

FAITH AND VICTORY

USPS184-660

Church of God Servant



Volume 82, No. 8 82nd Year Guthrie, Oklahoma \$5.00 Per Year Nov., 2004

THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

By Bro. Clint Doolittle

Have you ever gone through a time when the presence of the Lord seemed distant? I was recently going through such a place and began to seek the Lord to better understand if it was a result of my displeasing Him or if He was allowing it for a purpose. As I did so, He began to open my understanding through His Word and showed me that there may be several causes of this sense of separation.

First, we may bring it upon ourselves. In Isaiah 59:2, it speaks of "iniquities [that] have separated between you and your God, and your sins [which] have hid his face from you." Without question, **sin** will separate us from God. The only way to obtain or restore the presence of the Lord in our lives at that point is through His plan of redemption. This sense of separation may also come, however, as a precursor to sin. If the Lord calls for something in our lives and

we shrink back from that, we grieve the Holy Spirit. God will never override man's will, but will instead accept this and step back. Thus by **lack of submission** to the Lord we separate ourselves from Him. Through His infinite mercy we can have a close walk with Him again but we must first come back to the place where we left our "first love."

Yet even outside of sin or lack of submission there is another reason why we may fail to recognize or feel His presence. Job, whom God called a perfect and an upright man, came to a place where he said "I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." Job 23:8-9. God had stepped back and taken His hand off of Job, to an extent, in order to prove him. The Lord showed me that very often the reason why He withdraws the manifestation of His presence from us for a time is **to prove us**. Job recognized this and went on to say in the 10th verse, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Peter said that this time of proving is sent "that the trial of your faith,...though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." I Peter 1:7. It is the Lord's will that in conjunction with this proving may also come the **increase of our faith**. Romans 8:24 says that "we are saved by hope (faith); but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

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Sometimes it's only in times when we can't feel the presence of the Lord or see His hand guiding us that He is able to teach us to have faith. That is why at times the Lord will allow His presence to be hidden from us for a time to teach us to walk by faith and not by sight. In flight training you have to learn to trust completely in instruments, not in intuition or sight. When your visibility is obscured, you have to be able to rely solely on the instruments to guide you. So it is in our walk with the Lord. He may allow us to go through places in which we will be unable to feel His presence or see the end of where He is leading us. In these times He is endeavoring to teach us to have faith in Him and His Word, despite what our feelings, instincts and intellect may tell us. It is then that the devil so often tries to turn us off course with doubts, fears and accusations. Yet the Lord wants us to come to the place that we can say as Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Job 13:15. When we fail to let our faith take hold, or we move outside of the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, we are dependent on our own strength and intellect. That will get us sadly short of heaven. When we begin to look to our own reasoning, it opens the door to the enemy and will allow him to shake even the most fundamental beliefs we hold. If we don't keep our eyes and trust on God, satan will turn the very thing the Lord intended to draw us closer to Him into something that distances us from Him: the very thing He intended to clarify our vision into something that clouds it. We are by nature creatures that want our walk with God to translate directly to our emotions and senses. The Lord understands that, as well as the

trouble it can get us into. I believe that's why He told us to "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." Proverbs 3:5.

Another thing that will prevent us from hearing the voice of the Lord or feeling His presence is our **failure to perceive it**. It seems like it would be so convenient if the Lord would just speak to us audibly from a burning bush as He did Moses. Yet we must recognize that with a new covenant came a new relationship with Him. No longer does the Lord dwell in a temple made with hands but within every blood-washed one. I believe the Lord intended this closeness and direct intercession with Him to absolve the need for such outward manifestations of His presence. Although I am fully persuaded that the day of miracles is not passed and that He is still able to manifest Himself as He did under the old law, I also believe He wants us to walk so closely with Him that we may hear His faintest whisper. "And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." How many times do we fail to hear that still small voice because our hearts and minds aren't in tune with Him? The Lord has really challenged me that when the times come that His presence feels distant I would seek Him to know if there is any place I've failed to submit. If there isn't, I must trust Him and allow Him to draw me closer to Him and increase my faith.



"BELIEVEST THOU THIS?"

By Sis. Naomi Jennings

Paul stood before his captors and said, "...Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." Acts 27:21-25.

God wants His people to believe Him. Jesus told the woman at the well some of the things she had done and she realized that what He told her was the truth and she believed Him and ran into the city to tell others. God sent His Son into this world to die for our salvation and now He is blessing us to tell others about our risen Lord.

In Mark 9:23 it says, "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth." Mark 5:25-28 says, "And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years. And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she

had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." God is calling us to do more pressing. This woman believed God and made an effort to touch His garment and she received the healing that she sought for. The atonement that Jesus made for our sins also included our healing. "Believest thou this?"

In John 14:9-10 Jesus asked, "...Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Then in verse 12 Jesus gave this promise, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." God has work for all of His children to do. He said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,..." The Lord may not call for you to go across the water into other countries to fulfill His command. He may only call you to go across the street to the neighbors and spread the news of salvation or to do a good deed. Some say, "I can't do very much," but you must do what you can. God is not pleased with us if we do nothing for Him. The man who was given the one talent buried it and his Lord was very displeased with him and took away his talent and gave it to the one who had ten talents. If you don't use your talent God will take it and give it to someone else. There are

those who say, "I can't sing, I can't pray or testify like others," But God wants you to do what you can do. "Believest thou this?"

Amos 6:1 says, "Woe to them *that are* at ease in Zion,..." Ease means: freedom from difficulty or effort. *At ease* means rest, repose. There is no place for this kind of rest for the people of God. We must be up and at our post of duty for God. The devil would like to put the people of God to sleep and steal their salvation. He also does not want you to put forth any effort to help someone else to be saved. If he can keep you from working for the Lord, he will be able to keep more souls in the kingdom of darkness. "Believest thou this?"

Song number 302 in the *Evening Light Songs* says, "Ne'er think the vict'ry won, Nor once at ease sit down; Thine arduous work will not be done Till thou hast got the crown." Dear ones, young and old, don't get slothful; the battles are still very hot. We must run and never look back.

Song number 314, "The Golden Harvest" says, "Oh, why should I be idle, While there's so much to do? The wheat is ripe to harvest, And the laborers are few. Why stand ye all day idle? There's harvesting for all; Oh, grasp the flaming sickle, And heed the Master's call. No, I shall not be idle, For in God's word I see: 'No idlers in my vineyard; Go thou and work for Me.'" Many are too busy to hear the call of God. The call is still sounding, "...Come over into Macedonia, and help us." If ever the church should be in prayer, it is now. "Believest thou this?"

Let us all take heed; the Lord hath need of thee. I can say, "Use me Lord to Thy glory." Pray for me.



WHEN WILL YOU BELIEVE?

By Sis. Linda Clevenger

I'd like to start this thought with the question, "Do you believe in God?" I think most people would casually say, "Yes." But do we really believe? If we really believe, our lives will show it.

In Luke the 23rd chapter we read about people who didn't believe at the time when Jesus faced Pilate and Herod. Starting at the first verse. "And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow

pervverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King."

They began to accuse Jesus because what He was teaching was contrary to what they thought was right. Unbelief is what led them to this point. Pilate said, "...I find no fault in this man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place."

(Continued on page 13.)

FAITH AND VICTORY 16 PAGE HOLINESS MONTHLY



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

(Periodical postage paid at Guthrie, OK)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

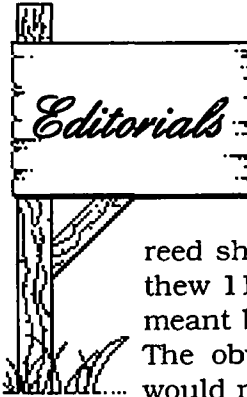
FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE

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

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

(Periodical postage paid at Guthrie, OK.)

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



Jesus posed an interesting question to the multitudes that were following Him concerning John the Baptist. He asked them, "...What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A

reed shaken with the wind?" Matthew 11:7. What could Jesus have meant by asking such a question? The obvious answer is, "No." We

would not put forth much effort to make a trip to watch grass being blown around with the wind. We could probably see that without going very far from an easy chair. Maybe by simply looking out the window of our home.

There were many that made a journey out to the wilderness to hear John preach and they obviously had a reason, or reasons, for going. Their trip may have been made out of curiosity. John was certainly a curiosity. For one thing, his leather outfit would not meet the approval of those who are following the latest fads of western wear and most people today would have likely turned their noses up at some of the things in his diet. Some in John's day had such disgust for him that they said he had a devil.

No matter what reasoning motivated the people to go, see and hear the preaching of John, how they responded to the message of repentance became very important to their spiritual well-being. The expression "A reed shaken with the wind," would indicate someone who was very unstable in their doctrine and was very changeable in their approach to spiritual things. We know John was not unstable. He was very straightforward in his message of repentance. It could also indicate the lack of value that some of the people placed on his preaching and the disregard they had for the truths he taught. John was wielding the gospel plow, by the spirit of the Lord, in an attempt to break up the hardened hearts of the people and prepare them for the Kingdom of heaven. But many failed to recognize the spirit of God that was visiting them through his preaching.

This dangerous disregard for truth is still prevalent today. It indicates a heart that is hard and impenetrable by the plan of salvation. After the Gospel is preached, the seed simply lays out for the birds to come pick up and carry away. They recognize no sense of urgency in doing the

will of God and preparing for their eternal home. If there is a faint awareness of a need in their soul, it is easy to put off doing anything about it. That unbelieving soul is dead spiritually and they would say they need to see signs and wonders before they would believe. The sad thing is the signs and wonders are all about them and they are too blind to see them. There are masses of people who are so addicted to the programming of "professional" entertainment that they live in a world of make-believe that excludes the voice of the Lord. Anything of a spiritual nature is truly boring to them. They are totally consumed by the lusts of the flesh and the things that are earthly.

In Deuteronomy 32:15 it speaks in reference to Jeshurun, a symbolic name for Israel, that in his prosperity "...he forsook God *which* made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." When things are going well there is a very real danger of taking spiritual things "for granted" and allowing our priorities to become focused on temporal things instead of heavenly things. This causes a leanness to occur in our soul as the Lord becomes relegated to something less than first place in our lives. Unless one becomes aware of what is happening to them and begins to put God back in His rightful place as Lord of their life they will drift into a condition of mediocrity and lukewarmness that God will not tolerate.

There is an expression used to describe a group of people today called "nominal Christianity" that is a reproach to God. *Nominal* means: being something in form or name only. Those who would fall into this classification of people will lack the real life changing power and stability of the true child of God. They will sin, more or less every day, just as others who have no profession of Christianity. They may claim God but God does not own them. Their religion is vain and worthless. When God looks on them He sees nothing different about them from all of the rest of the sinful world. They are only "...A reed shaken with the wind." What a sad testimony.

I Peter 2:9 describes the true child of God this way. "But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God:

which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." May each reader be a part of this blood washed, holy group of people that are reigning victoriously in this present world.

The invitation is still calling for "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." If you are of the ones who have not obtained mercy, you can be one of those who have obtained mercy. By being willing to give up the sinful things of this perishing world and obtaining Bible salvation you can possess this "Pearl of great price" and be included in this holy nation. Instead of being a reed that is shaken with the wind, you can be a pillar in the temple of God. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name." Revelation 3:12.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will ignite a flame of life in every reader and cause you to be a brilliant, shining light showing forth the glory of the Lord.

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The equipment we have obtained for hard-back binding is being put into operating condition one machine at a time. Much time and effort is going into this project for the Lord's work. With the installation of a digital temperature controller, which has been purchased and should be received in the near future, and other minor adjusting and wiring it will bring the count of operable machines for this purpose to seven.

The list of those machines include: Signature Tipping machine, Book Sewer, Spine Gluer, Rounding Backer, Casing-in machine, Building-in machine and the Foil Stamping machine.

That will leave two more machines to bring into operation. They are the Backlining/Headbanding machine and the Casemaker. Both of these machines will require a significant amount of work to bring them into working order, especially the Casemaker which is missing some major parts. It is a Kolbus DA-48, which is classified by the company as a DA-30. I would request an interest in your prayers that the Lord would help us to obtain these needed parts.

One other machine that we do not have is a Spine Nipper. This machine would compress

the spine of the book block after it has been sewed and before it is glued. It seems like a simple operation but it is an important one. There was a used one advertised for \$4,000 and I thought that was a high price until I priced a new one for \$29,400. However, we are waiting for the direction of the Lord.

This whole project has been a step of faith and I praise the Lord for showing Himself faithful and answering our prayers and the prayers of the saints in this need. It has caused us to marvel at His goodness and He has made a way when there was no visible way from our point of view. But our eyes have been on Him and we are committed to do His will and endeavoring to keep Him in view.

The words of a song says, "Many things about tomorrow, I don't seem to understand; But I know who holds tomorrow, And I know who holds my hand." It is a great comfort and source of assurance in troubling, uncertain times to know that our hand is in the mighty hand of a loving Father. He is worthy of all our praise and thanksgiving.

Bro. Ed and Sis. Roberta Wilson, accompanied by Bro. Nick and Sis. Kyra Probst and Bro. David Bell plan a missionary trip to Germany leaving the third of November. Pray that their work will be blessed of the Lord and that they will be an encouragement to the ones they will be visiting. We trust their efforts will help the people of God be united in a greater way, also that the Lord will grant them protection on their journey.

On November 9th another group will be traveling to Germany. Bro. Leslie and Sis. Sylvia Busbee accompanied by Bro. Harlan Sorrell, Bro. Ron Zacharias and his daughter, LouCinda, Rodney and Kevin Sorrell, Julie and Sherie Benson and my daughter, Elizabeth Murphey. They will be visiting the saints near Wesendorf. Some of these saints attended the Monark Camp meeting this summer. Pray that their visit will be profitable for the Kingdom of the Lord and also for their protection.

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

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High." Psalm 92:1.



OK—Dear Bro. Willie: Please put my sister, Charlotte Dilliner, on your standing prayer list. She has a life threatening condition in her body. We are looking for God to bring relief. Remember us all here in the Shawnee congregation when you think of us. There are so many older ones and we all depend upon the prayers of the saints. Sincerely, —Sis. Mary Dunavan

OK—Remember Bro. T. V. McMillian in prayer. He recently pulled something in his back while doing some work and suffers much discomfort when he tries to get up or move.

OK—Bro. Michael Smith is in need of a healing touch from the Lord for an affliction that has resulted from a back injury.

IN—I have been afflicted for a couple of months and solicit your prayers for my complete recovery. God Bless, —Bro. D. L. Jones

Standing Prayer Requests

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

MEETING DATES

Jefferson, OR (Revival)—November 10-14
Loranger, LA (Assembly Meeting)—Nov. 24-28
Miami, FL (Revival)—December 1-4
Oklahoma State (Guthrie)—Dec. 25, p.m.-Jan. 2

MEETING NOTICES

JEFFERSON, OR, FALL REVIVAL

The saints in Jefferson, OR cordially invite everyone who can to join us in our Fall revival meeting which will run November 10-14. Bro. Jerry Melot will be the evangelist. For further information contact Bro. Bob Wilson, Pastor, (541) 327-3621 or Bro. Clifford Smith, (503) 581-4575.

LORANGER, LA, ASSEMBLY MEETING

Lord willing this meeting will begin Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m. November 24th, with services daily through Sunday, November 28th. Come for a blessing and please support this meeting with your prayers. There is a dormitory for the sisters and one for the brothers. Please bring your own sheets and linens if possible. Power and water hook-ups are provided for those with campers. Meals will be served and expenses met by freewill offerings.

From Loranger, go two miles south and about three and one-half miles east on Hwy. 40. For those traveling I-55, the grounds are about 10 miles east of the Tickfaw exit. (Take Hwy. 442 east which runs into Hwy. 40.)

For more information write Bro. Nelson Doolittle, 51367 Narretto Rd., Loranger, LA 70446. Phone (985) 878-6111. The chapel phone is (985) 878-2788.

MIAMI, FL, REVIVAL

You are welcome to attend the Miami, FL Revival meeting that is scheduled to be held December 1-4. Services will be nightly at 7:30 p.m. The chapel is located at 235 NW 47th St., Miami, FL. For further information you may contact Bro. Charles Clay (305) 235-4271, Bro. Lester Walker (305) 253-8512 or Bro. Kenneth Baxter (786) 554-8833.

OKLAHOMA STATE ASSEMBLY MEETING

The Oklahoma State Assembly Meeting of the Church of God will be held at Guthrie, OK,

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

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

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

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

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

MEETING REPORTS

HOLLY HILL, SC MEETING REPORT

Dear Saints: We wanted to write and tell of the joy that is overflowing in our hearts for the way God blessed in our Fall revival at Holly Hill, SC. Every service was led by the precious Holy Spirit and the presence of God was so real. There was more altar work conducted in this meeting than we have seen here for a very long time. Conviction was strong in every service and many found help to their souls. We are so thankful for the new converts who were saved. Saints sought for a closer walk with the Lord, sinners were saved, bodies were healed and three were baptized. There just aren't words to express how this has encouraged the congregation and how God is blessing in our midst. It is so wonderful to see what can be accomplished if the Lord is allowed to have His perfect way and man-rule is not involved in a meeting. We just

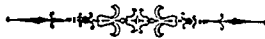
praise the Lord for all He is doing for us and we say as David said, "This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." Psalm 118:23. Thanks to all who came to our meeting and those who prayed for us. God surely answered and blessed in a mighty way. Praise His name!

—The saints at Holly Hill

WICHITA MEETING REPORT

Praise God! We want to report victory for our Wichita meeting once again. The Holy Spirit was truly faithful. The messages were good. Two souls got saved. There was good altar work and the singing was a blessing. We thank the Lord for His continued faithfulness to us. We were privileged to hear about God's goodness to man and His daily benefits. We were warned about waiting for a convenient time, having bad attitudes and how we must love the Lord more than "things."

We are thankful to all who came from out of town to help us in the battle. May the Lord reward them greatly. —Sis. Shirley Knight



SPECIAL THANKSGIVING

WICHITA , KS, CHAPEL PURCHASE

The Wichita Congregation of the Church of God gratefully reports success in acquiring the building they proposed to purchase. With the help of the dear saints around the country, we were able to finish out the amount that was needed to meet the contract. There is even some toward the amount that will be carried for a year.

Saying thank you does not seem sufficient but it is from the depth of our hearts. We appreciate the love and generosity of everyone who gave. Some whole congregations sent money and some individuals and families gave various amounts from \$1 to \$5,000. The larger amounts were rightfully from saints and friends in Wichita who responded with liberal generosity. God is so good and His saints are so loving and kind. We plan to move the week of October 18-23. We praise God and give Him the glory. Amen!

We do want to say how much we have appreciated the chapel that Bro. Lewis Williams and other saints built and it served us well for over 50 years. —Sis. Shirley Knight



LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

OK—Special greetings to you, Bro. Willie and Sis. Neta: I am still saved and encouraged to go all the way until the end of my life. The Scripture says in Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him;..."

Remember us all in prayer. I still can't walk yet but I am pleased to know that I will walk again. I have my trust in the Lord. I am your sister in Christ Jesus, —Mary O. Jones

OK—Dear Bro. and Sis. Murphey: Greetings to you in the precious name of Jesus, the One that loved us and gave His life for us that we might be saved and live with Him and with the redeemed of all ages. The scripture in Revelation 12:11 (speaking of the Dragon) says, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;..." I am glad that our faith in Christ and in His shed blood is still powerful today and causes and helps us to be overcomers. It said, "And they loved not their lives unto the death." Our supreme love for God helps us to be overcomers of this world and causes us to love Him with all our hearts. "We love him, because he first loved us."

I am glad that the Gospel is going forth by the printed page. It reaches so far and touches so many people. The Scripture says, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" How wonderful this must have sounded to the lonely shepherds as they kept watch over their flocks by night. "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a

multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

I would that all men would hear the angel sing and then would do as the shepherds did, go and worship Him.

Your Brother in Christ, —T.V. McMillian
— — — — —

OR—Dear Bro. and Sis. Murphey: I feel that God would be pleased and would accept a letter of praise to Him and a "thank you" to the many people who have been so kind, thoughtful and gracious to me of late. Truly my age of 89 is making it more difficult to be as active as I'd like to be and that is where my "thank you" comes to my heart. Each morning as I awaken I thank the Lord for a pain free night and ask for His help and mercy through the day.

My thanks are for so many dear ones—A young brother who keeps all the parts of my RV in working order. The ones who have brought baked goods and sang for me. A couple who so willingly give me a ride to and from church since I don't drive anymore. My dear prayer partner, who has been so ill herself, came to see me and left a nice monetary gift for my birthday. The many precious cards and phone calls from every direction—Washington, Missouri, California and all over Oregon. The thoughts and love is appreciated.

My thanks surely go to my own family. There were times, in the growing up days, that their Dad and I wondered if they would ever make it safely but all four of them and both daughters-in-law are precious to me. Nancy has chosen to be my caregiver and treats me very well. I'm grateful for each one. I must not forget my precious little great-granddaughter whose mother named her Tre'sure. She is exactly a treasure to me. She has named me G.G. for great-grandma. She likes to push the button for me on the lift chair and as I start to stand she takes my hand and says, "I will help you G.G." If you have never been helped by the precious little hand of a three-year-old, you have missed a real blessing.

My favorite biological brother—the only one I had—Clifford Wilson, always told me there is no one in this world better than the children of God and I have truly found it so. It was through his and Dorothy's and Mother's prayers that I truly found salvation. I am so very grateful for God's mercy to me. He has never left me nor

forsaken me since the day Jesus accepted me—washed me in His blood and gave me the sweet assurance in my soul, "You are My child."

We have some Sunday School teachers who are so faithful and are truly used of God, also our congregation is so blessed to have Bro. Bob Wilson and his precious family to guide us, which they are faithful in doing. Many thanks to all you dear people and "I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God." —Sis. Orpha Wilson Mapes
— — — — —

CA—I would like to share with the saints and others the goodness of the Lord unto me and my wife. I am very thankful to be saved and encouraged. I do appreciate salvation. I am very thankful our joy, happiness, well-being and contentment are not based on the circumstances of life but on the God of the circumstances.

I have learned to be thankful in all things and I am yet learning. I appreciate the scripture: "I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad." Psalm 34:1-2. I am thankful that by the grace of God we can do this.

My wife and I have been afflicted for a good space of time. But the Lord has been faithful and exceedingly good to us. My rejoicing is this; that the Lord has given us joy, happiness and contentment through it all. There has not been any murmuring or complaining against God but a heart full of thankfulness for His love and mercy to us.

My wife is currently in the third stage of Alzheimer's disease. She is basically unable to do anything or care for herself. She has also had several strokes, which have caused her to have some serious falls. In one fall she broke a shoulder, in another fall she broke a hip very badly. These falls took place earlier in her affliction or dementia. She was able at this time to express and show forth her strong conviction and trust in God. God wonderfully honored her faith and trust in Him. He rebuked pain in her behalf and healed the shoulder and the hip. The hip break was so severe that the Adult Protective Authorities came out. They made it known that had my wife been in great pain they would have taken action to force me to have her medically treated. The doctors wanted to do surgery but my wife refused all treatment. She made it known that she was fully trusting the Lord.

My wife is not able to speak anymore. The dementia has taken its toll on her but she still has that same sweet spirit that she has had throughout her affliction.

I am very thankful for how the Lord has manifested love and mercy unto us in all of our afflictions. Truly the Lord is good!

We appreciate the people of God here and everywhere. We do appreciate the prayers of the saints holding us up. We really appreciated our deceased pastor, Bro. Charles Taylor, and his prayers for us. There are no other people like the people of God. Their price is far beyond gold or value. You can depend on them and they love their God, His Word and way. They love one another. I greatly appreciate the saints of God!

I am thankful for how the Lord has blessed me in my body. Although I am not well I am much better and for this I thank the Lord and saints for their prayers for me. Caring for my wife is a 24 hour job. The Lord in His mercy has given me strength to fill this task. Surely the Lord has done great things for the Parrishes

—Bro Charles Sr. and Sis. Wilma Parrish

OK—Dear Friends: As the song says, “Jesus has been so good to me.” I want to let you know how much! I do appreciate His protection on the highways, for supplying my every need and keeping me feeling like going.

Recently I was in Louisiana to see my first newborn great-grandson. Soon afterward I accompanied my friend Shirley Leiska to Fort Worth to see her brother, Clyde Taylor and wife. We were thankful he was feeling some better when we left for Dallas.

For so long I had desired to attend the services with the saints at the Church of God in Dallas. The Riches who live in Carrolton were so kind to take us with them to the prayer service. We are so happy to see young couples living for the Lord. Quite a number of young ones were in attendance and plans are being made to build a larger chapel. We trust God will bless and supply every need. When we were living in Dallas we had no congregation there. So I am very happy there is one now!

—Sis. Evodna Marler

LA—Bro. Willie, Sis. Neta and friends: I feel impressed to write my testimony of healing to the glory of God. He is worthy of all praise and thanksgiving.

Many of you know of the severe problem I had with my heart and were under a burden and praying for me. I thank you all and appreciate so much your calls, cards and prayers.

In November 2003 I started having some serious heart problems and by mid December was mostly bed fast. I had three hard attacks—the last one was January 1, 2004. I was anointed and prayed for at the start of the attacks and sought the Lord’s will whether it was to heal or take me. I felt impressed that He wanted to heal me, so I endeavored to believe that was what He was going to do. I asked Him for an inspiration of greater faith than I have ever had, for I have never been faced with an affliction this severe on my body before. My husband, Gerald, had a battle with cancer in 2001-2002. We both sought the Lord for greater faith and with many praying for him, the Lord healed that cancer. He is well today. That was a great inspiration to me when it came my time to go through the battle.

After the last attack I was so weak I felt I could not go through another one and live. I thank Him that I didn’t have to go through another one.

Soon after that last attack, one day I was lying there looking out the window (which faced west) at the heavy, rainy-looking clouds. There was no sunshine and I felt I needed something special from God at that time, so I was praying (and crying) asking God to please visit me. I expected that He would bring some special scriptures to mind. As I was praying there shone a beautiful sunray through my window. I suppose He parted the heavy clouds a little so the ray shone through, for it was so heavy there was no hint of the sun shining. As soon as it appeared to me I knew it was God’s answer to the prayer I was praying. It shone directly on my face and I could look directly into it. I suppose He softened it so I could look into it. I was so thrilled I didn’t want it to end, but after a little while I heard, “A new day is dawning for you,” then it was gone. Soon another smaller one shone very shortly and that time He said, “The sun is shining behind the cloud” and it too was soon gone. I was so overjoyed I felt I couldn’t contain it. That was around 3:30 p.m. That same day my sister who lives in Wisconsin was driving home from doing some shopping. She had been here with me the previous week and was very upset at the news of my last attack. She was very nervous and was wondering if she

would soon get the word that I was gone. As she drove along, she said a warm soothing feeling came over her, unlike anything she had ever experienced, and she heard, "She is going to be all right. She is not going to die." The time was about 3:30 p.m. What a God we serve! She took comfort from that.

I thought I would soon be up and going, but I was to be down another two months. He didn't say, "A new day is here," He said, "It was dawning." Psalm 27:14 says, "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD." I read that verse one day and the Lord let me know that was for me. I would open my Bible again later and it would open to that verse. There were numerous times it opened to that verse, so I asked the Lord to inspire my courage. He was so faithful!

The first of March I was able to start getting up. That was about exactly two years after Gerald was healed of cancer.

Now I am enjoying my "new day," and I want to live every day of the rest of my life for Him. I am able to go about as usual not having any heart problems. Praise our Lord!

—Sis. Connie Flynn

OK—Dear Readers: In May I had a very serious case of the shingles. My Mother, Sis. Imogene Taylor, and the James Huskey's came to Sasakwa from Guthrie to pray for me. Several things were wrong. I was running a fever and had colon trouble. For five days I had no relief, having had the latter trouble all of my life. I realized I was in desperate need of prayer and God's help

They felt impressed to visit and pray with me, but I asked, "Did you come to anoint me?" I said, "Pray right now so I can enjoy your visit." I had been holding my side, feeling miserable, but in about 20 minutes I was relieved and my colon began functioning normally. That was a fast miracle.

After this incident, I got poison sumac, but after calling for prayer it soon dried up. Praise the Lord! Later I contracted poison ivy and then poison oak from helping clear the fence line. It got in my shoes and the perspiration caused it to spread up to my knees. My legs became so swollen they looked like stove pipes. This was extremely painful because it caused my skin to split and ooze. The saints were praying for me

and by the time they arrived my legs were beginning to improve. Sister Rebecca Shaffer was able to see a change in my skin and it was looking more normal.

I surely thank the Lord for all He has done and for recently checking the shingles that were reappearing and causing some pain. Our pastor, Bro. Carl Shaffer, said they would pray and ask God to check the shingles and He did.

If the Lord is testing my faith, I plan to stand firm. Neighbors have remarked, "God sent you to this community for you have been witnessing to many." May the Lord help me to be a light here as we feel the Lord worked it out for us to move here and we do love it.

—Sis. Joyce (Taylor) Cunningham

OK—Dear Readers of the *Faith and Victory*: I would like to give my testimony. Though this occurred almost 25 years ago, it is still fresh and new and a living experience in my life even today. Although I have given this verbally before I feel it will glorify God to have it in print.

In life there are many kinds of emotional problems, many of which stem from childhood experiences. One can suffer from deep feelings of insecurity and deep depression even as a child. This was me. On the surface one would never guess, I was the "life of the party" so to speak, but in secret—oh, the suffering! As I grew older, in my teenage years, I would often say to my friends, "I need a psychiatrist."

I married with this emotional "baggage." Over the years this expression became deeper and it seemed there was no way of escape. I was so bound that, even though I was saved, I was contemplating suicide. I know I would have been lost had I yielded to it's temptation but God had mercy on me!

The first Sunday of 1980 the Lord sent ME a message. The message was on "Emotional Disturbances." I literally sat on the edge of my seat! For the first time I had hope! For the first time I realized God could and would be my "psychiatrist!" Didn't He say His name would be "COUNSELLOR?!" This message was not recorded and is forever lost, nor do I actually remember even one word, yet the message is with me still. The next day I went to the pastor's house. Again I cannot tell you even one word of advice that was given but God met me when we prayed. The Lord spoke to me in a vision of my mind and presented to me a box. The Lord said,

"I can take all those things from your childhood and I can put them in this box. I can lock it but I hand you the key. If you ever want those things in your life again, you will have to unlock the box!" Praise God! The power of depression was broken! Note what I have just said, "**The power was broken!**" The power which controlled my feelings lost it's force. My faith was a very small faith but didn't Jesus say, "...If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

The above paragraph begins the story of a road to recovery. You see, when one lives with a certain emotion for so long it seems to become a part of that person. This is where God became my Counselor. The first lesson He taught me was how meaningful my words were. Didn't He say, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and **by the word of their testimony...**?" This is not only referring to one standing up on Wednesday night and telling of their trials and victories. Our words are what we are and we are what our words are. Words that I had said everyday, over and over, were: "Oh! I am so depressed." The Lord spoke to me and said, "These are words you can never say again." Then He gave me other words to take their place. I could now say, "I am fighting depression today." Do you see the difference?

This was the beginning of a new life, though it took some time to learn how to live without the oppression and depression of which I had been in bondage to. Little by little the Lord even began to show me why things happened to me in my childhood, giving me understanding and forgiveness.

This deliverance has been so complete in my life that to use it in helping others the Lord has had to bring it back to my mind.

May this give hope to someone.

—Sis. Maxine Busbee

OK—Greetings to all the dear people of God: Psalm 63:4-7 says, "Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name....and my mouth shall praise *thee* with joyful lips:...Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." Surely I was in the shadow of God's wings on October 1st of this year. I was visiting Sis. Charlotte Huskey and before leaving her home

that afternoon she asked me if I would kneel in prayer with her and so we did.

Shortly after leaving her home I was involved in a bad car accident. Everything happened so fast that I did not even have time to react. All I felt was the great crash. I sat there in my driver seat hoping that I or the other driver was not hurt bad. Thank God we were both okay! I was hurting some in my chest and realized the seat belt had left me bruised and very sore. I am just very thankful that God spared my life that day. He is so wonderful to help us and bless us. I am so thankful to God that we took time to pray at Sis. Charlotte's before leaving. Several people that saw my car after the accident could not understand why the air bag did not go off. I have heard of some getting severely injured and even killed from air bags going off. So I just praise God that my accident didn't leave me severely hurt or even killed. Once again God has spared my life. To God Be The Glory! Let us always take time for prayer! we do not know what will befall us in one day.

Christian Love, —Sis. Marsha Corteway

From India...

Oct. 25, 2004—Dear Bro. Willie Murphey and dear saints everywhere: Greetings to you dear ones again in the glorious name of Jesus, our Redeemer. By the grace of God all of our congregations including the new stations are going well. Our present effort is to buy a small plot of land at Vadasserikara, the new station, to build a prayer hall there. Please pray and support this need.

Lord willing, we will have our minister's conference on November 2-3 at Karickom. May God bless this meeting for the good of our ministers. Our 40th General Convention will be held at Karickom Bethel Tabernacle on January 12-16, 2005. We request an interest in your prayers for its blessings.

We were sorry to read the news of the death of dear Bro. George Hammond in the *Faith and Victory*. He took care of me three months during my first visit in America in 1974. He visited our land in the same year also. We send our condolence and prayers to the bereaved family members.

Please continue to remember us in your prayers.

Yours in Him, —Bro. John Varghese

OBITUARIES

Theresa Gaines was born March 10, 1914 in Boley, OK. She attended and graduated from Boley Public Schools. She met and married William Perry "Hashbrown" Wright. The couple moved to Tulsa, OK. There she accepted Christ while attending the Church of God. To this union six children were born. Her husband and three children, Butch, Perry Jr., and Barbara preceded her in death.

Theresa later married Manyles Gaines Sr. and continued her devoted life to Christ. Known to many as Sis. Gaines, the teacher, deaconess, minister and spiritual counselor, she devoted a special interest in the youth.

Manyles and two children, Rozelle and Mary preceded her in death.

On February 5, 2004, Sis. Gaines peacefully ended her life journey at home.

She leaves to cherish her memories three daughters, Jacquelyn (Chester) West, Frances (Clifford) Andrews, and Dr. Oleta Whibbey, all of Tulsa, OK; one son, Manyles (Geraldine) Gaines Jr, of Tulsa, OK; one brother, Frank (Mildred) Williams of Wichita, KS; two sisters-in-law, Edith Sherman and Ruth Shehee of CA; one brother-in-law, David L. (Lula B.) Douglas; fourteen grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren and many other relatives and friends who had a special love for her.

Memorial services were officiated by Bro. Charles Lowe on February 10, 2004 at the Church of God Chapel in Tulsa, OK.



WHEN WILL YOU BELIEVE?

(Continued from page 3.)

They never could accept the son of God because they didn't believe. When we have unbelief about someone or something, we will find all that we can to condemn them. Now we know that what Jesus taught is right because we believe but look at what extent unbelief will take you to. Pilate sent Jesus before Herod because of jurisdiction. In the 8th verse we read that Herod was glad to see Jesus because he had heard about Him and hoped to see some of the miracles first hand. So he questioned Him but Jesus said nothing. After Herod's questioning the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. The word *vehement* means

impassioned or violent. The writer is trying to give us an idea of how angry the people were and how greatly they opposed Jesus. They were so outraged that it influenced Pilate and Herod's decision. Verse 11 says, "And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate." They set Jesus at nought. The word *nought* means contempt, disgrace or disrespect; also zero. They were saying there was nothing to Him. Zero is nothing. The Son of God, God in the flesh and there is nothing to Him. They believed that so much that they mocked Him and dressed Him in a robe. I'm sure we all have an idea of what a king looks like. So they looked on Jesus as to say, "He thinks He's a king, we'll make Him a king." They said such degrading things to Him. I can hardly describe how insulting they were to Him. People can be out of their minds and think they are something they're not. This is what they thought about Jesus. What would you say if I said, "I am the President of the United States?" You would laugh because you know there is nothing to it. Well that is how they felt about Jesus, except they were wrong and God proved it.

So He was sent back to Pilate but still Pilate found no fault in Him and stressed that to the people. He also said, "He has done nothing worthy of death." It was the time of the feast and one had to be released. We know there is no comparison, but to those who don't believe, right becomes wrong and wrong becomes right. It is God that gives us the discernment and without Him in our lives we cannot see the difference. In their rejection of Jesus, they were rejecting God. "And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas:" In their asking for Barabbas they were asking for a seducer and a murderer to be turned loose. They would rather have him loose than Jesus. This is how far unbelief will take you! Pilate tried again, "But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required." Luke 23:21-24. Pilate yielded and Jesus was sent to be crucified. Can we see the danger in unbelief?

"And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God....And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." Luke 23:35-39. So all eyes were on Jesus. It was the moment everyone was watching, watching that they might prove Him wrong. To put Him at naught (zero). They were waiting to say, "we were right."

In Matthew 27:45-54 it says, "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him." Do you think they were believing yet? "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose. And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." God became reality to those people. He proved Himself though

everything seemed to go against Him. There is no challenging Him. He is and He will.

In Matthew 24:36-39 it says, "But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

God told Noah what He was going to do and Noah was faithful to warn the people. It took a hundred years to build the ark and everyone saw and had the opportunity and yet they did not believe. They thought Noah was a crazy man but the day came when it was time and God began to call the animals in and then Noah and his family. Then God shut the door. It said, "And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away." It was too late then. Oh Lord help us that we don't become as those. If we are not fully persuaded it will influence us. Our world is pushing more and more the idea that God does not exist. That He is nought. People may have the opinion that there is no God or maybe they have their god that they believe in but they will not stand in that great day. It will happen, whether we believe or not, it will happen. How sad will be the end for those poor people that are being deceived into thinking that there is no God. Someday God will prove that He is real once again but it will be for the last time. They won't realize until it comes upon them and they will cry, "Woe is me; I should have believed!" Lord help us and our children. Please pray for me.



The Family That Prays

By Bro. Toney and Sis. Jeanie Samons

X. "DATING"

There is presently a lot of discussion in the church world around us whether "dating" is even acceptable or a word that should be used for Christians. We are not prepared to say that it is or is not. What we would like to stress in this discussion is the fact that whatever your definition of "dating" is, it should be markedly different from that of the world. We would like to suggest several points for your consideration on this subject.

The primary goal of every young person should be to become spiritually mature enough to make decisions in life that will be solid and godly. When a person has become mature enough to do this, then he should be better equipped to choose a life-mate for himself. Common sense would tell us, then, that in this area of dating, it certainly should not begin at an immature age when young people are most vulnerable to making bad choices.

The Bible does not mention the word "dating;" in fact, we all know that the mate of your

child was chosen by the parents in those days. The only guidelines we have biblically are those of basic scripture saying: "And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him.*" Genesis 2:18. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Genesis 2:24. So we know that God intended marriage, but from I Thessalonians 4:3-5 we read, "...That ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence...." The man-woman relationship of today is so far removed from what God intended, that we, as followers of Christ, should be sure to set safe guidelines for our children and help them to pursue this relationship in a way that pleases God and will help them to have a happy home when they do marry.

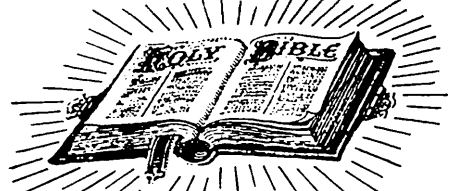
Marriage should be the only motivation for dating should you choose this term to refer to a male and female getting to know each other by spending some time together. First of all we would like to encourage you to let your "getting acquainted" be done in a group until you have definitely been impressed by the behavior of one person so much that you would like to pursue it further. And again, you can only do this if you are old enough and prepared to consider the idea of marriage. Mostly, the dating game is played because youngsters think that someone is "cute" or they want to have fun, or worse yet, the boy or girl is looking for some physical excitement with the opposite sex. No serious consideration is given to what the Lord requires or where this relationship will lead in the future. The entire dating game can lead to frustration and heartache because you are playing with emotions that are very volatile and changeable.

The person who thinks they are ready to deal with this subject should have a proper perception of love. We have only to look at the story of Samson to see what infatuation can do. The kind of love he thought he experienced only weakened and ruined him. Love is so much more than this and needs to be understood before pursuing it. It is not getting; it is giving and involves sacrifice and giving so completely of oneself that there is no backing out. It is not something that we helplessly fall into. Love has its wonderful feelings but it is not only on those feelings that a lasting relationship can be established. It requires commitment to one another and to the Lord to carry you through the times

when the feelings are not so strongly felt. It is most certainly not all physical or even a strong emotion. It is again a sense of responsibility to one person for the rest of your life. It is not easily comprehended and should be prayerfully and reverently considered.

If you have godly parents, they should certainly be considered in your choosing someone to be interested in. God always intended this to be, for you and your future companion will be living around those parents on both sides in the future and it is important that there is a solid and respectful relationship to work with. Traditionally, a young man would not pursue and interest himself in a young lady unless he first consulted the father. This has basically been discarded, today, but is still a healthy way to do things. Parents who feel that their children wish to honor them will often choose to trust them and help them. Much frustration and tension can be avoided if a healthy parent-couple relationship is built early on. Note: If you want to impress parents and a partner you hope to choose, keep your reputation clean, your per-

Bible Lessons



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

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sonality approachable and your experience with God real.

Once some of these problems have been worked through and you feel that a relationship is ready to be pursued, here are some suggested guidelines: Do not do late-night dating. Never spend time in a car parked in a dark or isolated area. Always get out into the light where you can be seen and others are not far away. Do not do a lot of aimless driving. You are asking for trouble. Visit mostly in a home when other family members are present. Getting acquainted is necessary between the two of you but do not require all your time to be just alone with each other. Include others and use interaction of games, etc. to keep your relationship healthy and pure. Engaging in physical interaction with each other distorts your relationship and undermines your trust of one another. Physical contact is always progressive once it is started. Purpose to get to know each other on a spiritual and emotional plane that can enhance your relationship, not hinder it.

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"Where Are The Nine?"

*Ten lepers once for help implored
To Jesus Christ, the blessed Lord.
He passed that way—they raised a shout:
"O Son of David, help us out!"*

*Their crusty loathsome flesh bespoke
That their entreaty was no joke;
And in their anguish and despair
They called on Christ in earnest prayer.*

*His answer came: "Yourselves go show
Unto the priest: then you will know.
And he shall then pronounce you clean
And lift you from the quarantine."*

*They turned to go and as they went
The healing of the Lord was sent.
Rejoicing went they on their way
Except for one who turned to say:*

*"Oh, thanks to Thee, O gracious One:
Doubtless Thou art God's Holy Son!"
And, falling down upon his face
He glorified the God of grace.*

*And Jesus looked and answered then:
"Where are the nine? Were there not ten?"
Then said He, "Rise and go thy way,
Thy faith hath made thee whole today!"*

*"Where are the nine?" O question great!
Where are the thankful low estate
Who sense their need to come and bow
And offer thanks to Jesus now?*

*God wants us all to thankful be
For favors granted full and free.
To thankless souls there is no gain
Nor benefit to ease their pain.*

*"Where are the nine?" How many more
Are never found Christ to adore?
Thank God for His unspeakable Gift,
Let gratitude your spirits lift!*

—Leslie C. Busbee