

finding

TRUTH & Hope

ISSUE #33

The Eternal Home of the Church

Excerpts from The Cleansing of the Sanctuary by D.S. Warner & H. M. Riggle pg 442-458

Peter denominates the New Testament church “as strangers and pilgrims,” who are “sojourning here” (1 Pet. 2:11; 1:17). “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come” (Heb. 13:14). “For he hath prepared for them a city” (Heb. 11:16). All these scriptures point us away from this earth to “another country”—yes, to a “better country,” “an heavenly.” We are only sojourners here for a time. We are traveling to another clime, another sphere of existence, a brighter realm. Our short pilgrimage upon earth is compared to a handbreadth, an eagle hastening to his prey, a swift post, a dream, a shadow, a vapor. Time with gigantic footsteps is bearing us to the future. Life is soon cut down, “and we fly away.” “Because man goeth to his long home” (Eccl. 12:5). “To his eternal home.”

“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Cor. 4:18). Paul here speaks of things which are “temporal” (*proskaros*), for a season or time only; and then he speaks of things “eternal” (*aionios*), without end, as the eternal Spirit. Heb. 9:14. Those things we see with our natural eyes are only temporal. They are things which have a short duration, and must have an end. “The things which are seen are temporal”—temporary, for a time only. That includes this earth and all that pertains to it. All nature teaches this fact.

The green grass covers this earth with a beautiful and verdant carpet, but the time comes when it withereth and the lovely flowers fade away. The leaves which come forth and cheer our hearts in springtime turn to a golden hue when the autumn winds blow, and fall to the earth, and decay away. The sturdy oak, in whose branches the fowls of the air lodge, soon decays and is no more. The lofty pyramids, and the monuments, in time crumble to dust.

When we come over into the New Testament, we have this same fact taught, if anything, more clearly than in the Old. Jesus said, “Till heaven and earth pass” (Mat. 5:18). In the very commencement of his ministry, Jesus Christ

(Continued on page 2)

The Small Clay Vessel

A small clay vessel by the garden path

Had been carelessly cast aside.

It lay unused year after year

Until one day it was spied.

“Just what I need for this little job!”,

The happy gardener sighed.

He bent low and picked it up

His needed vessel supplied.

It wasn't a vessel of beauty.

An important place it did not fill --

Just a little jug by the path

In readiness, waiting and still.

This vessel he filled with water

Which would revive his little garden.

The water he poured over and around

To soften the ground which had hardened.

We, too, may be a small vessel

Feeling useless and forsaken;

But, lie there faithfully by the path

Till new purpose the Lord does awaken.

He'll pick us up, and brush us off,

And with His Living Water infuse.

He'll water the ground of hearts around.

Just be THERE ready for Him to use!

~Lana Lasiter Johnson~

taught the instability of all visible things. The heavens which you see, and which are so glorious, and the earth which you inhabit shall pass away; “for the things which are seen are temporal.” From the lips of Jesus we hear the solemn words, “Heaven and earth shall pass away” (Mat. 24:35). “The end of all things is at hand” (1 Pet. 4:7).

From the beginning, God has meted out this world’s career. One long age has succeeded another, until we now have reached the “last days” of its history. A small step before us is the **end of “all things” pertaining to earth.**

The Scriptures very clearly teach that Christ will come in the end of the world, in the last day of this last age of time. They also inform us that the same will be the day of judgment. And here Peter tells us plainly that on that very day of his coming and the judgment, **the heavens and the earth will be consumed, melted and destroyed.** So it will indeed be the end of the world, the **close of all time** allotted to this earth.

Since man will have an eternal existence, and as we see, this earth shall pass away and be no more, it cannot be his eternal home. “The things which are not seen are eternal.” Our eternal home is something we cannot now see. Where then is it located? The Word plainly answers: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, **an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens**” (2 Cor. 5:1).

We here enter the kingdom of grace, which prepares us for an abundant entrance into the future everlasting kingdom of glory. This is not a literal something upon earth as many imagine, but it is “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God” (1 Pet. 1:4, 5). “And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (2 Tim. 4:18).

When will all this be fulfilled? “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: **then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:** and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thes. 4:16, 17).

The apostle Paul informs us that if “in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” (1 Cor. 15:19). This language implies that our present enjoyment is based on our future prospects and hope. This was true in the life of Christ; **“who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.”** Amidst the trials, temptations, difficulties, disappointments, and adversities of life, **the bright prospects the Christian has in the future, is what encourages him to cleave unto the Lord with a purpose of heart.** It enables him to outride the raging storms, and

surmount life’s billows. When the heavens gather blackness, and the tempests sweep the sky, his hope is anchored in that within the veil. It puts new courage in him, so he is enabled to run and not be weary, to walk and never faint.

As to the glories of heaven, we can have but a foretaste. The apostle informs us that to dwell with Christ is far better than to abide in the flesh. Therefore he adds, “To die is gain.” The inspired testimony is that in his presence there is fullness of joy; and at his right hand, pleasures forevermore.

“There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master” (Job 3:17-19). “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever” (Dan. 12:3).

“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears, from their eyes” (Rev. 7:13-17).

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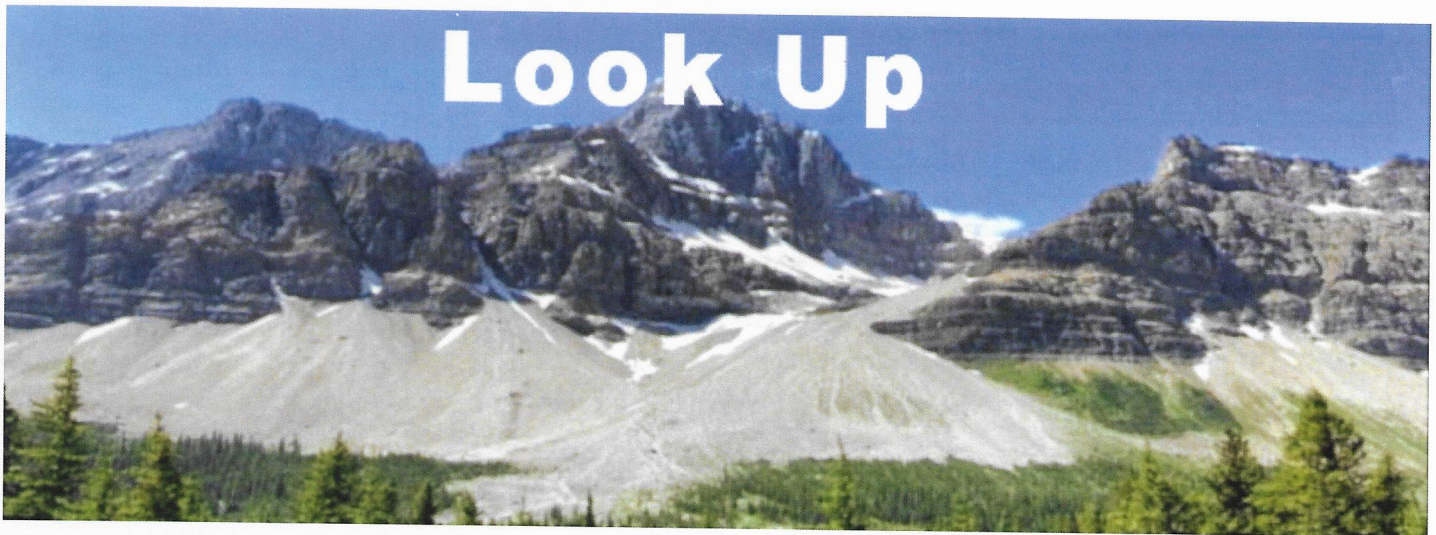
Finding Truth & Hope

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The Loranger, LA congregation does the cutting apart, folding, taping, addressing, and stamping, which greatly aids in getting the papers ready to mail.



The enemy would love to keep us always with our head down -- cast down and discouraged. Let's try, for a moment, to look up! **If the Lord can help us to look up more, the enemy can be routed**, less able to accomplish his purposes.

Every temporal thing around us takes so much of our time, attention, money, and our energy! Yet in the light of eternity, they are passing things. ***Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away (Matt 24:35 / Mark 13:31 / Luke 21:33).***

We are flooded with duties every day, but let's write God's word on the "doorposts" of our hearts. Those early verses memorized can now mean the most to us! *Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee* (Ps. 119:11). Feed on His word, giving our minds and hearts fodder, nourishment, encouragement, instruction, and correction – all to do us good. Saturate, immerse, and in small ways surround yourself with the word of God. Keep a few fresh meaningful daily battle verses close and handy.

It is through faith in Christ that we become overcomers. God has enabling grace for us as we look up to Him. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen* (Heb. 11:1).

Moses's Mount Sinai may have been with dark tempest, fearful, threatening, and dreadful to hear and behold as God gave His commandments of old. God needed to get their attention and for them to change their ways. Like as in the Mount of Transfiguration, God would have us catch a glimpse of the other side, looking into things eternal. God would have us benefit from inspiration and an upward look that's not nailed down to my shortcomings and inabilities. **He is our strength and wants us to look to Him to help fight our battles.**

Evening Light Song # 300 speaks of looking far down the mountain. Let's see things in the dimension as God would have us to see. Let's not be always "nearsighted." N D

STAND YOUR GROUND

Bro. Michael Smith (Facebook) Springfield /Billings Church of God 7-31-22
<https://fb.watch/eGolw5Co8Y/>

The enemy is assaulting God's people this morning. Time is running out! We need to stand our ground. The enemy is trying to steal our relationship with God. He's trying to steal the purity away from the young people. If the Lord has given you a victory, just know you're going to come to an obstacle – a Red Sea! The devil is going to tell you that you cannot make it. The devil is a liar! There's victory for us to overcome by the power of God. So stand your ground.

He said the Lord will fight for you. We are not able to fight the armies of Egypt in our own power. There have been many who have lost their spiritual power because they retreated in fear. When you're tired of fighting the devil – stand your ground. When you look and say "I can't fight all these forces against me," **stand your ground!** Set yourselves; stand ye still. "I'm planting my feet." See the salvation of the Lord!

God Will Keep His Promises

God's Gracious Dealings by Fred Pruitt Page 122

All along through our ministry, the Lord has used us in praying for the sick, and He would heal them; and a number of different times He has used us in casting out demons. We find that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Read Heb. 13:8).

In speaking of the healing of bodies and other mighty deeds which Jesus is doing today, people often think them great and wonderful, and many often manifest surprise. When we look at them in the light of God's Word and compare them with His promises, we should not be surprised or think it so wonderful that God would keep His word. At the same time, we do greatly appreciate His faithful love and mercy to us unworthy creatures. Has He not said that "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt 28:18)? "If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us" (I John 5:14). "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:18). "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up" (James 5:15); and "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" (John 14: 12).

Do we not believe that God will keep His promises? Do we think it a strange and wonderful thing that He does keep them? Why should we doubt God who spoke the world into existence and all things therein by His Word? Do we look upon Him to be one as weak and frail as man? Can we not have implicit faith and confidence in our Heavenly Father who has unlimited power, and is seeking our good and His glory in everything? Why should we think it a thing incredible for God to show special love and mercy to those who seek His honor only?

When Jesus was here in the flesh, people believed because they saw Him and beheld the miracles which He did. Thomas believed that He was the resurrected Christ because he saw the nail prints in His hands and feet and felt of the pierced side. Jesus said, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29). Brethren, let us believe God and not think it strange that He keeps His promise to those who love and serve Him.

Fred Pruitt

Prayer Meeting Night *Excerpts*

"He is just the same today" (E L S # 307)

I've had a boil once before – it was very uncomfortable – it took a long time to go away. Recently, I had a boil on my back. My wife had to take care of it. I couldn't sit or lie down on it without discomfort. This week, I needed to leave on a business trip, and my wife would not be along. I felt impressed to be anointed and prayed for on Sunday. That afternoon, things began to change! I was able to take my trip, and three days later it is almost gone.

Prayer Meeting Night *Edited Excerpts continued****An affliction has an errand to be accomplished!***

I remember when I was in my late teens, lying around with flu and cold. When I was prayed for, I felt impressed to get up and walk across the floor. As I got up and walked, I was made well.

The testimonies you're telling about tonight are an encouragement to all of us.

I often feel so inadequate and know I'm leaning on His strength. "Lord, if you don't help, I have no help!" It's learning places – He helps us see where we are. It's faith builders.

I, too, felt very impressed to be anointed Sunday. I knew the pain in my side from coughing so much, if a cracked rib, could last a long time. I am so much better tonight! The Lord doesn't want to be our last resort. We should lean on Him and not feel self-sufficient.

I thank the Lord for touching after a couple weeks of sickness. I had a large area to mow at Mom's, and there were pretty good chances of rain. A couple times, it would rain a little, but would stop. After breaking a belt, I had to stop to change that. Another cloud came up, but not enough to stop mowing. Then I could see a wall of rain right across the field, but it never came, just a few sprinkles! There was never enough to stop mowing— much rain was all around, but never came there.

I am still rejoicing for what the Lord did for me not too long ago. I was hurting so badly and desperate for eight more days after I was anointed and prayed for. I told the Lord I wanted Him to get all the glory. But when the Lord healed me *I knew it!*

This past weekend I had car trouble. I was praying, "Lord help it not to be something serious." It only cost \$50. I've paid more than that for a tank of gas! Above all, pray that I grow and abound spiritually and draw closer to Him when He's trying to instruct me.

Be not weary in well doing for we shall reap in due time if we faint not. Others are benefiting from you – so don't let go. God is dealing and working for good in our lives even when it appears otherwise.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it (I Thess. 5:23-24).

The on-line book ***Life's Story and Healings*** by Nellie Poulos is very, very encouraging. It tells of amazing accounts! ...Major healings – even raised to life again, God's miraculous workings in her life, of one time when her eyes were healed after being really bad! www.churchofgodeveninglight.com/wp-content/uploads/Lifes-Story-and-Healings.pdf

Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day long. (Ps. 25:5) You must seek Him. He is always there.

Prayer Meeting Night *Edited Excerpts continued*

There is a certain part of divine healing that goes so much deeper – trust His working for our good, helping us to grow and to learn deeper understanding. Really reach out to God and His ways. He has so much for us – to grow and trust Him with our bodies.

Lord help me have some type of resolve to fight the battle that He's put in front of me. No matter what was coming their way – the faithful had a resolve. Standing on what they believed in – no matter what happened.

The Cause

Edited excerpts Bro. Dan Adams 2022-06-29 Loranger, LA #8176 www.churchofgodpreaching.com

David saw something in this giant that others didn't see. They only saw riches, honor, and self gratification – that's as high as they could see! David said, "There is a cause!" **The cause was enough.** It wasn't the reward of all the other stuff.

Giants will go down today, if we can see the cause. What's going to keep this going? Not the good food in the dining hall! Jesus said, "Not my will be done." The three Hebrews said, "Even if we don't come out alive – we can't bow down." Challenge each one to **get a hold of the cause.** Without the cause, I'll fail. Without the cause, you'll fail.

Time Is Running Out!

Edited excerpts Bro. Michael Smith 2022-07-16 Monark MO #8230 www.churchofgodpreaching.com

Seven days before the deeps were opened up, God said, "Go into the ark." The Lord is saying tonight, "Get into the ark!" The door is very quickly shutting! If you want to get on the Ark – now is the time! We're not going to make it in on anybody else's coat tails. How is my personal experience with the Lord? How is my heart? My consecration? The changes taking place in our lives, are they taking us closer to the Lord? Jesus is not going to come back on my schedule. **Dear friend the end of all things is at hand.**

Testimony of George W. Winn

Our youngest boy had a growth on his wrist the size of a goose egg. Wife sent him to a neighbor to borrow some soda. The neighbor, noticing the growth, said to the boy, "I am going to ask the Lord to remove it from your arm." On returning home, the child told his mother what had happened.

One morning about three days after this, at the breakfast table one of the boys started laughing, and upon being questioned of the matter he said, "That growth is gone from Ed's hand," and it was completely healed.

One time we had a call for some of the elders from Guthrie to go 6 miles east of Orlando, Okla., to pray for a sister. As all the rest of the ministers at Guthrie were gone, I was called upon to go. They said for me to come 6 miles due east from the depot at Orlando.

I arrived at the depot, and nobody was there to meet me, so I started walking. About half way, I met a man in a spring wagon. He asked me to ride with him, but I told him I was going the other way. He insisted for me to get in and said that he would turn around and take me where I wanted to go.

He then said it was his wife that I was going to pray for, and how it had been phoned all around that I was coming to pray for his wife. He also said that it would be like a camp meeting gathering at his house, because people were there from miles around in wagons, carts, on horseback and afoot to see what would happen.

When we came in sight of the house it was just as he had said. Not all could get in the house, for some were all about the yard. He tied the horses and went right in with me. There were so many people in the room and only one chair was there, so he stood at the head of the bed and I sat down.

The sister said in a low whisper, "Is this Bro. Winn?" I answered her that it was. Then she told me she was very sick. Before praying for her, the man asked where a certain scripture was that his wife had asked for the night before. I gave him chapter and verse of the scripture that he might put it down. The sister then said, "I knew it was there somewhere."

I then read to her from the 5th chapter of the gospel of James – the Lord's will concerning our healing. I anointed her and prayed for her according to the scripture, and as I started to remove my hands, the husband screamed in a loud voice, "My wife is healed; I know she is, for I can see the change already!" In five minutes, the room was vacated, and the sister arose, dressed and helped get dinner for the crowd of people.

Some six years later, a gentleman was sick about three miles north of the place just related. Wife and I were called to pray for him. We labored in prayer for three nights and days for him. He would receive help but was not healed; so we set a day of fasting, which was on Sunday, for his healing. When the appointed hour came, we anointed him and prayed the prayer of faith, and God healed him instantly.

We also wish to tell how the Lord supplied our needs. In the early days, I filed on 160 acres of land northwest of Guthrie. I made our dugout and moved the family into it. Times were very hard, and provisions were very scarce. Wife went to one of the neighbors, and they gave her a cat which she brought home with her. The only opening for air that we had was eighteen inches by eighteen inches in the door, which stayed open night and day.

The children had a pallet on the dirt floor to sleep on. Night after night this cat would bring a rabbit and put it at the children's feet. She would eat the heads off the rabbits, and leave the nice fat rabbit for us. After about three months of faithful service, our cat disappeared. Early on the morning of the third day one of the boys called, "Papa! Papa! Come and see; here is a smart dog out here, and he acts like he wants to go hunting." I got up and dressed and took my gun and brought back nine squirrels. So thus we were fed until we were able to have a pig in the pen.

Many, many obstacles and hindrances have confronted us from time to time. By God's grace, we are more than conquerors. One of my favorite songs, namely, "I'm Nearer My Home," is becoming more real to me each time I sing it, for I realize that one of these days, I shall see heaven for myself.

GEORGE W. WINN <https://www.churchofgodeveninglight.com/wp-content/uploads/Biography-of-GW-Winn.pdf>

OFF COURSE!

Edited excerpts of message by Bro. Ivan Eck Gale, IL 9-30-22

We have a Good Shepherd. God is not there looking for opportunity to cut us off the first moment we misstep! For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved (John 3:17).

Does it make you happy to get chastened? When what you want to do gets crossed? When the Lord kindly, gently let's you know "You can't do that"? *Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth* (Heb. 12:6). *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby* (Heb. 12:11). Let's learn to receive correction from the Lord; instead of stubbornness, to just admit "I'm wrong." It's not my Heaven, not my eternity to give. The Lord claims, "All souls are mine" (Ez. 18:4).

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When I've been off course, I've had to turn around. I had to figure out how to get back on the right road, to reach out for help. Jesus still says *Come unto me* (John 7:37). He understands our heart. He understands our cry. The devil tells us — "The Lord wouldn't want you if you did make it back," which is a lie. The Lord put me on his shoulder, like a sheep, and carried me home. *And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing* (Luke 15:5).

The Reason for Singing by Charles H. Spurgeon

"The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing" (Zephaniah 3:17).

What a word is this! Jehovah God in the center of His people in all the majesty of His power! This presence alone suffices to inspire us with peace and hope. Treasures of boundless might are stored in our Jehovah, and He dwells in His church, therefore may His people shout for joy.

We not only have His presence, but He is engaged upon His choice work of salvation. "He will save." He is always saving: He takes His name of Jesus from it. Let us not fear any danger, for He is mighty to save.

Nor is this all. He abides evermore the same; He loves, He finds rest in loving, He will not cease to love. His love gives Him joy. He even finds a theme for song in His beloved. This is exceedingly wonderful. When God wrought creation He did not sing, but simply said, "It is very good"; but when He came to redemption, then the sacred Trinity felt a joy to be expressed in song. Think of it, and be astonished! Jehovah Jesus sings a marriage song over His chosen bride. She is to Him His love, His joy, His rest, His song. O Lord Jesus, by thine immeasurable love to us, teach us to love thee, to rejoice in thee, and to sing unto thee our life-psalm.

At God's Bidding by Charles H. Spurgeon

"And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men" (Micah 5:7).

If this be true of the literal Israel, much more is it true of the spiritual Israel, the believing people of God. When saints are what they should be, they are an incalculable blessing to those among whom they are scattered.

They are as the dew; for in a quiet, unobtrusive manner they refresh those around them. Silently, but effectually, they minister to the life, growth, and joy of those who dwell with them. Coming fresh from Heaven, glistening like diamonds in the sun, gracious men and women attend to the feeble and insignificant till each blade of grass has its own drop of dew. Little as individuals, they are, when united, all-sufficient for the purposes of love which the Lord fulfills through them. Dewdrops accomplish the refreshing of broad acres. Lord, make us like the dew!

Godly people are as showers which come at God's bidding without man's leave and license. They work for God whether men desire it or not; they no more ask human permission than the rain does. Lord, make us thus boldly prompt, and free in thy service wherever our lot is cast.

www.churchofgodmeetings.com

Loranger, LA Assembly Meeting November 23 – 27, 2022

Guthrie, OK Assembly Meeting Dec. 27 – Jan. 1, 2023

This is the most current information as of this printing, but before planning travel, it would be good to check the website for the most up-to-date information. www.churchofgodmeetings.com

Honor God in Body Part II

Message by Bro. Rodney Smith Loranger, LA 2022-09-18

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. 1 Cor. 6:19-20

As the temple of God and a representative of Jesus, the Lord desires that our behavior and conduct are consistent with godly principles and honorable to Him. This includes practicing moderation, godliness in the temporal affairs of our lives, honoring Him with how we manage our time, how we adorn ourselves, and how we use the bodily members He has given us (eyes, ears, lips, hand, feet, etc.). And this just scratches the surface.

There are some other specific subjects that Paul was dealing with in this passage, and that he also addressed in Romans — and that is the issue of fornication and ungodly sensuality – sins against the body. It can be a sensitive subject but is a subject that is being given much airtime in the world in which we live – including in our schools where innocent children are a captive audience and are being taught things that are far from truth. These same children will one day be fathers, mothers, teachers, and leaders of our land – with new and false norms that are presented as truth. Parents are now having to address related subjects with their children that not so many years ago were of little concern. Don't think they are of no concern to our own children — this can lead to our own children being caught up in the deception of the world.

All through scripture, we are warned against being deceived – believing a lie or an untruth. It is sobering that precious-few people believe they are actually deceived. To counter deception, we have to recognize it and stand against it by being knowledgeable of the scripture and spirit-filled.

In 1 Cor. 6:9, Paul started out by making a statement in the form of a question: “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?” Entering the kingdom of heaven should be our most important objective. Then he made a three-word statement, “**Be not deceived**” – don't take it lightly. If you are not careful, you too will become deceived.

He then began speaking against sin of the body which leads to God departing from our temple and ultimately our being lost at the judgment — serious business. The sins called out were **fornicators** and **adulterers**. Illicit relationships outside of the marriage relationship that God recognizes – not that man recognizes, but that God recognizes. No matter how common this is, it does not make it right in the sight of God. We are warned not to be deceived by the norms of the world. Our Sunday School Bible Lessons speak of how small steps can lead us far away.

Consider this mental model of progression:

Exposure leads to **Familiarity**; familiarity breeds **Tolerance**; tolerance can lead to **Acceptance**; and too often, acceptance ends in **Participation**. The enemy uses this tool to deceive and bring about sin – be wise to it and remain on guard.

Most often when we are first exposed to sin, we don't jump straight to participation. You may even be shocked by what you observe. But as the sin becomes more commonplace, so are the reasons and justifications. And we can start to give room and be sympathetic to sins that the Lord has strongly called out in His word. We can allow our minds to become sympathetic to the sin because the people committing them seem nice, have a testimony of salvation, and do many good works. This sympathy can turn to confusion and deception, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin diminishes in our minds. And what previously was considered inconceivable becomes commonplace.

Flee fornication — a sin against the body. This is not a norm or accepted by God in heaven and should not be with us. This is so serious that Jesus taught fornication can occur in our hearts even if the physical act has not been committed.

Effeminate — men endeavoring to deliberately take on characteristics that God gave to women; same truth holds going the other direction. It is wrong and is an abomination in the sight of God. It is trying to

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change the image of His design into something else and disrespects what God created. It has always been wrong and will never be accepted in the sight of God. It was an issue in Paul's time and is becoming more and more an issue in our day. Let's not be sympathetic to it by granting it space as right and/or part of truth.

Abusers of Themselves – idolatrous practices at the time of Paul's writing and is present even today.

In Romans 1:21, Paul spoke of those that knew about God but didn't honor Him as God, which led to vain imaginations and heart and soul darkness – something that always happens when we turn our face from light.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools – this describes what we are facing today; supposed new enlightenment. People who profess to be awake to what we are supposedly asleep to; believing higher level of moral understanding has been achieved than has previously been recognized....yet, "professing themselves to be wise, they become fools."

It is simply foolish to say that we have no gender except what we choose it to be – that is foolishness; yet increasing numbers of people promote, teach, and demand that it be accepted as truth. This is even promoted among the very young in some places. Make no mistake, judgment for this will not be withheld. It is foolish to try to act like there is no difference between boys and girls and to treat and teach them as if there is no difference. People become so consumed with what they want, that they worship the very things they create irrespective of what God has ordained as truth.

The lifestyles and practices described in Rom 1:26, 27 are on the rise and are being promoted and accepted as normal, right, and acceptable before God. Church organizations are starting to shift their stance on these issues and even promote them – accepting these sinful lifestyles among their leaders in prominent religious organizations of our day. Understand, God is not pleased with this unrighteousness, and the scripture declares the judgment of God on these sins.

Paul further makes the point of how serious this issue is by outlining that there are people who, knowing the judgment of God against such things, not only continue to do them but have pleasure in them that do them. The teaching and practices being promoted are destroying families and the family unit. May God have mercy on us as we live in a world quickly spiraling so far out of moral control that what was once inconceivable is now a reality in our time.

We must be on high alert regarding what our children and young people are being fed and taught that they be not deceived – maintaining understanding of the Word while teaching and reinforcing truth according to the Holy Spirit. I Cor 3:17 says "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

I don't think the Lord wants us to live each day with unhealthy fear, but He does want us to be aware and equipped with His Word and Spirit that we may stand against what is wrong. May God help us be ever diligent.

*And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and **the violent take it by force*** (Matt. 10:12)

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But whereunto shall I liken this generation? (Matt. 10:16). There's not much movement toward spiritual things. Spiritual things are neglected and not taken care of. Temporal things are put to the front.

Let us put forth great effort to receive what Jesus is bringing and God has for our lives. It takes a perseverance on our part. It doesn't happen on it's own. We're in a time where people feel little or no concern for their souls. They're indifferent. It is so easy for us today not to recognize the spiritual importance and need of our soul.

Where am I leading my family – my grandchildren, if they follow me? Jesus spoke of the bridegroom tarrying a long time waiting. I believe today we're living in a sleepy, unconcerned time.

"I wake with horror from the spell" (ELS #233)

You know, Satan doesn't want us to feel concern. He wants us to be under his spell, under his control.

***"My sins were sinking me to hell,
O Jesus, save my soul!"***

We've seen Godly witness, we've seen lives lived before us. We need, like Jacob, to say "I will not let you go till you bless me." We need to get desperate with God. The Bible works! We need to lay hold of God! We need Him to save us from our own propensities that would take us down. But we have to persevere. We have to hold on. Jacob received his blessing. God changed his name. He held on in prayer. ***The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*** (James 5:16). It means glowing, hot, boiling, in earnest before God, and to seek Him with all your heart. Heaven will be moved. Sincerely stay in prayer until God's Spirit begins to move in your heart. God will be glorified and honored. We can't just go through the motions, pray till Heaven moves! The Lord wants to help us. Fight indifference in our own lives. Let's not be complacent. All the time, the Lord had so much more for them to gain. **I believe God will be just as real to us as we are to Him.**

The END

www.churchofgodpreaching.com # 8371 Edited excerpts of message by Bro. Marty Clevenger Dallas, TX 2022-10-13

The end of a thing is better than its beginning. The days behind are OK, but the days ahead are more important! *But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went* (Matt. 21:28-29).

Paul had persecuted the church — women and children, too! But now in II Timothy 4:6, he says, *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. He was soon to stretch his neck out – I'm going to die anyway! (8) Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Sometimes we're wrapped up in this old fleshly world! We need to be careful! I don't want to wait for a death bed experience to get ready, but a death bed experience could be a privilege — a chance to ask God to search me! How am I at the time that I go? Many people are taken out in a moment!

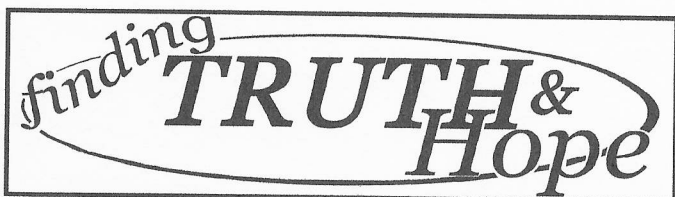
Samson felt he was invincible, pushed the lines, and had failures in his life. Samson had a special gift from God on him. He trifled with it. He could do things nobody else could do, but he wist not that the Lord had departed from him. **But it's not over till it's over. It's the end that matters.** Samson's name is named in the 11th chapter of Hebrews — with faithful people. Do you know what made him faithful? THE END!

For Saul, God sent a prophet to warn him. His end didn't have to be that way!

But he that endureth to the end shall be saved (Matt. 10:22).

What if the woman that touched the hem of Jesus garment had only come 4 inches from His garment? Would she have gotten her healing? What if she'd missed by ½ an inch? Would she have gotten it? **It's not God that's coming up short!** We say, "It's so difficult, that I can't endure." YOU CAN! Whatever it is, it's got to come through the Lord first to get to us. God's going to bring us to the place that we can be faithful. Lord help us to be able to say, "Yes, Lord, my time has come."

IT'S GOING TO BE THE END THAT MATTERS.



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We wish to encourage each one – we CAN get ready to meet God!

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Christ – Our Friend

Excerpt from **Bible Lessons**, Volume 53, No. 2

“But suppose you do think of forsaking Christ, where are you going to get another friend to take his place? You must have a friend of some sort; who is going to sit in Christ's chair? Whose portrait is to be hung up in the old familiar place when the old Friend is discarded? To whom are you going to tell your griefs, and to whom will you expect to receive help in time of need? Who will be with you in sickness? Who will be with you in the hour of death? Ah! **There is no other who can ever fill the vacuum which the absence of Christ would make. Therefore, never forsake him**” (C. H. Spurgeon).

– Angela Gellenbeck

Audio book on YouTube: **“Raising Children in the Light of Eternity”** by Sis. Charlotte Huskey
(Also free E-book: www.churchofgodtruth.com/raising-children-book)

Free e-book: **“Traveling With God”** by Sis. Charlotte Huskey – www.churchofgodtruth.com/copy-of-raising-children-book

Tinyurl.com/3ap2pyz8 **(The Shepherd's Fold)** [by Harlan Sorrell]

Tinyurl.com/y49zr545 **(The Place for Truth)**[by Larry Whittenborn]

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