systems. After the sixth wrath angel poured out his vial, the Revelator says, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Rev. 16:13, 14. The stage is being set for a combination of all false worshippers to compass "the camp of the saints" in one last gigantic attack. Rev. 20:9. Thank God, the fire from God out of heaven will vindicate and preserve the "beloved City," the Church of the living God which is built upon the Rock of eternal ages.—L.D.P.

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OBITUARIES



Mrs. Thedora (Teddie) Burns was born Jan. 6, 1886 to Mr. and Mrs. John Miller, in the State of Mississippi. She passed away Sept. 21, 1966 at the age of 80 years, 8 months and 15 days.

She was united in holy matrimony to Robert H. Burns. To this union 11 children were born, four preceding her in death. Years ago the family moved to Oklahoma City and she worshipped with the Church of God. She was a devoted Christian and faithful at the services of the church.

Survivors include seven daughters: Mrs. Theresa Thompson, Mrs. Opal Simms of Los Angeles, Calif., Mrs. Katherine Haley of Watonga, Okla., Mrs. Mozella Armstrong, Mrs. Jewel Laviolet and Mrs. Seleatha Smith, all of Okla. City; one brother, Leroy Cook, and two sisters, Mrs. Iva Green and Mrs. Geneva Love; 30 grandchildren, 36 great-grandchildren, and a host of relatives and friends.

The funeral was conducted by Bro. Herman Kelley, assisted by Bro. Lewis Williams, and Bro. Woodrow Warren. Texts: 2 Cor. 5:1, Rev. 2:10, 2 Tim. 4:6, 7.

Ed Crowl was born June 25, 1885, to Edward and Laura Crowl in Franklin, Tennessee. He departed this life September 8, 1966.

He came to Oklahoma City at an early age and made his home there. In the early 1900's he was saved and professed a hope in Christ until the time of his death. He was married twice. The first one is deceased, the second one is Mrs. Florence Perkins.

He leaves to mourn his passing two sisters, Mrs. Leona Ronaldson of Twinsburg, Ohio and Mrs. Lucy Graham of Cleveland, Ohio.

Sunrise tomorrow,
Sunrise in glory is awaiting for me;
Sunrise tomorrow,
Sunrise with Jesus for eternity.

The service was conducted by Bro. Herman Kelley, assisted by Bro. E. G. Sanders and Bro. Clifford Wilson. Text: James 4:14.

Bro. Earl McFarland was born Dec. 27, 1875 in Bethel Township, Clark County, Ohio, and departed this life at his home in Springfield, Ohio on September 15, 1966 at the age of 90 years, 8 months, and 19 days.

On November 30, 1893 he was united in marriage to Nancy (Nannie) Shroyer. She preceded him in death on May 27, 1966. To this union seven children were born; 5 sons, Chester L., Horace C., Herbert G., Forrest L., and Carl E.; two daughters, Nellie R. Bethel and Hazel L. Sparrow. Two sons, Forrest L., and Carl E., preceded their father in death.

He was a faithful father and a member of the Church of God.

The funeral services were conducted by Bro. S. E. Abbott.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. REVIVAL

The Los Angeles revival will be held, Lord willing, Nov. 25, 1966 through Dec. 4, 1966. We extend a hearty invitation to all. We solicit your sincere prayers. For further information write to Bro. I. C. Chandler, 415 11th St., Bakersfield, Calif. Phone FA 5-6752 or Bro. T. R. Summers, 207 E. 76th Pl., Los Angeles, Cal. Ph. 758-8319.

—Bro. I. C. Chandler, Pastor

HAMMOND, LA. ASSEMBLY MEETING

The Fall Assembly Meeting of the Church of God at Hammond, La. will be held, the Lord willing, November 20 to November 27, inclusive.

Sleeping quarters and food will be furnished on the free-will offering plan as usual.

We are looking for another outpouring of the Spirit and blessings of the Lord. We are expecting the Lord to send in His Spirit-filled, Spirit-led ministers to preach His wonderful truth.

For further information, write or call Bro. T. H. Coffey, Pastor, P. O. Box 1177, Hammond, La. 70401. Phone area code 504-345-2412.

ALL-DAY SERVICES AT SAPULPA, OKLAHOMA

The congregation at Sapulpa, Okla. cordially invites you to worship with them in all-day services on Sunday, Oct. 30. The chapel is a short distance north of Sapulpa on old Sapulpa Road. Come and worship the Lord with us in the "beauty of holiness." —Richard Madden, Pastor

REPORT OF BOLEY AND DOVER, OKLA. CAMPMEETINGS

The Campmeeting season has come and gone. We surely thank the dear Lord for the good He brought to our souls during the meetings we were privileged to attend.

The Boley and Dover, Okla. campmeetings were well attended this year. A few were saved in both meetings. Others sought for spiritual help. The Lord did some wonderful healing also. He was present in our midst to anoint the services and the preaching of His Word.

We were thankful for the ministers who worked and helped in these meetings and how the Lord did richly anoint each one.

Our dear Brother and Sister Crawley were in much of the Boley, Okla. meeting. They have been faithful through the years. Bro. Crawley testified how he had been going to the Boley meeting more than fifty years. They are feeble in body and need our prayers. Bro. Ostis Wilson attended a part of the Boley meeting, as well as other ministers. The Word was precious.

The Dover, Okla. meeting was blessed with a goodly number of ministers. We surely thank the Lord for blessing Bro. and Sister Darius Gibson to be in the meeting, and how the Lord had blessed Bro. Gibson in his body so that he was able to expound the Word of God. Let us continue to hold them both up in our prayers. Sister Gibson desires the Lord to restore sight to one of her eyes that is very dim. We thank the Lord for all the ministers that labored in these meetings and pray God's blessings on all.

We were blessed to have a brother attend the Dover meeting by the name of Joshua Peavy from Slagle, La. He came the first day and remained through the meeting. He stated he was looking for the Church of God, a people who lived according to the Word of God. He testified how he enjoyed the meeting. We have received a communication from him since he returned home, stating he hopes to come back next year. Let's pray for him.

I desire the prayers of the saints. I need help in my body. Christian love, —Katherine Williams

Anything that won't stand the test of prayer won't stand the test of the Judgment.

Prayer Requests

Pa.—Dear Ones in Christ: I enjoy your gospel paper. I am very glad God called me from a life of sin to godly living. I am glad for the "seed" He planted in my heart—that seed is Christ. I thank God each day anew for His blessings.

I have a special request of the Lord which I wish you to agree in prayer with me for—that my husband be loosed from sin and return to the Father's house. Pray that he will come to himself and feel his need, that he may be loosed from the power of sin. My children also need Christ very much.

In Christian love,

—Mrs. Ralph Lewis, Sr.

Miss.—Dear Saints at the Publishing House: I am sending in for prayer for my son, Arthur D. James, who is 19 years old. He is in the State Hospital and has been there three years. Please pray for him.

Your Sister in Christ,

—Bessie F. James

Virginia.—Dear Sister Marie: I want to write and let the saints of God know how much I enjoy reading the "Faith and Victory" paper. I thank the one who had it sent to me. I am not a Christian, but I came from a Christian home, and I do want so much to live for God. All my family are dead now. I have my own little family—my husband and five children. I thank the Lord for them. I enjoy reading the testimonies of the saints. Pray for me that I will find the Lord. I want to be saved. Also pray for my family. —Vivian E. Crockett

Mo.—Dear Brothers and Sisters, I am inclosing \$1.00 for the ten names. I am also requesting prayer for my body, and for a better understanding of God's Word. I need a closer walk with Him, so I will be able to stand in this testing time when so much sin and darkness are on every hand. Also pray for my children that they will be saved before it is too late.

Love to all the saints,

—Florence Burris

Ark.—Almost blind.—Verlene Williams.

Ore.—Sinus trouble. —Grace Jones.

Tenn.—Tumor —Grace Burger.

Ky.—Bro. Curtis Williams is improving, but still has trouble in his lungs. His father, who had several strokes, is improving. Pray for all of them.

Calif.—Varicose veins. —Sister McKinney.

Mo.—Afflicted ears. —Lana Lasiter

W. Va.—"My daughter-in-law has cancer."—Sister Roberts.

Okla.—Nervous condition and low blood pressure. —Sister Katherine Williams.

Pa.—Not well and cannot sleep at night —Sister Avis Tinsley.

Ind.—Pray for my 17-year-old son who has a serious nervous condition, and my husband who has palsy, and for the affliction on my body. —Sister Lowell Wilson.

La.—Sister Viva LaCroix desires earnest prayer for healing of cancer. Her trust is fully in God.

Calif.—"Pray for my complete recovery, also my brother who was in a wreck and received head injuries. He is saved."—Mary Worley.

Ill.—"Pray for my son who has gotten saved that he may have grace, also for his wife to be saved." —A Mother.

Calif.—"Pray for the healing of my grandson."—Sis. McKinney.

Kentucky—"Under deep trial."—W. Horsley.

Pray for some saved wives who are going through severe trials, caused by unsaved husbands.

God is still on the throne and answers the prayers of His trusting children. We not only receive many requests for prayer but also we receive many testimonies of answered prayer. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and for ever." "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

Christ's atonement made provision for the total man—soul and body. Nothing is more demonstrated in Jesus' ministry on earth among men. Divine physical healing is part of the gospel. "... with his stripes we are healed." By faith let us appropriate the promises for our healing.

—L. D. Pruitt



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MEXICO MISSIONARY REPORT

Calexico, Calif.—Dear Co-laborers: We greet you this morning in the sweet and holy name of our Jesus. How grateful we are for this Name which means hope of eternal life! This Name means liberty from the devil and a life of peace here while we journey on toward that all-important day, the Judgment.

We thought you would be interested to know some of what we have been doing here in Mexico and will try to give you a brief summary of the activities. First, we want to say that we certainly enjoyed the privilege of being in our homes in the States for a few days and being able to attend some of the campmeetings. We feel that we are better equipped to serve our Lord after hearing the messages that were food to our souls.

At this writing Sister Carrie Sheppard and I are in Rosarito, Mexico. We felt the Lord would have us go there to enable Sister Opal Kelly, who fell from the pick-up, to be in Mexico. The Lord has done marvelous things for her and her strength is returning rapidly. Sister Carrie and I go over to Patzcuaro every week-end to hold services. It is still very hot over there. This last week Brother Angel Rodriquez told us that a man who was picking cotton with them in the blistering sun, decided to rest in the shade before eating his lunch. When called, he failed to answer them, and going to see about him, they found him dead. Many have lost their lives due to the heat. One woman, to whom we have talked about her soul, but who never quite got around to doing anything about it, died from the heat about a month ago. Poor soul!

One time in services, some were testifying, and we heard a lady crying. When we asked her what was wrong, she said, "Oh, I feel so dirty and wicked; I want to get saved." We all prayed and that dear soul told us afterward that she didn't know what it was, but it was all gone. How we all rejoiced with her! Another dear sister who was faithful before, seems to be rather discouraged. She has such a hard time in the home, with a husband who is lazy, a gambler and drinker. They have a big family and she has a rough go of things. Do pray for her, for she certainly needs help from the Lord. The little old man who asked us to come to his home and have services, had his call from the Lord this last Thursday after a long-term illness. He claimed to be saved up to the very last that we knew. His wife, who is 96 years of age, still lives.

Brother Angel Rodriquez has nearly completed a room for us adjoining the chapel in Patzcuaro. This room has large windows in it to let the breeze through when there is one, thus making it more comfortable for us. Before coming to Rosarito, we stayed there for about a month and the heat was hard on us, though the Lord was good to help us through it.

The work has been rewarding here in Rosarito, as we see the fruits of labor from the Huskey and Wittenborn families. The saints here are very precious. Recently, two new families have been coming. One family's home burned and was a total loss, and their two-month-old baby girl received second degree burns on her face and right limb. She has improved to the point that we believe there will be no scars. The other family has three children. We trust that the mercy of the Lord extended to the baby will be the means of winning them to Christ. The saints both here and in the States have been good to help them in their need. The family with three children, who are coming now, are very sweet, too. The man was saved and began coming with his unsaved wife. One service day she seemed to be under conviction and her

husband told some of the workers that if some of them would visit her, he believed she was ripe for salvation. Sisters Carrie and Opal went on Monday morning, and though she was glad to see them, there was not the welcome of a saint. After visiting a while, praying that God would direct, the way was opened to talk to her about her soul. Prayer was offered, she prayed and asked forgiveness for all her sins, and arose a saved woman, and immediately was changed completely. She openly greeted the sisters and insisted on them having a meal with her right then. They accepted and she set out beans, Spanish rice and tortillas to be eaten with the fingers. They ate heartily, which seemed to really make her happy. The next Sunday when the call was made for those who needed sanctification, she came up and, after earnestly pleading in prayer, testified that she received it, and has a real sweet spirit.

With a burdened heart for the many who do not darken our doors for services, we have long sought the Lord for a means by which to reach them. The Lord has answered this by blessing us with means with which to buy a mimeograph which will be more efficient in printing many copies of portions of God's Word than the hectograph or jelly board which we have been using heretofore. Pray for us that we will use the wisdom of God in getting out the printed word to the people and always do it under the leadings of the Holy Spirit. Every child of God has a responsibility to those around them and we have been stressing this to our people here, that they, as well as we, are responsible to invite the people out and tell them about Jesus.

We are praying that God bless all His children, and we earnestly covet all your prayers, too, for the work and workers in Mexico.

Your Sisters in Christ, —Carrie Sheppard, Edith Cole and Opal Kelly, by Edith Cole.

MISSION REPORT FROM NIGERIA

Bro. B. U. Etuk, native missionary in Nigeria, W. Africa, sends his cover letter dated Oct. 4 for the type-written report of the mission activities for September written by the secretary, Bro. Nse Umanah. Following is a brief summary of these reports:

On Sunday, Sept. 4, a combined service was held at the main station at Three Towns Asana. Bro. Brownson Inyang taught the Sunday school, using the lesson in Matt. 10:1-10—the twelve apostles chosen and commissioned. The morning service was conducted by the pastor, Bro. Stephen Akpan, Jr. Other ministers speaking during the service were Bros. B. U. Ekpene, Ndareke Robson, W. G. Udoffia, and B. E. Udoka. The attendance numbered more than 330 at that service.

On the second Sunday a communion service was held at Ibagwa for all stations in that district under the pastorate of Bro. B. E. Udoka. The morning service was conducted by Bro. Michael Amos Unanam. Bro. Sunday Udo Udo and Bro. Robson read scriptures. Bro. B. E. Udoka preached the sermon from the text in Exodus 3:5. The Lord's Supper was observed by more than 300.

On Sunday, the 18th, a communion service was held at Ibekwe for the believers in the Minya Ntak district. Ibekwe is about 13 miles from the central mission. Bro. Michael Akpan conducted the morning service. Bros. Paul M. Umoh and Johnson Mbebe read scriptures. The sermon was preached by Bro. B. E. Udoffia, using the

text in 1 Cor. 11:30. Bro. Stephen Akpan, pastor in charge of the Minya Ntak district, added some fitting words. Over 200 participated in this communion service. Eleven new converts were counted.

On the last Sunday a communion service was held in the Creek area for all the congregations who meet at Three Towns Ikono. The area is under the charge of Pastor Macauley U. Ekpene. The morning service was conducted by Bro. Frank U. Uffort. Other ministers read scriptures and Bro. M. U. Ekpene preached on the subject of observing the Lord's Supper. Text: 1 Cor. 11:26. Participants numbered 315.

On Sept. 30 a business meeting was held at the Central Mission, in which appreciation and thanks were expressed to the Lord and the saints in America for the regular financial support extended to the 25 native ministers and gospel workers, as well as to other mission expenses in Nigeria.

The primary purpose of the Church's mission work in Nigeria is to take them the gospel "which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." Their greatest need is salvation from sin and superstition, and only through the knowledge of the saving grace of Jesus Christ can they be delivered. The soul is more important than the body. The gospel is needed more than physical welfare programs and social services. The poorest of the poor can be saved from sin and ready to meet the Lord.

Most missionary authorities agree that the best method to reach the heathen is through the native missionary. Get him soundly converted and filled with the Holy Spirit, teach him the Scriptures and send him to his own people with the gospel. None of the native missionaries which the Church is now supporting have been promised any allowance, nor do they receive any stipulated amount, but only that which the saints in America feel led by the Spirit to give for that purpose.

This month the Nigerians observed their sixth anniversary of independence from England. Unfortunately, the country has been shaken again recently with political upheavals and tribal fighting, particularly in the northern area. Bro. Etuk writes that the mid-western and eastern regions have not been disturbed so far. This is where the Church of God mission stations are located.

—L. D. Pruitt

TESTIMONIES

Pa.—Dear Sister Marie and all saints everywhere, greetings in the precious name of Jesus! We are so glad to know that there are those who are living true to God in this world of sin. Those who say God is dead, He is dead to them, for they do not know Him. I do wish I could give them my God as I would a piece of bread, but they have to hunger and thirst after Him for themselves. My neighbors need Him, my children need Him, my brothers and sisters need Him, in fact, most of the world need Him. The fields are so white and the laborers are so very few.

We do thank God for touching Mother's hand. It looks the same, but now she is making potholders on a frame my sister gave to her. She has such a strong spirit and dislikes sitting with folded hands; wants to be doing something, so she sets a goal for herself for the day and usually makes it, too. Her mind is failing fast, but she surely remembers the Scriptures. When a question is asked, she can give the answer now, so we know God will be with His own right to the end. She

had two real bad spells with her heart, but God has seen fit to leave her with us. I won't think of the time when she is gone, but enjoy her while she is here. What a wonderful mother she has been to all of her ten children—giving advice when needed, soothing hurt feelings and hurt bodies, doing all the sewing for her family! She kept up her side of the family budget during depression, and it wasn't easy to get the meals ready and do all the work connected with rearing a family, but God saw her through it all. She suffered persecution but she remained faithful to her God. Praise His wonderful name!

I would like some tracts on "How to be Saved." People don't know how today, so hope to get some enlightened. They have to hunger after God or they can't see it.

We do pray to God for you each day that He will give wisdom to do His work in the way He would have it done.

Please pray for my family. In the Bible when they did what was right in their own eyes, they didn't prosper and the battle was lost. Please pray for my loved ones.

We do pray God to be with you through each day and help you in all ways that you need Him.

Yours in His service, —Dona Campbell and Eva Cox

o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

Okla.—Dear Bro. Lawrence and Saints everywhere: I feel that I should write my testimony. God has been so good to us and supplied our needs so wonderfully that I cannot refrain from praising His dear name. This leaves us both saved. Truly I thank God for saving my companion. I had prayed for him for many, many years, and in the spring he gave his heart to God. He has had a very serious illness, but is up and able to drive around. For this we truly give God the praise.

We wish to thank all of the saints who visited and prayed with us and truly we do appreciate the offering sent us from all the saints. God is not slack concerning His promises as some men count slackness. He promised to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory. I am a living witness to God's healing power and His saving grace. Many times Husband was very sick, and we asked for prayer. The Lord always undertook for us. When our financial means would get low, God always opened up a way. Praise His dear name! Truly, He is worthy to be praised, and I mean to praise Him more and more.

The children and I desired to go to the Boley, Okla. campmeeting. It seemed that we would not be able to go, so I explained to them that if we got to go we would have to pray and ask the Lord to make a way. We started packing our clothes and getting ready, still praying and trusting God. The children and I would get down and agree together, leaving it entirely in God's hands. He miraculously opened up a way for us, and I told the Lord I would write this testimony in the paper.

Truly, I love the Lord with all my heart and I mean to be a living example for Him. Please continue to pray for us. Husband is young in the cause and is still weak in body. Please pray much for him. He has had laryngotomy, and desires to learn to talk again. He says he is expecting to be able to speak again.

Yours in Christ, —Theresa and Perry Wright

o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

Mo.—Dear Saints and readers of "Faith and Victory," greetings to all: We want to take this means of expressing our appreciation to everyone for your prayers and interest in us since we have been so sorely afflicted. We are both better at this writing, Oct. 3. We feel your prayers and the tender love of God to us has brought us this far. We have it settled to fully trust Him and be true and faithful until He is through with us here. We have received some precious lessons in this prolonged

affliction. We have truly been put to the test, but never have we desired to turn to man for help. Your love to us and the deep interest shown to us, have been so greatly appreciated. Words fail us to know how to tell you each one what it has really meant to us. Anyway, we feel we know how to sympathize and get under the burden for others who are so sorely afflicted. Some have driven hundreds of miles to be with us. The letters, cards, and offerings have come just at the time needed. May the dear Lord richly bless and reward you every one according as your need may be.

Your Brother and Sister, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints,

—Darius and Evelyn Gibson
Rt. 3, Box 23, Seymour, Mo.

o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

Ind.—Dear Sister Marie and co-workers: I do want to praise the Lord as He has been so good to me. I wrote you about nine months ago to pray for the growth on my eyelid to be removed. God has healed it completely. Praise His wonderful name! He has healed me and answered prayer for me so many times, I just can't praise Him enough.

I also want to thank all of the saints that prayed for me. May God bless each one of you.

I have some very special unspoken requests I would like for you to pray about.

Your Sister in Christ, —Mrs. Silas Whitson

o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

La.—Dear Sister Marie, greetings in the dear name of Jesus: I'm still encouraged to press the battle on. I want to testify to the way the Lord blessed me when I was anointed at Guthrie this summer. I have had ulcers in my stomach for a year or maybe longer; also I had gall stones. The Lord healed my stomach and now I can eat almost anything I want. I have gained 15 pounds since August. I surely do thank the Lord for touching my stomach. However, I still have cancer and it is getting worse. Unless the dear Lord undertakes soon, I'll be called on. I know He is able to heal the cancer, too, and I desire the prayers of the saints everywhere that I'll be completely healed. I'm in quite a lot of pain all the time now, so please pray that I'll be strong and able to stay true to the Lord. My determination is to trust Him whatever happens.

I'm enclosing a small offering for the work there. I would like for you to send the "Faith and Victory" paper to the two addresses listed below for one year. Use what is left in any way it is needed.

A Sister in Christ, —Viva LaCroix

o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o

Mo.—Dear Readers, greetings in Jesus' dear name: Tonight finds me with my faith and trust in the great Physician, praising His holy name for all He has done for me. One year ago I was lying in my bed very sick. Only the dear Lord knew what suffering I was going through. He was with me all the way. The first of September I took a severe pain in my right side. It went into my stomach and I started vomiting. For six weeks I could not keep anything on my stomach, not even water. I got so weak that I would almost faint when I would try to stand up. I went down in weight. I hovered between life and death for over six weeks. I did not worry as I knew I had it fixed to trust the Lord all the way. My loved ones and neighbors would tell me I ought to go to the hospital. I knew the dear Lord knew what the trouble was, and He knew just how and when to heal me. I will never know what my ailment was, but the Lord knew and when He saw fit, He touched my body and healed me the last of October. The first

thing I was able to keep down was similac. I could take a little every few hours for a few days, then I took a little potato soup. From then on, I was able to eat soft foods. Now I can eat anything I want to. I have regained most of my weight, and feel well most of the time. I can do all my work, and did a lot of canning. I am praising the Lord for it all.

Dear ones, when you get sick or need help, don't be afraid to trust in the Lord and leave it all in His hands. He never fails. He knows what we need. We may be tested and tried, but we need to keep faith in the Lord. He will do all things for our good and He is never too late. Some times when we are suffering we may think He has forsaken us, but He will never leave us nor forsake us as long as we have all our faith and trust in Him.

I do thank all the dear ones who had an interest in me, those who came to see me, and everyone who offered up a prayer for my healing. May the Lord's richest blessings be on each one is my sincere prayer.

A Sister in the one Body, —Fannie Williams

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

Akron, Ohio—Dear Sister Marie and Saints abroad, greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: We are grateful to our heavenly Father for victory in our soul and for the many spiritual and temporal blessings in the congregation here. We bow in humble thankfulness and adoration.

In the month of August we were thankful to have Sister Annie Bell Allen here to conduct our vacation Bible school and a Revelation study of four nights. We appreciated her consecrated work for the Lord.

Starting on the 14th of September, Bro. Samons of Dayton, Ohio conducted a revival through Sunday, the 18th, which was our all-day service. We were grateful to have some attend these services from Cass, West Virginia, Delroy and Dayton, Ohio, and for the souls that were saved, including one from Virginia. Six were baptized on Saturday evening before our all-day service. We were much inspired by the spiritual messages that went forth in this meeting. Each evening the anointing of the Spirit was felt by all—conviction on the unsaved and a spiritual blessing for the saints.

The congregation here is looking forward to the visit of Bro. Willie Murphey and two daughters, Kathleen and Patsy, on the 18th of October, expecting another spiritual blessing. They are so appreciated in times like these when there is not a famine of fine churches, nor religion, nor intellectual speakers, but a lack of the spirit of the living God.

Pray much for the work here.

Yours in the work of the Lord, —Sister Hazel Clark

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

Mo.—Dear Saints: I want to thank the Lord for saving me and for His many blessings to me.

About a year ago I had an ingrown toenail which became infected. It kept getting worse, and I told the Lord that if He would heal it I would give my testimony. Recently it began healing up and is completely well now. I also appreciated all the prayers of the saints. I need your prayers that I will keep saved and make the Lord a better servant.

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

La.—Dear Saints everywhere: It has been some time since I wrote my testimony for the "Faith and Victory" paper.

God is still blessing me in soul and body. He has been very good to me, also my family, for which I praise Him. Some of you know about the goiter I have. The devil really tried to discourage me for some time with

the thought that it might be malignant. I did suffer quite often, but thanks be unto God, I just refused to be discouraged. God has wonderfully blessed me and for quite a while I have been so much better. I very seldom have pain from the goiter, and that not severe, and I give God the glory. I'm His and I have this completely in His hands. I don't just say I trust God, but I really trust Him and know He will do the thing that is best for me if only I keep my trust in Him and live close to Him. Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. If He sees fit to take us Home, out of this world of trouble, strife, heartaches, tears, burdens, etc., and take us to live with Him, where all is joy and peace, what is bad about that? Of course, we get pleasure right here in this present world, living for God and enjoying His many blessings, but nothing to compare with what it will be over there.

Some of my children and my husband are unsaved and I carry a heavy burden for their souls. I was so heavily burdened the other day, thinking of how I had been striving to please God and teach my children to serve Him for 24 years, and prayed many times that not one would be lost. It seemed that I almost questioned for awhile, just why they weren't living for God. Then this scripture came so forcibly to my mind, "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not." This just lifted me up. I don't know what it will take, but I have prayed that my husband and children be saved at any cost. Of course, we want God to deal with our loved ones in mercy, but if He has to use drastic measures we must say amen. We had much rather see our loved ones suffer here than throughout eternity.

To our dear unsaved young people I would like to say, please, don't ride over the prayers of those precious saved parents who love you so dearly and have a heavy heart, because of the concern for your never-dying soul. Don't trample underfoot the mercy and love of God. He is willing and ready to save you. The world isn't really concerned about your soul and doesn't have a love for you like the saints do, so why not cast your lot with those who have a love and concern for you? Please give your heart to God before it is too late.

Yours for Christ,

—Cassie Price

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

S. Carolina—Dear Sister Marie, greetings in Jesus' name: I am sending in a testimony for my husband, Bro. Winters, and myself. We are still thanking and praising the Lord for salvation that keeps free from sin. My husband, Bro. Winters, has been real ill at times. He lost the sight of his left eye, but we are still trusting in the Lord. The Lord is so good to us. We can't thank and praise Him enough for what He has done for us. We desire the prayers of all the saints that we will ever be what the Lord wants us to be. We want more faith and more grace to stand. By the Lord's help we want to be faithful in His service.

Yours in the Lord, —Bro. and Sister J. D. Winters

o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o

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The Seven Churches of Asia

We have read many explanations of men concerning this subject of the seven churches of Revelation, second and third chapters. The most popular seems to be the chronological setting of each church during the Gospel age since Pentecost, each church representing a period of several hundred years, and that we are now living in the Laodicean church age, being lukewarm in God's sight. Yet the same people who give this explanation insist that their group represents the Philadelphia church who found favor in the sight of Christ. This would mean overlapping of the different church ages, so-called.

Some have gone so far as to say that the geographical location of each church had a spiritual significance. Those in the east and south, being nearer the sun, were warmer and more alive spiritually than those in the northern parts, who were cold and indifferent.

We ask the Holy Spirit to direct our thoughts on this subject, that we might explain it the way it has been revealed to us. First, let us keep in mind that these messages were to the people of God, or the several congregations making up the Church of God. There were seven congregations of God spoken to. The number "seven" is mentioned many times in the Bible, starting with the creation in Genesis. Seven denotes completeness, or fullness. Thus it shows a complete message to all the congregations of God, both then and down through the ages to the present time. We realize that during the time the Church was in the wilderness (Rev. 12) there were very few to represent her, but the message was still to them, even though they were few in number. Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18:20.

Let us also notice that each church represented a different spiritual condition. Each was told in no uncertain words their good traits or works, also their faults which were displeasing to God, also what to do to correct these things which were hindering their power and influence.

Perhaps at this time we should explain that the seven golden candlesticks represent the seven churches also the seven stars represent the angels (ministers) of the seven churches. Rev. 1:20. An angel is a messenger of God and here they were the ministers or pastors of these churches. Christ shows His interest and concern by walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks which represent the churches.

Even though some things were displeasing to Him, nevertheless He did not forsake them, but told them how to correct their shortcomings. But if they did not, He would remove their candlestick or church from His watchful care and blessings. Oh, how many churches in this day have been removed because they have refused to obey His will!

These messages were sent to the ministers or pastors of the churches, showing the great responsibility resting upon them in caring for their congregations

or flock, watching out for their spiritual condition and welfare, and giving special care to those in a weakened condition.

In Acts 20:28-30, we read about Paul giving instructions to those whose duty it was to guard the flock: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." These things are happening before our very eyes.

Now let us look at the spiritual condition of each church, remembering also that each one in the congregation is responsible in determining the spiritual condition of the church as a whole. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, so with the church.

The Church at Ephesus had lost their first love. Their zeal, fervor and burden for lost souls were growing cold, even though they were commended for still endeavoring to hold on to the doctrines they realized should be taught and practiced in God's church. They were advised to acknowledge their shortcomings and repent, or be removed from Christ's ownership.

The Smyrna church was praised for carrying on in the midst of trials and tribulations and material poverty, and were told that they were rich spiritually.

The Pergamos church was still contending for the faith, but were permitting the unsaved, and hypocrites to work in their midst, bringing in the lusts of the flesh, false doctrines and worldliness. They were told to repent, or they would be removed.

The Thyatira church was praised for their love and faith, patience and good works, but these good traits were used to the extreme, even to letting unsaved people teach and bring in false doctrines, even to committing fornication and idolatry. They were strongly reprimanded, but the faithful ones were promised a reward.

Next we have the Sardis church, which still bore the name Church of God, but were dead spiritually, except for a very few faithful saints. They were instructed to hold fast what faith they still had, and to gain strength from God, or they would be cast out. We have many Sardis churches today.

The Philadelphia church was highly praised for her good works and faithfulness, even though they were persecuted by those who said they were Jews (spiritually) but were not (unsaved), wanting to take part in the workings of the congregation. Christ said He had placed before them an "open door," (the opportunity to call the lost to repentance and salvation through the Savior, Jesus Christ). No man can shut this door. Praise God, the gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church of God!

Last, we have the church of Laodicea, which was very strongly condemned for their worldly, compromising spirit, rich in this world's material wealth, and just content to drift along, fellowshiping the

unsaved, and making a great showing of popularity with all men.

They were told their faults and shortcomings and how to get back in the favor of God, because Christ still loved them, and "not willing that any should perish."

So we see in these seven churches the completeness of God's plan for His Church, and His concern for each one. They were told their faults and given a chance to correct them, but they would reap the penalty for disobedience if they did not repent.

—V. E. Yantis

Discipleship

What is a disciple? "One who accepts and follows a teacher"—Webster. "A follower of Christ."

Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:35. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" John 8:31. "If a man love me, he will keep my words" John 14:23. So love is a requirement for discipleship.

Now please read carefully Luke 14:25-35. In verse 26 Jesus says that any man who comes to Him must "hate" (love less) not only his own family, but his own life also. Do we abhor our ourselves? If not, Jesus said, "Ye cannot be my disciple."

In verse 27 He tells us that whosoever follows Him must "bear his cross," or else, He says, he "cannot be my disciple." Have we given up our will, our way, "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"? Jesus said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Through verses 28-32 Jesus teaches us to count the cost of being His disciple. He wants us to think seriously what it will mean to follow Him, before we start. He does not want us to repent of our sins, become a child of God and filled with His love and peace and a desire to please Him, and then in a few days change our minds and decide we would rather go back to the ways of the world and to our old life of sin. Someone would surely deride us or "mock" us and say, "I didn't think he would stand," or "He doesn't act like a Christian." Oh, how sad!

In verse 33 Jesus talks about forsaking. If we would awake in the night and find our house on fire we'd leave it (forsake it) in a hurry—glad to get out alive, even if we could take nothing with us. Jesus said, "Whosoever [you or me] forsaketh not ALL . . . cannot be my disciple." Is it worth it to give up all—loved ones, possessions, fame, honor, everything, to become a follower of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, the Savior of the world, the King of kings and Lord of lords? Jesus gives a wonderful answer in Matt. 19:28, 29.

Now Jesus speaks of salt, verses 34 and 35. Suppose you are invited to a feast in a wealthy home. The table is invitingly spread with appetizing food. Everyone begins to eat, including the hostess. At once she apologizes, for the meat, gravy and vegetables seem to have no salt in them. She gets the box of

salt and tastes it. There is no taste to it; for it has lost its savor. She immediately throws that box of salt in the trash basket, it is "cast out." Jesus said in Matt. 5:13, "Ye are the salt of the earth." So then, if we lose our savor, which is the grace of God, we become unfruitful. Our lives as Christians become distasteful. Our company is unwanted. We are rejected, "cast out." Yes, Jesus said so. Then we may wonder, where are my friends? No one cares for me. If we have lost that fervent love, no longer kind and affectionate, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us, miss Sunday school and prayer service, and have quit praising God and witnessing for Him, want our own way, do not regard others' rights, and so on, we need not be surprised if we are shunned, given the "cold shoulder," left out, yes, "cast out." Are our friends to blame? No, for we read in Eph. 5:11, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness."

May God help us to diligently watch and pray, and find it is joy unspeakable and glorious to follow Jesus all the way, every day, and be faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

—Vera Forbes

"HOW I CAME TO KNOW CHRIST THROUGH A TRACT"

T. J. Bach went to S. America as a missionary in 1906. He served as Gen. Director of the Evangelical Alliance Mission from 1928-1946. His story follows:

I was eighteen years of age when I came to know Him as my personal Saviour.

It was good to know Christ by name, by history and doctrine, but that was not sufficient. Though the Holy Spirit used my academic acquaintance with Christ to bring me under conviction of sin, yet it is one thing to be convicted; it is another to be born again.

It took the distributor of a gospel tract and the reading of that tract to change my conviction to decision.

At that period in my life, I was studying engineering in the city of Copenhagen, Denmark. On a Sunday afternoon, as I walked along one of the streets a young man came across the street to meet me. He apologized for stopping me. Then he took a tract out of his pocket and said, "Will you please take this little tract? It has a message for you."

I crushed the tract in my hand as I replied: "Why do you bother people with such reading? I will take care of my own interests." I tore the tract into pieces and stuffed them in my pocket.

The young man did not respond to my words. As I turned to leave, I noticed he had turned his face toward the doorway, but I could see that tears were running down his cheeks and that his hands were folded in prayer. He had given his money to buy the tract; he had given his time to distribute it; and now he gave his heart in prayer to God for me.

The young man's attitude toward my crude actions and harsh words brought deep conviction to my heart. Half an hour later I was in my study. The

first thing I did was to paste together the pieces of the tract. Before I had finished reading it, I was down on my knees asking God for forgiveness of my sin and for the grace to accept Christ as my Savior. He had heard my prayer. That very evening I went to a gospel hall and gave my testimony for Christ. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9, 10).

I am anticipating the privilege of meeting in heaven the young man who gave me the tract and wept and prayed for me. And may there be some there who have received tracts from my hands and have been the subject of my prayers and tears. —T. J. Bach

Note: Prayerful tract distribution is the most prolific way of winning souls to Jesus. You can reach 700 souls for Christ for \$100 with tracts. Oswald J. Smith says, "If I had a million dollars, I'd spend it on tracts." Have you read and given a tract today? Millions could be reached with thousands of dollars. In any other way it costs millions to reach thousands. —Editor.

"The Foxes, the Little Foxes . . ."

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." Song of Solomon 2:15. The Aramaic translation reads, "Let us catch the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vineyards, for our vines have tender shoots."

When writing of the desolation of Israel (Psa. 80:13) David wrote, "The boar of the wood waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it." "In the east nearly all vineyards are fenced or hedged to protect the vines from the sheep, goats, and wild animals. In some of the vineyards men keep constant watch, especially during the night. Bears, boars, and other wild animals might sneak in and destroy the plants.

"The boar and the wild beast here are used symbolically, meaning false prophets who had introduced pagan teaching into the Jewish religion, and pagan enemies who sought the destruction of Israel." This quotation is from "Old Testament Light" by George M. Lamsa, page 511.

Large animals are easy to be seen; but if the watchman is careless, the smaller ones will slip by unnoticed and destroy the vineyard little by little. The hedges around the vineyards were mostly built of stone. The little foxes could slip through the crevice between the stones and do their deadly work before being detected.

The ministers are the watchmen on the walls of Zion. Satan is doing his best to cause the watchmen to become careless, especially about the little innovations which he wishes to use to persuade the saints to leave the narrow way. Satan is more cunning than the fox. He knows that God's little ones will not fall if tempted to commit the greater sins, such as murder, robbery, and adultery. Therefore,

he begins by tempting them with the little, so-called "no harm" things.

Many times by being crafty Satan uses honest souls to advance his cause. Some are crying out against the preaching of what is considered minor things ("the little foxes"), thinking that the greater sins should be emphasized in these evil times of the last days. Perhaps they are honest in this, not realizing that Satan is clearing the way for the "little foxes" to come in.

When ministers begin to think that they have no time to waste preaching on "no harm things," we had better take warning, for the "little foxes" are eating away the very life of the vineyard. Many that one time walked with God have fallen away by catering to the fads and fashions of the world.

Some may consider the television a harmless thing, but this is an instrument of Satan to steal the hearts of Israel. Absalom stole the hearts of Israel. Do you have this "thief" in your home?

Yours in Him,

—H. P. Huskey

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November 6, 1966

WORDS WITHOUT WORSHIP

Printed Portion Jeremiah 7:1-15

Jer. 7:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying,

2 Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord.

3 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

4 Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these.

5 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour;

6 If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt;

7 Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

8 Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.

9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;

10 And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?

11 Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord.

12 But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh,

where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.

13 And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not;

14 Therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh.

15 And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.

Memory Verse: Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. *Psa. 19:14.*

Practical Truth: Prove your love for God by speaking true words and worshipping Him from your heart.

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

"God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." *John 4:24.* These are the words of our Master, Lord, and Savior. Worship means "showing reverence for a diety." Reverence means "a feeling or attitude of deep respect, love and awe." (*Web.*) Real worship is the deep feeling of love, with an outward expression "in the spirit" from the soul. It also must be "in truth." Our lesson points out how a person can be deceived and have vain worship. Deceived people might be very sincere, but if they are not worshipping "in truth" and "in spirit" it will not go any higher than their heads. God does not accept that kind. How wonderful it is to have that deep love, respect, and awe in one's heart as he lifts his heart and mind up to God. There is nothing more wonderful in the world than to feel a touch of God upon the soul. Just bow before Him and let Him play on the heartstrings of the soul (that kind of music and praises go straight through to God) and a return of blessings is received. Sad to say, many do not obey God's Word and therefore God cannot bless them when they want to come before Him.

Our lesson points out the sham religion in that day. Jeremiah, the prophet, was reprimanding the people for the way they were living, yet going to the house of God and pretending to worship God.

November 13, 1966

GOD'S TRUTH CANNOT BE DESTROYED

Printed Portion Jeremiah 36:20-28, 32

Jer. 36:20 And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king.

21 So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.

22 Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him.

23 And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.

24 Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

25 Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Germariah

had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them.

26 But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelmiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the Lord hid them.

27 Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying,

28 Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned.

32 Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire; and there were added besides unto them many like words.

Memory Verse: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever. *Isa. 40:8.*

Practical Truth: By God's Word the heavens and earth were made and it will stand when the world is on fire.

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

We thank God for those men who had courage and faith in God down through the ages, who preserved God's message for us. Men like Jeremiah who wrote God's message after the king burned the first message. The Bible has been burned many times, destroyed in various ways but God has always had one that was brought before the people again. Today it is the nation's best seller and has been translated in nearly every language and dialect.

How sad that people today are not obeying God's Word even as those did not in the day of our lesson. The sermon read before the people in last Sunday's lesson stirred them. The princes wanted the king to hear it. He rejected it and burned the roll. He ordered Jeremiah and Baruch to be taken but the Lord hid them. God took care of them.

Today the message from God is still going out, Jesus has said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (*Luke 13:3*) Judgment is pronounced upon this generation. What are people doing about it? What are you doing about it? Are you obeying the message? Or are you going to suffer the judgments of God against all evil? Serious questions, but you must answer them.

November 20, 1966

A LETTER TO EXILES

Printed Portion Jeremiah 29:1-7, 10-14

Jer. 29:1 Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon;

2 (After that Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem;)

3 By the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon) saying,

4 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon;

5 Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them;

6 Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished.

7 And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

10 For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

14 And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

Memory Verse: And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. Jer. 29:7.

Practical Truth: Just as a child needs to be prepared to be an adult and face life, so a person needs to be prepared to live in eternity with God.

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The children of Israel sinned. God punished them and they repented. God forgave them but they sinned again. In our lesson they were punished and carried away captives to Babylon. Our lesson is a part of a letter written to them by Jeremiah. He is telling them to settle down and live normal lives because they were to be there 70 years. Verse 11 shows the love of God to them. Even though they had disobeyed Him, He loved them and said that He had "thoughts of peace" for them. He wanted them to pray unto Him and seek after Him. He promised to hear them and they could find Him in the day that they searched for him "with all your heart."

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God, the Bible tells us. (Rom. 3:23). God dealt with our souls and we came to Him and repented of our sins. He forgave us that day when we searched for Him with all of our hearts. But sometimes the Lord has to chasten us when we do not walk closely by His side. He does that because He loves us. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11) Let us take courage as we look at it from the angle of "nevertheless afterward." Remember "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, . . . every son whom he receiveth." (ver. 6)

November 27, 1966

A DARING FAITH

Printed Portion Jeremiah 32:2, 6, 7, 9-17

Jer. 32:2 For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the

court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah's house.

6 And Jeremiah said, The word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

7 Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth; for the right of redemption is thine to buy it.

9 And I bought the field of Hanameel my uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver.

10 And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances.

11 So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open:

12 And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseian, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchases, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison.

13 And I charged Baruch before them saying,

14 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days.

15 For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.

16 Now when I had delivered the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the Lord, saying,

17 Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:

Memory Verse: Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. Jeremiah 31:10.

Practical Truth: Having faith in God in times of trouble will cause others to know that your God is real to you.

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

After Jeremiah wrote the letter to the exiles, many criticized him. Some said they would be there longer than God had shown Jeremiah. Those who were left in Jerusalem shut Jeremiah up in the court as a prisoner. They did not believe the messages from the Lord that God would restore the land to them. But when God told Jeremiah to buy the land from his cousin he obeyed and observed all the legal requirements of that day. He had faith in the Word of God. Probably not another person in the city would buy any land because they did not have any faith in the future of their country. Jeremiah did not walk by sight but by faith. He dared to believe there was a future to Judah. We know that God promised that a Saviour would come out of Judah. God did preserve Judah.

How many of us walk by sight and not by faith in God? We need to set our sights higher than this old world. We need to see God as a God who rules the events of our life. God has promised that He would not let more come upon us than we are able to bear, but would make a way of escape. (1 Cor. 10:13) We must believe God's Word and rest upon it. Faith brings the facts of God's Word into a reality. Jeremiah suffered to stand for what God had revealed to him but God was with him. God will be with us.

—Sister Marie Miles