

finding **TRUTH & Hope**

No. 3
Summer 2015

TRUE HAPPINESS

Edited from a message by Bro. Michael Williamson

God's purpose for me was to love Him of free will. In the garden of Eden there were fruits and vegetables. They were to dress and to keep that garden. There was only one thing not to touch. The Scriptures tell us there is reward in work. But, after the transgression took place, there were thistles and briars. Scripture tells us in those first few chapters, how the Lord came down and communed with them in the cool of the day. Folks, once we take that step to move away from that Divine plan, we lose something! They lost the essence that brought them peace. What is your pursuit of happiness? What is it that brings blessing to you? Are you happy today? Is there something missing? (Continued on page 6)

PREPARE FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD

Edited from a message that Bro. Ira Stover preached in the late 1970s

The Lord allows wickedness just so long before He brings it to a halt. You know when sin is abounding on the earth, the ears of God hears those things that's going on. His eyes look down. I've thought many times, "Oh, what a wicked world that God has to look into today." Every direction that He might look, it's sin, sin, sin, vice and immorality, nakedness and ungodliness—every wicked thing you can name as He looks here.

The sin of Sodom is sweeping our nation. It's just as vile as the devil himself. I tell you today, the world's getting ready for the heart of God to wipe it off and bring it to final judgement. We'd better have God in our lives. This is too filthy a place for you to live without having God's Spirit in your very soul.

The angel came with the judgements. The angel had to shake them out of there. It was hard for them to break loose from their homes and possessions. They had to leave their flocks; they had to leave their earthly substance. **You know, everyone's going to have to leave everything behind one of these days! The judgement fire is going to burn it up, and all we'll have is our bare soul.** How will it be with us? God is calling for a clean

sweep of evil. As they fled, his wife was thinking about her home. Home--you know that is a big attraction. Many women think their home is a little castle, and it is almost! Everything that you can put in some of these homes, they're there. They are so fine and so marvelous that they don't want you to hardly walk over their carpet. Think of it, our homes so fine our shoes aren't fit to hardly go in the door. They don't want people to come and visit them—afraid they might get some spot on the rug or some of the furniture. Let me tell you, one of these days, they're going to leave it all! The fire's going to consume it, and it will all go up in smoke.

Then I think of the 25th chapter of Matthew, concerning those ten virgins. You know, God is expecting His people to be ready to meet Him! He's doing everything He can warning us all to flee from sin and evil, and turn to God before it's too late. Five of the virgins had the same understanding, but were not ready.

How wonderful, when someone passes away to know they've lived for that hour! They have lived careful and watchful, ready for the Lord to come and call them, not fearful that it might come and nobody there to help them. You know, if you're right with God, He'll help you out regardless of the cost – if we'll just be true and faithful. Dear Ones, be ready when He calls. Don't be careless of your soul's welfare. **It's such a long eternity with no return.** When once we have cast our lot for eternal things, and the end comes and takes us just as we are, we can't make one amend. There's not one thing we can do.

Sometimes people have had ill feelings in their hearts; have carried them for a long time. You know those things will damn your soul. An unforgiving attitude is one of the hardest things for a lot of people -- to get where they can forgive somebody who has wronged them. If you just cross somebody, sometimes if you just say the wrong word, you're in trouble with them. You know, Dear Ones, that ought not to be. People ought to be congenial with each other. We ought to be friendly; we ought to be brothers in the Lord. Then, it is easy to forgive if someone makes a misstep or says a wrong word. You know it's easy to correct something with a good saint. If you say something that's not right, and you see it, just go to them and ask them to forgive you for what you said or did. You know, saints are not hard to satisfy. When they're asked forgiveness, they forgive; or when they don't, they're in trouble. When we wrong somebody and see it and ask forgiveness, and they just let us know, "I don't forgive you. You've done so awful I just can't forgive you." -- the trouble then lies on them. **They're the ones that's in trouble now.** It shifts from the one who made the error to the one that does not forgive.

May the Lord help us! The thought upon my heart is: how needful it is that we be a people ready for the coming of the Lord! **Just as sure as the world is standing, He's coming. He's coming; how soon we don't know! It will pay for us to get ready!**

Right after the Spring papers were put in the mail, the opportunity was made available for papers to be taken into jails and penitentiaries in several places. Immediately, we went back to press, printing several thousand special edition papers for this purpose.

This paper is going to men and women locked up physically in a cell somewhere, but who have maybe turned to God in repentance and are free in their souls. This paper is also available to persons – free and busy in society -- who are yet bound -- in their souls and spirits in a prison house of sin.

Today, speak to Christ; He hears your every thought and word. Ask Him to forgive your sin and selfishness. Repent, give your heart and attention to Christ—be made a new creature. “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:13).

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20). ND

SHEEP

Edited from a message by Bro Ed Wilson

The Lord compared people to sheep. Shepherds become attached to those sheep. When they live with them day in and day out, they learn to tell those sheep apart. Some sheep are more intelligent than others. They move out of the crowd and become individuals. **It is the individuality about people that makes them lovable.** The things that make my wife an individual make her attractive to me. I decided that I wanted to spend my life with somebody like my wife. There is a language in love beyond the tongue to express. You and I, everyone, are the creation of God: big ones and little ones, skinny, tall and short, every kind that there are. The Lord loves us and created us particularly and specifically in His image. **The things that make us individuals are dear and precious to the Lord.** He walks with His people like a Shepherd among His sheep.

There is a special relationship that God has with His people. I might look on a multitude of people, and to me it might seem just a sea of faces; but the Lord knows them, everyone, individually. The things that make them unique as individuals are precious to the Lord! He loves them. What man of you having a hundred sheep doesn't leave the ninety-nine till he finds the one lost sheep in the wilderness? There are other places in the Bible that the Lord talks about sheep. He talked about hirelings over His sheep. You can hire a shepherd. He's there for the money. He'll bring the sheep back if he can, if it's convenient. At any time that the risk of bringing back one of those sheep weighs for more than the \$500 or so that he's being paid, there you're going to lose a sheep! (If I have to risk breaking my arm, three weeks in a sling, \$500—a month's wages—on the hospital bill...)

This is talking about more than sheep. This is talking about souls, never dying souls of

men and women. Now some people develop prejudices. Those ideas are ridiculous to God, because He was the Creator of all of us, you see; and everything that has a soul is precious in His sight. Jesus counted sheep so precious, so valuable, that He was willing to come down and die for you, for me, for every other soul that's in the world today. Any time I would be so foolish as to esteem lightly --- despise --- any soul, **I do violence to the blood of Christ.** I lower the estimation of it. I **spurn it or degrade the blood of Christ by doing that, because He died for everyone of us.** As much as it is a cleansing fountain to my soul, it will be a cleansing fountain to any soul that will come and bathe in it's laver.

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THINKING BACK

The blessings of when and how we first knew about the Church of God, and how blessed we were to be among them: By Sis. Gladys Cashio

In 1940, our family moved next door to Sis. Emma and Bro. Harry Jackson. One day, Sis. Jackson came to our house and invited us to go to prayer meeting on Saturday night and to Sunday School on Sunday at their house. Their house was large and pleasant. We had Sunday School on their lovely front porch. Other neighbors were invited also.

Bro. Cecil and Sis. May Carver would come from Shreveport from time to time and hold cottage meetings. May was Emma Jackson's sister. They were a special blessing. There was an old church building a mile or so down the road from us that wasn't used much anymore. The Carvers held a revival meeting there, which our big family was blessed to attend. At the close of the meeting, there was a baptizing. My sister, among others, was baptized.

Bro. and Sis. Carver and their four sons could sing. Sometimes, Bro. Carver lead the singing. We had never heard anything like it before---so beautiful! As the years moved on, they sang specials wherever they attended church.

Our Lord helped us to realize they were teaching the Truth. Other Church of God ministers would come at different times: Bro. Max Williamson from Hammond, LA; Sis. Catherine Simpson from Loranger, LA; Sis. Ruth Murphey from Jena, LA; as well as several others---so we heard and embraced the Truth.

Bro. and Sis. Jackson invited us to go with them to the Hammond Campmeeting. As I walked down that lane going to the campground, I could hear the saints' voices ringing out from the large tabernacle. Oh, the blessing! There I met Bro. Ray and Sis Katherine Key, Sister Lottie Joiner, Bro. and Sis. Ira Stover, and Bro Pruitt. Bro. Pruitt would bring the wonderful literature from the Guthrie printshop and line it on the big half circle altar bench; we could have some free to take home.

As I heard the truth preached, I became more aware of the sad plight I was in. At a very young age, I made a sad mistake of marrying the wrong man and finding I could not live with him. A little later, I married the man I found to be one that truly loved me and took good

care of me. But, now here I was in double marriage. My condemnation was so heavy that I could not go on. In order to do God's leading, I had to give up the one whom I had found too late. Oh! It was very difficult, but the grace of God was there to help me. My second husband could not understand, so our parting was sad. I learned that God's grace is what saved me.

The Church of God children became my sisters and brothers. I have been enjoying the Truth ever since. As I heard, I was given Light which called me to make a great sacrifice, but I was given grace and went all the way with the Lord. Now at the age of 94, I am still walking in the Light. Sis. Gladys Cashio---Loranger, LA

The Persecuted Church has been praying for you!



China: At the time of the Communist takeover of China in 1949, there were an estimated 5 million Christians in China. The Communist set out to destroy China's old belief systems, including its small Christian community, and by the time of Mao's death in 1976 had largely succeeded. Even after Mao's death, Christians are still subject to harassment, arrest, and imprisonment for practicing their faith.

Economic policies and the pursuit of fortune could not provide people or a nation with a "sense of purpose." What emerged was a "spiritual void." For many Chinese, that void is being filled by Jesus Christ. This puts the Communist party, however, in a bind. On one level, they know Christianity is good for China, especially in the area of morals. On the other hand, they're afraid of a movement they can't control.

China is "in the midst of a full-fledged revival," writes Evan Osnos. Now there are as many Christians as there are members of the Communist Party. It is so large that "as [he] traveled around China [he] stopped being surprised by [his] encounters with Christians."

Iran and other countries: The most underreported important story of our time is waves of Muslims converting to Christianity – [They are] "Finding the living God who has come into the world – God with us, God among us – who is bringing them salvation that they were never able to find" in Islam. [David Garrison]

In spite of ISIS's widespread, deadly presence in these areas, the Church is growing rapidly in Muslim countries. Daily, Muslims are coming to Christ, believing in Jesus. The Lord Himself has been appearing to many Muslims in dreams. He is often coming to them night after night! Many are connected by satellite, searching and receiving the gospel. The Spirit of the Lord emboldens them to reach out to their people. **They ask us, "What are you doing with your freedoms?"**

True Happiness

(Continued from page 1)

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9). A commentary says, “The heart hides itself from itself.” For many, their only motive is self-interest and being shrewd. Once we make decision to turn away from the Lord and seek things in the world, the things we seek to make “me” happy for a moment--they disappear. After awhile, it subsides, and the happiness I had in that moment vanishes. We may have left out the main ingredient. We still can find a place of happiness with the Lord. “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7). **God has forgiveness; God has a remedy.**

Now let's go to the New Testament: “...Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good” (Romans 12:9). Abhor: not to want anything, or any circumstance, to do with that which is evil. Cleave: to glue; to attach (like super glue); to stick; not to be separated from. As humans, we've pushed God totally out of our lives.

“We hold these truths to be self evident...endowed by our Creator of certain inalienable rights...” We've taken away the boundaries. We're making everything relative! Who's happy? Is the world happy? **The reason we're not happy is because we've pushed out the True Source of happiness.** God help us to maintain our relationship with Him so we can maintain true happiness.

The Scripture says for a man to look on other things rather than just “my” own selfish happiness.

Washed in Jesus' Blood

Excerpts of a message by Bro. Michael Williamson

Are you going through any great tribulation today? (Rev. 7:14). There are things the Lord allows in our lives, to prove the effectiveness of His blood and salvation. He wants us to plunge ourselves into that great fountain. He came to give relief to physical and spiritual needs. Has the Lord worked on you? **What trial, what difficulty are you going through?** Take advantage and get the most good out of it. The Lord wants us to wear white robes! He would use circumstances of life to cause us to have a stable relationship with Him; anchored in the Lord.

Folks, the Lord wants you and me to plunge ourselves into His plan of salvation. The thief comes to steal our hope, happiness, and peace (John 10:10). The thief comes to kill and to destroy homes. **Man's best hope is to be plunged into Jesus.** So refreshing! It is a plan of salvation that works! Not just to stick a toe in – not just to “wash up” a little. They have plunged (definition of “washed”) their robes (souls) and made them white. His purpose is to make us new creatures. Let's not stop short of that. Let's not pull back. **Let's take full advantage of His plan, because it works, and it will heal!**

SERVING GOD AND SERVING HUMANITY

From a message by Bro. Michael Williamson

God created a beautiful world. It's hard to comprehend what Adam saw when he was given his life – to see the things around him created in it's maturity. We see things from the natural standpoint of birth and growth. Adam saw a mature, complete, and perfect world!

God infused into this man part of Himself. Man was created distinctly different from all other creatures in many ways – in many ways much the same: blood, lungs needing oxygen, the heartbeat to carry that blood throughout the body, the breath of life to expel carbon dioxide, etc. But, God did something very different with him. He said, “We're going to make him in our own image and give him dominion over all the earth.” God infused in man this soul that had the ability of mind to reason, think, absorb, discern, and to make decisions. If he had been just like any other animal creature, there would have been no temptation. There would have been nothing to draw him from that perfect relationship with the Holy Father.

God gave man intelligence and a rational mind. God didn't create the clothes, the weavers shuttle, or the sewing machine. He put that in your mind! He put the ability, in your mind, for you to figure these things out! He's a big God, a loving God. He told Adam to subdue the earth – have dominion over it.

Oh, I would to God that all of humanity would be able to approach their existence, not from the standpoint of: “Now mine own hand hath gotten me this.” but, **“The hand of God has given me this ability.”** That's one of the reasons when we sit down at a table, and we have food set before us, that we bow our head and respect the Heavenly Father and give Him thanks for the food that we have before us. If God hadn't given to humanity the ability to understand, to know how to work the earth, and process these foods, where would we be? We'd be like the other creatures – grazing, rooting, looking for food. The wild animals don't have to give account unto God – they live by instinct. **We're going to give account to God!** God sent you to subdue – how did you do it? Did you beat and conquer, or did you uplift and encourage? (see Phil. 2:2-4) **Have love and compassion. Be caring for others! Look at others from the mind of God** – realizing that God gave our brother ability, and he has excelled. Be glad when others have promotion!

Jesus (God in the flesh) was willing to take on the flesh like you and me. He took the form of a servant. For what reason? So we could be helped – to help me! The Lord has something for you to do in this life. **If not careful, you will squelch opportunity.** God has given us a mind to comprehend, factor, and to use.

Here is a story of George Washington Carver's conversion:

“I was just a mere boy when converted, hardly ten years old. There isn't much of a story to it. God just came into my heart one afternoon while I was alone in the 'loft' of our big barn, while I was shelling corn to carry to the mill to be ground into meal.

A dear little white boy, one of our neighbors, about my age came by one Saturday morning, and in talking and playing he told me he was going to Sunday school tomorrow morning. I was eager to know what a Sunday school was. He said they sang hymns and prayed. I asked him what prayer was and what they said. I do not remember what he said; only remember that as soon as he left I climbed up into the 'loft,' knelt down by the barrel of corn and prayed as best I could. I do not remember what I said. I only recall that I felt so good that I prayed several times before I quit.

My brother and myself were the only colored children in that neighborhood and of course, we could not go to church or Sunday school, or school of any kind.

That was my simple conversion, and I have tried to keep the faith."

—G. W. Carver; Letter to Isabelle Coleman; July 24, 1931

On his grave was written, He could have added fortune to fame, but caring for neither, he found happiness and honor in being helpful to the world.

According to Andrews, Carver was once faced with a highly volatile problem by his supervisor, who just happened to be Booker T. Washington, president of the Tuskegee Institute. The problem involved Carver's decision to advise local farmers to plant peanuts rather than cotton. Decades of growing cotton had depleted the land into a virtual wasteland of withering weeds. His idea, which eventually became known as crop rotation, was to alternate soil depleting cotton crops with soil enriching crops such as peanuts. What Carver hadn't factored into his plan was that there was no commercial appeal for the peanut at the time. Without a market for their crops, farmers would be left penniless.

Washington was fearful that due to the highly volatile nature of race relations in 1914, that the mostly white farmers would not hesitate to retaliate on the bad advice of a black scientist.

George Washington Carver was not worried. He turned to face his obviously worried mentor and said, "All my life, I have risen regularly at four in the morning to go into the woods and talk with God. That's where He reveals His secrets to me. When everybody else is asleep, I hear God best and learn my plan ... This morning I asked Him why He made the peanut."

Washington looked at him incredulously but allowed Carver to continue:

"He told me, 'separate the peanut into water, fats, oils, gums, resins, sugars, starches, and amino acids. Then recombine these under My three laws of compatibility, temperature, and pressure. Then, the Lord said, 'then you will know why I made the peanut!'"

Washington laughed nervously, obviously skeptical at Carver's suggestion. Finally, with much anxiety he asked the humble scientist if God always gave him the right answers.

With a broad smile Carver replied, "Let me put it this way: The Lord always provides me with life changing ideas. Not that I am special. The Lord provides everyone with life changing ideas. These ideas are quite literally a treasure from the Almighty. It is up to each of us however, to choose and dig for the treasure."

Within ten days George Washington Carver had "discovered" more than 300 uses for the peanut. One trip to that special place in the woods to talk with God not only enhanced race relations at the time but also fundamentally changed the agricultural industry as we know it today. All because he listened to and felt the spirit of God in his life.

In Zechariah 4:6 it says, "So he answered and said to me: 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts."

Excerpted from an article by Chris Carpenter at cbn.com

Excerpt
From **The Leopard**

By Erica Haggwa, AS TOLD TO DANIELLE ELISKA LYLE

I was returning to my hiding place when I heard a shout. Militants. Their machetes glinted in the moonlight.

I couldn't make it back to the pit. Still, I ran. I came upon a large bush, its branches long and thick. A place to hide! As much as I wanted to die, I feared the machete cleaving my flesh. *Please, God, not by the blade...*

I parted the branches and gasped. A pair of eyes stared back. A leopard, crouched in the underbrush. It crept toward me, its gaze steady, its sleek body low to the ground, shoulders shifting as if to pounce. Had God sent it to kill me, before the men could?

The leopard paused. I glanced back. The militants were almost upon me when they stopped short,

nearly falling over one another.

I looked at the leopard. It was staring at the men. The great spotted wildcat stalked toward them, growling. The militants turned on their heels and ran.

The leopard lay down. It gazed at me for a long moment with its beautiful amber eyes, then rested its chin on its paws. I climbed into a space in the bush, branches sheltering me like a cocoon.

All night, the leopard kept vigil. Under its watchful eyes, my mind cleared, my fear and despair faded. It never approached, never bared its teeth at me. I stayed in the bush for three days, counting each sunrise, in awe of my silent protector, who remained nearby. On the third morning,

the militia moved on. I no longer heard gunshots or rioting. Only then did the leopard disappear back into the wilderness. I left the bush not knowing where I'd end up, but knowing I was protected.

I eventually made my way to a refugee camp, then a children's home where I met another orphan, a young Ugandan man named Daniel. Today we're married and parents to seven. Daniel is a pastor and our ministry finds adoptive homes for orphans. It's the way we rebuild, and heal. Of my family, only my sister, Elyse, survived. Not a day goes by that I don't grieve for my losses, for the losses of all. The hearts of some men, God can't reach. But in the midst of the horror, God sent his protector. He meant for me to live. MYSTERIOUS WAYS

New Website:

Go to: **www.churchofgodtruth.com**

Featuring:

God's Five Minutes ♦



Includes songs, articles, ...and more.

Wichita, KS Fall Revival

The Wichita congregation welcomes you to our fall revival. Sunday, September 13 - Sunday September 20. Services will be held at 11:00 am and 7:30 pm, Monday through Sat. On Sunday, services will begin with Sunday School at 9:30 followed by Morning Worship at 10:45 and afternoon and evening services.

All are welcome! Chapel address: 2509 N Grove. Chapel phone: 316-267-9582. For more information contact Bro. Emanuel Gracey at 316-461-1267, or Bro. Theodore McCray at 316-641-4170.

Upcoming
Church of God Meetings

17 Jul 2015	-	26 Jul 2015	Monark Springs	MO	Campmeeting	Monark Campground
12 Aug 2015	-	16 Aug 2015	Spooner	WI	Tent Meeting	Spooner Zacharias Property
21 Aug 2015	-	30 Aug 2015	Pacoima	CA	Campmeeting	Pacoima Campground
30 Aug 2015	-	06 Sep 2015	Roatan	Honduras	International Meeting	Politilly
04 Sep 2015	-	07 Sep 2015	Myrtle	MO	Campmeeting	Myrtle Campground
25 Oct 2015	-	01 Nov 2015	Fresno	CA	Revival	Fresno Chapel
25 Nov 2015	-	29 Nov 2015	Loranger	LA	Assembly	Loranger Campground

Go to: www.churchofgodmeetings.com

Excerpt From

Are You Here to Kill My Father?

On Sundays, however, some nearby believers gather at a little church building behind Simon's house. Simon preaches over a sound system, knowing that the guerrilla groups camped across the river can hear every word. He's happy that they are hearing the gospel, but he also knows they could shut him down at any moment. Throughout Colombia, guerrillas and paramilitary groups see churches as threats to their authority, as potential sources of conspiracy against them. They hate the fact that Christians are more loyal to God than to communist ideology.

Two years ago, a FARC soldier came to his house, kicked in the door and said, "Bring the pastor." Simon wasn't home, so his 8-year-old son asked the uniformed guerrilla, "Are you here to kill my father? If you are, we won't be friends anymore." The soldier laughed and patted the boy on the head. "Your father will not die today," he said. Then he asked the boy to pray for him before he disappeared back into the jungle.

Simon worries about what would happen to his family if he were taken by the FARC, and he also wonders how he would respond. "I don't know what I would say in the midst of persecution," he said, "because I love my children and wife.

"I don't think I am stronger than anybody; I am not smarter or stupider than anybody." Simon knows he is an ordinary man being used by God, and — with the support of his brothers and sisters in Christ — he is eager to continue sharing the truth of the gospel with his neighbors.

women's work at home

Laura Ingalls Wilder

The days are just filled with little things, and I am so tired of doing them," wailed a friend recently. Since then I have been thinking about little things or these things we are in the habit of thinking small, although I am sure our judgment is often at fault when we do so.

Doing cut up fingers, kissing hurt places, and singing bedtime songs are small things by themselves; but they will inculcate a love for home and family that will last through life and help to keep America a land of homes.

Putting up the school lunch for the children or cooking a good meal for the family may seem insignificant tasks as compared with giving a lecture, writing a book, or doing other things that have a larger audience; but I doubt very much if, in the ultimate reckoning, they will count for as much.

When cooking, think of yourself as a chemist, combining different ingredients into a food that will properly nourish human bodies—then the work takes on dignity and interest. Surely a family well-nourished with healthful food so that the boys and girls grow up strong and beautiful, while their elders reach a hale old age, is no small thing.

It belittles us to think of our daily tasks as small things, and, if we continue to do so, it will

We will feel an added dignity and poise from the fact that our everyday round of duties is as important as any other part of the work of the world.

in time make us small. It will narrow our horizon and make of our work just drudgery.

There are so many little things that are really great, and when we learn to look beyond the insignificant-appearing acts themselves to their far-reaching consequences, we will "despise not the day of small things." We will feel an added dignity and poise from the fact that our everyday round of duties is as important as any other part of the work of the world.

And just as a little thread of gold, running through a fabric, brightens the whole garment, so women's work at home, while only the doing of little things, is like the golden gleam of sunlight that runs through and brightens all the fabric of civilization.

Excerpt From: Laura Ingalls Wilder Farm Journalist

A Parable is an earthly story with a Heavenly meaning.

Matthew 7:24-27 speaks of:

2 Builders 2 Houses 2 Foundations & 2 Results

The focus is on the end results -- hearing & doing, not just hearing!

Bro. Steve Elston

Testimonies

I was born in French Canada from a Presbyterian father and a Roman-Catholic mother. Although I was baptized in the Protestant religion as a new born child, my religious education had been Catholic through my mother's influence and the education system in French Canada. ...

From 1978 to 1985, I read many books to find the real purpose of life, expecting to find the TRUE Church. I joined several organizations, read a lot of books, but my heart and my mind were not filled yet.

Although I had read the Bible, never did I think to ask Jesus to enter into my life. My ego was still the Master of my life. In the night of October 30th-31st, 1985, after reading a tract, I forsook myself into God's hand, accepting Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior.

I read in the New Testament that Jesus is the Truth, the Way, and the Life, not human doctrines (John 14:6). I came to believe that salvation isn't earned by good works but by faith in Jesus Christ. I was no longer a slave of any human organization, but a member of the Body of Christ and a free man in Jesus (John 8:32).

.... I continue even now to distribute tracts here and there to lead people to Jesus, the only name by whom true freedom and true salvation comes (Acts 4:12).

Alain Y. Miller---Canada

Dear Saints,

I'm thankful to God for His many blessings to me and for keeping me safe when I was in sin. Most of all, for saving my soul. Thank God!

In 2006, before my mother (Naomi Jennings) died, she would look at my neck and ask, "What is that knot in your neck?" In 2008, I had a very bad cough. I would cough, cough, and cough up lots of phlegm. I got so when I would eat, I would throw it up. I could not keep food down. I could only swallow liquids or something very soft. A specialist said I had acid reflux. He told me what to eat and what not to eat to control it. I changed my diet.

At the same time, he said he saw nodules on my thyroid, which were growing. She wanted to operate and take my thyroid out. I said, "No, I trust the Lord. He knows all about it. I'm trusting God." It's still growing. I'm looking for healing from God when He sees it is time.

One day, the Lord gave me a Scripture. Psalm 27:14. I read it over and over. It gives me comfort. It blessed my soul.

Pray for me that I will go all the way with God. He cannot fail. I love God, and He loves me. He knows me. I'm His daughter, He knows best. Pray for me.

Sis. Margaree Hightower---Fresno, CA

WHAT THE BIBLE Teaches About...

Word of God

2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Matt. 24:35

Relationship of Love

Matt. 22:37-40; John 14:21-23; 1 John 4:7-11

Repentance

Acts 3:19; Acts 17:30; 2 Cor. 7:10

New Birth

John 3:3-7; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:1-4;

Eph. 2:1, 5-6

Freedom From Sin

1 John 5:18; Matt. 1:21; John 8:11

Infilling of the Holy Spirit

Acts 19:2; Acts 15:8-9; Acts 1:8

Holiness

Luke 1:73-75; Heb. 12:14; 1 Peter 1:15-16;

Titus 2:11-12; Rom. 6:22

Kingdom of God

Luke 17:20-21; Romans 14:17; John 18:36

The Church

Acts 2:47; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Col 1:18

Unity

John 17:20-23; Gal 3:28; Rev. 18:2-4

Ordinances

Matt. 28:19-20; Matt. 26:26-30;

1 Cor. 11:23-27; John 13:14-17

Divine Healing

Luke 4:18; Isaiah 53:4-5; James 5:13-16

Sanctity of Marriage

Matt. 19:5-6; Luke 16:18; Rom. 7:2-3;

1 Cor. 7:10-11

Outward Appearance

1 Tim. 2:9-10; 1 Cor. 11:14-15; Deut. 22:5

End of Time

2 Peter 3:7-12; John 5:28-29; 2 Cor. 5:10;

Matt 25:31-46

Pacifism

Luke 6:27-29; Luke 18:20

Worship

John 4:23-24; Eph. 5:19; 2 Cor. 3:17

Great Commission

Mark 16:15

The Gospel Truth

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. (Habakkuk 3:17, 18.)



OW irrational it seems! We, with whom God hath dealt bountifully, can understand praising Him, but we should have the greatest respect for a man, who under these circumstances would not repine. To bring it closer home than the time of Habakkuk, translate all this into current experience. Instead of flocks and herds, use profits; instead of figs and olives, read credit balances; for husbandry and its terms, use business and its terms; for flocks and stalls, substitute bank balances and securities; for Chaldean invasion, the economic blizzard which is sweeping through the world—and then see where you stand!

Although there shall be no balances and securities, and all dividends shall be passed, and though I be reduced to utter penury, yet will I rejoice in the Lord!

You say that is impossible! Of course, apart from some supernatural aid he could not have done it, nor can we. Habakkuk learned that life cannot be a solo affair: it is a duet. If life were a solo, it would mean a tragic breakdown when the high notes must be reached, or the low ones melodiously sounded. A duet means harmony—*human life linked on to divine purpose and power.* Habakkuk's experience shows that *you have lost nothing if you have not lost God.*—J. Stuart Holden.

Pilgrim, look up!

*"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward."
(Exodus 14:15.)*



ET us move on and step out boldly, though it be into the night where one can scarcely see the way. The path will open as we press on, like the trail through the forest, or the Alpine pass which discloses but a few rods of its length. There are things God gives us to do without any light or illumination at all except His own command, but *those who know the way to God can find it in the dark.*—Alexander MacLaren.

The God of Israel, the Saviour, is sometimes a God that hideth Himself, but never a God that absenteth Himself; sometimes in the dark, but never at a distance.—*Matthew Henry.*

*There was a rift tonight;
I saw a grey cloud break and let the light
Shine through—a ray of hope to all the earth;
Long had I waited here; I found it hard to say,
"The clouds will drift apart, the darkness melt away
Before the radiance of the night's new birth."*

*So, if I can but wait,
I know that God will send it, soon or late—
This break within my life's grey cloud; His gift
To me, one star of perfect love to shine and show
That they who walk by faith are told the way to go,
And after storm will come the blessed rift.*

—Ruth M. Gibbs.

SPRINGS IN THE VALLEY

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**“Smite the Shepherd,
And the Sheep shall be scattered.”**

The above title is found in the 7th verse of the 13th chapter of Zechariah and it is a prophecy of Christ being smitten by the evil-hearted men and his followers being scattered.

To smite anything would mean to ill-treat, to bruise, to wound, or to slay. All down through the ages God has allowed His people and others to be smitten in different ways and manners that good might come forth from the smiting as they exercised themselves in a godly manner through the smiting.

When Moses was in the wilderness with over a million people with him and an enormous amount of cattle, sheep, and oxen, and there was no water and all were dying for thirst, God told Moses to smite the rock. Water ran out of the flinty rock like a river, and quenched the thirst of the millions. Smite and bruise a flower and the sweet odor will fill the air all around. God has told us in His Word, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” Things that are smitten will give forth what is in them whether it be good or bad. Smite a man that is filled with wickedness and there will come out cursing and bitterness. If a carnal professor of religion is smitten there will come out retaliation, fault-finding and scorn.

Smite a saint of God and it will bring out, “Praise the Lord,” or the returning of good for evil. God does not allow His saints to be smitten without a good purpose in it; and He will go with them through the trials and furnaces of life. When the three Hebrew children were humiliated, bound, and thrown into the literal fiery furnace, the King saw the form of the fourth in there with them and His likeness was as the Son of God. God brought them out without a smell of fire on their garments and the King proclaimed and made a decree of injury to anyone that would speak against their God. By their willingness to be smitten the King was made to believe in the true God. Much good came out of the smiting.

When God allowed Satan to smite Job, destroying all of his property and slaying his children, smiting him with sore boils from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head, and three miserable comforters accused him of doing evil, Job, through it all, held his integrity in God and sinned not. After the smiting was over, God stayed the hand of Satan and gave Job back more than ever and blessed his latter end more than the beginning. Just consider what a river of water and soul food has been flowing from the record of Job's furnace of affliction. The saints all down through the ages when in trials and troubles turn to the book of Job and get comfort as the Spirit reveals truth to them and they realize the long suffering and patience of Job. They take new courage and yield more fully to the good hand of God working in them.

It is recorded in history that when Polycarp was being burned at the stake the blaze of fire circled out from his body and his body shone like silver and gold and not as one being burned and charred.

Bunyan, in the book of Pilgrim's Progress, relates that he saw a fire leaping up beside the wall and a man who represented Satan standing there throwing water on it, and the more he poured, the higher the flame leaped and the hotter it became. Then he saw another man on the other side who represented the Lord pouring oil on the fire. Satan wants to make it easy on the flesh so lusts will flourish and the holy fire in the soul die, but the Lord wants to see your self life and flesh crucified and the holy fire burning in your soul, that good might issue out and others be blessed.

The Lord said to the men of the church of Laodicea (Rev. 3:16) that they were luke warm and because of that He would spue them out of his mouth. Nevertheless, He gave them counsel as to how they could get in favor with God and said, “Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich [have the true riches].” He said the shame of their nakedness then would not appear, and in obeying Him their eyes would receive eyesalve and they could then see spiritual things and live. If these men had become willing to go into trials and furnaces with the Lord, they could have lived and been in favor with God. The furnaces would have destroyed the selfish ease in which they were indulging, and they could have been clothed with new garments of the Lord's righteousness and others would have been saved through their faithfulness. In their self-righteous condition their converts would have no real spirit and life from heaven in their souls. The Lord told the rich young ruler what he should do to have eternal life but he went away sorrowful for he loved his riches and the honor of men rather than to bear the cross and wear a crown that would never fade away. It seems that today most people have self-righteousness and many preachers hold up for self to live. They cry, “Release Barabas, but let Christ be crucified.” Paul makes us know that such preachers are “the enemies of the cross of Christ: . . . whose God is their belly [fleshly lusts], and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.” Read about it in the latter part of the 3rd chapter of Philippians.

In the 17th verse Paul told them to “be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.” He is surely a good example for anyone to follow if he wants to kill his selfish life and have eternal life flowing from heaven in his soul. Just think of the self-denying ways and hardships he endured, and said, “I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church” (Col. 1:24). He was scourged, beaten, striped, and smitten time after time as an example for us to be willing to go through

the trials and afflictions of this life, that we may win a crown in the end as he did. The record of his days is like a river of water to thirsty souls and his writings feed the souls of men as the Spirit works with the truth and turns it into spiritual food for pilgrims in this world.

In the first verse of the 12th chapter of Romans, Paul makes it quite plain what it means to be dead to self and alive unto God for he says in part, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." We would surely have to die to our selfish interests and make Him first in every thing if we obey this Scripture. Paul teaches the same thing in Galatians 2:20 when he says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Jesus voices the same truth in Luke 9:24 when he says, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." In 1 Thess. 5:23, we read, "I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." He further says, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Spirit, soul, and body is all there is to a man, and if all were preserved blameless the self life would necessarily have to be dead and, in its stead, the life of Christ living in the soul.

Now we come to the great shepherd that was smitten—the Lord Jesus Christ who bore our sins in his own body on the tree—the one who was reviled and reviled not, the one who suffered and threatened not, but willingly committed himself to Him (God) who judgeth righteously. Let us turn to the 53rd chapter of Isaiah and see what he prophesies of Christ. Beginning at the 3rd verse let us read, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has born our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." This is a true word picture of the treatment that Jesus received at the hands of evil men who professed to be the Lord's people and to believe in God. Just think how the people smote Jesus, mocked him, spit on him, reviled him, scourged him, lied on him, led him away to be crucified, hung him up between thieves and robbers as though he were the worst of sinners, and gave him gall to drink. As he gave up the ghost he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He was taken down from the cross and put in a sepulcher, and a great stone was rolled against it to close up the mouth. It was sealed with the governor's seal and brave men were set to watch

to see that no one stole the body away. On the third morning the Almighty God sent his angel down, who broke the governor's seal and rolled away the stone. The brave soldiers fell down as dead men and the Son of God came forth a living Christ, never to die again. He was smitten and died the death of the cursed, for it is written in II Cor. 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Although he was smitten and abused in this life and slain as though he were a criminal, yet after he ascended up to heaven a river of water of life began to flow from heaven into the souls of men and it is flowing today. All who will plunge into that fountain can have their sins all washed away and have His peace and righteousness in their souls, which brings joy and comfort in this life as a hope of glory in the soul. Jesus said in John 7:37, 38, and 39, "In that last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This was to take place after his resurrection and his ascension to the Father. In Rev. 22:1, 2 we read, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life [Christ is the tree of life], which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves [doctrines] of the tree were for the healing of the nations [There will be no distinction of nations in heaven where the redeemed are in eternity]." In the 17th verse we read, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

—Fred Pruitt,
December, 1957
Faith and Victory

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This printing is being sent forth in bundles mailed to congregations. We desire to send the paper in individual mail to those shut-in, isolated, or to those requesting individual mailing as often as the Lord may burden. Articles, testimonies, and announcements received will be considered for publication.

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We all have a part in taking Christ's gospel to all the world! Pray for those who rule in government. Let us everyone reach out to that individual, that one God put in your circle of influence, those children around our knees, the children in our congregation, that weary one that we know needs a boost. Reach out to that stranger God places in your path.