

finding

TRUTH & Hope

Issue 28

God is a Spirit

“God is a spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth”(John 4:24). “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad”(II Cor. 5:10). Folks, **when we feel conviction—it is God speaking to us!** He favors us to prick our conscience! “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day”(John 6:44). **What a privilege for the God of Heaven to visit us with a touch of His Spirit!** He Sends His Spirit to turn us around and to point us to eternal life. He gives us a call and a chance to repent. Then the eyes of our heart can be opened to take take in things of eternal worth. God can open our spiritual understanding. “Behold all things become new.”
- N. D.

The following are excerpts of a message by Bro. Rod Smith preached 6-30-21, during the Loranger, LA Campmeeting.

Embrace conviction, ask the Lord, please convict me. It's got to be a personal walk! If there's a little rock in your shoe, you're going to stop and get it out. As the Lord reads the book of my life, what is He seeing?

The Stained Glass Window

A stained glass window in a church
Such a beauty to behold
Was blown out and broken
By strong winds, sharp and cold

An artist took the broken pieces
That were scattered, not a few
He put them back together
And fashioned them anew.

The glory of the new creation
Far surpassed the old
In the telling of this little tale
Another story can be told.

A broken heart that's shattered
Can be mended by God's touch
His Spirit works It's wonders
By His love and care and such.

He tenderly puts together
The broken pieces of this heart
Then the Light of God's Right Hand
Shines through His Mended work of art!

-Lana Johnson-

Inspired by the Nov. 22 reading in, “The Springs in the Valley”
-Nov. 22, 2020-

A Story of

Eternal Perspective

Back in 1921, a missionary couple named David and Svea Flood went with their two-year-old son from Sweden to the heart of Africa—to what was then called the Belgian Congo. They met up with another young Scandinavian couple, the Ericksons, and the four of them sought God for direction. In those days of much tenderness and devotion and sacrifice, they felt led of the Lord to go out from the main mission station and take the gospel to a remote area.

This was a huge step of faith. At the village of N'dolera they were rebuffed by the chief, who would not let them enter his town for fear of alienating the local gods. The two couples opted to go half a mile up the slope and build their own mud huts. They prayed for a spiritual breakthrough, but there was none. The only contact with the villagers was a young boy, who was allowed to sell them chickens and eggs twice a week. Svea Flood—a tiny woman of only four feet, eight inches tall—decided that if this was the only African she could talk to, she would try to lead the boy to Jesus. And in fact, she succeeded.

But there were no other encouragements. Meanwhile, malaria continued to strike one member of the little band after another. In time the Ericksons decided they had had enough suffering and left to return to the central mission station. David and Svea Flood remained near N'dolera to go on alone.

Then, of all things, Svea found herself pregnant in the middle of the primitive wilderness. When the time came for her to give birth, the village chief softened enough to allow a midwife to help her. A little girl was born, who they named Aina. The delivery, however, was exhausting, and Svea Flood was already weak from bouts of malaria. The birth process was a heavy blow to her stamina. She lasted only another seventeen days.

Inside David Flood, something snapped in that moment. He dug a crude grave, buried his twenty-seven-year-old wife, and then took his children back down the mountain to the mission station. Giving his newborn daughter to the Ericksons, he snarled, “I’m going back to Sweden. I’ve lost my wife, and I obviously can’t take care of this baby. God has ruined my life.” With that, he headed for the port, rejecting not only his calling, but God Himself.

Within eight months both the Ericksons were stricken with a mysterious malady and died within days of each other. The baby was then turned over to some American missionaries, who adjusted her Swedish name to “Aggie” and eventually brought her back to the United States at age three.

This family loved the little girl and was afraid that if they tried to return to Africa, some legal obstacle might separate her from them. So they decided to stay in their home country and switch from missionary work to pastoral ministry. And that is how Aggie grew up in South Dakota. As a young woman, she attended North Central Bible college in Minneapolis. There she met and married a young man named Dewey Hurst.

Years passed. The Hursts enjoyed a fruitful ministry. Aggie gave birth first to a daughter, then a son. In time her husband became president of a Christian college in the Seattle area, and Aggie was intrigued to find so much Scandinavian heritage there.

One day a Swedish religious magazine appeared in her mailbox. She had no idea who sent it, and of course she couldn’t read the words. But **as she turned the pages, all of a sudden a photo stopped her cold. There in a primitive setting was a grave with a white cross—and on the cross were the words SVEA FLOOD.**

Aggie jumped in her car and went straight to a college faculty member who, she knew, could translate the article. “What does this say?” she demanded.

The instructor summarized the story: It was about missionaries who had come to N'dolera long ago...the birth of a white baby...the death of the young mother...the one little African boy who had been led to Christ...and how, after the whites had all left, the boy had grown up and finally persuaded the chief to let him build a school in the village. The article had said that gradually he won all his students to Christ...the children led their parents to Christ...even the chief had become a Christian. Today there were six hundred Christian believers in that one village...

All because of the sacrifice of David and Svea Flood.

For the Hurst's twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, the college presented them with the gift of a vacation to Sweden. There Aggie sought to find her real father. An old man now, David Flood had remarried, fathered four more children, and generally dissipated his life with alcohol. He had recently suffered a stroke. Still bitter, he had one rule in his family: “Never mention the

name of God-because God took everything from me.”

After an emotional reunion with her half brothers and half sister, Aggie brought up the subject of seeing her father. The others hesitated. “You can talk to him,” they replied, “even though he’s very ill now. But you need to know that whenever he hears the name of God, he flies into a rage.”

Aggie was not to be deterred. She walked into the squalid apartment, with liquor bottles everywhere, and approached the seventy-three-year-old man lying in a rumpled bed. “Papa?” she said tentatively.

He turned and began to cry. “Aina,” he said, “I never meant to give you away.”

“It’s all right Papa,” she replied, taking him gently in her arms. “God took care of me.”

The man instantly stiffened. The tears stopped.

“God forgot all of us. Our lives have been like this because of Him.” He turned his face back to the wall.

Aggie stroked his face and then continued, undaunted, “Papa, I’ve got a story to tell you, and it’s a true one. You didn’t go to Africa in vain. Mama didn’t die in vain. **The little boy you won to the Lord grew up to win that whole village to Jesus Christ.** The one seed you planted just kept on growing and growing. Today there are six hundred African people serving the Lord because you were faithful to the call of God in your life... Papa, Jesus loves you. He has never hated you.”

The old man turned back to look into his daughter’s eyes. His body relaxed. He began to talk. And by the end of the afternoon, he had come back to the God he had resented for so many decades. Over the next few days, father and daughter enjoyed warm moments together. Aggie and her husband soon had to return to America—and within a few weeks, David Flood had gone into eternity.

A few years later, the Hursts were attending a high-level evangelism conference in London, England, where a report was given from the nation of Zaire (the former Belgian Congo). The superintendent of the national church, representing some 110,000 baptized believers, spoke eloquently of the gospel’s spread in his nation. Aggie could not help going to ask him afterward if he had ever heard of David and Svea Flood.

“Yes, madam,” the man replied in French, his words then being translated into English. “It was Svea Flood who led me to Jesus Christ. **I was the boy who brought food to your parents before you were born.** In fact, to this day your mother’s grave and her memory are honored by all of us.” He embraced her in a long, sobbing hug. Then he continued, “You must come to Africa to see, because your mother is the most famous person in our history.”

In time that is exactly what Aggie Hurst and her husband did. They were welcomed by cheering throngs of villagers. She even met the man who had been hired by her father many years before to carry her back down the mountain in a hammock-cradle.

The most dramatic moment, of course, was when the pastor escorted Aggie to see her mother’s white cross for herself. She knelt in the soil to pray and give thanks. Later that day, in the church, the pastor read from John 12:24: “I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.” He then followed with Psalm 126:5: “Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.”



David and Svea Flood

A Christian loves God, and desires to glorify Him as much as he possibly can. The way to glorify Him most is by bearing the “peaceable fruit of righteousness.” You cannot bear these fruits to perfection without prunings, chastenings, and scourgings. You should be willing to endure the chastenings that you might bear more fruit. **O dear saints, every time you are chastened of the Lord, you are simply made capable of bearing more fruit,** which results in greater peace to your own soul, and makes you to be to others all that God designs. Remember, this chastening brings a greater yield of **peaceable fruit:** a greater yield of peaceable fruit brings more glory to God; therefore, endure the chastenings without a murmur. —C. E. Orr

Love

Many good things have been written on this subject; but it is as inexhaustible as God Himself, for “God is love.” It is the one thing above all others that is needful in the Christian life and experience. Paul, in his writing to the Colossians, calls love the “bond of perfectness” ; and to the Corinthians he writes, “ But now abideth faith, hope, and charity [love], . . . but the greatest of these is charity.” In the preceding chapter he had been enumerating the different gifts of the Spirit and its various manifestations, and after exhorting them to “ seek earnestly the best gifts,” he added, “But yet show I unto you a more excellent way.” The more excellent way he proceeds to show in chapter thirteen. Many today are seeking the various gifts— miracles, prophecies, tongues, healing, etc. This is good if sought in the right way and for the glory of God. However, Paul declared that we might have all of these, and yet, if we did not have love it would profit us nothing. We may gain much knowledge if we have not sufficient humility, but never much love. It is the heavenly element that flows into our souls from the glory world and causes every fiber of our spiritual being to pulsate with divine life and power. I once worked in a coal mine where the coal was mined with machines operated by electricity. The power was generated at the power-house on the outside, and the current was carried into the mines on two large wires—one positive, and the other negative. The positive wire conducted the current from the powerhouse to the machine and the negative wire was used to make the return circuit. The machines of

themselves were heavy and cumbersome and could scarcely be moved by the efforts of two strong men, but as soon as connection was made with the wires they immediately became very powerful, and capable of doing a wonderful amount of work. **If from any cause the connection was broken, they would instantly become dead and powerless again.** I have thought that this very well represented God’s love, it is both positive and negative. “We love him because he first loved us.” God’s love became positive toward us when it first flowed into this world in the person of the Lord Jesus. He found us dead and powerless to help ourselves; but He laid down His life for us, and as by faith our hearts were connected to Him our souls were quickened into life and filled with the heavenly element of love. We now became the negative wire, so to speak, and His love began to flow back to God in streams of thanksgiving and praise, and to work in us mightily for Jesus and lost souls He died to save. Praise the dear Lord! Another thing I noticed when in the mine was that the **farther away** from the powerhouse we were the **weaker** the current was and the less effectually the machine would work. Let us keep as near as possible to the heavenly world that the Lord may more effectually work in us to His glory, and that the life of Christ may be powerful in our souls. In a flower garden we sometimes see flowers of many different shades and colors, but yet they all belong to the same species of flowers. So-it is in the Christian life—we see many different graces, but they all spring from one heavenly plan of love. The different graces are only the different manifestations of the one thing. As someone has said, “Joy is love victorious; peace is love at rest; longsuffering is love suffering; patience is love under trial; goodness is love at home; kindness is love at work; faith is love in conflict; temperance is love denying herself; humility, gentleness, meekness, etc., are love’s adornments.” Praise God! How wonderful is the plan of divine grace! No wonder Paul says that “ love is the fulfilling of the law,” and James calls it the “royal law.” If you should ask me what the Christian life is made up of, I could find no better answer than the one word love. As the blood is the life of the physical body, so love is the life of our spiritual being, and of the body of Christ, the Church. Beloved, let us live close to God and seek earnestly for more of this heavenly love. Let us remember the words of our Lord Jesus, “ If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” John 15:10.

—J. B. Branam -----

How to Make a Delinquent Child

Please read Prov. 22:6. “Train up a child in the way it should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” It is implied here that children will never forget their early training, or the lack of it. Remember God formed man, but the home, the school, and the street informs him, and sin deforms him, and only God through Jesus Christ can transform him. It is important for us to remember that the clock of life is wound but once, for we will not pass this way again. We should so live that we help others to make the most of life, by living for eternity, while living here. The present is all we have, and no one can tell just when the clock of life will stand still for us. We should endeavor with all our heart to live for God, influence others to live for God, and to leave the world a better place than we found it. With these thoughts in mind as parents, we should be true to our God-given responsibilities of rearing our children in the way that they should go, and not just leave it up to them. We may wonder why some youngsters develop into well adjusted adults, while some others go wrong. Here are a few thoughts that may help us understand. If a child lives without love and affection, he will no doubt be without love and affection as an adult. If a child lives in a home of hostility, he will grow up to be hostile. If a child lives with fear, he learns to be afraid. If a child lives in a home where his parents are contentious and do not respect one another, he will no doubt be contentious, and show no respect for others. If the parents use foul language, it will no doubt grow up using foul language. If the parents are sincerely honest, it will influence him to be honest. If the parents believe in God, it will influence him through life to believe in God. If a child lives in a home where fairness is displayed, he will be influenced to be fair. If the parents respect the rights of others, he will be influenced to respect the rights of others. If the parents respect the laws of the land, he will be influenced to respect them also. If a child lives in a home where there is hatred, he will be influenced to hate. If the parents have high moral standards, this will influence his standards in life. The child that receives the proper training is influenced to be a decent citizen, and one whose training is neglected is on the road to becoming a delinquent, and a hippie. Here are some results when we neglect our God-given responsibilities in training the child. Begin at an early

age to give the child everything he wants, and he will grow up to believe that the world owes him a living. When the child picks up bad words, laugh at him. Never give them any spiritual training. Avoid the word wrong or sin, so they will not have a guilt complex. Pick up everything they leave lying around, freeing them from any responsibility. Be sure their food is clean and good, **but let their mind be filled with garbage.** Give the child everything he wants, and at all cost do not frustrate him. Take the child’s part against neighbors, teachers, policemen, and make him feel that all the world is against him. When he gets in trouble, console yourself by saying, “I never could do anything with him.” If you are guilty, prepare for a life of grief, for you will no doubt have it. Remember—you have a choice. Do choose the right one, is my prayer. -- Carl Burton

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Suffering for Jesus

If we will read verses seven and eight of the third chapter of Paul’s Philippian letter we will learn that he “suffered the loss of all things” for Jesus. If we should take time to consider this fully we would find that it means very much. It is hardly possible to approach to any considerable degree of likeness to God without passing through suffering. When we consecrate our all to God at the very entrance of the Christian way it is then that we receive the stamp of the divine image upon the soul; but our being molded more fully in that likeness and strengthened in the divine character is only brought about when as we go on our pilgrim way, we are called upon to experience suffering. The actual experience is needed. If we still cling to God and love Him, though we are called to suffer for His sake, it is quite certain evidence that our love is genuine. We can have trust in God as a real, fixed principle in the soul only as circumstances bring trust into actual exercise. Consecration and faith unites us to God, but suffering strengthens that union. Suffering strengthens our hearts in submission to the divine will. Submission to all the will of God is a sweet and precious soul experience, but we can scarcely realize the blessedness of it until some deep suffering brings that submission into exercise or puts it to the actual test. We may very frequently meet with happenings that test our submission to God. We may experience some physical suffering, or some loved one may be brought near to death, we may lose some property, or lose reputation—all of these will help us

into a deeper experience of submission. God would not only have us submit to His will, but love submission. He would have us love suffering, not for suffering's sake, but for His will's sake. I hardly think we can reach a state of mind where we delight in suffering, glory in tribulation, and take pleasure in denials for the sake of suffering only; but, like Paul, we glory knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience. Rom. 5:3. Suffering, therefore, is necessary to a deep Christian experience. We may have a mind-picture of true piety and considerable understanding of union with God, but it is suffering that makes this union a real experience. When we have reached the experience where we can welcome suffering in recognition of the divine will; when we can embrace the trials, when we can leap for joy in persecutions, we have reached the "cleft in the rock"—a hiding-place in God. Our reputation might be assailed, our motives aspersed, our actions misrepresented, insinuations might be cast against us, but these only help us hide deeper in the cleft and be silent. A most valuable lesson to learn and one that is only learned fully through more suffering, is that of keeping still. When our reputation is assailed, our actions misrepresented, our motives misunderstood, and our influence in danger of being destroyed, the natural disposition of man is to speak, and to speak hurriedly. He feels that something must be done, and that it must be done at once. But just then is the time to hide in God and be silent. Oh, how blessed to look up to Jesus and know that He knows you are willing to suffer the loss of all and keep silent! Some years ago the writer thought he had attained to quite a depth of Christian experience, but as the more severe trials came and his soul struggled through, he found that he had only struggled through to the border of a vast, unexplored territory before him. This convinced him that there are heights and depths in the Christian experience attainable only through suffering. We will lean upon God only when all other supports are removed. It is necessary that all supports but God be now and then taken away. In fact, it is difficult for one to know that he is leaning upon God unless all other stays are gone. Many who are surrounded by kind friends and Christian brethren and who are in health and have their garners full may think they are leaning upon the Lord, but when all these things are taken away they may find that they had many supports other than God. But the Lord is good and **He will bring us to lean entirely upon Him.** Though this can be done

only through suffering, the experience is so blessed that it causes us to love the suffering. The deeper the trials the more precious God is to the soul. Suffering loss for Jesus is the way into the secret presence of God. The little chick never runs under the mother's wing for protection until danger threatens. **Trials cause us to seek a hiding-place under God's wing.** There a feeling of security fills the heart and an inexpressible joy the soul. Suffering loss for Jesus makes God most real and heaven most precious.

—C. E. Orr--

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TOMORROW

Did you ever stop to think about the simple word "tomorrow" ? Tomorrow is the next day, or the day after the present one. You very often hear the expression used, "I will do so and so tomorrow." That is they will do it on the next day after the one they are living in. We live today. We have lived yesterday, and it is now in the past. But when we lived yesterday it was today. Today is the present time. Tomorrow never comes. It is always ahead of us. Sometimes it is as far away as to be nearly twenty-four hours ahead of us. Again we put our task off until tomorrow. This time, as before, we think we have reached it. We come to the place where we can almost say, "tomorrow is here," but just then the next day comes, and tomorrow is still in the distance, still in the future. Now dear ones, stop and meditate a moment. We have seen that tomorrow never comes. We are now a long way from it, then we keep getting closer and closer until we are almost there, then it is set ahead again; still we go on, day after day, and it never comes. Tomorrow never will come. But stop a moment. There is a time coming, somewhere in the future, when you will lay this old body down. It will go back to dust. This time is surely coming. Once you were many years from this day. But you are steadily, day by day, drawing nearer. Days, weeks, months, and years have passed. You are drawing nearer that time with every breath you draw. Still time goes on and you come to the place when you know it is very near. You can feel the cold grip of death stealing over you. Only a few hours, only a few minutes, only a few seconds more of life. Now death has come. The spirit takes its departure from this dwelling of clay. They are separated. One goes to its Maker, God, the other

returns to dust. Death has come and done its work. Unlike tomorrow, it came closer and closer until it had come. It did not flee away at the very last moment. No, it came nearer and nearer, until it was here. Death which once was in the future has come. But tomorrow is still in the future. It will never come. Take warning, precious soul, you who are continually waiting until tomorrow to get saved. Death and tomorrow are running a race. Death will win. Why? Because death will come some time in the future; tomorrow will never come. Throughout all eternity there will be no tomorrow. It can not possibly come. The end of this wicked old world is coming; then the great Judgment Day when we all shall be judged according to the deeds done while in the flesh; then eternity. If we have lived and died a saved man or woman, we shall enter the pearly gates of heaven; but if we have lived and died a sinner, we shall be cast into the lake of fire which burns forever. This is all coming. As sure as death is to come to each one of the human race, just as surely will the judgment day come. Eternity, like death, is drawing nearer and nearer. Each breath you draw brings you that much nearer to the end of time. It will come. The time will come when time will be no more. ETERNITY will take its place. Every one will know it. Take warning, precious soul. You will never live in that time called tomorrow. Thousands of precious souls are saying, "I will seek the Lord tomorrow. I will get saved tomorrow." Why not get salvation now, today? It is here. Tomorrow is fickle. You are waiting until a day which never will come. When we hear a precious soul say, "I will get saved tomorrow," we can see that they are on the losing side. Death and eternity will come first, and find them unprepared; it will then be too late. They will have to spend eternity in hell. It will not vanish and still be in the future as does tomorrow. No, it keeps drawing nearer and nearer, and the time is not far distant when these things will be a reality. The end of time, destruction of the earth, the resurrection of the dead, the judgment day, the trial of souls, the passing of the sentences upon the sinner and saint, then the entrance into heaven or hell, to rejoice or suffer, to reap what has been sown. When this time comes you can realize then, if you do not before, that **it does not pay to put off your salvation until tomorrow.** "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Jesus never said, "Wait until tomorrow to get saved." Those who keep putting it off until tomorrow may never get saved. God said, "My spirit shall not always strive

with man." "Therefore be ye ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24:44. Today is the day of salvation.

—Clyde Anthony

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Sinful Neglect of the Dying

A missionary some years ago, while traveling in China with a native helper on a passenger boat, was one day startled by a splash and a cry from without. He sprang on deck and saw at a glance that his helper had fallen overboard and sunk. He at once lowered the sail of the boat and leaped overboard in the hope of finding the unfortunate man. Unsuccessful, he looked around in agonizing suspense. Seeing close to him a fishing boat with a peculiar drag-net furnished with hooks, he called out, "Come and drag over this spot; a man is drowning just here." "It is not convenient," was the unfeeling answer. "Don't talk of convenience," he replied, "a man is drowning I tell you." "We are busy fishing," they responded, "and can not come." "Never mind your fishing," he said, "I will give you more money than many a day's fishing will bring, only come at once." "How much money will you give us?" "We cannot stay to discuss that now, come or it will be too late. I will give you five dollars." "We will not do it for that," replied the men, "Give us twenty dollars and we will drag." "I do not possess so much. Do come quickly, and I will give you all I have." "How much may that be?" "I don't know exactly, about fourteen dollars." Then slowly the boat was paddled over, the net let down, and immediately the body of the missing man brought up, but it was too late, life was extinct. Pause, dear brother and sister, before you pronounce judgment against these ignorant fishermen. Is it so wicked a thing to neglect the saving of the body? Surely it is, but oh, how infinitely more wicked to neglect the saving of the soul! Millions of souls today are drowning in the deep waters of sin. Jesus gives the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." The cry comes ringing from many places, "Come and let down your nets here, for many are drowning!" Some are answering, "It is not convenient," others, "We are busying fishing at home and cannot go." Many excuses are offered, but brethren, let me sound this alarm in every congregation of the saints. Millions are being swept into eternity unprepared, many of whom could be

rescued. As one who hears the splash and cry of souls drowning-around me, let me urge once more, Come over and let down the net, and come before it is too late. —William Hunnex

Bearing Another's Burdens

As we make the journey of life there are burdens to be borne. You have yours and I have mine. Sometimes these burdens are very heavy. They seem to be about all we can bear. We as Christians are to help one another in bearing burdens. You may have a very great burden this month and I have none particularly. Then when I have none, I should help you. Later I may have a burden and you have none, then you can help me and thus we go on helping one another. Then again you may have all the burden you can bear and I have all the burden I can bear, but we can join and you help me and I help you and our burdens will be lighter for two are more, far more, than twice as strong as one. To make the Christian path brighter, to help some one love Jesus a little better, is the noblest work man can do. I count no gift so great, no blessing so precious, as that which helps me to be more like God. To help another to be more noble, pure, and unselfish is the greatest help we can give. When some one is being tried to the very end of their patience and we can then help them by a word to be more enduring, we may have rendered them the greatest service. To relieve some one of a burden may not be as great a blessing as a word of cheer that will help them bear it longer. We should seek to bear the burdens of others rather than to have our burdens borne. Let us be brave in life and bear our own burdens and then help others all we can. Beautiful service is that of bearing the burdens of another. It is fulfilling the law of Christ. In all the realm of holy living there is nothing more beautiful, more noble, or more pleasing to God than bearing the burden of another. Be careful not to be a burden but a burden-bearer. - C . E. Orr

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When you are forgotten or neglected, or purposely set at naught, and you smile inwardly, glorying in the insult or the oversight, because thereby counted worthy to suffer with Christ — that is

victory. —C. E. Orr

A Vision of Heaven and Hell

Proverbs 29:18, “Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.” Webster defines vision: “unusual discernment or foresight of a happy or dangerous event; something beheld or revealed; awareness of objects; consciousness.” We also read in Prov. 22:3, “A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself:” which means to withdraw from sight; put out of view; to turn away, as the eyes or face, in displeasure; shame. “But the simple [those devoid of wisdom] pass on, and are punished.” All of life should be a looking forward to future perspectives, heaven or hell. We may ignore the facts, but they still remain the same. The ending of life is right before us. We need a “bird’s eye” view of the broad, vast eternity. It is all summed up that life on earth is the shortest period in man’s existence, and eternity is the longest period in man’s existence. It is a world without end. In the light of these facts, the devil has people so entertained that the voice of conscience can’t be heard. Millions are being entertained through the medium of worldly pleasure, sports, television, worldly ambitions, deceitfulness of riches, strong drink, drugs, and perverted appetites of the flesh. In the modern hospitals, television occupies nearly every room, even those rooms where people are dying of cancer and other dreaded diseases. Why? Because man can’t stand to be alone with himself. It is hell on earth for a sinful man to be alone with his conscience of wrong doing in his past life. **Man has sought out many inventions to drown out the voice of conscience.** Eccl. 7:29. The god of this world has blinded their minds. 2 Cor. 4:4. They can’t see the ending of their actions. In the whirl of society, man has no serious thoughts of the future. In the secluded hours, when nothing stands between man and the whispering of his soul (Job 33:14-26), **the Holy Spirit deals with man’s heart,** bringing visions of the awfulness of sin, uneasiness, discontent, remorse, and fear. Hell becomes a reality as a place of total absence of all that is good and lovely. Heaven becomes a desired place, where there is a total absence of all that is bad and ugly. Conviction grips his soul, and sins of the past become a heavy burden. He is now aware of his condition. His guilt is more than he can bear. He is ashamed of his sins against God. He now has a vision, a broad view

of eternity. Godly sorrow worketh repentance. 2 Cor. 7:10. The battle is now on. The devil persists that he should wait awhile and fulfill life's pleasures. The world of pleasure invites with promises that cannot be fulfilled. He counts the cost: heaven or hell, which shall it be? Heaven, with all that pertains to joy, peace, and ecstasy of bliss; the total of all that gladdens the soul; the permanent, unlimited, and boundless land of love, delight, and holiness; the eternal light that has no ending. Hell, with all that pertains to hatred, sadness, remorse, blackness of night; the total of all that is miserable, unpleasant, and hateful; the permanent, unlimited, and boundless land of eternal blackness and hopelessness, where the screaming conscience coupled with ruthless demons is tormented forever and ever; eternal darkness that has no ending; without God or a Savior. In the valley of decision, he makes the wise choice. He pleads his case at the mercy seat in prayer. With godly sorrow that worketh repentance to salvation, he asks God's forgiveness of all past sins, forsaking them to sin no more, and believing from the heart that his sins are forgiven. Rom. 10:9-10. He claims the promise of deliverance (Luke 1:70-75), and becomes a new creature, with a clear conscience. 2 Cor. 5:17. He makes restitutions. Oh, soul away from God, stop and consider the ending of your life. Start looking forward to future perspectives, either heaven or hell. The choice is yours. A school class motto read, "As we face the future, where will the end find us?" Unless you are sure you have what it takes to bring you safely through the storms of life to an eternity in Heaven, then you had better turn your life around and consider a change. Without this vision, the people perish. —Bro. Donald Sharp

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Leaving Home With a Bad Attitude

It is my desire to write some about the prodigal son. In the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke, beginning at the eleventh verse: "And he [Jesus] said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and

joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." Luke 15:11-24. We have before us a picture of a boy who became dissatisfied with home and decided to leave. I get a picture out of this situation that I had never before noticed. I would like to use the thirteenth verse for a text. It says, he "gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country." We had always thought of his substance, as being his money or material accumulation, but I get a far deeper meaning of this. The young man had gathered together and accumulated a lot of things in his mind down through the years— accumulated a bad attitude, from being dissatisfied with his home. No doubt he had a selfish spirit, a picking spirit, and a bad attitude. When he left home, these are the things he gathered together and took with him. No doubt it made the father's heart sad when he thought of his son's leaving home; nevertheless, that was the son's desire, and his father gave him the desire of his heart. I get a true picture here of a person who has been acquainted with the truth, been with the saints, known the doctrine and what it means, but he begins to accumulate some things in his mind. He becomes dissatisfied and unwilling to measure to the truth, believing in his mind that these things are not necessary, so decides, "I will get out of this place and go where I can have my liberty and freedom, and do as I want to do. I won't be under bondage!" He has accumulated these things in his heart and mind through a space of time; he reasons in his mind and decides he wants to leave the truth.

He takes his journey! Oh, what a sad picture to think about leaving Father's house—leaving the truth, leaving the doctrine, leaving the saints, leaving the precious true Word of God that makes us free and happy and has brought us to this place where we have liberty and freedom in the Lord. Nevertheless, he has gathered these things and taken his journey into a far country—another country—out into the world, and into sectism. We have noticed among the saints people who have been taught and reared in this truth, who have gathered together their **own thoughts**, ideas, and **opinions**. They think that they can go out and join up with some denomination which is man-made, and have their freedom and do as they please. They, go their way, but it turns out that it isn't like they thought it would be. They take their many thoughts and ideas, go out and wander from mountain to hill, **seeking rest and finding none**. There is no rest outside this precious truth! Many times they are turned over to a reprobate mind because they believe a lie and are damned. There are some who come back to the truth like the prodigal who came back to Father's house. That is good and we are thankful when they do, but so many times they do not return. Dear ones, if you are out there on some mountain or hill joined up with some sectarian group, or somewhere out there in a backslidden condition, I hope you will come to yourself and drop all of your thoughts and ideas—all your fault finding, your bad attitude, and that dissatisfied condition. Be like the prodigal boy and return and say, "I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight. I've done the saints wrong. I've had a bad attitude, a bad spirit, and I've accumulated a lot of bad things. Now I'm sorry about it. I am repenting of it all." Lay them all at Jesus' feet, and come back to the Father. It was wonderful how the prodigal saw himself—his attitudes and his ideas that were wrong. It wasn't his father who was wrong, but it was he himself. He found himself to be in a sad condition and a sad plight. He had landed in a swine's pen, feeding with them, but he began to think about his father's house, and of all that he was missing. There was bread there to spare and there was a good atmosphere in Father's house. So he said, "I've sinned against heaven and am no more worthy. I'm going back and ask forgiveness. I will repent of this thing and tell him I'm sorry." Oh, we find Father looking for him—having that longing for him to come back. He saw his son a great way off and ran and embraced him. He told his servant to kill the fatted calf, put shoes on his

son's feet, and a robe on him, for he had returned to the fold. Now dear ones, today if you have failed, left God and the saints, left the truth, left the doctrine, and have gone off with your accumulation of ideas and opinions, please lay them down today. Do you not remember or think of all the precious truths that you've been taught down through the years, and of the wonderful abiding peace and fellowship you enjoyed with the people of God? Why don't you give up? Why don't you turn down everything except Jesus, and return? The saints will have wide open arms to receive you back into the fold of God; the dear Lord is waiting to accept you back Home. But you must come to the place that you are sorry for your sins; sorry for your bad attitudes, sorry that you found fault with the saints, and sorry for the wrong thoughts that you had. You must repent of these things and throw them all aside. Then you can find peace and rest to your soul. In Jeremiah 6:16, it says, to "ask for the old paths, **where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.**" — Murphy Allen

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“Not If It Were My Boy”

Some years ago the late Horace Mann, delivered an address at the opening of some reformatory institution for boys, during which he remarked that if only one boy was saved from ruin, it would pay for all the cost, care, and labor in establishing such an institution as that. After the exercises, Mr. Mann was asked: "Did you not color that a little, when you said that all that expense and labor would be repaid if it only saved one boy?" "Not if it were my boy," was the solemn and convincing reply. Ah! there is a wonderful value about "my boy." Other boys may be rude and rough; other boys may be reckless and wild; other boys may seem to require more pains and labor than they ever will repay; other boys may be left to drift uncared for to the ruin which is so near at hand—but "my boy," it were worth the toil of a lifetime, and the lavish wealth of a world to save him from temporal and eternal ruin. We would go the world around to save him from temporal and eternal ruin. We would go the world around to save him from peril, and would bless every hand that was stretched out to give him help or welcome. And yet every poor, wandering, outcast, homeless man is one whom some fond mother called "My boy." Every lost woman, sunken in the depths of sin, was somebody's daughter in her days of childish

innocence. Today somebody's son is a hungry outcast, pressed to the very verge of crime and sin. Today somebody's daughter is a weary, helpless wanderer, driven by necessity in the paths that lead to death. Shall we shrink from labor, shall we hesitate at cost, when the work before us is the salvation of a soul? Not if it is "my boy"; not if we have the love of Him who gave His life to save the lost. —Selected

Excerpts from **Heart Talks #49 & #59**

Reader, what will be your life's sunset? Will it be serene and calm and peaceful, lighted up with glory from the throne of God, or will it be dark, without a promise or ray of hope? You are fast hastening to that hour. It may be nearer than you think. If you live without God, you will die without God. Take a view of yourself now. Would you like for your life's sunset to find you as you now are? If not, what assurance have you that it will be different? Good intentions will never change it. Good desires will never change it. God only can make you ready for that hour. Unless you seek Him, you too will take a "leap into the dark;" for you there will be only the "blackness of darkness forever." "If ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart."

Reader, you and I are on the path to the cemetery. Someday, and it may not be far off, we shall look back over our lives from the end. Day by day, often with but little thought, we are building the structure of our lives. Yesterday we laid the foundation of today, and today we lay the foundation of tomorrow. Unless we lay a good foundation and build well thereon, when we look back upon our lives at the last, we shall find much to regret. The wood, hay and stubble of selfish works and selfish purposes will be burned up in the fire that will try every man's work. How much of the selfish element enters into most lives! The ambition, the labor, the planning, is for self. If self prospers, what else matters? If self has ease and comfort, what does it matter about others? If self is pleased, is not that enough? Self seems to be the mainspring of most lives; is it so in our own? **When we come to look back at the last,** we shall find no pleasure in viewing our own selfishness or its fruits. We shall not desire to retain it in our memories. We shall see that whatever was done through selfish motives was time and energy lost.

When we look back, shall we see bitter words, unkind

deeds and unfaithfulness to God and man? Shall we look back upon broken promises, on friends who trusted us and were disappointed? Shall we look back upon wrongs to our fellow men and sins toward God? It seems to me that the keenest regrets that ever come to a soul on earth are the regrets that come to him who, during his last hours on earth, has to view a misspent life. How many have said, "Oh, if I could live my life over!" Alas! that cannot be. My brother, my sister, **you can live this day but once.** You will look back in time and eternity and see this day just as you lived it. Not only today but every day—when it is today— holds the same momentous responsibility. Let us live today as faithful to God and man; as true, pure, just and kind as we shall in the last day wish we had lived. Do not think that tomorrow you will live better and be more kind and true and gentle. Today is your day; tomorrow is out of your reach.

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Edited by Nelson & Genece Doolittle
 assisted by Dakota Doolittle
 and all of the Loranger, LA Congregation

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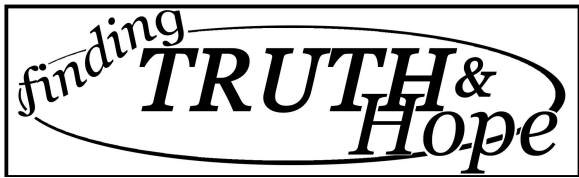
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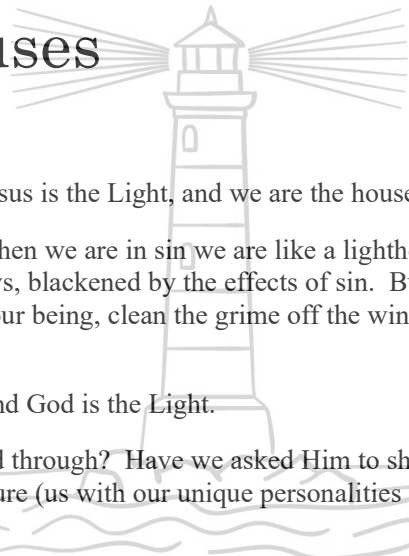
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God's Lighthouses

Kasey Doolittle



Jesus is often referred to as the Lighthouse. A thought came to me recently. Jesus is the Light, and we are the house.

A lighthouse with no light in it really isn't going to do anybody much good. When we are in sin we are like a lighthouse that is void of a light. No light could even shine through us because of grimy windows, blackened by the effects of sin. But, hope is not lost. We can be restored! His name is Jesus! He can come in and restore our being, clean the grime off the windows, and put in us a light... Himself!

Now don't think that is the end; it's only the beginning. We are the structure, and God is the Light.

Have we truly offered ourselves up to God as structures for Him to shine in and through? Have we asked Him to shine so brightly in us that those out on the wild billows of life don't even see the structure (us with our unique personalities and gifts) because of the light?

What good is a lighthouse without a light? True, you could also ask, “What good is a light without a structure?” Though God can do His work without us, it makes His job easier when there are those willing to be structures for His light.

Perhaps you are feeling that your life isn't of much importance, that you can't do very much; remember, the structure of a lighthouse doesn't move; the light does. The light moves across the waters to guide those out at sea. You may not know just how many lives you are touching simply by God shining in you and through you. Are we willing to be structures for Jesus? To stand on the shore and be beaten with the winds and storms, but still have the Light of the World shining in us and through us?

Shine, Jesus Shine!