

finding **TRUTH & Hope**

ISSUE #34

And God saw that it was good

This morning, I was out in the cool twilight before the sun arose. You've seen the glorious blaze or colors of the sunrises and sunsets. *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. . . . the sun . . . His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof (Ps 19:1, 2, 4, 6).*

What if the sun were a few million miles closer to or farther from the earth? What if the temperature of our earth was 150+ degrees or -150 degrees? We all purchase and use energy for our vehicles, homes, and businesses. Who has supplied the sun's tremendous source of energy for us for the past 6000+ years?

And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, . . . And God saw that it was good (Gen. 1:17-18). "By the word of God the worlds were made, and are held in place by His commands . . . His truth forever stands . . . changeless as the throne of God." (Evening Light Songs # 332)

On cold winter mornings, the cattle are ready to stand in the morning sun for warmth. The moment you step into the sunshine, you immediately feel the benefit of it. What a mighty God we serve!

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness (2 Peter 3:10-11). N D

Without Restraint

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh (Gal. 5:16).

"My soul be on thy guard, / Ten thousand foes arise, / And hosts of sin are pressing hard / To draw thee from the skies. // Oh, watch, and fight and pray, / The battle ne'er give o'er, / Renew it boldly every day, / And help divine implore. // Ne'er think the victory won, / Nor once at ease sit down; / Thine arduous work will not be done / Till thou hast got the crown" – Evening Light Songs # 302.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph. 6:12).

Let us guard against UNGUARDED MOMENTS! Knowing that we can cry out to our Shepherd in an instant, the enemy works hard to make us melancholy, or to color our thinking, or just anything to hinder our reaching out to the Savior. *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8).*

Wantonness: To be brought up **without restraint or rule.** To rove, ramble, or frolic without restraint

Continued . . .

or rule. *Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying* (Rom. 13:13). *They allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness* (2 Peter 2:18).

Let us guard against UNGUIDED MOMENTS! *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps* (Jer. 10:23). N D

Prayer Meeting Night *Edited Excerpts*

Though we are in challenging times, the Lord is still in control. If we'll pray about everything, His peace will keep our hearts quiet. Our courage can well up! The Lord has been there to encourage and help in physical weakness.

Grace is unmerited favor of God through His righteousness and grace. We live our lives trying to find perfection in ourselves. His blood we accept as a gift in faith. The enemy comes and tells us we are second-class Christians. The enemy says, "Don't be too happy, because you've got lots of problems." Jesus Christ came to be the door we can go through, and to give us abundant life. Let's do everything we can do to understand Him better. If we fall, "A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again" (Prov. 24:16). The Lord's saying, "Get up, I've got you. Let me carry you over the finish line. . . Welcome! You had faith in me. Welcome! You stood on my Word."

We can have restless anxiety about the future. The future is not yet ours. Let's shut our eyes to the things that God hides from us. Sometimes we don't need to do anything but pray and give it to God.

The devil uses our weaknesses to make us think we have nothing to offer anybody else. We have to learn to live inspirationally! There are things the Lord has for all of us to do reaching out to people. Hear the Lord and know what He is asking us to do.

(Ps. 23) By those quiet waters . . . He is strong. He is my protector. He delivered and brought me out. He guides me with His wisdom. I will fear no evil, because I know He's with me. This is His love holding us. We can say unto Him, "Shepherd our hearts, shepherd our minds." He's there for us, ya'll. He'll walk beside us – when we can't see Him and can't feel Him. There is hope we can make it. He is so tenderly caring for the sheep, even when we don't know He is there.

"So thankful to have a good shepherd," is one sentence that stood out to me. I related it to our journey lately. The woes and tears of life belong to the interlude and not to the finale. The Lord was faithful. When we got to the finale, we were given a beautiful gift – a beautiful witness! I don't know how people go through life without having the Lord carry them. So thankful for the way He's carried us. When you've gone through these places, it gives you motivation and more desire for Heaven. We want to be true to Him.

Evening Light Songs # 98 (The Victory Is Mine) "His promise is yet / The same as of yore, a bountiful store / To those who will trust, and they shall be kept."

Evening Light Songs # 261 (Press On) "Press on, and let thy failings / A blessing to thee prove; / No wave of care or sorrow, / Thy trusting soul shall move."

"Faith does not operate in the realm of the possible. There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible. Faith begins where man's power ends." – George Muller

Walk Worthy of Your Talents

Edited excerpts of Message by Bro. Rod Smith Loranger, LA 12-18-22
www.churchofgodpreaching.com #8565

We are called to glorify Jesus Christ. We're not to be glorifying our own self. God wants others to see your good works and glorify our Father which is in Heaven. The Lord does not want us to marginalize the talent that He has given us. God in Heaven has given us the talents that He gave us, and He wants us to make full use of it. (Matt. 25:14 *Five Talents*). But He didn't give everyone the same talents. He didn't give everyone the same resources. It may seem like some have been given so much more.

Folks, the Lord gives no one the responsibility to be idle. You cannot bury what the Lord has given you without consequences. Do you know that the Lord gives us what is best for us – so God can get the greater increase? In the end, **He's** the one that's glorified! Let's use the talents God gives us with zeal. Let's not go through life with our heads down, saying, “Woe is me. Everyone else has more than I do.” God wants to do something special with what He gave you! **Somebody is in need of what you have to offer.**

Gideon started out with 32,000 people and felt like he didn't have enough to go face the enemy. The Lord came along and took away 99% of the talents that he had. I want you to go out and do my will with 1%, lest ye think that you did it in your own power. The Lord doesn't need 100 talents on our part to do the work! He needs willing servants. He does not need us to be a 5 talent person for Him to be successful. He was looking for somebody to be faithful, so that He can do what He needed to do.

We turn away and withdraw saying, “There are so many more suited to do that than I am . . . I don't even know what talent I have to go and do anything.” We have to be willing to use the talents that He has given us. I know that God gives us weaknesses and strengths. We humans view a talent as something that was better than something else. “I don't know that I have anything with which to impress anybody.”

Some people seem like a 5 talent “Faith” person. **He wants all of us to work to have faith in Him.** Did you know the Lord is not pleased for us to lift 75 pounds if He knows we can lift 100 pounds. And when we don't, there are people who suffer for it. **Bless the multitudes.** We could withhold the little fishes because we think they couldn't possibly help the multitudes. **Let's not cross the finish line having more on hand than we should have.** The widow with two mites -- she ran the race! Let's not have lost opportunities in life. **The story of our lives is still being written. Our story is not done.** There is yet hope. **You have something to give.** Give a genuine smile from the heart. We live in a needy world – needing someone to reach out. You can do it. Give it your best, relying on God to give the increase.

Excerpts from 100 years ago

the first *Faith & Victory* - March, 1923

A GOD OF LOVE

Jesus said, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you” (John 6:53). In the 63rd verse, same chapter, He says, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” So we see it is by hearing His words and willingly obeying them that brings spirit and life in the soul.

Oh, dear souls, pilgrims to the judgment bar of God, we pray God that you be filled with the Spirit, **for it is the Spirit-life dwelling in the heart that will cause this mortal to take on immortality.** It is the life of Christ, yea, His righteousness in your soul that will receive a glorified body when the last trump doth sound and time shall be no more. So “let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9). Seek God until you are filled with perfect love and then keep filled by continually yielding to the commands from Christ our Lord. “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Phil. 2: 13). Our work is to keep wholly yielded to God and obey His voice, and His work is to keep us saved and work through us for His good pleasure, bless God. — Fred Pruitt

The Bible is the one book that people love; it is the treasure that people hold fast, even at the risk of their lives. In past ages, when wicked rulers tried to keep it from the people, they could not. At the peril of their lives, people would have it.

The educated and the ignorant, the high and the low, all races in all climes—when they learn to truly know the Bible, and when they submit themselves to the God of the Bible, learn to love it and to delight in it and are enriched and blessed by it. And because I, too, feel this deep love in my heart for the old Book, I believe it. I believe that, in some way, it was made for me by One who knew my needs, and that it corresponds to the very essence of my inner self, and I believe that I could not love it as I do if it were not God's Book, and if it were not true.

Not only is it the best-loved Book, but **it is also the most-hated Book.** The more men hate God, the more they hate His Word, and this has a deep, underlying reason, and that reason, I believe, is that the Bible is God's Book, and that in it there is so much of God himself. The Bible has withstood the assaults of all its enemies and stands victorious still. All through the ages, countless theories—religious, philosophic, scientific or other, have been used against the Bible, only to fall in ruins at last before it and to be rejected even by those who once advocated them. The Bible endures an amount of criticism that no other book could endure, and instead of being destroyed, it is only brightened and made better known. Could such a thing be truly said of error? Could error endure what the Bible has endured and live? It is the law of nature that error is self-destructive, but that truth cannot be destroyed, and according to this law, the Bible must be true because of its indestructibility.

It speaks to me of my secret ambitions, of my dearest hopes, of my fears, of the love that burns within me. My desires are pictured in the Book just as I find them working in my heart. Whatever picture it draws of the human soul, I find within myself, and **whatever I find within myself, I find within its pages**, and thus I know that it is true. No man can know me as the Bible knows me, nor picture out my inner self as the Bible pictures me, and since no work of man could correspond with my inner self as the Bible corresponds with me, I know that it did not come from man.

The sad and desolate heart turns to its pages, and as it reads, the consolation of the Holy Spirit, which fills the Book, comes into that heart, and it is comforted. It is as the balm of Gilead; it is as a letter from home to the wanderer; it is as a mother's voice to the child. It lifts up the bowed head, strengthens the feeble knees, renews the courage and takes the sadness out of the voice; **it is therefore truly the Book of hope.**

The "why" of life is found nowhere else. Other books tell us many truths about life, yet its depths and meaning find expression and answer in only one Book. **It interprets life**, and he who reads the interpretation knows that it is true because it is the story of himself, and in himself is the witness of its truth. Men have sought everywhere the secret of life and the things that pertain thereto, but everywhere, save in the Bible, they find only darkness and obscurity and uncertainty. The Bible; however, speaks in no uncertain terms. It speaks the language of Him who knows, and if we reject its voice, we are left in a tangled maze out of which we cannot find our way. The Bible outlives all its critics and is triumphant when they are forgotten; it has many times been pronounced dead, but still it lives; it has seen all antagonistic theories of the past, one by one, destroyed and rejected. But it still stands, in spite of the critic, in spite of its enemies, and those who anchor their faith upon it need not fear what voice is raised against it. -- C. W. Naylor Excerpts from *Heart Talks*

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free" (John 8:32).

I believe that . . .

The Bible is the inspired Word of God.

God created us male and female, and in His image.

Every child in the womb has inherent value.

God has a plan and purpose for every life.

Marriage is the union of one man and one woman.

Religious liberty is an inherent human right.

Jesus is the Son of God and my Lord and Savior. (selected)

Seasons

- Ecclesiastes, chapter 3: *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;*
- Thinking first of a time to plant: Speaking generally, **the years between childhood and, say, 22 or 23 for a young man or woman, for the most part settle the main outline of their character, and thereby determine their history**, which, after all, is mainly the outcome of their character. You have wide possibilities before you, of molding your characters into beauty, and purity, holiness, and strength. For one thing, you have got no past, or next to none written all over, which is hard to erase. Your stage of life predisposes you in favor of novelty. New things are glad things to you. You are flexible yet, like the iron running out of the blast furnace in a molten stream, which in half an hour's time will be a rigid bar that no man can bend. You have all these things in your favor, and so, whether you think of it or not, whether voluntarily or not, please remember that this awful process is going on inevitably and constantly in every young person, and to some extent in us all.
- You are planting, whether you recognize the fact or not. What are you planting? Well, for one thing, you are making **habits**, which are but actions hardened. It is a temptation to play with the tiger's cub of some pleasant, questionable enjoyment, and you think that it will always keep so innocent, with its budding claws not able to draw blood, but it grows—*it grows*. And it grows according to its kind, and **what was a plaything one day is a full-grown and terrible wild beast** in another. You are making habits, whatever else you are making, and you are planting in your hearts seeds that will spring and bear fruit according to their kind.
- Then remember, you are planting *belief*.—Most of us seem to get our opinions by haphazard. They come in upon you, you do not know how. Planting is the time for forming your opinions, for forming some rational and intelligent account of yourself and the world about you. **See to it, that you plant truth in your hearts, under which you may live sheltered for many days**. Then again, you are planting **character**, which is not only habit, but something more. Character is the inward response resulting in outward behavior to the moral realities of life. You are making **yourselves**, whatever else you are making. You begin with almost boundless possibilities, and these narrow and narrow and narrow, according to your actions, until you have laid the rails on which you travel—one narrow line that you can no longer change.
- A person's character is formed like a brick-mason building a great house. It is laid up one brick at a time. So you build up a great solid structure—yourself—out of all your deeds. **You are making your character, your habits, your opinions.—And you are making your reputation too**. And you will not be able to get rid of that. This is the time for you to make a good record or a bad one, in other people's opinions. And so, planter friend, **please remember the permanent effects of your most fleeting acts**. Nothing ever dies that a man does. Nothing!
Notice, in the next place, that as surely as *now* is the time to plant, *then* will be a time to reap, if I may speak so of plucking up. There stands, immutable, for every human soul and every human deed, this great solemn law of harvest - that the results are similar in kind, and more in number. And so, be sure that you will find that all your past runs into your present; and that **the present, in fact, is very little more than the outcome of the past**. This mysterious life of ours is all sowing and reaping intermingled, right to the very end. Each action is in turn the child of all the preceding and the parent of all that follows.
- Considering these things, which we who have perhaps experienced life before you know to be true, can you see the urgency of planting with the seed and under the watchful, loving scrutiny of the Master husbandman, and with the counsels of His true shepherds? Have you talked to God today? **GOD'S 5 Minutes** by Bro. Ed Wilson

Satan's Subtlety

By Bro. Stanley Dickson

The devil can present the enticement in one's mind that since no one will know or see, then maybe, just once, it won't hurt to succumb to his suggestion. Please do not be offended by this idea of our susceptibility to temptation. We are all human. Satan can tempt, and he does, but the grace and discernment of the love of God and the Holy Spirit can keep us from yielding the flesh to the wiles of the devil.

One of the facts of sin and Satan is that they are never satisfied with just one bite. Adam and Eve, "did eat." How Satan must laugh his sinister laugh at the person who is tempted and eats of his death-producing evil, only wrapped up in another package. Remember, anytime we submit to Satan's subtle ways, WE LOSE!

Dear reader, please do not succumb to that which will supplant the stench of death where the sweet fragrance of a holy heart should be. God has called us to holiness, and that must be our standard. God said to us, "Neither give place to the devil." Do not leave the door of your heart unguarded for a moment. Satan is just lying in wait to bring an old evil into your home and heart. Excerpt from *Faith & Victory* 9/1994

"Praise Ye The Lord"

By Sis. Carol Jantz

God not only created our physical bodies, but He put within the depths of our being an eternal soul. We were designed to live pleasing to God and to worship Him. Nevertheless, God has given us complete freedom of choice, whether to love Him and obey His commandments, or to follow after the allurements of the tempter. **We must always be on our guard, lest we yield to the enemy of our souls.** "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:37). We can cultivate our love for God by calling to remembrance many blessings He has already bestowed upon us. God wants us to appreciate His wonderful love and great power he has shown toward us. If we thank and praise the Lord all through each day we live, it not only blesses God, but will lift us up onto a higher plane with Him.

"This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long."

The apostle Paul was a good example to us. He even sang praises to God when he was in prison. We should not only praise God when things are going well, but when things go wrong. Praise and thanksgiving are very pleasing to God. He will give us peace which passes all understanding. However, Paul had to learn how to endure hardness. "...For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Philippians 4:11). Our flesh is so weak, and shrinks back from any kind of suffering, sorrow or pain, but Paul counteracted his feelings by rejoicing or praising God. "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:4,6,7).

The devil knows that praise and thanksgiving will keep our souls in tune with God, so he will try to flood our minds one way or another. His most common tactic is to get our minds on ourselves. Self is the main avenue the devil will use against us. There are allurements and enticements which lead to traps and snares for the soul, but discouragement can be the most deadly weapon the devil uses on us. He has no mercy with his attacks. **The more downcast we feel, the harder the blows of the enemy, for he is out to destroy us.** What a blessing that we can cry out to God for help. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10).

We need to realize that anything that crushes, depresses, or confuses us is from the devil. Praise and thanksgiving to God are mighty weapons to use against the enemy of our souls. We can resist the devil's terrible onslaughts by praising God in spite of difficulties, for we know God will

Continued . . .

work everything out in His timing. Surely we have much to be thankful for and praises to give unto the Lord as long as we live.

“If I had ten thousand lives in which to praise Him,
I could not enough my blessed Lord adore.”

The apostle Paul suffered much more than most of us will ever encounter, but by living a life that was filled with praise and rejoicing, he was able to look at the end result of his sufferings. He knew his trials would be turned into triumphs in the light of eternity. “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

Praise will help our spiritual vision to develop. “Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord” (Psalm 150:6).
-- Taken from *Faith & Victory* 5/1995

PRAY FOR OUR NATION

A nation's future depends on the prayers of it's people--
we need to know how to kneel before the Lord

When you pray for our nation, ***first ask God to forgive our national sins.*** Repent for the sexual perversion we have tolerated as legitimate, alternate lifestyles. Repent that the foundation of our families has been destroyed, that we no longer hold the marriage vows sacred as God does. Repent of our sin of the legalized murder of over sixty million babies, created in the image of God. Repent for allowing our children to be indoctrinated with secular humanism in the public schools. Confess to God every stand that our country has taken contrary to His standard of right living.

Then plead to God to have mercy on our nation, to bring about a national movement of prayer, repentance, and obedience to His laws. John Wesley understood the power of prayer to obtain God's mercy. He wrote, “Have you any days of fasting and prayer? Storm the throne of grace and persevere therein, and mercy will come down.”

Remember Your Leaders: Pray for Authorities.

Second, Scripture commands us to ***pray specifically for those who have authority in our nation.*** Paul exhorted Timothy to pray and intercede “for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (I Tim. 2:2). He explained that if people will pray for their rulers, they will then have the freedom not only to live quiet and peaceable lives, but also to proclaim the gospel and introduce men and women to Christ.

The majority of Christians in America have neglected to exercise their right as God's children to influence by prayer the men God has allowed to bear authority. Because we have not laboured in prayer to place godly men in our government and to change the hearts of godless men who occupy office, God has allowed us to be ruled by men who are motivated by selfishness, humanistic thinking, and peer pressure.

There is another group of people who need our prayers. In this hour of crisis, we must ***intercede for the men God has raised up to lead His people in the fight*** against the forces of Satan in this nation. These Christian leaders are vulnerable to constant attack because of the stand they are taking for God. We need to pray that God will put a hedge of protection around them, that they will be able to discern what God wants to say, and that they will have the courage to speak God's message without ever faltering or retreating.

Pray For Those Who Are Enslaved to Sin.

Finally, we need to ***pray for the millions of people in our nation who are trapped by sin.*** It is easy for us to criticize the sins that are destroying our very foundation; but we must love and pray for those who are slaves to alcohol, drugs, sex, money, and self. So many people are experiencing the

Continued . . .

empty, painful consequences of their rebellion against God. Moses stood in the gap between God and the blasphemous, idolatrous Israelites who had erected the golden calf as a monument to their independence from God. Moses interceded for the Israelites and caused God to change His mind about destroying them. Let us join this man of prayer and prevail upon God to deliver those who are shackled by the chains of sin.

Friends, America stands on the brink of disaster. Your freedoms are at stake. Your children's future is at stake. The name and character of God are at stake. Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" As never before, we are in desperate need of the forgiving, healing hand of God. Let us join together in earnest, effective prayer that God would sweep across our sick nation with a great revival of conviction of sin and commitment of obedience.

Are you willing to bend your knees and heart and meet His conditions? Are you willing to pay the price of humility, repentance, and persistent, prevailing prayer? May God make us all willing.

Rebirth of America

**The Greatest Thing Anyone Can Do
For God And Man Is Pray.**

**It Is Not The Only Thing, But It
Is The Chief Thing.**

The Great People Of Earth Are The People Who Pray.

**I Do Not Mean Those Who Talk About Prayer;
Nor Those Who Say They Believe In Prayer;
Nor Yet Those Who Can Explain About Prayer;
But I Mean Those People Who **Take Time To Pray.****

S. D. Gordon

The Traditional Family

From antiquity the family has served as the basic building block of society. Likewise, we find a strong emphasis on the high estate of parenthood in history. One of the few exceptions to this historical rule has been the contemporary era. **Contempt of the family** goes hand in hand with **contempt for religion and morality**. The breakdown of the faith is also the breakdown of the family.

Contempt for the family is readily illustrated by the proliferation and easy access to pornography in this country. Pornography is a subtle attack on the family. It totally depersonalizes people. Women, especially, are portrayed more as things than as human beings. Instead of being an expression of love, sex becomes a source of immediate gratification and eventually a form of manipulation. The only way pornography can be curtailed is through a moral and spiritual revitalization of the people. And this will not happen until the family, the chief progenitor of morality and religion, regains its strength.

A family is built upon human relationships. It takes effort on the part of parents to develop relationships with their children. It means taking time with children, reading aloud to them, playing with them, working with them, shopping with them, and so forth. This is all relationship building.

Continued . . .

Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see. They are the combined images of their parents. They must, therefore, be molded with love and compassion. Children must be guarded and protected, but not shielded altogether from reality.

Television invades the privacy of the home. It almost always teaches an ethic that runs contrary to the foundation of the traditional family. It is, then, a very subtle (although sometimes overt) attack on the family.

A family will not work if it does not follow the biblical design set forth in Ephesians 5:21-25. The principles set forth are clear. The male is to act as leader of the family. The wife submits to this leadership, not out of fear of her husband or because she is inferior to him, but out of her respect for Christ.

Submission, then, does not mean enslavement. It is the *yielded, intelligent, humble obedience to an ordained authority*. Christ was the ultimate example of submission. Throughout His time on earth, He submitted Himself to the will of the Father.

Modern men have been feminized, and modern women have been masculinized. Sexual roles have been reversed. Men must become men again and regain their leadership role in the family. The effective father is a leader, a role model.

The family is much like a classroom. The parents, as teachers, must be effective role models. A culture will mirror what is taught by the parents in the family.

The wife plays a very important part in supporting the leadership role of the husband. This is strategic, because one of man's greatest needs is for respect. The way a man can be hurt the most is by being rejected publicly or privately by his wife. This, too, is part of the loving submission process. If the wife refuses to submit to her husband, their children probably will also refuse.

In addition to the husband being the leader of the family, he is also to be a compassionate lover of his wife. Ephesians 5:25 is very clear: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." How does Christ love the church? With a sacrificial, giving, compassionate love. A husband's love for his wife should be similar.

This places the wife in a high estate. Thus, we see the practice, for example, of men opening the doors for women. Such acts have roots in Christianity, and more specifically, Ephesians 5.

In addition to being the lover and the leader for his wife, the husband needs to be a good father to his children. Fathers represent God. They should reflect, therefore, as closely as possible, the Creator.

Excerpts – John Whitehead

The Way of the LORD

Edited excerpts of Message by Bro. Ed Wilson 1-1-23 Guthrie, OK

The way of the Lord is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity (Prov. 10:29).

See God solemnly marching through the ages of time on down to eternity! The same way that shelters the upright is destruction to the workers of iniquity. We need to know that the devil is relentlessly diabolical. Cain didn't need a serpent! The way of God remains the same. He wants us to be able to choose. Choose the good and forgo the evil. I can understand His way is a fortress. Look at the long course of time. There is a governing power that's greater than all these things! The way of the Lord is a fortress to the righteous.

Some people have something missing in their lives. Stealing, cruelty, selfish, lustful, greedy, cold, unfaithful -- there's something missing between God and them. He predestined us to have grace enough to face anything. He gives us power to choose.

Continued . . .

visit www.churchofgodtruth.com for e-books, many "Issues", & **God's 5 Minutes**

Guardian angels are appointed at our birth to do whatever needs to be done to get us to Heaven. The Lord, in His mercy, has talked to me when I'm going down a wrong way. At the end of my journey, I will give account. The angel will be there too – there to testify against me if I have not chosen well.

God is walking through our nation with a dull heavy tread. Our government is rewriting whole composition of human structure, claiming gender is not a construct of biology. They think they can reconstruct it if they get rid of enough old people. In wisdom, God has set limits of what governments can do. He has promised us, that in the things we don't understand, He'll still be our fortress.

“Occupy till I come” (Luke 19:13). Use this wisely, because this is not your world. We're going to give account of how we handled our choices at the end of the journey.

“Destruction shall be” – Perdition: destruction of everything. Absolute damnation is for a soul to be cast away from God. He has one way. It's a righteous way. We bring damnation to our own souls. We choose in our youth – our middle years. He accepts our choice! By the end of the day, our life has proved whether or not we overcame. “The day shall declare it,” (1 Cor.3:13). Our life proves what our life has been. God must stop mercy (Christ) before judgment has it's full sway. Man shall give account of every idle word!

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

The most awful thing that can happen is perdition – to be lost! **We must do whatever we have to do to get our souls clean.** There will come a time when mercy will be no more. *You had your chance – what did you do with it?*

The Shepherd's Purpose

Edited excerpts of message by Bro. Chad Champlin 10-30-22 Loranger, LA

“And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them” (John 10:4). In dark shadows, the thief comes to steal, kill, and to destroy. In our lives, there doesn't have to be destruction. We have Someone to get behind that the enemy cannot penetrate.

Through Him, you can find pasture (places of nourishment) and still waters. He restoreth my soul. He came to give things that sustain life. When I'm in those hard places of life, when I see a situation that hurts, when I am hopeless, He can give me the words to say in my prayer. Nothing is too big to face if we have Jesus and let Him be our Shepherd. It's a personal choice; we can choose to go through Jesus. We will be sustained, and every need supplied. No matter what I face, I can know He's going to be right there with me.

Through Jesus, I can gain some sort of a Heavenly perspective. I can learn to trust in Jesus. I can set my affections on Heavenly things. My life begins to blossom with the fruit of the Spirit. Things that I have no chance to discover on my own, the Shepherd has set down to teach and lead me. That's a new life, and it's eternal life!

Continued . . .

Thank God that He is our shepherd – that He gives life and gives it more abundantly! Jesus wants to lead, guide, call your name, heal wounds, fix broken hearts, pick us up and carry us. He wants to wrap His arms around you and fill your every need. Lord, help us to allow Jesus to fulfill His purpose. He wants to stand between us and the enemy, to be our protection.

www.churchofgodmeetings.com

Apr 8 – 9 Hayden, AL Singing

Jun 14 – 18 Gladstone, OR Campmeeting

Apr 19 – 23 Wichita, KS Revival

Jun 28 – Jul 02 Fresno, CA Campmeeting

May 18 – 21 Tollesboro, KY Spring Mtg.

July 2 – 9, 2023 Loranger, LA Campmeeting

May 26 – Jun 4 Guthrie, OK Campmeeting

Jul 21 – 30, 2023 Monark Springs, MO Campmtg.

Jun 7 – 11 Holly Hill, SC Campmeeting

Dec. 22 – 31, 2023 Guthrie, OK Assembly Mtg.

Visit website to confirm dates before travel.

Stolen Peace

Edited excerpts of message preached by Bro. Rod Smith Feb. 5, 2023 Loranger, LA.

The enemy would like to rob us of our faith! (John 10:10). He uses vague accusations. He likes to bring guilt when we're not even sure why we feel guilty! The enemy does this to those tender of heart.

“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all”(I John 1:5). He is a God of peace, light, and not a God of darkness. When we have an open mind and heart asking, “Lord what would you have me to do?” – the Lord helps us recognize places in life that we did not recognize.

The Lord wants us to wait in peace. The 120 in the upper room were told to tarry till endued with power from on high. The first evening came and went, and still there was no answer. The third day came; they were still tarrying, and there was no answer. After about seven days, the Lord came. The Lord wasn't displeased with them not knowing exactly how He would work. Abraham didn't have all the answers. We come face to face with famine, unanswered questions, and our minds not satisfied. No peace?

Here's what we can be tempted to say, “I must have sinned; I must have gone astray; God must not be pleased with me.” If we're not careful, that thought process will fill our minds. The enemy loves to insert **absence of peace**. He preys on conscientious souls. God was there all the time. And God will be there for you too. **That is an attack of the enemy! Let's put the enemy on his heels.** “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

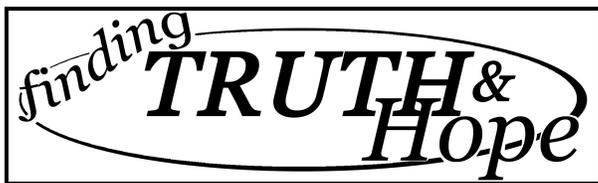
I'm not talking about getting into trouble when we knew to do good, and we say, “That's not important; that's not what I want; or I'd rather ask forgiveness than permission.” That is avoiding knowledge of God. I'm talking about people who want to serve God, yet still feel accusations of the enemy, doing everything they know to do to serve Him. God is in the business of coming and showing us areas to improve. **He doesn't come just to cause us to lose all our peace.** Jesus paid too great a price! He doesn't ask us to have to run this most difficult obstacle course, and by the way, do it blindfolded!

You should know why, if you feel guilty. Jesus Christ leads by light. Jesus Christ shows the way. When He shows us what is wrong, **He shows us the way out.** Jesus has not designed chambers of darkness with unending times. The Lord has peace for us.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”(1 John 1:9). “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25). “Uttermost” is a positive, strong, affirmative promise. Recognize we're only saved by the merits of the blood of Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ came to save us from things we don't even recognize. His blood covers till we become aware of what our need is. The enemy is there to bring darkness. **The enemy wants us to remain in a state of darkness and absence of peace. Jesus Christ wants to get us across the finish line and to Heavenly places.** Salvation is come to your house today. The enemy deals with uncertainty. “Where have I gone wrong?” That is the enemy. Jesus Christ says “Peace be still.” **Today, be encouraged to call the enemy's bluff.** Jesus' message to you is “Peace be still.” “Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen” (Rom.15:33).

www.churchofgodtruth.com

ftruth@gmail.com



P. O. Box 80 Covington, LA 70434

www.churchofgodtruth.com

The Bible Page 4
GOD's 5 Minutes. . . . Page 5
Satan's Subtlety Page 6
PRAY FOR OUR NATION. . Page 7
The Traditional Family. Page 8
The Way of the Lord Page 9
The Shepherd's Purpose Page 10
Stolen Peace Page 11

Say not, "It is so many months till revival or campmeeting." Let's quicken ourselves now!

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.
(James 4:8)

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. (Heb. 10:22)

The Heavens Declare. . .

From the fearsome form of dinosaurs to the buzz of a honey bee, from the fragrance of the sweet olive tree to the miracles of our own digestive tract – or that of the tiniest beetle: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” (Ps. 19:1).

Our earth is **hung on nothing and created from nothing**. The miracles of stars above . . . the energy of our sun for thousands of years . . . Consider the order of it all! Our air, the temperature, the seasons, the seas . . . the miracle of a snowflake, a drop of rain . . . the thunder of an avalanche, to the chirp of crickets . . . the rhythm of the fireflies by night . . . the lonely song of the whippoorwill, the hoot of the owl, the wingbeats of the gull, or the whirl of the hovering hummingbird . . . the ostrich and her egg, or the shortsighted fury of the rhinoceros . . .and wonder! Our heavenly Father conceived it all, created it all, and continues it all!

“As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place” (Prov. 27:8). Let us return unto our God. He created us to worship Him. Let us not dedicate ourselves to other images – but to Him!! Let us renew our consciences, lift our faith, and return to simple goodness, love, and compassion. **Let's let Him soften our hard hearts and breathe forgiveness, hope, and life into our bosoms!** “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

The dance of the dolphins, the dive of birds of prey, the sweetness of a honey drop, the smell and crackling warmth of a campfire, the incredible color of the dawn, and the setting evening sky – on what kind of canvas would you depict this? Who would be the Artist? Who could manage it all at once, and then in continuance? “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork.”

“Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it . . . Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: . . . thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing”(Ps. 65: 9, 10, 13).
