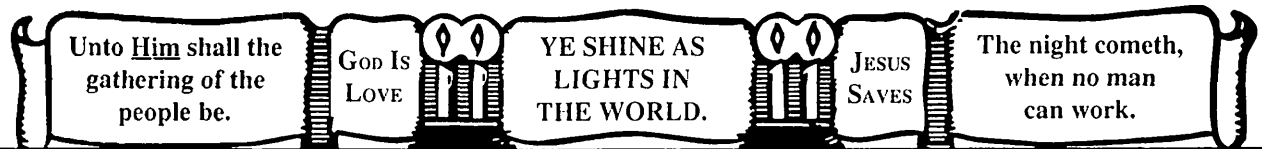


FAITH AND VICTORY

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Not Even A Hint

By Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

In God's dealings with me lately, the messages He has given me have been revelations of different aspects of His character. When God's character is revealed, we also begin to know His will and what pleases Him. We then know how we should respond to what we've learned about Him, and how we should live our lives.

One thing God has been teaching us is that He is a God of holiness and purity. Consider this verse: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity. . . ." Habakkuk 1:13. Again, in James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The seraphim in Isaiah 6 and the beasts described in Revelation 4 cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts" day and night, before the throne of God. In all of the types, shadows, ceremonies, and laws of the Old Tes-

tament, in all of God's dealings with fallen humanity, we see the same pattern unfolding. God is holy, and in order for man to fellowship with God, and be His son, God has to deal with the sin that separates man from God. This is the Gospel story that we love to share, that through Christ, God has done a complete work to bring sinful man into reconciliation with God and make him pure in heart, mind and body.

In Psalm 119:1-3 David declares, "Blessed [how happy!] are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways."

Jesus' teaching in the sermon on the mount echoes this declaration of what makes a truly happy man: "Blessed [how happy!] are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Oh, to have a vision of God, to see and discover Him in all of life, and then, in the life to come, to look upon His face for all eternity! This is the truly happy, blessed life!

Looking further into the Scriptures, the Hebrews writer lets us know that without holiness, "no man shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14.) So our life pursuit, our chief heart's desire, should be—must be—Holiness! Purity! We are promised fellowship with God, and the privilege of being His sons and daughters, if we will "come out from among them" (unbelievers, unrighteousness, darkness, idols) and be "...separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be

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a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." II Corinthians 6:17-18; 7:1. The apostle John exclaims about this privilege of being called a son of God: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." I John 3:1-3.

But, you may say, as some of Job's miserable comforters said, "How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" Job 25:4.

David answers this question: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? *By taking heed thereto according to thy word.*" Psalm 119:9. (Italics added.)

I believe that God has provided a way for us to be pure in heart, in mind, in body, and in spirit. As we have read the previous verses, we see that there is a part that only He can do, and a part that we must do if we desire to be holy. There are other Scriptures that support this.

I Peter 2:11 says, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul...." Certainly, as a believer, as a saved person, if I am seeking to live a clean and holy life, I can do my part by recognizing what fleshly desires are my particular enemies, and eliminate, as much as possible, those opportunities. I can rid my home, person, vehicle, office, refrigerator and computer, of every possibility to temptation. Obviously, there are some relationships that must be severed as well, if I am to give myself wholly to God. These two statements may very well seem impossible to accomplish. "You're killing me." Someone might say. In actuality, that's what it is. A death. It's a fight that we face, and the armor we use is *crucifixion with Christ*. I Peter 4:1 tells us, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God."

Let's say that my particular temptation is sensual books, magazines or other media. I will never overcome this foe in my life if I keep a stash of this kind of reading material in my home or workplace. I may need to stay out of the bookstore or library for a good while. I may need to totally take internet access from my computer, and rid my files of all tempting pictures, music, videos and games. The old saints called this "cleaning house." It's still the safest war strategy.

Maybe the Lord revealed to me that food was an idol to me. When I needed comfort or peace, I ate doughnuts or ice cream instead of seeking a refuge in the Lord and His Word. It may seem ridiculous to everyone around me, but I may need to totally eliminate these items from my kitchen, while I am fighting this particular enemy.

In my "abstaining," I may need to equip myself with other fighting aids. An accountability partner can be a great asset to me at this time. This person would periodically check with me, and ask me how I am doing in this battle. We could regularly agree together in prayer for this area of victory in my life. I may need this person to accompany me when I am obligated to go around certain places of temptation. This kind of help is Biblical. The Lord Jesus told the apostles to "make disciples" of all nations of people. This is one of the methods of making a disciple.

All of this fighting is certainly not going to accomplish anything if I don't learn to TRUST in the Lord and DEPEND upon the power of HIS might. The moment the temptation hits my mind, I need to CALL upon the Lord with all of my heart. "Lord, deliver me! I give this area to You! Don't let me sin against You! Cause me to walk in Your ways!" Plead the powerful blood of Jesus. (Hebrews 9:14, Revelation 12:11.) "Lord Jesus, I plead Your blood to cleanse me! Keep me covered by Your blood right now, Jesus!" (I John 1:7.)

Someone has said that, whenever he was seeking deliverance from a powerful sin in his life, God showed him that he didn't HATE the sin enough. He began to pray every day for the Lord to give him a hatred for that sin. That brought the deliverance that had evaded him so many times before.

Going back to something David said, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word."

Psalm 119:9. We see that God's Word is a powerful cleansing agent. The more I put God's Word into my mind, the more ammunition I have against the enemy, the stronger I am in battle against temptation. "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Psalm 119:11.

It is absurd to think that I will have victory if I don't equip myself with this valuable ammunition. Going to worship services with other believers, singing spiritual songs, taking time to help others and sharing the Gospel with unbelievers are all helpful aids, and necessary Christian duties. But they can never be substituted for that personal, one-on-one time with God—calling on Him, trusting in Him, submitting to Him, learning to love what He loves and hate what He hates, praising Him, pleading His blood, and reading His Word.

Through the years, Christians seeking to draw closer to the Lord have recognized the threat that the world had in its entertainments, pleasures and pursuits. Although the arenas have changed with the times, the things of the world—the "lusts of the flesh", the "lusts of the eyes", and the "pride of life"—can still be identified as enemies to our souls. Jesus said that the thorns that would choke the Word were cares of this life, pleasures, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things. (Mark 4:19 and Luke 8:14.) In Strong's Concordance, this word "lusts" means "a longing, especially for what is forbidden." What's to be done with a heart that longs after what God has forbidden? How can I no longer respond to the voices that call me from the world? Again, the cross is the power of God in my life to free me from the spirit of this world. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, *by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*" Galatians 6:14. (Italics added.) That place of entertainment, that movie, that ungodly music, that style of dress, that sensual pleasure afforded me by a particular food or drink, that thrill of competition, whether in racing or gaming or sports—I must recognize it as a condemned felon, to be nailed to the cross. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Galatians 5:24.

To do this act of crucifixion, I need God's divine help. I am too weak to do it on my own. The Scriptures speak of Christ, Who "through the eternal Spirit offered himself." (Hebrews

9:14.) This is my answer. As Jesus went to the cross through the help of the Spirit, *by the Spirit's help*, I am crucified "WITH CHRIST." *Through power of the Holy Spirit* I identify with Him, I trust in Him to TAKE ME WITH HIM UPON THE CROSS. I yield to Him, and plead His power to crucify my flesh.

The Holy Spirit is Jesus' promise to every believer. (John 14:18.) We will receive power after the Holy Spirit comes upon us. (Acts 1:8.) He will endue us with power from on high. (Luke 24:49.) He also accomplishes a cleansing in our hearts. He is a refiner's fire. (Malachi 3:1-3.) He purifies our hearts as we look to Him in faith. (Acts 15:8-9.) He helps our weaknesses. He teaches us how to pray. (Romans 8:26.)

As I yield to Him, and receive His Holy Spirit, then I rest in faith that He is doing the cleansing work, and will accomplish the work in every area of my life. Whatever He brings into my life, I trust Him to use to work this crucifixion that I have asked for. I realize that, whom the Lord loves, He rebukes and chastens. (Revelation 3:19.) His chastenings for the moment seem grievous and difficult. The flesh cries, "How can He do this to me?" But my spirit recognizes, "He's doing this FOR me, not to me." The afflictions WORK FOR ME a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (II Corinthians 4:17.) He chastens me for my profit, that I might be a "partaker of His holiness!" The chastening yields a peaceable fruit of righteousness in my life! (Hebrews 12:10-11.) One of the meanings of the word "tribulation" in the Bible is "pressure." Paul says that tribulation works *patience* in our lives. (Romans 5:3.) Patience is the quality of being "undisturbed by obstacles, failures and delays." By being put under pressure, or tribulation, I am being made into that beautiful and spotless bride described in Ephesians 5. The wrinkles in me are being ironed out *by the pressure and heat of my trials and chastenings*—the refining of the Holy Spirit!

We see so clearly now, that Christ's blood, His Word, and His Spirit work together to cleanse us and make us holy. (I John 5:8.) These three bear witness in the earth, of God's power to make a person holy and free from all sin. Praise God!

As I yield to Christ, and He works in me, the holiness and goodness and righteousness coming from my life are not my own. They are His. Without Him, I can do nothing. I am nothing.

(Continued on page eight.)

FAITH AND VICTORY 12 PAGE HOLINESS MONTHLY



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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.

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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.

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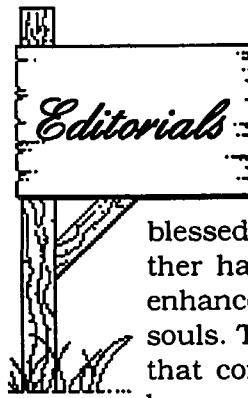
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"And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed." Numbers 22:12. God's people are a

blessed people, for the heavenly Father has provided many things to enhance their lives and nourish their souls. The guilt and condemnation that comes as a result of sin has been purged from the heart and mind of the Christian, thus freeing them to really appreciate the new life in Christ that they have been called to partake of. The blessings they enjoy are directly motivated by the love God has for His children, and when they serve Him they are as precious as the apple of His eye.

While the child of God is basking in the light of holiness and rejoicing in the glory of their salvation, there is an enemy lurking about who would like to steal their joy and curse the bright hope that gladdens their heart. If satan can work through someone else to quell the spirits of God's chosen people then he is delighted to do so. There are many wicked people who have no good words to say about God's people and do all they can to hinder and accuse them. This is to be expected for they have not tasted the fruits of holiness and are intoxicated by the sinful ways of the flesh. Some are like Esau who hated his brother, Jacob, with such passion that he comforted himself in his evil plans. (Genesis 27:42.) What a horrible way to find comfort! Yet, I am afraid there are many who are attempting to find comfort in vengeful thoughts toward God's people, which are ultimately expressed in their words and actions. This is sad because it places those individuals in the direct path of God's wrath. Remember what Jesus said about those who offend His little ones? (Matthew 18:6-7.) A woe is placed on these offenders that is worse than being cast into the sea with a millstone about their necks.

The Saints of God are going to face trials, persecutions and afflictions that will try their very souls and prove their love for God. Of these faithful ones who have endured the tests of life, the Scriptures say they shall "...come forth as gold." Another says, "...he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

There are many verses of Scripture that speak encouraging words to God's people, for it is His desire to see pure and lasting gold refined in the lives of His children. Some of the greatest battles that a young Christian faces is the need to make changes to bring their lives into conformity with God's perfect plan. Evil habits and wrong attitudes that have become ingrained in a person's life before they are converted must be conquered and replaced with godly ways. These changes may present themselves as enormous tasks, and satan may try to persuade them that their efforts to live for God are all in vain. If it were not for the strength that comes from the Lord, no one would make it through those changes. But God is faithful to bring strength and comfort at the right time to keep His children from falling. Notice this verse in II Chronicles 15:7. "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded." When the Lord spoke these words of encouragement to Asa, King of Judah, through the prophet Azariah, the country had fallen away from serving the true God and was worshiping idols. But when King Asa heard this message, the Bible says he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land. Changes that a young Christian makes are extremely important and are precious in the sight of the Lord. If the changes are not made early on, the foes that are left unconquered will later become giants that will cause trouble throughout their experience with the Lord and may very well cause them to eventually lose out with God.

Those who have started for that heavenly kingdom are going to need patience. There will often be occasions when God does not see fit to answer the prayers of his people immediately and it will require much perseverance for them to endure the trial they are going through. Because the answer does not come immediately does not mean God has forsaken them, but they are given an opportunity for their faith to be exercised. For someone struggling in this area of their experience when it seems there is no end to their trial, may you find solace in this verse from Psalm 27:14, "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD." God will not forsake His own and it is only a matter of time until the answer comes. Hold fast to His promises and keep your heart focused on Him.

Our communication with the Lord through prayer, reading His Word, singing and meditation are important parts of a Christian's life. It is through these avenues that we find strength to overcome evil. Then there are those special times that the Lord pays us a personal visit that does wonders for our spirit. After a personal visit our life is changed and we will never be the same person again, for His visits reveal truth to us in ways that we will never forget. When Daniel was seeking the Lord, he was visited in a way that was a great blessing to him. Notice this passage in Daniel 10:18-19, "Then there came again and touched me *one* like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me. And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace *be* unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me." God would have us to "...be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." Ephesians 6:10. He is delighted to impart strength to His people, not for them to be selfish and lifted up in pride, but to magnify and exalt His holy name in the earth. As little Samuel was instructed to say, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." May we also open our hearts to the voice of the Lord, even if He is telling us something that our flesh does not want to hear. His words will strengthen us and as we obey Him we will be richly blessed.

Cooperation and unity are beautiful virtues of God's people who are blessed. This beauty can only be achieved by every person keeping their eyes on the Master Conductor, Jesus Christ. Throughout the course of history there have been many led astray because some flamboyant man tried to stand in His stead. Oh, but the unity soon becomes a clashing of opinions. God's leadership is such a better way. Those who have been in the camp of the Saints and experienced the leadership of the Holy Spirit moving among His people have no desire for any other way. His ways are so lovely and pure! The singing is so heartfelt, the prayers are so earnest and the praise rings with conviction. These joyful sounds of worship all coming from hearts washed pure by the blood of Jesus Christ. What a beautiful city of God where the verse in Isaiah 41:6 is a reality, "They helped every one his neighbour; and *every one* said to his brother, Be of good courage."

"Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good." Psalms 122:7-9. May each child of God witness the comfort of His blessing as we walk in the paths of righteousness.

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



Philippines—Pray for the Saints in the Manilla area who suffered loss from the flooding of their homes by the recent typhoon which struck the main island.

Honduras—Pray for the safety of God's people and the political unrest that has occurred in Honduras.

TX—We would appreciate the prayers of all the Saints for the severe pain in my back. I have received some relief and I thank the Lord once again for His mercy to me. Your brother in Christ,
—Clyde Taylor

TX—Remember my daughter, Evelyn Ford, in prayer. She has had a brain tumor removed that contained a rare form of cancer. She is now undergoing radiation treatments to stop the redevelopment of the cancer.

—Bro. Elbert Johnson

MO—I desire prayer for relief from the severe back pain that has resulted from an injury.

—Sis. Cathy Younger

MO—I have requests for prayer for the physical needs of my family and for the Lord's help in their souls. God bless each one. Christian love.

—Sis. Nelva Stanley

CA—I have a prayer request for my friend, Maureen, who had surgery and they found and removed cancer that was in her colon. Please pray for her recovery. Also, that my wife would

be successful in her interview for a job she has coming up. God bless.

—Bro. Don & Sis. Wanda Viser

BUILDING PROJECTS

Two congregations are requesting financial help from the Saints to aid in their building projects.

The Church of God congregation in **Durham, NC** have been in the process of building a chapel for several years now. Bro. Lennon reports that it is about 70% completed. They are needing to install doors and windows and complete the inside work. They are meeting some time constraints since their building permit expires at the end of this year. Unless the building is nearly completed at that time, it will cost them a considerable amount of money to take out a new permit. Remember them in prayer as they work on this project. To help them or for further information you may contact Bro. Jerry Lennon at (919) 740-3748. Their mailing address is: Church of God, 3203 Hwy. 55, Durham, NC 27713.

The **Vanceburg, KY** congregation is needing to add Sunday School rooms to their chapel. Bro. Dallas Cooper reports that their classes have grown tremendously and they are currently using the confined space in their kitchen area for teaching both classes together. Those who feel a burden to help with this need may contact Bro. Dallas Cooper, 2012 West KY 8, Vanceburg, KY 41179.

Most of all, pray that God will bless these efforts for His Kingdom.

MEETING REPORTS

MYRTLE, MO, MEETING REPORT

We thank the Lord for another precious and blessed camp meeting at Myrtle, MO. The attendance was good and the anointing of the Holy Spirit on the services was inspiring and uplifting. The singing was heavenly and the Lord sent challenging and heart-searching messages through His Holy Spirit-led ministers. Recordings of all the messages are available on CD. There is also one CD available of special singing, including some congregational selections. If interested, you may send your request, or order to Harlan Sorrell, Rt. 1 Box 118A, Myrtle, MO 65778, email address: hсорrell@wildblue.net phone (417) 938-4336. —Bro. Harlan Sorrell

MEETING DATES

Oklahoma City (Fall Revival)—Sept. 30-Oct. 4
Myrtle, MO (Fall Singing)—Oct. 4
Baldy Mesa, CA (Fall Revival)—October 9-11
Dallas, TX (Fall Meeting)—October 14-18
Holly Hill, SC (Fall Revival)—Oct. 14-18
Okmulgee, OK (Fall Revival)—October 16-18
Guthrie, OK (Fall Revival)—Oct. 28-Nov. 1
Los Angeles, CA (Sisters' Retreat)—Nov. 6-7
Loranger, LA (Assembly Meeting)—Nov. 25-29

MEETING NOTICES

OKLAHOMA CITY FALL REVIVAL

The 23rd Street Church of God, Oklahoma City, extends an invitation to our Fall Revival beginning Wednesday, September 30th, at 7:00 p.m. through Sunday afternoon, October 4th. Bro. Ken Elwell has been led of the Lord to minister in this meeting. There will be a dinner served after the Sunday morning service, with the afternoon services at 2:00 p.m. If you are not able to come, please pray for the success of this meeting. Bro. Loren Busbee, 405-478-3860 or Bro. Galen Kelly, 405-424-8400.

MYRTLE, MO, FALL SINGING

Lord willing, we will have our annual fall singing on Saturday night, October 3, at 7:00 p.m. We would like to invite all the Saints who can to come worship the Lord with us in holy song. Cabins and dormitories will be available on the campground. Provisions will be made to care for all who come. Breakfast will be served in the dining hall Sunday morning, October 4, followed by regular service in the chapel at 10:00 a.m. (no Sunday school). Dinner will follow the morning service. Everyone welcome!

—Bro. Harlan Sorrell

BALDY MESA, CA, FALL REVIVAL

We are seeking the blessings of God for our community, our congregation, and fellow Saints as we anticipate our Fall Revival 2009. Lord willing our weekend meeting will be held October 9-11.

Friday—Worship 7:30 p.m., Saturday—Worship & Youth Focus Activities 1:00 p.m., Worship 7:30 p.m. Sunday—Sunday School 10:00 a.m., Morning Worship 11:00 a.m., Afternoon Worship 2:30 p.m.

In His Service.—Pastors Travis & Alice Johnson
 (760) 780-6707

DALLAS, TX, FALL MEETING

The Church of God congregation in Dallas, TX cordially invite you to join them in their Fall Meeting October 14-18. The service times will be at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. On Sunday, Sunday School will begin at 10:00 a.m., Morning Worship service at 11:00 a.m. and Afternoon Service at 2:30 p.m.

The chapel is located at 11501 Ryliecrest Drive, Balch Springs, TX. The chapel phone number is: (972) 557-1591.

For further information contact Bro. Calvin Frentrup (972) 237-1538, Bro. Henry Grimes (972) 222-7249. For lodging contact Sis. Linda Montgomery (972) 286-6239.

HOLLY HILL, SC, FALL REVIVAL

We would like to extend a heartfelt welcome to all to attend the Holly Hill, SC, Fall Revival. Lord willing, it will be held from Wednesday, October 14, through Sunday morning, October 18, 2009. There will be one service each day at 7:00 p.m. and one meal will be served daily. We have limited accommodations available, and there are also several local motels in Santee (about 16 miles from the chapel.) **Motel 6**—(803) 854-3221, **Super 8 Motel**—(803) 854-3456, **Holiday Inn**—(803) 854-9029, **Country Inns & Suites**—(803) 854-4104. If you would like the names and phone numbers of other area motels, we will provide them upon request. If you would like to make reservations to stay on the church grounds, please call Sis. Beverly Pratt at (803) 496-3057 or Bro. Kevin and Sis. Cheryl Smith at (803) 492-7975 as early as possible. If you are unable to come to our meeting, please pray that God's blessings will be upon each service and that the powers of the enemy will be hindered.

With much love,

—Bro. Kevin and Sis. Cheryl Smith and
 The Holly Hill, SC Congregation

OKMULGEE, OK, FALL REVIVAL

You are invited to attend our Fall Revival at the Church of God congregation in Okmulgee, OK on October 16-18. Service times will be 7:30 p.m. On October 18 we plan to have our regular Sunday services with a Singspiration in the afternoon.

The chapel is located at 1515 E. First St., Okmulgee, OK. For further information contact Bro. Robert Warren (918) 733-1306

GUTHRIE, OK, FALL REVIVAL

The Guthrie, Church of God congregation invites you to our Fall Revival beginning, Lord willing, Wednesday, October 28 through Sunday, November 1. Bro. Larry Abbott has expressed a burden to be with us in these services. Services will be held nightly at 7:30 p.m. A special singing is planned for Saturday evening, October 31. On Sunday, Sunday School will begin at 9:30 a.m. and Morning Worship at 10:30. Dinner will be served after the morning service.

Please mark your calendars and plan to join with us in worship and revival. Pray much for this meeting.

—The Saints at Guthrie



Not Even A Hint

(Continued from page three.)

But with Christ, and through Him, I am made holy. He is made holiness and righteousness to me. (I Corinthians 1:30.) By being connected to Him, His sap flows through me as a branch, and the fruit I bear is His own. (John 15:1-8.) I begin to recognize things that affect this fruit-bearing. Things that affect the connection I have with Christ. Things that choke the life of Christ right out of me. I seek to be very careful and zealous about my relationship with Christ, and avoid those things that I know to be detrimental. People may think I am being legalistic. It would be legalism if I felt that avoiding the fleshly things was what constituted my salvation. But when I know that *being connected to Christ is my*

salvation and my holiness, then avoiding those things that hinder that is not being legalistic, it is LOVE.

So my attitude toward all of these hindering things is: "Not even a hint." I don't want to be a partaker with anyone else's sins. (I Timothy 5:22.) If there is not even a "shadow of turning" in God's character (James 1:17), may there also not be a hint of turning in me. I don't want to have pleasure in the wickedness of others. (Romans 1:32.) If they are displeasing God on the screen, I don't want to spend one hour and fifty-seven minutes of my time admiring it. "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside. . . ." Psalm 101:3. I will not bring an abomination into my house, lest I be a cursed thing like it, but I will utterly detest and abhor it, for it is a cursed thing. (Deuteronomy 7:26.) God, give us a fervent hatred for the sensual media of this age! May we recognize what is sapping our love for You and killing the connection we have with You!

Christian, prepare for war. Arm yourself with the mind to die with Christ. Turn your eyes away from the things that are hindering you, and run for your life. Make a deliberate and concentrated effort to cut off the fleshly elements in your life. Clean house! Don't listen to the voices that call to you from this world. Determine that you will see the Lord in peace, recognize that HOLINESS is the requirement for that, and don't stop seeking until you know God has rained His righteousness and holiness down into your life.



Learn of Me

By Bro. Jim Linch

"Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30.

These three verses, a portion of a single paragraph of a book, can inspire a person to talk, write, preach, testify, be encouraged, and encourage others. I do not know of any other book that can lift mankind as God's Word. These verses can raise a man from the pit of sin, set him on a straight and narrow path, and keep

him there throughout his life. Verse 29 is the verse that has inspired me to write this article to be an encouragement to God's people.

Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you," Adam Clarke brings out his thoughts about the meaning by saying "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee; i.e. trust thy soul and concerns to him, and he will carry both thyself and thy load." That should give us great comfort in putting our complete trust in Jesus Christ. The loads that people are carrying upon themselves are many. We see, feel and hear about the great stress level that people are under, trying to

carry the burdens of life themselves. We live in this world and experience the same battles that the people of this world have. But we need to be able to handle the problems of life differently than the world, because we have Christ in our lives saying, "Take my yoke upon you."

The next part of the verse tells us to "Learn of me." Jesus wants us to be always learning of who Christ really is, what He can do for us, His love for us and our fellow men. The more we understand about the love and mercy of Christ, the better we can go through our trials and tests of life in a way that is pleasing to Him. Many people, through lack of understanding of Christ, have become discouraged and have even given up because of the tests of life.

Apostle Paul writes in II Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." I thank the Lord that this is the will of Christ, for "*all should come to repentance.*" Thank the Lord for being longsuffering and not willing that any of us should perish. Remember Christ's words "Learn of Me."

We cut ourselves short by not trusting in Jesus' mercy and longsuffering in helping us to overcome and gain the victory in our lives. If we do not give up our fight of faith while going through life's trials, Jesus will not give up on us. How many times has satan convinced some people that "it is no use, you are a failure, God is tired of you trying to get the victory, and you might as well give up?" Thank the Lord, Jesus has not given up on us, thus we need not to give up. Victory is in Christ! He gives strength to overcome our shortcomings in life.

Remember the parable in Luke 13:6-9, "He spake also this parable; A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, *well*; and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down." See the mercy of God, in being longsuffering towards man. Remember "Learn of Me."

Clarke again brings out the meaning of "Why cumbereth it the ground?" "Or, in other

words, Why should the ground be also useless? The tree itself brings forth no fruit; let it be cut down that a more profitable one may be planted in its place. Cut it down." Again the mercy of Jesus is revealed in the special attention He gives to souls, and He will do this to us.

Oh, how many times have I felt the Word was talking about me in this parable. If we have read that Edison failed around a 1000 times in inventing the light bulb, how do you think he felt the 100th time, the 500th time, and etc. He was finally successful in creating a practical source of electric light. I remember Bro. Ostis Wilson preaching a sermon about one of Winston Churchill shortest speeches, "Never, Never, Never give up," Is this what Christ is trying to relay to His people concerning our faults and failures in life? By no means are we saying that there is no victory in our battles; there is, but sometimes we have to "Learn" more about Jesus and ourselves. What makes us do the thing that is not of Christ?

The Word says in, I John 3:2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." We are going to have to be like Christ to be able to enter into Heaven.

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Matthew 22:37-39. Does this take "Learning of Me?" I am beginning to see that these verses are some that we have to put to use all of our lives. When we see the love that Christ has shown to us, how much love do we have to show toward Him and our fellow man? This is what the Bible is all about, our relationship with God, Jesus and mankind. This does not apply just to our brothers and sisters in Christ, but to our loved ones, our friends, neighbors, our enemies and fellow employees. If I left anybody out, fill them in. I Thessalonians 5:14-15 says, "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any *man*; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men*." These two verses tell us to show this kindness to *all men or any man*; does the Word leave anybody out? The conclusion is this, to

have peace and victory, LOVE is what we need to learn—how to love God and our fellowman more, just like Christ does. Luke 23:34 says, "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do...." These words of Christ clearly express His love.

Remember the first verse, Christ possesses a meek and quiet spirit. Again Clarke passes on his definition of this part of the verse "I am meek and lowly in heart—Wherever pride and anger dwell, there is nothing but mental labor and agony; but, where the meekness and humility of Christ dwell, all is smooth, even, peaceable and quiet; for the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." Christ possesses a meek and quiet spirit, so must we. That is what the scripture is telling us, to "Learn of me."

How do we perceive God? In Matthew 25:24 the man with one talent said "Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man." That was his perception of God. I remember when I was younger, I was always looking at God as one that was ready to cut me off when I would make a mistake or do something that I should not be doing; in other words "the **spirit** indeed **is willing**, but the **flesh is weak**." Looking back at the shortcomings and mistakes that I have made, I am ashamed to have done the things that I have done. When I would come short with my problems of life, I would become discouraged to try again because I figured that God was tired of dealing with me. But thank the Lord, He never did. Some people are faster learners than I am, so that would get me down, but through the mercy of Jesus, He would encourage me to keep trying, and also show me where the problems are that were hindering me. He is showing me more and more about His love towards me and my fellowman. Jesus says, "Learn of me." This is just touching the surface of the many things that the Lord wants us to learn of Him. We need to know from the Scripture why we believe the way we believe. Why do we forsake the world, why do we live a simple life, why do we dress different than the world, why do we believe that we cannot serve God and Mammon?

When I first started getting out on my own and working on my first full time job after schooling, I remember talking with my fellow workers during one of our lunch breaks. I was asked why I believed in what I was doing. I soon learned by that question that I needed to learn and understand why I believe in living this way. The question was asked if I believed in this way

because of my parents telling me to. I can say my answer was not satisfactory to the person asking the question. True, my parents taught me the truth, but I needed to have the truth in my heart, to believe that the Word of God is truth, and what Scriptures back it up. People want to see truth lived in our lives. Not only talked about, or expressed with our lips. When we "Learn" about truth, and put it to use, then we are showing the world about the truth of the love and mercy of Jesus Christ that He wants to show to *all mankind*. The person who asked the question also told me I needed to find out myself what I believed. I had to agree with him. The Lord can use anybody He wants in getting the truth to us.

I had an experience at work with one of my supervisors that I will relate to glorify the Love of God. This one supervisor was always on me about something; I guess always is not the right word to use, but he was on me a lot. My age and health were some hindrance to me at work, and it was always "hurry up." I asked him one day about the function of a machine, and he went off the wall. He raised his voice and started going through all the functions of the machine, it looked like he was very upset with my questions. After he was done, he came to me and said that I was pathetic, he was at my face you might say, and I looked at him and the Lord told me to agree with him, so I did. I do not know how many seconds he stood there looking at me, but he started laughing and walked past me and said nothing more. After that, our relationship grew and he was very pleasant to work with, even though he still was telling me to "hurry up." When he walked away I wondered why I agreed with him about being "pathetic," and the Lord gave me the scripture in Matthew 5:25 it says "Agree with thine adversary quickly." You can image what the situation would have been if my flesh had its way—*trouble*. The Lord has His way to solve our problems with *all men*, and that is why He said, "Learn of Me."

How many people in this world are convinced that failure is all part of life and we can do nothing about it? On our own that is right, but through the Lord Jesus Christ, and our ability to learn of Him, we can and will have the victory. Praise the Lord!

"Ye shall find rest unto your souls," Thank you Lord that rest is through Christ, the love He shows towards us, and the love we need to show to Him and towards *all men*.

A True Christian's Prayer

*My God, in me Thy mighty power exert,
Enlighten, comfort, sanctify my heart.
Sweeten my temper and subdue my will,
Make me like Jesus, with Thy Spirit fill.*

*I want to live on earth a life of faith;
I want to credit all the Bible saith;
I want to imitate my Savior's life,
Avoiding lightness, gloom and sinful strife.*

*I want to bring poor sinners to thy throne;
I want to live and honor Christ alone;
I want to feel the Spirit's inward power,
And stand prepared for death's important hour;*

*I want a meek, a gentle, quiet frame,
A heart that glows with love to Jesus' name;
I want a living sacrifice to be,
To Him Who died a sacrifice for me.*

*I want to do whatever God requires,
I want a heart to burn with pure desires.
I want to be what Christ my Lord commands,
And leave myself, my all, in His dear hands.*

*O Lord! Pour out Thy Spirit on my soul!
My will, my temper, and my tongue control;
Lead me through life to glorify Thy grace,
And after death to see Thee face to face.*

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